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

by

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DISSERTATION

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DEDICATION

Dedicated to all invested in the fight against corruption, and in the efforts to help developing countries break free from corruption’s monstrous grip.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AG	Action Congress
APC	All Progressives Congress
AU	African Union
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BBOC	Bring Back Our Corruption
BVN	Bank Verification Number
CAR	Central African Republic
CJN	Chief Justice of Nigeria
CSO	Chief Security Officer
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EFCC	Economic and Financial Crimes Commission
EU	European Union
FIRS	Federal Inland Revenue Service
FOI	Freedom of Information
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ICPC	Independent Corrupt Practices Commission
ING	Interim National Government
IPOB	Independent People of Biafra
LAO	Limited Access Order
NADECO	National Democratic Coalition
NAPEC	National Poverty Eradication Council
NAPEP	National Poverty Eradication Programme
NBS	National Bureau of Statistics
NCNC	National Council for Nigerian Citizens
NNA	Nigerian National Alliance
NNPC	Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation
NPC	Northern Peoples' Congress
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance

PDP	Peoples' Democratic Party
R-APC	Reformed APC
SCEEP	Strengthening Citizens' Engagement with the Electoral Process
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
SURE-P	Subsidy Reinvestment and Empowerment Programme
TI CPI	Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index
TI	Transparency International
TMIS	Total Military Interventions Score
TSA	Treasury Single Account
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UPGA	United Progressives Grand Alliance
US	United States (of America)
VVF	Vesicovaginal Fistula

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 Purpose

In the study of corruption are two orthodox notions: (1) public corruption catalyses political instability; (2) public corruption only benefits governing elites and victimises the masses. The reality in Nigeria, however, appears to call these notions into question. First, despite mindboggling corruption in the post-1999 democratic regime in Nigeria, there has been relative political stability contrasted with the period before 1999. Second, as supposed victims of corruption who intuitively should support anti-corruption efforts, many ordinary Nigerians vehemently resisted the post-2015 anti-corruption campaign executed by the government. Through the 'Bring Back Our Corruption (BBOC)' counter-campaign, the masses demanded a return to the period of pervasive and scot-free corruption. These paradoxes throw up questions that the orthodoxy cannot answer.

This study, therefore, suggests that the orthodoxy-defying, counter-intuitive reality in Nigeria seems to point to a largely ignored function of corruption in developing states sharing certain characteristics – a history of elite-led instability due to the struggle for rent, a failing formal welfare system, and entrenched elite-masses patron-client relations. In such states, corruption may function to stabilise the political system and support the subsistence of poor masses. As a consequence, anti-corruption programmes may come under the overwhelming threat of what the study terms 'anti-anti-corruption' reactions. Unlike noncompliance with anti-corruption measures, anti-anti-corruption reactions involve deliberate and often fierce counter-reactions to stymie anti-corruption measures. As the study demonstrates, anti-anti-corruption reactions have played out observably in post-1999 Nigeria, particularly following the execution of the post-2015 war on corruption.

The study explores the controversial and almost ostracised 'functional corruption thesis' in providing explanations for Nigeria's experience. As we shall find in detail in chapter two, the functional corruption scholarship emerged in the 1960s when corruption in developing countries, most of whom had only emerged from colonisation, occupied a key spot in Western social science discourses. Given the self-evident adverse impacts of corruption on public wellbeing and the developing states, the dominant scholarship (Banfield, 1958, 1961; Nye, 1967) mainly approached corruption from the perspective of its deleterious or non-functional outcomes. In deviation, proponents of the functional corruption thesis argued that in developing states, who unlike their advanced Western counterparts suffered severe state dysfunction (a weak public administration system and poor formal capacity for reforms and resource allocation), corruption could function to facilitate economic and political progress (Merton, 1968; Huntington, 1968).

The functional corruption perspective suffered enormous rejection (and continues to) as scholars maintain their preference for the orthodoxy, which is to emphasise the non-functional outcomes of corruption (Pozsgai-Alvarez, 2018). A major blindside of the non-functional approach, it seems, is the tendency to view corruption from the prism of morality, thus leading to the characterisation of corruption not only as almost always deleterious but its commission a violation of ethical standards. With incontrovertible evidence, scholars of the non-functional orientation have demonstrated that in India, Mexico, Columbia, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Venezuela, Nigeria, among others, corruption remains the single most destructive phenomenon (Klitgaard, 1988; Gray & Kaufmann, 1998; Rose-Ackerman & Palifka, 2016).

Without a doubt, corruption is the scourge of the developing world. Its scale and persistence are major factors for the lethargic development of most developing countries. The corrupt choices and transactions of avaricious political and military elites (often in cahoots with bureaucratic and

corporate elites) cost developing countries billions of dollars annually (Transparency International (TI), n.d), thereby causing extreme mass misery. The evidence indicates that African states are the most adversely impacted by corruption. As revealed by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA, 2016), the continent loses more than $148 billion annually to public corruption (p. 20). The destructive effects of corruption are visible in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) where public looting shoots up the cost of governance, widens the infrastructure gap and worsens socioeconomic misery (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012; Ganahl, 2013; Brinkerhoff & Bossert, 2014).

Foremost cross-national corruption barometers show that SSA is home to some of the world's most corrupt governments. This reality reflected again in the 2018 Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index (TI CPI).[1] As the index shows, only six out of 46 SSA states rank among the best 60 of the 180 countries covered in the survey. The best performing SSA states include Seychelles (28th), Botswana (34th), Cape Verde (45th), Rwanda (48th), Namibia (52nd) and Mauritius (56th). The subcontinent's powerhouses – Kenya, South Africa and Nigeria – maintain a dismal ranking for the umpteenth time. The Africa-centric corruption perceptions index – Afrobarometer[2] – shows similar results in the past two decades.

Nigeria's experience with corruption, while hardly unique in SSA or the broader developing world, represents a notable case. Despite her vast human and natural resource potentials, Nigeria is the quintessence of corruption-induced underdevelopment (Hoffmann & Patel, 2017; Page,

[1] Since 1995 the annual index has measured experts and corporate sector players' perceptions on the pervasiveness of public sector corruption in 90 to 180 countries. Countries are scored 0-100. A score of 0 indicates a high incidence of corruption while 100 indicates a clean public sector. Based on their score, countries are ranked from 1 (very clean) to 180 (highly corrupt) on the scale.

[2] A public attitude survey covering at least 37 African countries. The face-to-face interviews collect respondents' perceptions on the prevalence of corruption (particularly in public governance and administration), government's response and the impact of the response.

2018). Concerns over corruption in Nigeria go back as far as colonial times (1900-1960) (Ogbeidi, 2012). In the post-colonial period, corruption continues to be a major governance challenge in Nigeria. The persistence of the scourge is not indicative of the absence of countermeasures. Nigeria has been through phases of legal and institutional reforms and anti-graft programmes to prevent and respond to corruption. The countermeasures, however, have generally failed.

Adduced for the failure of anti-corruption measures in Nigeria are the same factors generally blamed for failed anti-corruption policies in the developing world. The most emphasised factors include weak legal framework and institutional capacity to effectively combat corruption (Rose-Ackerman, 1978; Klitgaard, 1988), the absence of political will for bold anti-corruption enforcement (Abdulai, 2009; Ankamah & Khoda, 2018), and prevalent social norms accommodative to corruption (Persson, Rothstein & Teorell, 2010; Hoffmann & Patel, 2017). While these explanations remain useful, they do not explain why in states where major reforms have taken place to address these factors, anti-corruption efforts continue to be unsuccessful.

1.2 Problem Statement

The adverse consequences of corruption are self-evident and undeniable. However, the propensity to approach corruption only from the angle of its non-functional outcomes overlooks the probable function of corruption in developing countries locked in the struggle against the blight. In these countries, political and economic contexts may exist that make corruption functional in ways that pose a danger to anti-corruption enforcement. In order to understand these contexts, it is imperative to shift the analytical lens from the non-functional perspective. This study, therefore, proposes a two-pronged and interlinked analysis.

The first is to examine how historically politically unstable states (due to by fierce elite struggle for rents) that have transitioned to relative stability sustain the tenuous stability. The second is to determine the nature of governing elite-ordinary citizens exchanges where the formal welfare system is weak and socioeconomic vulnerability is high. 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. As we shall find in chapter two, in the case of Nigeria, where the contexts exist, the fulfilment of the necessary conditions seems to have made corruption functional in ways that threaten the success of anti-corruption efforts. These crucial conditions, the study claims, account for why Nigeria has achieved relative political stability post-1999 despite humungous corruption and why an anti-anti-corruption response on the scale of the BBOC resistance greeted the post-2015 war on corruption.

1.3 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?

To the first question, it appears to be because corruption has been crucial to sustaining political stability in Nigeria since democratisation in 1999, unlike before 1999, when corruption was a trigger for political instability. As the study claims, the condition was not fulfilled for corruption to perform a political stabilisation role in Nigeria until the post-1999 period. To the second question,

the study claims that the potential for popular hostility to anti-corruption has always been there, but only in the post-2015 did all conditions align for this to occur on such a scale. As noted earlier, these conditions are articulated in chapter two.

1.4 Methodology and Design

Every research is a scientific endeavour expected to apply an unambiguous, systematic and reliable approach to arriving at results (Mohajan, 2018). As a general rule, the determination of a methodological approach depends on the nature and objective of a study. In the researcher's estimation, the nature and objectives of this study required an inductive process for collecting, collating analysing and presenting data. The appropriate method had to allow ample room for the researcher's interpretation of the data. Also, corruption represents a sensitive issue in Nigeria, as it often evokes discomfort and sentimentality. For these reasons, the ideal method had to be one that would enable the researcher to decipher meanings insinuated or concealed in responses. Hence the study adopted the qualitative inductive method. This method has proven flexibility for exploring meanings and drawing valuable insights from the research process.

The study employs historical interpretative research design. The rationale is to aggregate relevant historical evidence, synthesise the evidence with empirical data and draw conclusions from the synthesis. The study applies this design to consolidate a broad range of qualitative and quantitative secondary data and mainly qualitative primary data. Secondary data was obtained from peer-reviewed articles, textbooks, news sources and relevant online sources, while primary data came through oral interviews, personal observation and semi-netnography (data collection on social media, particularly Facebook). Semi-netnography provided useful supplemental data.

The study recognises that the use of data derived from social media raises ethical and reliability questions. Debate persists over whether researchers should utilise consumer-generated data without the expressed consent of the creators of the data. Critics insist that researchers must not consider social media data free for mining simply because the data is out on a public platform. Some also question the trustworthiness of such data. Citing evidence of propagandistic online personalities and suspiciously unidentifiable social media users, critics call the veracity and reliability of social media data into question (Social Media Research Group, 2016; Townsend & Wallace, 2018). While these concerns are legitimate, a growing recognition is that social media is a treasure trove of data for academic research. In recognition of the potential value of social media content, an increasing number of scholars are beginning to favour the development of new methods to accommodate this kind of data, which, due to its nascency, finds no accommodation in traditional research approaches.

Mindful of these concerns, the study makes limited use of user-generated Facebook data. While the data is relevant to the study as it helps to answer the research questions, the researcher had no means of determining its trustworthiness. In order to enable readers and other researchers verify the data sources and determine their reliability, the study supplies web links to the data and date of creation.

1.4.1 Sampling/sample frame

The determination of a respondent base cognitive of the subject under study is another key challenge every study must overcome. A crucial task in this regard is the framing of a sample size that is both manageable and sufficient for reaching conclusions. Unlike in quantitative research, there are no clear-cut modalities for sample framing in qualitative studies. In qualitative research, preference is often on the quality of the sample than it is on the size as there may not be a significant

difference in the usefulness of data between when the sample size is within a manageable limit and when it is too large (Dworkin, 2012). For this reason, the study kept the sample size under a manageable limit and applied the stratified sampling technic. The sample frame comprises four categories of respondents differentiated as follows:

i. Elites (politicians and business executives)
ii. Bureaucrats (low to mid-level government employees, particularly those in anti-corruption agencies)
iii. Professionals (academics, civil society activists, journalists and public analysts)
iv. Everyday Citizens (artisans, informal business operators and unemployed persons)

The reason for organising respondents into distinct clusters was to administer each cluster with data collection instruments with lines of questioning specific to each group, taking into account their peculiar experiences and suitability to support particular aspects of the study.

For the Elites category, the study collected political actors' perceptions of the relationship between corruption, the dynamics of politics and political stability throughout Nigeria's history. The study initially did not include corporate actors but had to widen the respondent base, when, due to its unprecedentedness and scale, the BBOC popular pushback to the post-2015 anti-corruption programme required collecting the opinions of members of the business community to understand the motivations behind the hostile popular reaction.

For the Bureaucrats cluster, the same questions as those posed to respondents in the Elites category applied. However, given their involvement with the design and implementation of government anti-corruption policies, the study sought to know whether they encountered political interference, the nature of the interference and impacts on anti-corruption execution. The purpose of such lines of questioning was to draw inferences on the reasons for such interference.

The Professionals category is perhaps the most important segment of the sample. Respondents in this group possessed vast knowledge on the issues raised in the study, and unlike respondents in the other clusters, most of them had no inhibitions to speaking freely during the interviews. Most academics sampled are either published or vocal on issues related to corruption, politics, political stability and public welfare. Civil society professionals in this cluster are those involved in anti-corruption and good governance outreach and those who have been in the vanguard of pro-democracy and anti-corruption activism. Journalists and public policy analysts sampled possessed authoritative knowledge of corruption and political events in Nigeria.

Some respondents in the Everyday Citizens category responded to the general questions. However, the specific purpose for this category was to learn from the common folks themselves the reasons for the paradoxical U-turn in popular reception to the anti-corruption programme despite having emerged in response to public outcry for tougher anti-corruption enforcement.

The larger share of respondents – mostly politicians, business executives, academics, journalists and civil society activists – were selected through the judgemental sampling method of chain-referrals (snowballing), while the rest – mostly bureaucrats and everyday citizens – were randomly selected. As noted earlier, inquiries on corruption in Nigeria often evoke uneasiness and sentimentality. The reason is that most Nigerians respond to queries on corruption guided by ethnic, religious and regional biases. The study had no absolute safeguards against this tendency. However, to minimise the likely dominance of respondents who may share similar biases due to their ethnic origin, political or religious affiliation, the sample was drawn from five of Nigeria's cosmopolitan cities – Abuja, Lagos, Port Harcourt, Benin City and Yenagoa (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Study locations

Note: Modified by the author. The red circles indicate the five locations the interviews held.

Source: Map by Nations Online Project.[3]

Abuja is Nigeria's political capital, while Lagos is the country's economic nerve centre. Due to their significance, both cities host citizens of all political, ethnic, religious and regional backgrounds. Port Harcourt, Benin City and Yenagoa, while not of the same political or economic stature as Abuja and Lagos, are home to Nigerians of all backgrounds.

[3] Unmodified map available at https://www.picbear.org/media/BynWytaAWUF

1.4.2 Primary data collection

i. Instrumentation

The study chose the oral interview tool because of its usefulness in collecting data in the narrative form. The interview questionnaires consisted of semi-structured, open-ended questions. The rationale was to not limited responses to pre-determined questions. It also was to make certain that responses did not come in simple 'yes' or 'no' format. New questions emerged with the flow of each interview and respondents were allowed to narrate their perceptions as much as possible. The study conducted 44 oral interviews. These include 22 face-to-face communications conducted in July and August 2017 in Nigeria and another 22 interviews conducted remotely via video and voice calls between September 2017 and March 2018. Tables 1 and 2 below show the distribution of respondents across the four clusters, the five locations and respondents' basic information.

Table 1: Respondent distribution

Category	Abuja	Lagos	Port Harcourt	Benin City	Yenagoa	Total (%)
Elites	4	3	0	0	2	9 (20%)
Bureaucrats	3	0	2	0	0	5 (11%)
Professionals	6	2	3	3	3	17 (39%)
Everyday Citizens	4	2	3	2	2	13 (30%)
Total (%)	17 (39%)	7 (16%)	8 (18%)	5 (11%)	7 (16%)	44 (100%)

Table 2: Respondents information

No.	Name	Identity	Education	Occupation
1.	U. Chukwura	Anonymised	Post-graduate	Banker
2.	Amara Nwakpa	Real name	Post-graduate	Civil society actor
3.	Austin John	Real name	Post-graduate	Civil society actor
4.	Zibima Tubodenyefa	Real name	Post-graduate	Assistant professor, Niger Delta University

5.	APC official	Anonymised	Post-graduate	Politician
6.	Nuhu Clifford	Real name	Graduate	Politician
7.	Prosecution officer	Anonymised	Graduate	Civil servant
8.	PDP official	Anonymised	Graduate	Politician
9.	Chike F. Okolocha	Real name	Post-graduate	Professor, University of Benin
10.	Civil servant	Anonymised	Graduate	Civil servant
11.	Wigwe Mbakwe	Real name	Unascertained	Retired civil servant
12.	Analyst	Anonymised	Graduate	Civil servant
13.	M. Meli	Anonymised	Post-graduate	Investigative journalist
14.	Onyekachi Ifieanyi	Real name	Unascertained	Commercial rickshaw rider.
15.	Ukiwo Ukoha	Real name	Post-graduate	Professor, University of Port Harcourt
16.	Mumuni Adetokumbo	Real name	Unascertained	Civil society actor
17.	Jaye Gaskia	Real name	Post-graduate	Civil society actor
18.	Ede Iji	Real name	Post-graduate	Emeritus Professor, University of Calabar
19.	Abolade Tomi	Real name	Post-graduate	Journalist.
20.	Ibaba S. Ibaba	Real name	Post-graduate	Professor, Niger Delta University
21.	A. Razak	Anonymised	Unascertained	Politician. A former member of Nigeria's House of Representatives
22.	A. Udeka	Anonymised	Graduate	Politician
23.	J. Patrick	Anonymised	Post-graduate	Freelance investigative journalist
24.	Uvwe Dennis	Real name	Graduate	Retired teacher
25.	Anselem Prosper	Real name	Senior school	Unemployed
26.	Eme C. Ekekwe	Real name	Post-graduate	Professor, University of Port Harcourt
27.	Kemelade Grace	Real name	Nil	Petty trader
28.	Jacob Ebiabowei	Real name	Senior school	Unemployed
29.	Tunde Oyedeji	Real name	Unascertained	Unemployed
30.	Amos Chinwon	Real name	Undergraduate	Trader
31.	Accounting officer	Anonymised	Graduate	Civil servant
32.	Oyebamiji Olumide	Real name	Post-graduate	Civil society actor
33.	Amos Onyekachi	Real name	Graduate	Unemployed
34.	Angela Ogbu	Real name	Post-graduate	Lecturer, Benson Idahosa University
35.	Frank Keme	Real name	Unascertained	Taxi driver
36.	D. Oseloka	Anonymised	Graduate	Business executive
37.	U. Ibrahim	Anonymised	Graduate	Politician
38.	Procurement officer	Anonymised	Senior school	Civil servant

39.	Precious Ebenezer	Real name	Undergraduate	Niger Delta University
40.	Dubakeme Christian	Real name	Undergraduate	Niger Delta University
41.	Eseimokumo Opuene	Real name	Graduate	Unemployed
42.	B. Samuelson	Anonymised	Graduate	Politician
43.	Victor Essien	Real name	Graduate	Civil society actor
44.	Aalo Anthony	Real name	Graduate	Civil society actor

ii. The interview process

The interview process involved pre-arranged and impromptu interviews. The longest interview was 56 minutes, while the shortest lasted 5 minutes. In situations where respondents permitted, the researcher took audio recordings and handwritten notes during the interview. The interviews held in Standard English and Pidgin English. All responses given in Pidgin English have been translated into Standard English in the analysis.

iii. Adherence to ethical requirements

The data collection phase of the study observed the code of ethics for research of this nature. The researcher informed respondents that the information would only serve academic purposes. Also, no interviews held without respondents' consent. Interviewees who agreed to be named are mentioned in the study while those who demanded anonymity, particularly politicians, business executives, undercover journalists and bureaucrats, are so granted. Information given off the record is not included in the analysis even though such information would have given more depth to the analysis.

1.4.3 Data analysis

The study adopts the 'Narrative Method' of data analysis – one of the five main approaches to qualitative data analysis (James, 2017, p. 3104). The method uses stories obtained and experiences

gained during interviews and personal observation to answer research questions. In applying this method of analysis, the study first identifies data patterns (themes). Next, primary and secondary data are extracted and presented as direct quotations, summaries and paraphrases to answer the research questions.

1.4.4 Validity and reliability

Validity and reliability are crucial elements of objective research. A study fulfils the requirement of validity to the extent that its findings are replicable by other researchers applying the same methods. The reliability condition is satisfied if conclusions drawn from data collected are demonstrable, logical and considerably agreeable (Bryman, 2008). Qualitative social research does not yet have such generally applied standardised procedures as those that immensely enhance validity and reliability in quantitative social and natural science research. Therefore, the responsibility to minimise biases and other subjective influences that may undermine validity and reliability rests with the researcher.

Consequently, the researcher ensured that the data is trustworthy and that conclusions drawn are falsifiable. The data collection instrument was devoid of ambiguity. The researcher framed every question to show clarity of intent. The study provides a sample of the interview questionnaires as a guide to researchers who may want to repeat the study. The researcher may provide some audio recordings to interested researchers if need be. While other studies may not produce the same results due to the uniqueness of each respondent sampled in this study, the general findings may bear significant similarities with this study.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The literature is replete with perspectives that approach corruption from the non-functional point of view. However, as most developing states remain overwhelmed by the scourge despite its incontestable perniciousness, newer unconventional understandings seem to have become imperative. In light of this, this study suggests that the functional corruption perspective, though widely dismissed as deadbeat intellectualism, may provide additional answers as to why developing states like Nigeria continue to struggle with corruption. The study thus has both theoretical and practical significance.

On the theoretical angle, a major significance is the study's departure from the non-functional and often moralistic approach to the study of corruption. The study may be considered an attempt to revisit the relegated functional corruption scholarship. Markedly, however, the study deviates from the functional corruption perspective in the classical form, which measures the functionality of corruption by how much it facilitates bureaucratic efficiency, economic growth and political development with utilitarian outcomes. The study instead argues that corruption may be functional even when it produces none of the outcomes in the traditional functionalists' point of view. Corruption could function to stabilise states with a history of political instability as well as support the livelihood of vulnerable citizens where formal welfare measures are weak while also producing longer-term adverse consequences and impediments to anti-corruption efforts. The study emphasises that this may present difficult hurdles in the way of anti-corruption efforts.

On the practical side, the study suggests that recognising the functionality of corruption may help policymakers reassess the optimality of current theorisations that inform anti-corruption policy formulation and execution in developing countries waging a seemingly fruitless war against corruption. Such recognition could improve the chances of success of anti-corruption efforts.

Hence, where corruption has a functionality that is likely to provoke anti-anti-corruption retorts, policymakers may frame responses to the conditions for which corruption is functional, thereby minimising the threat to anti-corruption policies.

1.6 Scope and Limitations

The scope covers variations in elite cooperation, the dynamics of politics, support for political stability, the state of formal welfare provision and the nature of elite-masses exchanges in two major political eras in Nigeria: 1960 to 1998 and 1999 to 2019. The post-1999 period is further subdivided into 1999 to 2014 and 2015 to 2019. The purpose of this subdivision is to draw attention to more specific variations in elite cooperation and commitment to stable politics following the enforcement of anti-corruption policies in both post-1999 periods. The study also gives extensive coverage to the counterintuitive popular opposition to the post-2015 anti-corruption campaign.

Corruption is a nebulous concept. However, the study does not go into the various conceptualisations and typologies of corruption as that has received extensive scholarly focus. For the avoidance of conflating forms of corruption, the study uses the term ‘corruption’ in strict reference to ‘graft and embezzlement’ by the governing elite (civilian and military) and ‘governing elite-masses patron-client exchanges’. In other words, corruption in this study refers narrowly to the illicit accumulation of public funds by individuals exercising public authority and influence and the informal welfare exchanges they enter into with their clientele. Forms of corruption like nepotism, cronyism, influence peddling, are not in the scope of this study. Particular focus is on the non-functional and functional perspectives on corruption, how both perspectives characterise corruption, and the relevance of the latter to understanding corruption in the developing world, especially in Nigeria.

Also, the analysis is limited to national politics and governance in Nigeria. Keeping the focus only on the national government makes the analysis less complicated for readers unfamiliar with Nigeria. The main reason for such a limited scope is that, vested in the national government are enormous power and resources upon which subnational governments, the economy, and citizens rely. Given the almost limitless power and vast resources vested in the national government, it has been the object of fierce elite competition. The nature of the competition has implications for stability, the wellbeing of the population and strength of government policies, particularly anti-corruption policies.

As is common with research, the study encountered some limitations. However, the limitations had minimal adverse impacts on the outcome of the study. Efforts to interview politicians holding formal offices were unsuccessful due to the difficulty of getting past official protocol and irreconcilable time schedules. Two senators and a minister could not keep to the interview schedule due to official engagements. Although this hampered collecting first-hand information, it does not invalidate the data nor the inferences made in the study. As an alternative, the study collected the opinions of past executive and legislative officials, and functionaries of the governing and main opposition parties. Despite not occupying government offices at the time of the study, they gave valuable responses drawn from their active involvement in the political process.

Similar challenges followed attempts to collect the perspectives of the leadership of the two anti-corruption agencies in Nigeria. While one agency communicated by email its refusal to participate in the study, the other permitted the researcher to interview one mid-level and one lower cadre employee. An employee of the agency that declined to participate offered to support the study under the promise of anonymity.

Some respondents – mostly politicians – expressed willingness to take part in the study. However, their availability fell outside of the two-month timeframe the researcher was directly in the field. Perhaps to safeguard against the recording of the interview, a number of them were only open to face-to-face interviews which required more trips to Nigeria with huge financial implications. For lack of fund, the rest of the interviews were conducted remotely via phone and video calls with respondents who had no objections to distance interview. A major disadvantage with the remote interviews was the inability to keep audio recordings. The researcher only took handwritten notes.

It is vital to emphasise the methodological limitations. Although the study draws inferences from elites and the masses' observed behaviours as it relates to corruption and anti-corruption enforcement, it is not a behavioural study. Such a study would have required more stringent behavioural analysis based on precisely collected and analysed empirical data. Also, the assumption that corruption may be functional is not to say that at any point in time, elites or ordinary citizens deliberated and agreed to evolve corruption into a functional tool. The study's claim on the functionality of corruption, although deduced from the literature and primary data, remain circumstantial and will need more in-depth and controlled studies to validate.

1.6.1 Internal validity

In order to draw inferences on the functionality or non-functionality of corruption in each period delineated, the study separates variables that one could easily conflate with corruption. Counter-facts are also utilised to point out the explanatory insufficiency of other variables.

1.6.2 External validity

The conclusions reached in this study may not be generalisable to all developing countries as each country may have peculiar experiences. However, given that most developing states, particularly those in SSA share commonalities with Nigeria, the findings of this study might, to some degree, reflect their experiences.

CHAPTER TWO

Conceptual Analysis and Analytical Framework

2.1 The Functional Approach, Origin and Application

A fine place to begin is a general overview of the functional approach and how it contrasts from the non-functional perspective before narrowing the analysis to how both approaches apply to the study of corruption. The functional perspective is not to be understood simply as a virtual opposite of the non-functional viewpoint. Also, while there is a functional school of thought, there is no such thing as a non-functional school of thought. The designation of a point of view regarding a phenomenon as non-functional is largely dependent on the extent to which we perceive the point of view to accentuate the phenomenon's negative attributes over its positive elements.

The functional approach, also called functionalism, has been applied to the explanation of phenomena in diverse fields of study. Its application in one field of study often differs from its application in another. Irrespective of the discipline, the functional approach generally conveys understandings gained either through scientific research or intuition, of a phenomenon's utility relative to the functioning of a broader and often complicated system. Even when a phenomenon is mostly associated with doom and gloom, functionalists – as we call proponents of the approach – could show how the phenomenon is crucial to the functioning of a larger system.

To illustrate this, let us consider a common example. In almost all cultures, including among mammals with cognitive abilities similar to humans', 'death' represents a source of grief, pain and many dreadful emotional states for the deceased's loved ones and society at large. From a non-functionalist point of view, we could see death as having no functional value given its association with unpleasantness. From a functional perspective, we may view death beyond its grimness. A

functionalist might, for instance, view death as a necessity that functions to minimise or eradicate suffering, as well as create a balance crucial for the sustenance of life and the survival of the earth. Although this may sound repugnant to the individual or community grieving the demise of a loved one, the perspective has its undeniable logic. Euthanasia, for example, could provide relief and finality where medicare-defying conditions leave an individual in a vegetative state, torturous mental health or in excruciating pain. Also, taking into account that the earth's resources are finite and its survival depends critically on the maintenance of equilibrium, functionalists may argue that death is essential for maintaining the needed balance.

While one may cringe at such a point of view and be inclined to dismiss it, science has shown that keeping the human population under control has the potential to reverse world poverty, combat climate change and enhance the earth's longevity. The logic is that with less population, there will be a corresponding decrease in exploitation and use of natural resources. Available resources may, therefore, go round earth's inhabitants compared to the prevailing experience where the larger proportion of the population is in extreme deprivation that creates conditions that continue to threaten human existence and survival of the planet (Guzman, Martine, McGranahan, Schensul & Tacoli, 2009; Tayag, 2018). Due to the difficulty with controlling world population given the absence of a single authoritative enforcer, death, whether humanmade (war, and other forms of violence) or natural (old age, sickness, suicide), could be interpreted from a functional perspective, as part of a design for maintaining equilibrium.

To further appreciate this unsavoury perspective is to take a moment to imagine what state humanity and the earth would be in today had all of the 108 billion humans estimated to have been born since the origin of modern Homo sapiens (Kaneda & Haub, 2018) continue to live on the planet and share its resources. If at the current 7.5 billion population, the earth is in danger, we

could, from a functional viewpoint, understand how grave the danger would be without the 'gift' of death. Against this background, the succeeding discussions provide an overview of the origin of the functional approach and its application in diverse disciplines.

Scholars trace the etymology of the functional approach to the classical Greek philosopher Aristotle. In his conceptualisation of substance, matter and form, (commonly regarded as Aristotle's conception of the soul), he applied the functional approach when he argued for the complementarity of matter and form. He believed that the soul (matter) and the body (form) functioned to support each other. The soul is a potential for life but cannot on its own come alive without the body, as the body will be inanimate without the soul. The amalgam of both, therefore, creates the substance – the living being (Cohen, 2016). Centuries after, the functional approach would transcend metaphysics to the human, biological and social sciences.

From a psychobiological perspective, the functional approach expresses the principle that, what defines a condition as a cognitive state, such as an emotion, a thought, pain, or an aspiration, is not its makeup, but purely the purpose it serves to the functioning of the overall system. For example, a mental state should not be seen simply as a mental state, but in terms of its role in the 'cognitive system of which it is a part' (Levin, 2018). Likewise, pain is not to be understood merely as pain but as a mechanism to alert the body of a harmful state – a cue to take action to exit the state and avert further harm (Levin, 2018). In this sense, certain mental states function to promote the safety and longevity of a cognitive system. Without these mental states, the system may collapse – and irreparably so – as there will be no warnings of impending or ongoing danger.

In the interwar period (between the end of World War 1 and the start of World War 2), the functional theory emerged as a guiding framework for analysing interactions between and among international actors. Diverging from realists who saw the state's obsessive focus on actualising its

interest and maintaining its territorial integrity as the main factors influencing international relations, the functional theory argued that mutual needs and collective interests of both state and non-state actors played and would continue to play a major role in shaping international relations (Mitrany, 1933; Rosamond, 2000). This theory began the intellectual conversation that ignited the flame of globalisation as the focus not only shifted from the view of the state as a territorial entity but to the roles supranational, and other non-state entities could perform in global integration geared toward fulfilling mutual needs.

In the field of sociology where the application of the functional approach (commonly called structural functionalism) has been phenomenal since the start of positivist theorisation, its earliest appropriation is traceable to the works of the French sociologist Emile Durkheim. Durkheim devoted his scholarship to understanding how society achieved order and stability. He studied social structures to determine what contributions each made to the sustenance and stability of society as a whole. He analogised society to an organism with several components. Each component performs a vital role in the functioning of the organism but cannot function in isolation. When one component fails, the others adapt to keep the system going. Durkheim argued that like an organism, society comprises social structures designed to perform specialised functions necessary for societal cohesion and progress and that each social structure is meaningful only as long as it is part of the whole and its contribution is deemed relevant (Durkheim, 1984).

Other influential functionalists in the field of sociology such as Herbert Spencer, Talcott Parsons, and Robert Merton would concur varyingly that, government, the family, educational institutions, the economy, religious institutions, and media, function interdependently to create an orderly society. As they explained, the government's role is to guarantee citizens' education, economic fulfilment, and to extract taxes for providing public services. The family's role – as could

be said for religious institutions – is to nurture the young physically and spiritually to make them socially-compliant. Similar to the family and religious institutions, educational institutions are to inculcate the right values and skills necessary to help the individual integrate fully into society, become gainfully employed, and expand the tax base. When each social structure dutifully performs its designated functions, society enjoys order and makes advancement. When a structure fails, society becomes dysfunctional unless other structures adapt quickly to maintain equilibrium (Macionis & Gerber, 2010).

Structural functionalism came under criticism for the excessive emphasis on social consensus and shared values as a means of maintaining social order, and for overlooking the downsides of the fixation on social order. The preoccupation with maintaining social order, critics argued, could undermine genuine social change. The emphasis on social conformism and structural accord equates legitimate nonconformity with subversive behaviour. Antonio Gramsci, for example, argued that structural functionalism rationalises the preservation of a status quo and the hegemonic philosophy sustaining it, thereby discouraging radical social change (Bates, 1975). In essence, while structural functionalists believe that change will or should come in an orderly manner, with each structure and the overall social system sensing the need for change and making needed adjustments, critics argue that change cannot always be orderly. Taking several variables, particularly the inevitability of social conflicts into account, critics contend that radical change is natural to social progress (Harrington, 2005).

The functional approach gained popularity in political science in the 1960s and 1970s, particularly in the subfield of comparative politics (Lane, 1994). By this time, political scientists began to question the reliability of methods applied to the study of the political systems of more advanced states when applied in the contexts of developing states. In a bid to overcome this

methodological hurdle, structural functionalism gained traction in comparative politics. Like structural functionalists in sociology conceived of society, those in the field of political science perceived the state as a political system with several structures and tried to understand what functions each structure performed to the sustenance of the system. Instead of studying the functions structures ought to perform, they studied the functions structures performed and the impact on the political system.

For example, political parties by design, are to perform a set of roles, chief among which is to aggregate individuals who share a legitimate ideology and mobilise votes to win power to execute the ideology for the benefit of society. However, to understand what role the political party performs in any political system, structural functionalists approached the study not from the angle of the 'ought to' function, but from the 'actual' function and the implications for the political system. By doing so, they were able to compare how similar structures functioned in the political systems of developing and advanced states. Gabriel Almond, one of the most venerated structural functionalists in the discipline of political science, provided a useful model of analysis. He began by asserting that certain political functions are universal irrespective of the political system or the part of the world. These include input and output functions shown below:

i. Input functions
    - Political socialisation and recruitment
    - Political interest articulation
    - Political interest aggregation
    - Political communication

ii. Output functions

- Rulemaking
- Rule implementation
- Rule adjudication (Almond & Coleman, 1960, p. 61)

Almond's model, which also included core elements as an inputs conversion process, system maintenance mechanism, distribution and redistribution functions, became widely applied in comparative politics. Proponents of the approach contended that scholars could accomplish reliable comparative studies on the political systems of advanced and developing states by understanding how the actual roles performed by structures adhere to or diverge from the performance of these universal functions. They, like their counterparts in sociology, believed that the choices actors make within a structure and the choices made by a structure, have the potential to impact the entire political system. They also favoured consensus, conformism, order, stability and systemic change through non-radical means, arguing that the political system is cognitive and responds positively to the need for change (Almond & Coleman, 1960; Almond & Powell, 1966).

Structural functionalism in political science faced criticisms for being a derivative of a theory that had applicability challenges outside of sociology. The perspective was also criticised for being too conservative (like its variant in sociology) and blind to the dynamics of political change. By advocating evolutionary change over revolutionary change, the perspective was and remains to a great extent in denial of political realities and how change can come in diverse and often tumultuous forms. Largely underplayed are endogenous and exogenous propellants of change that are often radical than orderly. Also, critics have noted that the approach subtly justifies the structure sustaining the capitalist system that disempowers certain demographies to the advantage of others.

Although the approach underwent phases of refinement, these criticisms remained, and many considered the approach more useful for studying Western states than developing countries (Groth, 1970).

2.2 The Functional Approach in the Study of Corruption

By the 1960s, corruption had occupied a major space in social science discourses. The dominant scholarship perceived corruption as a cultural and normative problem and associated it mostly with pernicious outcomes. The focus on the non-functional outcomes of corruption more or less began with Edward Banfield's study on family-centric social organisation in the Basilicata region of Italy. His study found that people tended to form bonds that only emphasised the collective interests of the nuclear family. Families pursued their interests even when it undermined public wellbeing. Banfield contrasted the experience of Italy with that of his native United States (US) where public interest superseded narrow individual, family or other group interests. 'Amoral Familism', as he described the practice in Italy, was a key factor for the backwardness of the people (1958, p. 85).

In another study, Banfield demonstrated the connection between official corruption (bribery, nepotism, embezzlement and misappropriation of public resources), and destructive consequences for society (1961). These works blazed the trail for subsequent research that called attention to the maladies of corruption. One such study is Nye (1967) that identified corruption as the major cause of the underdevelopment of African, Latin American and Asian states that by the 1960s, had newly become independent from colonial rule. Later studies such as Rose-Ackerman (1978), Klitgaard (1988), Gray and Kaufmann (1998), Rose-Ackerman and Palifka (2016) would further demonstrate

how corruption constitutes a major cause of underdevelopment, poverty, instability and other ills that plague the developing world.

Diverging from the orthodoxy, a group of scholars argued for the functional value of corruption. The 'functionalists', as they were also known, contended that, in dysfunctional states, that is, states with a weak public administration system and poor formal capacity for reforms and resource allocation, corruption could function to facilitate political and economic development. This unorthodox viewpoint first appeared in Merton (1968) and received significant push by Samuel Huntington recognised as the chief proponent of the functional corruption approach (Walton, 2012; Jiang, 2017). According to Huntington:

> …corruption provides immediate, specific, and concrete benefits to groups which might otherwise be thoroughly alienated from society. Corruption may thus be functional to the maintenance of a political system in the same way that reform is. Corruption itself may be a substitute for reform, and both corruption and reform may be substitutes for revolution. Corruption serves to reduce group pressures for policy changes, just as reform serves to reduce class pressures for structural changes (1968, p. 64).

Huntington contended that institutional, political and economic reforms offered a veritable path to preserve the political system and enhance political and economic inclusiveness. However, where the capacity for bold reforms is weak due to state dysfunction, corruption could offer an alternative path. Corruption according to him, could help marginalised people and groups access public officials, ease investors' access to bureaucratic services crucial for economic growth, as well as facilitate resource redistribution to segments of society that would otherwise remain marginalised. Perhaps for its perceived justification of corruption or Huntington's notoriety for

controversial intellectualism, the functional corruption approach gained less traction. The majority of corruption studies preferred to approach corruption as a non-functional phenomenon.

A few studies, however, have lent credence to the functional corruption thesis. Lui (1985) and Khan (2002) have noted that in evolving states (states yet to attain effective administrative capabilities), corruption, most especially bribery, could help to facilitate bureaucratic efficiency and provide considerable assurance to investors that administrators would promptly render essential services. Like Huntington and the functionalists of the 1960s, they argued that such corruption-facilitated administrative services promote economic growth with cascading benefits for society. Girling (1997) and Hobbs (2005) reference East Asia as one region where corruption existed alongside rapid economic growth. In their opinion, sustained economic investments in most states in the region despite palpable corruption was because, to a large extent, corruption facilitated rather than undermined investment. The reason is that corruption was 'organised and controlled' (p. 11). Central in this argument is that, when organised and controlled, corruption has the potential to drive development.

Some contemporary sympathisers of the functional corruption argument – and there are not many of them – agree that corruption must be controlled to ensure it is constructive. For corruption to pass the functionality test, they argue that it should not exceed a threshold and should produce conspicuous utilitarian outcomes such as increased economic investments, new industries, jobs, and opportunities for individual prosperity. As one such proponent puts it:

> When corruption is constructive…a win-win sort of situation; when it leads to the creation of jobs, of quality infrastructures… investment in education, [research and development] and arts…the development of local economies[,] it is called Functional Corruption;

something that we, as a society, are usually more than willing to accept since the people benefit from it (Coutinho, 2013).

That is to say unless corruption produces these outcomes, its functionality cannot be proven. Coutinho argues that when corruption creates a small group of wealthy individuals and plunges the majority of the population into lack and despair, then it is 'destructive' and 'win-lose' corruption, or in other words, non-functional corruption. This argument provides a limited understanding of the diverse ways corruption could be functional. Corruption could be functional even when it is mostly non-functional – when it neither supports economic growth nor provide utilitarian outcomes. In a 'destructive' and 'win-lose' scenario (to borrow Coutinho's terminologies), corruption might provide certain benefits to the losers, without which, their socioeconomic condition may be worse off. Corruption may provide immediate to medium-term benefits to the losers while producing adverse outcomes in the longer term.

2.3 Functional Approach and Political Stability

As mentioned earlier, in the fields of sociology and comparative politics, functionalism advocates the creation and sustenance of social and political order by the harmony and interdependence of structures. There is no such official dichotomy as the functional and non-functional perspectives in the discourse on political stability. However, careful observation would reveal a proclivity among most scholars to conceptualise political stability along the lines of functionalism. That is to say, the dominant contributions to the discourse view political stability as the outcome of the complementarity of political institutions, and especially among political actors who are aware of the adverse implications of lack of harmony and cooperation for political stability.

Rawls (1958, 1979), for example, conceives political stability as a characteristic of just principles. As he argues, because certain principles are objectively just in themselves, they will be chosen by political actors even though they have no prior knowledge of what choices others will pursue. The logic in this argument is that, since each actor realises that his or her just principles are more likely to survive in a stable situation, they rationally will pursue stability. Ake (1975) reflects a similar view. Political stability, in his view, is a situation of regular exchanges in a political system, created not by chance, but by the deliberate choices of political actors. Political stability is created and sustained when actors do not deviate from the behaviour patterns prescribed as ideal for their formal roles. This perspective diverges from Rawl's to the extent that it does not leave the determination of 'stability-sustaining' choices to the actors. Instead, the state prescribes behaviour patterns that, when adhered to, promote political stability.

Other scholars have emphasised the importance of state capacity to the sustenance of stability. Hurwitz (1973) predicates the achievability of stability on the extent to which a state is capable of exercising control. Where state capacity is strong, the state can effectively check political actors' exercise of power, correct the actors' immoderations, ensure the integrity of the organs of government to maintain political stability. Sheafer and Shenhav (2013) share a similar view as they conceptualise political stability as a state's capacity to respond to internal political threats without altering its authority pattern. If the state cannot maintain its integrity, then there is political instability – the tendency for an abrupt change in the executive arm of government whether by legitimate or illegitimate means (Alesina, Ozler, Roubini & Swagel, 1996).

2.3.1 Political stability in the contexts of functional and dysfunctional states

An observed deficiency in the literature is the leaning toward across-the-board measurement of political stability. A consequence is what appears to be a misanalysis of political stability in dysfunctional states. In functional states such as the US, United Kingdom (UK), Japan, France, where the threat of instability has never been a concern or has become a distant possibility, the measurement for political stability may dwell upon maximal indicators. For example, stability may be assessed by how less opposing political parties disagree on key issues of governance such as policies and legislations; how less opposing politicians resort to insults and name-calling; and how less bitterly divided along political lines the population is.

In dysfunctional states with a history of severe political upheavals and frequent abrupt termination of government by legitimate and illegitimate means (as is the case of Nigeria, Thailand, Sudan, Venezuela, among others), minimal indicators may be more applicable. These might include the state's ability to ensure less-combative political exchanges between and among civilian and military elites, and maintain unbroken (preferably constitutional) governance. In this regard, Hurwitz (1973) provides two relevant minimal indicators of stability that will form the basis of this study's evaluation of political stability in Nigeria. The indicators are:

i. 'Legitimate constitutional regime'.

ii. 'Governmental longevity' (p. 449-463).

These indicators are more suitable for measuring stability in a dysfunctional state like Nigeria where decades of elite-led political crises culminated in frequent termination of administrations (by military coups). Given this turbulent antecedent, measuring political stability in Nigeria may require indicators different than those applicable in functional states. The reason is that Nigerians

are certain to gauge stability more by how long the state can maintain uninterrupted constitutional governance even though there is the hovering threat of a relapse into instability.

Another point to emphasise is that, in the context of dysfunctional states, insecurity is often conflated with political instability as is usually seen in state stability barometers. The World Bank's Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism index,[4] for example, measures political stability based on perceptions of the presence of political violence and terrorism and the degree of the likelihood for a descent into instability. While the index's composite measures may have wide applicability to some states, to others, political violence and terrorism may not readily translate as instability unless it results in the termination of constituted regimes. An example is the Boko Haram insurgency in northeast Nigeria. While it is an acknowledged threat, it is problematic to conclude that the decade-long insurgency poses a direct danger to the longevity of the national government. Therefore, to the extent that an insurgency does not put the longevity of government in jeopardy, it may not be a sufficient indication of political instability.

As briefly mentioned in chapter one, in the case of Nigeria, civilian and military elites-led hostilities represent the major cause of political instability. To understand why elite-level political conflicts constitute the major threat to political stability in Nigeria as could be said for most developing states, we have to turn our attention to the state-making process shaped by colonialism.

2.3.2 The role of colonialism

Colonialism is one of history's ignoble events. The overwhelming literature sees colonialism for what it is – unjustifiable domination of a people by another, often leading to a dislocation of

[4] To see the index, go to https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/political-stability-and-absence-violenceterrorism-estimate

the colonised people from their indigenous ways of life, history and development trajectory. However, views on this contentious issue are analysable from the non-functional and functional perspectives. While a greater consensus is that European colonisation left lasting negative legacies in colonised areas, there is also the argument that colonialism produced positive economic, social and political outcomes.

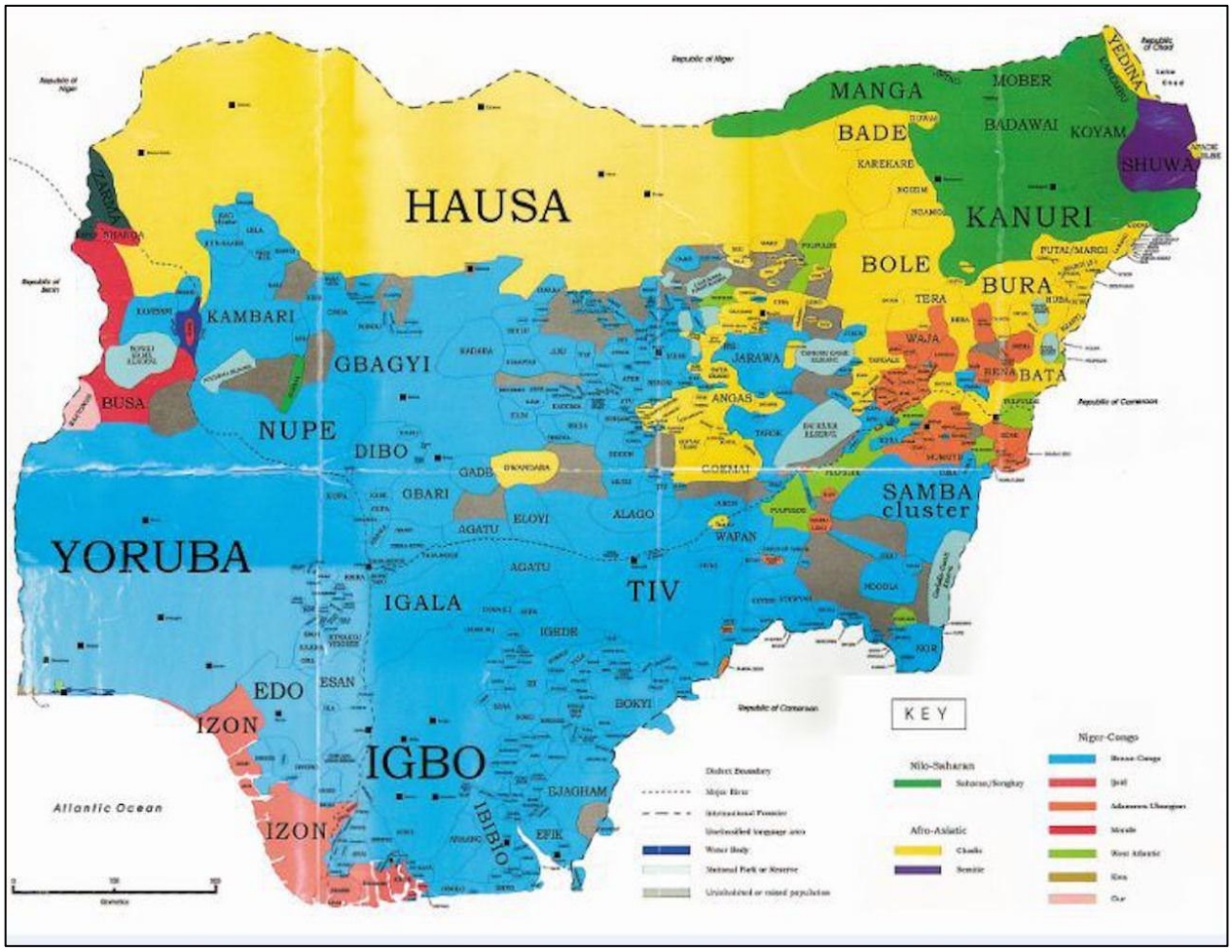
As some have noted, particularly in the context of Africa, colonialism resulted in the 'modernisation' and expansion of Africa's traditional economies. As the demand for African products in Europe and the Americas increased, production increased as did the standard of living of the local people. More importantly, African economies became interconnected with the global capitalist economy (Settles, 1996; Sande, 2016). On the social aspect, one argument is that colonialism exposed Africans to Western education thus created a crop of educated African elites who would lead the independent states (Sande, 2016). On the political angle, Africa's governance architecture, it is claimed, transitioned from a traditional and charismatic authority system to the Weberian system, at least in design that continues to improve (Sande, 2016).

Others note that the benefits that accompanied colonialism do not rationalise the subjugation of a people through imperialist incursions. A major negative outcome of colonialism is the cavalier manner culturally diverse and antagonistic ethnic nationalities ended up in the same colonial state, not by their choice but the whims of the colonisers. Another negative outcome is the colonial policy of divide-and-conquer that pitted ethnicities against ethnicities, and elite blocs against elite blocs, thereby engendering instability. For example, in Sudan, conflicts between the Arabs/Muslims in the north and Blacks/Christians in the south led to the country's civil war, the Darfur Massacre and eventual breakup of the country in 2011. In Rwanda, the Hutu-Tutsi rivalry culminated in the 1994

genocide that claimed almost a million lives and compounded the war in the DRC (Carpenter, 2012; myafricatv.com, 2012; Ndaba, 2012).

In Nigeria, mutual fear of domination between the Hausa/Fulani/minority groups in the north and the Yoruba/Igbo/minority groups in the south caused ethno-regional strife and political mobilisation that continue till this day (Salawu & Hassan, 2011).

Figure 2: Ethnic map of Nigeria



Note: The map shows the three major ethnic groups and minority ethnicities in Nigeria.

Source: Imgur.[5]

[5] See https://imgur.com/As6JUQm

Before British conquest, conflicts among these groups were mainly over conquest campaigns, forced proselytism and slave-trading of conquered people.[6] The British were not oblivious of these pre-colonial conflicts (''Flora gives the name Nigeria'', 2008, p. 8-9). Nonetheless, they incorporated the peoples into one colonial state. According to Diamond (1983):

> …no nation has come more graphically to symbolise the political explosiveness and human tragedy of competitive ethnic mobilisation than Nigeria…The demographic distribution of ethnic groups into a 'centralised' structure meant that competition tended to centre around the three major groups – the Hausa-Fulani [in the north], the Yoruba [in the southwest], and the Igbo [in the south-east] – which together comprised some two-thirds of the population… (p. 458).

The dual administrative style that the British applied deepen ethnic mistrust and animosity. In the north, the British ruled indirectly through emirs in fulfilment of a pact with northerners to not replace the Islamic sociopolitical system instituted under the Ottoman conquerors with Western structures and practices. In return, the emirs pledged fealty to the British Crown and paid royalties and taxes to their new overlords. In the south, the British ruled directly, supplanting traditional governance institutions with Western variants. The penetration of Christianity and secular values further made the south a stark antithesis of the north. By blocking the penetration of Western

[6] According to folklore and available literature, raids in search of slaves, wars to expand kingdoms and altercations over the use of rivers, lakes and land were the major forms of conflict among the pagan and slowly Christianising southern ethnicities who were the first to receive European Christian missionaries many years prior to colonisation. However, the southern peoples lived under the threat of Islamic jihadists of the Ottoman Empire which had spread from North Africa down to northern Nigeria. The jihadists attempted to push further southward. Although the attempts mostly culminated in failure, Islam spread up to the midlands in the 1800s (''Flora Shaw gives the name Nigeria'', 2008). This resulted in the division of the country into a predominantly Muslim north and a mostly Christian south.

systems and values, the Hausa-Fulani in the north lagged behind the Yoruba, Igbo and other southern ethnicities in education, professional training and wealth crucial for functioning in the modern state that the British had begun to build. As southern elite-led pro-independence agitations gained momentum, fears emerged in the north of possible southern domination given the south's grasp of the Western ways (Diamond, 1983).

One could speculate that the British realised this ethnic and regional imbalance and resultant tensions, thus sort to correct it. One way they accomplished this was by facilitating northern dominance in the colonial police and army. By 1958, more than 50% of the army's rank and file comprised of men of northern origin (Akinwale, 2014, p. 3). Also, through controversial censuses and gerrymandering, the British helped the north to achieve crucial political leverage. The north gained geographical and numerical strength to dominate the colonial parliament, which was key to the politics of the colonial state (Diamond, 1983, p. 458). Therefore, while southern elites equipped with Western education occupied key positions in the colonial bureaucracy, their northern counterparts who for long opposed the penetration of Western practices dominated the colonial army, police and politics. The strategic advantage of each region heightened inter-regional struggle, and regional elites were in the vanguard of the contestations, exploiting primordial sentiments to mobilise co-ethnics in furtherance of their quest to assume the reins of state at the exit of the British.

2.4 The Advent of Neopatrimonialism[7] and Spoils Politics

A major consequence of colonialism-induced ethno-regional rivalry was the emergence of neopatrimonialism and spoils politics. Access to public resources – legitimate and illegitimate –

[7] A system of vertical exchanges between patrons (governing elites) and their clientele (ordinary citizens and social groups) where patrons utilise public resources – often illicitly acquired – to secure the devotion of their clientele. The informal exchanges usually permeate official governance processes (Erdmann and Engels, 2006).

became integral in the north-south struggle. Ekeh's (1975) 'Two Publics' argument is a classic explanation of the advent of neopatrimonial politics in colonial Nigeria. According to Ekeh, the advent of colonialism distorted the practice of mutual help – a key feature of the premodern moral economy. As a result, two publics – the 'civic public' and the 'primordial public' – emerged.

The civic public was the colonial state system which dismantled indigenous welfare structures and practices yet provided no formal alternatives. The primordial public was an indigenous improvisation to minimise the effects of the colonial state's failure at welfare provision. The primordial public comprised ethnic associations provisioned by regional elites seeking to establish a strong support base to boost their competitiveness in the political contest. Elites initially catered to the primordial public from personal resources. When they occupied government offices, they began the diversion of public resources to the primordial public. At independence, elites retained the two publics and continued to transfer state resources from the civic public to the primordial public (pp. 93-100). Because maintaining the support of one's ethnicity rested on continuous patronage, the struggle to capture the state eventually became one with the jostle for public resources (Falola, 2004; Okafor, 2006).

Migdal (1988) has also noted the role of colonialism in the advent of neopatrimonial politics in much of the developing world. According to him, the weakening of indigenous systems of social and political control created social forces more potent than the state. As the state became weak, it became vulnerable to state capture.[8] State captors or 'Official Moguls' in Johnson's (2005, p. 3) coinage, exploit public power and private influence to plunder the state without fear of repercussion.

[8] A political order where public institutions and resources are seized by governing elites and used to serve their narrow interests often at public expense (Wong, 2010).

State captors may be non-discriminatory about what institutions or resources to seize for themselves. Public funds, foreign aid receipts, critical economic sectors, and natural resources, may become spoils of politics (Bratton & Van de Walle, 1994; Mkandawire, 2010). Hence, neopatrimonial states are likely to experience a great degree of corruption.

A major outcome of state capture, as the evidence in most states in the developing world, tends to reveal, is the failure of formal welfare provision (Delavellade, 2006). Many developing states are unable to adequately commit politics and administration to guarantee a basic standard of living for the citizens as expected of welfare states. Kawabata (2006) and Wai (2012) have demonstrated the correlation between state capture and the absence of the welfare state in the context of African neopatrimonial states. African states do not only fail at wealth creation for citizens but are unable to provide adequate formal safety nets for the elderly, retired, unemployed, underemployed, physically and mentally-challenged (Thovoethin & Ewalefoh, 2018). As the state abdicates its welfare responsibility, relations between the governing elite and the masses almost unavoidably become informal and steeped in clientelism and corruption. Thus, patron-client exchanges similar to those discussed in Scott (1969; 1972) often become entrenched.

Going back to Ekeh's (1975) 'Two Publics' argument, a failing formal welfare system in colonial Nigeria provided the grounds for transactional exchanges between indigenous elites competing for the reins of state and the devotion of alienated co-ethnics. As we shall find in the chapters to follow, the failure of formal welfare provision has been a constant throughout Nigeria's post-colonial evolution. This factor accounts for the pervasiveness of patron-client politics, especially under democratic governance.

2.5 Corruption and Political Stability: What is the Correlation?

Corruption and political stability are understood as sharing a negative correlation. That is, the greater the occurrence of corruption (public corruption), the lesser the likelihood of political stability. Scholars cite the Arab Spring and upheavals in Greece and Venezuela as recent examples of how corruption can undermine political stability. They argue that the diversion of public resources to a governing minority causes extreme socioeconomic misery and that at a juncture, will provoke the masses to extreme violent reactions that may send the political system on a downward spiral. The world saw this play out beginning with the self-immolation act of Mohamed Bouazizi, the frustrated Tunisian street vendor. Bouazizi's isolated protest against a corrupt regime triggered the chain of demonstrations that engulfed the Arab World, throwing some into continuing chaos and compelling progressive and people-oriented reforms in others. The now-calmer Greek episode and the raging Venezuelan experience continue to appear in analyses demonstrating how political corruption can interweave with other factors to undermine political stability (Lyrintzis, 2011; Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012; Kott, 2012).

Contradicting these examples are many other instances, particularly in SSA where, despite petrifying levels of corruption-induced popular desolation, the masses do not appear to represent a potential threat to political stability. Some suggest that SSA states have since the late 1990s experienced more upheavals due to unhealthy democratic competition between and among ethnic forces (Berman, 2010). Others believe that the subcontinent has been more stable (Dumitru & Hayat, 2015). The evidence goes both ways. While some SSA states have sunk deeper into instability, others continue to show an uncanny capacity to avoid degeneration into instability despite the presence of the same factors, especially pervasive corruption, that promoted instability in the past. It is, therefore, crucial to determine what factors account for the relative political

stability in a state like Nigeria where, for most of the period since 1999, there has been as much or perhaps greater degree of corruption than that which triggered the Arab Spring, Greece and Venezuela political revolutions.

This study argues that SSA states present a unique case. With sectional devotion still a key feature of politics (and as a result rent-seeking elites possess the capacity to instigate their ethno-regional bases to destabilise the political system), rather than mass revolts, elite confrontations remain the greatest primary threat to political stability, an observation also made in McGowan (2003). Hence, achieving and sustaining stability must begin with ensuring less-combative elite exchanges. How then do these states get elites to cooperate rather than fight in order to achieve a duration of relative stability? What role does corruption perform in the process?

Theories on elite negotiation provide vital clues on how corruption could function to promote political stability. Central to elite negotiation theories is the notion that the nature of elite exchanges has significant implications for political stability. The theories show varyingly how in explosive states, negotiations between or among elites play a crucial role in state stabilisation. Of prime interest to this study is the nature of the negotiations, what place corruption occupies in the negotiations and the outcomes of the negotiations. Two elite negotiation theories will form the springboard upon which this study's claim regarding how corruption might function to support political stability will take off. The first is the 'Limited Access Orders' (LAO) framework of analysis, and the second is the 'Political Marketplace' theory.

Applying the LAO framework of analysis, North, Wallis, Webb and Weingast (2013, pp. 1-19) demonstrate how a major preoccupation of most middle to low-income countries is with achieving political stability as a first and crucial step toward pursuing economic growth and political development. Their study examined the experiences of Mexico, Chile, Philippines,

Zambia, Mozambique, DRC and India, among others. As they found, a key factor for the failure of neoliberal policies, Western-style public institutions and governance architecture in most of these state, is an atmosphere of political instability occasioned by violent struggles among rent-seeking elites and groups. Based on their findings, they conclude that a major concern of developing countries is how to minimise violent conflict among actors whose struggle for rents stirs instability.

The LAO framework, therefore, describes the shaping and manipulation of inducements (rents) by the state to prevent rent-seeking actors and groups from engaging in hostilities inimical to political stability. The state aggregates principal actors in a 'dominant coalition' within which it apportions rents (p. 5). 'Dominant coalition' refers to a structure aggregating all actors' and their affiliate groups (for example, militias, supporters, political parties, patronage networks). The dominant coalition is thus an all-unifying framework that coordinates access to rent. Once integrated into the dominant coalition, the actors make a rational evaluation of possible benefits between a period of crisis and one of peace.

If peace-time rents are attractive, the rational choice will be to cooperate and ensure third-party enforcement (by the dominant coalition) of the peace deal in the actors' affiliate groups. Although the strategy may not eliminate the drivers of hostility, the likelihood of the outbreak of violent conflicts may decrease significantly, thus allowing the state to pursue governance and development. The more the state can ensure broad and inclusive access to rent in the duration of détente, improve institutional capacity and exercise its monopoly on violence, the more the state can make progress on the LAO spectrum until it eliminates the threat of instability.

The LAO framework of analysis has broad applicability to developing states like Nigeria. However, this study's point of departure with the LAO argument is its assumption that the rents that the state dispenses to keep the actors from engaging in hostilities are legitimate and directly

productive, and include economic concessions, mining rights, and public works contracts. North et al. suggest that as the actors extract allotted rents, they promote economic growth. This study claims that in the case of Nigeria, the rents are mostly corrupt and directly unproductive. The more corrupt and unproductive the rent, the more attractive it is and the more the actors are willing to remain cooperative and supportive of political stability.

The Political Marketplace theory (de Wall, 2009, 2016) takes a more radical position on the connection between elite negotiation and stability in troubled states. According to de Waal, universalist theorisations on what the ideal state should be like, and based on which we evaluate states and make conclusions on their conformity with or departure from the ideal, overlook the peculiar historical antecedents of most developing countries. He argues that in all states – developed and developing – a political marketplace exists where actors compete for advantage. In developed states that are typically functional due to strong institutions, the government regulates the political marketplace. In developing countries where state-making is usually a challenge and institutions are weak, the political marketplace falls under the regulation of the unofficial system dominated by powerful actors seeking to draw benefits to themselves. Hence, informalities govern the political marketplace of developing states.

The study cites troubled African and Greater Middle Eastern states (Sudan, DRC, Afghanistan) as examples where state capacity to regulate the political marketplace is weak or absent. Therefore, the informal system takes precedence. In these states, according to de Waal, there is an immense propensity for informal political bartering to secure devotion and a measure of stability. As a result, pervasive illicit financial exchanges form the basis for securing cooperation among actors and between actors and the state. Also, there is relentless rent-seeking by actors who bargain from the position of demonstrated or demonstrable capacity to cause instability. The situation makes illicit

informal horse-trading more inevitable. With a proclivity for informal negotiations steeped in corruption as a means to winning and sustaining political stability, state-making becomes almost impossible.

Although the Political Marketplace theory draws on the experiences of states locked in protracted violent conflicts, the fundamentals of the theory have applicability to many developing countries. It provides an important insight into the understudied stabilisation function corruption could perform in contested and weak states where the capacity to stoke violence and instability is dispersed among elite forces, and the state is preoccupied with getting actors to minimise confrontations and allow a window for stability.

The LAO framework of analysis, and Political Marketplace theory guide this study's evaluation of the role of corruption in political stabilisation in the context of Nigeria. Based on the amalgam of both theoretical standpoints, the study also determines if the criticality of corruption to the maintenance of political stability could provide any additional insights on why anti-corruption efforts fail in the developing world.

2.6 Corruption and Welfare Provision: What is the Correlation?

The literature brims with perspectives on the adverse impacts of corruption on public welfare. A point of convergence of the different perspectives is the consensus that corruption poses a danger to the state's ability to fulfil a key aspect of its social contract with society – the undertaking to guarantee public welfare. Lambsdorff (2001c) applied the principal-agent-client model (where the government is the principal, bureaucrats are the agent, and the public is the client) to the analysis of the implications of corruption for public welfare. All of the scenarios in the analysis show that corruption undermines public welfare. Delavellade (2006) identifies a commonality with states

where predatory rent-seeking is pervasive. Individuals exercising public power and influence not only engage in mindless haemorrhaging of the public treasury but also allocate far fewer resources to public welfare than they allocate to their happiness. Hence, in these states, while the formal welfare system is acutely underfunded, public officials reward themselves with humungous emoluments and welfare packages.

While the non-functional impact corruption has on formal welfare has received significant scholarly attention, the connection between corruption and informal welfare has attracted little explicit focus. Scott's (1969; 1972) works on machine politics and patron-clientelism, and Eisenstadt's (1973) traditional patrimonialism-neopatrimonialism dichotomy do no more than creating ample space for speculations on the relationship corrupt exchanges between political patrons and clients could have on informal welfare. That is to say, studies like these make no categorical allusions to corruption having any functional links with informal welfare. The shortage of studies on the functional linkage between corruption and informal welfare appears to be a consequence of the overwhelming tendency to approach corruption from the angle of its non-functionality.

As this study attempts to demonstrate, patron-client exchanges between corrupt politicians and alienated masses are one way by which corruption, though undeniably non-functional, could perform and informal welfare function. This is likely where the formal system for wealth creation, distribution and redistribution is weak and patron-client relations are pervasive. In such a circumstance, the flow of patronage from political patrons could provide a crucial safety net for their poor and vulnerable clientele.

Walton (2012) has shed some general light on the informal welfare function of corruption. Walton's study, which focused on Papua New Guinea, utilised five hypothetical scenarios to gauge

perceptions on the functionality of corruption. Three scenarios conveyed a possible occurrence of petty corruption that involved informal redistribution, while two mirrored a likely commission of grand corruption. In order not to pre-empt respondents' judgement, the study did not use the term 'corruption' to refer to the actions in the scenarios. The study asked respondents to analyse each scenario and give their impressions.

Table 3: Walton's hypothetical scenarios

Hypothetical Scenario	Scale/Form
1. A school teacher, without authorisation, occasionally took school supplies (notepads) and gifted them to a community health facility.	Petty corruption - *Embezzlement*
2. A group of corporate actors influenced the government to reduce the tax their businesses ought to pay. There was no violation of the law, and the businessmen made huge returns.	Grand corruption - *Abuse of power*
3. A politician running for office offered inducement money to a voter in return for his/her vote. The voter accepted the money and promised to vote for the politician.	Petty corruption - *Bribery*
4. A logging firm seeking to do business in a village took two landowners on a trip to Australia. The cost of transportation, accommodation, and incidentals was borne by the company to persuade the landowners to allow the company to come in. Without the approval of the community, the landowners agreed.	Grand corruption - *Uncategorised*
5. A government employee helped her kinsman secure job as a driver in a government institution. The beneficiary was qualified for the position. However, the process of his employment violated the law mandating open competition for vacancies.	Petty corruption - *Nepotism*

Note: The five hypothetical scenarios gauging respondents' perceptions of the functionality or non-functionality of corruption in Papua New Guinea.

Source: Modified from Walton (2012, p. 180).

The study differentiated the responses into three categories: 'unsympathetic', 'sympathetic' and 'neutral' (p. 181). Although the majority of the study's 64 focus groups were unsympathetic to all of the five scenarios, a significant percentage was sympathetic to one or all of the actors in the scenarios suggesting the occurrence of corruption that provided benefits that ought to come by formal means. For example, 25% of respondents expressed sympathy for the teacher in Scenario 1 because they believed that the informal and unsanctioned act transferred supplies from the school to the health facility where it was perhaps most needed due to government neglect. Relating the scenario to the experience in their villages where health facilities received far fewer supplies, empathetic respondents found nothing wrong with the teacher's donation.

The percentage of respondents sympathetic to the scenarios was higher in villages most undersupplied compared to those considered to be better off. Similarly, 28% of respondents, most of whom lived in poorer villages with far fewer economic opportunities, had sympathy for the politician-voter exchange in Scenario 3. They found the inducement money to be one way of giving back to citizens deprived of government attention. Also, 42% of respondents showed a fellow feeling for the state employee in Scenario 5. The sympathy stemmed from their reality where job opportunities were hard to come by. They believed that because the act helped someone in need, it was justified. Responses to Scenario 2 involving the businessmen, and Scenario 4 involving the logging firm and landowners, did not reveal as much sympathy. While only 8% of respondents showed empathy for the landowners, the businessmen received no sympathy at all.

Walton's study, to some degree, supports this study's contention that corruption may perform an informal welfare function in states where the formal welfare system underperforms yet informal interactions between public officials and society are commonplace. The extent of the transactionality of the interactions could be the determining factor for the degree to which

corruption serves an informal welfare function. Regarding the informal welfare function of patronage, which is crucial in this study, a crucial point to note is that the availability and size of patronage may depend on regime type. Authoritarian regimes typically limit access to rents to a tiny group of rulers (often military) and a narrow circle of civilian elites and their core supporters critical to the regimes' survival. Bueno de Mesquita, Smith, Siverson & Morrow (2013) call this critical group 'the selectorate' (pp. 40-52). Therefore, authoritarian regimes may not so well support elite-masses patronage exchanges. However, because the formal welfare system may fail more in democratic regimes that broaden civilian elites' access to illicit rents to the detriment of public welfare, elite-masses transactional exchanges may be more widespread, functioning parallel to the weak formal welfare system.

There is no consensus on what regime type – autocracy or democracy – promotes formal welfare the most. From a study of 18 Latin American countries, Huber and Stephen (2012) demonstrate that the longer a democracy endures, the likelier that there will be greater government investment in public welfare. Studies before and after Huber and Stephen's, however, have shown different results. For example, Bollen and Jackman cited in Mainwaring and Perez-Linan (2014, p. 282) revealed that democracies are not more distributive than nondemocratic regimes. More recent studies (Burkhart, 1997; Mulligan, Gil & Sala-i-Martin, 2004; Nelson, 2007) contend that democratic regimes do not necessarily invest more in public welfare than autocratic regimes. This study does not intend to join in the debate over what system of governance better guarantees public welfare. Instead, the study contends that democracies in high-corruption states may better create the atmosphere under which elite-masses patronage exchanges could be deeply-rooted and proceeds from corruption function to support the welfare of the masses.

A question thus arises as to what impact there will be on people's attitude toward corruption, where it is the case that corruption provides certain benefits. Will they be accommodative to corruption, or will they reject it? As Walton (2012) found in his study on the experience in Papua New Guinea, when corruption was perceived to provide marginalised citizens with such benefits that ideally should come through legitimate official channels, the people considered it functional, therefore tolerable. Contrariwise, when corruption was perceived to provide no obvious benefits to alienated people, it was considered non-functional, thus intolerable. The implication is that people are likely to be selective in their attitude toward corruption. Where the poor and marginalised perceive corruption to deliver benefits that they otherwise would not have, they are likely to tolerate it even though they recognise its longer-term perniciousness.

Another implication is that the public's perceptions of corruption may differ from the presuppositions of anti-corruption scholars and policymakers. Therefore, prevailing notions of corruption that inform the design and enforcement of anti-corruption measures in high-corruption states may have to take into consideration the circumstances that could make people numb to corruption or cause them to resist anti-corruption efforts. Where the masses are both ambivalent to corruption and find anti-corruption measures counterproductive to their welfare, the likelihood that they will oppose such measures is huge.

2.7 Why Anti-corruption Measures Fail in the Developing World

The post-mortem on failed anti-corruption efforts in the developing world reveals a plethora of causes. None of the identified causes, however, suggest an acknowledgement of the role of the functionality of corruption. Before going into a review of common causes, it is imperative to clarify

what is meant by ‘anti-corruption’ and provide some background on anti-corruption as we have come to know it.

Though a major subject of national and global interest, anti-corruption has no universal definition. The reason may be the concept’s self-explaining power. The term generally refers to activities or actions designed to prevent or respond to corruption and includes enlightenment campaigns, policy formulation, rulemaking, and enforcement (United Nations Office on Drug and Crime, 2004). In the past three decades, the imperative to address the menace of corruption, particularly in public governance, has elicited responses from activists, scholars and practitioners that have seen modern anti-corruption transform into a multi-million dollar industry. Its evolution into a global industry began in the early 1990s when, following the end of the Cold War and defeat of the communist ideology, Western countries turned attention toward transnational anti-corruption as part of their overseas state-making agenda.

Despite presiding over brazenly corrupt and despotic regimes, then-Zaire’s (now DRC) Mobutu Sese Seko, Philippines’ Ferdinand Marcos, Chile’s Augusto Pinochet and a host of developing world leaders would remain key allies of the Western bloc over the length of the Cold War. These individuals played significant roles in halting the communist advance in the developing world. With the Cold War won, the West no longer had strategic use for corrupt dictators (Rose-Ackerman, 2015). In the euphoria over the defeat of communism, eulogies to liberal democracy dominated the intellectual space (Diamond, Linz & Lipset, 1990; Fukuyama, 1992; Diamond, 1997; Schedler, Diamond & Plattner, 1999). Inherent in most of the tributes was the ascription of an almost cure-all quality to liberal democracy, including the potential to help developing countries find the path of development and tackle corruption. It is important to note that it is an issue for debate whether liberal democracy guarantees development or good governance. Sun and Johnston

(2009), Bauhr and Grimes (2014) and Goodfellow (2015) have debunked the notion that states can transform their development experiences by simply instituting democracy.

However, a common denominator in the early post-Cold War pro-democracy arguments was the idea that democracy would birth a vibrant civil society to keep the government in check. In furtherance of the agenda to spread democracy across the world, a sizeable proportion of Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) of the US and its European Union (EU) allies went toward supporting democratic transitions, democratic consolidation, good governance and anti-corruption programmes abroad (Sun & Johnston, 2009). Complementing these measures was pressure by international financial institutions like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, whose support developing countries desperately needed (Mtimkulu, 2015). Much of the focus was on Africa, where the West's democratic agenda intertwined with local pro-democracy movements to yield results. By the late 1990s, some of Africa's dictatorships had conceded to the pressure for democratic reforms (Bratton, 1998). New constitutions were adopted to accommodate political parties and elections and recognise the civil society as a legitimate and free segment of the polity.

Unconvinced by their democratic credentials, scholars have described the emergent regimes as 'illiberal democracy' and 'electoral autocracy'. The reason is that in many instances, old dictators implemented *democratic reforms* only to give a veneer of legitimacy to their grip on power. They organise and participate in elections with predetermined outcomes that are always in their favour. They employ state apparatuses to outplay the opposition. Some autocrats known to have employed this method include Cameroon's Paul Biya, Togo's Gnassingbé Eyadémathey, Gabon's Omar Bongo, Burkina Faso's Blaise Compaore, and Uganda's Yoweri Museveni (Mtimkulu, 2015). In countries like Nigeria where traditional dictators fell never to rise again, it has been the ruling political party outmanoeuvring the opposition in sham elections. While the

critique of the character of these democratic regimes remains valid, critics tend to downplay the obvious break these states have made from the past. The political system has become more inclusive and consultative at the elite level (elite polyarchy). In some instances, the dictators have had to enter into power-sharing agreements with the opposition.

Where some measure of democracy is in place, ODA has remained conditional upon recipient states' commitment to strengthening democratic institutions, creating legal and policy instruments to promote public sector transparency, accountability and the fight against corruption (Hanson, 2009). These conditionalities have resulted in the establishment of local and transnational non-governmental anti-corruption organisations. Other expectations on recipient states include the ratification of international anti-corruption agreements, the establishment of politically-independent anti-corruption agencies, and guaranteed protection for nongovernmental organisations engaged in good governance and anti-corruption activities.

In response to aid conditionality and recommendations of global anti-corruption watchdogs, developing states have implemented several anti-corruption programmes. These range from legal and institutional reforms to anti-corruption crusades. However, the evidence on the ground shows that under the democratic regimes, corruption has been far more spectacular. As mentioned in chapter one, in SSA, major perceptions surveys indicate a spike in public corruption. While it is true that in some SSA states, there have been mixed outcomes in the fight against corruption, it is also true that in many others, government anti-corruption policies have resulted in colossal failure. Concerned by the failure rate, studies have attempted to identify underlying causes.

2.7.1 Commonly identified factors

'Government life cycles', 'donor life cycles' and 'anti-corruption commission life cycles' are according to Doig, Watt and Williams (2005, p. 9), causes of the failure of anti-corruption measures, especially in Africa. First, anti-corruption commissions usually have performance expectations that successive administrations may not share. As a result, the end of an administration often marks the end of a particular course of action by anti-corruption commissions and the beginning of another under a new administration. Second, ODA supports a substantial part of anti-corruption activities. Donors usually decide when to provide financial and technical resources and where the resources should go, and this decision depends solely on donors' aid cycles. Anti-corruption activities, therefore, may not receive sufficient resources when needed. Third, donors and government ignore the fact that the maturity of anti-corruption commissions and their capacity to deliver on expectations do not follow linear trajectories and may take longer. The failure to take into account the maturation timeline for anti-corruption commissions undermines performance.

On their part, Persson, Rothstein and Teorell (2010) suggest that anti-corruption efforts fail because of the mischaracterisation of corruption. Their study calls into question the fundamental assumptions of the principal-agent theory (Rose-Ackerman, 1978; Klitgaard, 1988) which holds that institutional and legal reforms can enable citizens (the principal) keep public officials (the agent) in check and ensure that they do not utilise public offices for self-regarding gains. Persson, Rothstein and Teorell argue that institutional reforms and legal enablement have not resulted in greater citizen anti-corruption demand or support for anti-corruption efforts in developing countries because of a collective action problem – citizens' failure to organise against corruption. They note that due to faulty social norms, citizens are ambivalent to corruption and measures to address it

even though they recognise its deleteriousness. This point of view underlies the social norms approach to anti-corruption (Hoffmann & Patel, 2017).

Heeks and Mathisen (2012) blame the failure of anti-corruption policies on what they term 'design-reality gaps' (p. 41). As their study found, the divergence between expectations built into the design of anti-corruption efforts and the realities on the ground are often enormous, thus generating challenges with implementation. They claim that developing countries usually design anti-corruption interventions after recommended Western models built on assumptions that contradict local realities. Therefore, anti-corruption programmes fail when the design-reality disparity is too large.

Lack of political will or the inability to muster the political courage to confront corruption is perhaps the biggest factor scholars and practitioners have identified. Most developing countries, the argument goes, combat corruption only in speechmaking while failing to undertake necessary political measures to confront the scourge (Abdulai, 2009). Ankamah and Khoda (2018) have noted that while not a sufficient condition, political will is a necessary condition for the success of anti-corruption policies. They ascribe the failure of anti-graft efforts in much of the developing world to the absence of the political will. Some have attributed the failure of anti-corruption efforts in Nigeria to lack of political will (Ugoani, 2016).

These perspectives unarguably provide relevant understandings. However, the seeming functionality of corruption in developing countries, as claimed in this study, may provide new understandings on why anti-corruption efforts capitulate even when the impacts of the factors identified above are minimal. With particular regard to the factor of political will, examples abound in Kenya, Uganda, South Africa and Nigeria, among others, of anti-corruption efforts capitulating after showing commendable signs of political will.

2.7.2 A functional viewpoint

The literature is scant on what impact functional corruption could have on anti-corruption efforts. However, this possibility is discernible by interweaving the points raised earlier.

On one prong of this study's argument – the seeming nexus between corruption and political stability – it was mentioned that, in some developing states, minimising tumultuous exchanges among rent-seeking elites and maintaining a duration of political stability appears to be a major preoccupation (North, Wallis, Webb & Weingast, 2013). Also, elite negotiations steeped in corrupt informalities seem to be how troubled states achieve some stability (de Waal, 2009, 2016). Under such a circumstance, one could begin to imagine what prospects there will be for anti-corruption efforts that disrupt access to rent.

On the other prong of the argument – the counterintuitive likelihood that supposed victims of corruption would resist anti-corruption measures – it was emphasised that, where corruption is pervasive and socioeconomic misery is rife, elite-masses relations may become transactional. In such a situation, patronage from political elites may function to support the livelihood of their poor clientele. The dearth of studies on how this could impact anti-corruption activities underscores a deficiency in current notions on corruption and anti-corruption. As Walton (2018) notes: 'If anti-corruption organisations fail to account for the cultural, social and economic importance of transactions they label corrupt, it is possible that their policies will lead to local resistance through deliberate non-compliance' (p. 2). Citizens' opposition to Nigeria's post-2015 anti-corruption campaign to a large extent validates Walton's observation and points to a present yet understudied factor anti-corruption efforts may fail.

2.8 Analytical Framework

The preceding analysis provides a general approach to understanding how the average case may look like where the contexts exist for corruption to function to support political stability and informal welfare. The contexts include a history of political instability due to fierce elite conflict over rents; a weak formal welfare system, high socioeconomic vulnerability among the masses, and; opportunities for elite-masses informal welfare exchanges. These contexts, however, are not sufficient to make corruption functional. Certain conditions will have to be present for corruption to become observably functional. In the case of Nigeria, the study claims that the presence of certain conditions can explain why: (1) despite massive corruption, post-1999 Nigeria has been relatively politically stable, and (2) the masses resisted the post-2015 anti-corruption campaign through the BBOC counter-campaign. The conditions, shown in Tables 4 and 5, constitute the crux of the study's analytical framework.

Table 4: Condition for corruption-stability nexus in post-1999 Nigeria

No.	Condition
1.	Elites form informal cross-ethnic alliance and institutions to share rents.

Table 5: Conditions for the BBOC resistance to Nigeria's post-2015 anti-corruption campaign

No.	Conditions
1.	The masses were embedded in patron-client relations.
2.	The masses were dependent on patronage for their livelihood.
3.	The post-2015 war on corruption began with unprecedented intensity and coverage.

This framework provides a basis for the analysis of the two-prong functionality of corruption in the context of Nigeria. Based on the framework, the study demonstrates how the post-1999 era diverges from the pre-1999 period in terms of the political stabilisation function of corruption in Nigeria. The study also shows why, although the potential for popular anti-anti-corruption

reactions has always been there, only in the post-2015 period have the conditions aligned to trigger the BBOC movement.

It is essential to emphasise in this framework that the functionality of corruption to political stability and informal welfare are interrelated. Corruption-facilitated elite alliance and stability enable a regime of corruption that supports elite-masses transactional exchanges. As elites draw corrupt rents, they accumulate the resources to expand and maintain their poor and desperate clientele. The maintenance of a clientele is strategic because, in renegotiating access to rent, elites' bargaining power is bolstered by the size of their clientele and proven capacity to commit them to the dictates of the overriding elite alliance. Therefore, the longer the duration of stability, the more corruption there will be, and the more entrenched patronage exchanges will be.

As noted in the methodology section in chapter one, the study employs historical interpretative research design, and analyses the data using the narrative method of analysis. The next chapter begins the data analysis.

CHAPTER THREE

A Beleaguered State and the Quest for Stability (1960-1998)

3.1 Elite Disagreement and Political Hostilities

This chapter argues that this period did not fulfil the conditions for corruption to promote political stability and serve a welfare function. Corruption was widespread but assumed an ethno-regional character. Due to the failure to build an enduring cross-ethnic alliance to share rents among elites, uncoordinated pillaging was a major cause of instability during this period. Also, the chain of military dictatorships which bore evidence to instability did not provide the political ecology for elite-masses patronage exchanges for much of the period. As a result, proceeds from corruption did not seem to have supported the welfare of the poor. Anti-corruption enforcement was largely weak during this period. However, because corruption produced no identifiable benefits to the masses in the first instance, the period did not witness citizens-led anti-anti-corruption movement on the scale of the BBOC resistance on the occasions stringent anti-corruption programmes came along.

As mentioned in chapter two, ethnic and regional contestations that began in colonial Nigeria due to non-consensual state-making fuelled strife among Nigeria's ethnic groups, and regional elites championed the contestations. As the British prepared to withdraw following the wave of decolonisation by the end of World War II, indigenous elites' scramble for the reins of the independent state intensified (Ekeh, 1975). The contestations perpetuated mutual fear of domination and heightened the struggle to take control of the state (Anyanwu, 1982). A professor of political science and authority on Nigeria's political history emphasised the role of faulty state-making in setting the stage for turbulent inter-ethnic political relations that would usher in a duration of elite-led political instability:

> …it was because of the nature of the country as created by the British. You had three regions, and each of those regions had a majority ethnic group...What gave ethnicity that salience – and this is where the colonial design comes in – is that the British discouraged inter-elite circulation [and] inter-elite communication in the early period of the colonial era. So, you had [elites] who were working more or less in silos in different regions… The isolation of regional elites by the British made governance easier – you know – when you talk about divide-and-rule (E. Ekekwe, personal communication, July 13, 2017).

The respondent noted that the sectional nature of politics in the colonial state was counterproductive to cross-national elite cooperation. Compounding the situation were ethnic and region-based political parties which sought to advance the interest of each region above the national interest, an observation also made in (Nnoli, 1978; Ekekwe, 1986; Olugbade, 1992). These sectional political parties would make genuine north-south consensus impossible for nearly four decades after independence despite many attempts to foster cooperation and stability.

3.1.1 First attempt at fostering stability

By independence in 1960, a northern statesman Abubakar T. Balewa became Prime Minister and head of government – a position he had occupied since 1957 following his appointment by the colonial authorities. A south-easterner Nnamdi Azikiwe was President – a ceremonial office representing the British Crown as was the practice in much of the British Commonwealth. The composition of the independence government was a political compromise between the three dominant regional political parties – the Northern Peoples' Congress (NPC) representing northern interest, National Council for Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) which was more national in appearance

but was associated with the south-east, and the Action Congress (AG) which was the party of the southwest (Nnoli, 1978, Ekekwe, 1986). Together they formed the government of the First Republic (1960 to 1966).

A former school teacher informed the study that Nigeria could have disintegrated into smaller entities at independence had regional elites not reach such a political compromise. The respondent recalled the air of apprehension in the months leading up to Nigeria's independence. Although only ten years old at the time, he could recollect how teachers in the south often mentioned in class that northern politicians opposed independence for Nigeria unless they were to provide leadership for the independent country. The story incensed southern people as there already were concerns that the British preferred northern successors. Thus, political mobilisations in the south had strong messages of warning to the British and the northern people. Cooper (2002) has also noted this build-up of tension as independence approached. The interviewee believed that the constitution of a government with Balewa from the north and Azikiwe from the south holding the two major political offices was a carefully worked out compromise to forestall crisis (U. Dennis, personal communication, August 17, 2017).

Having constituted a government by compromise, the 'indigenisation policy' was introduced to fill up key positions in the military and the bureaucracy left vacant following the exit of British personnel. The policy adopted a quota system to ensure an inclusive allocation of the vacancies (Akinwale, 2014, p. 4). These efforts represent the first major attempts at securing political stability for the newly independent state. Nonetheless, the hostilities exacerbated as the north-south struggle proved to be not only over access to power but to public resources. Disputes arose over the allocation of ministerial and bureaucratic offices. Most elites, particularly southern elites, rejected allotted appointments for not being lucrative enough (Okafor, 2006; Oyediran & Aderemi, 2015).

A respondent mentioned that the disagreements during this period had much to do with the competition among the actors to improve their financial base and political relevance by diverting public wealth to themselves:

> …these elites were mainly professionals – lawyers, journalists, and teachers – who therefore were not entrenched in the [colonial economy]. If you have to involve in politics, you have to have a minimum material comfort to launch yourself. Having been denied access to loans and active participation in the [colonial] economy, how else were they to acquire [wealth] except through access to the state? (E. Ekekwe, personal communication, July 13, 2017).

As the disagreement deepened three years into the First Republic, political parties entered into what became the first political coalitions in post-independence Nigeria. By coalescing, the actors aimed to expand their spheres of influence, consolidate control and institute stability. The NPC merged with some marginal parties and a faction of the AG to form the Nigerian National Alliance (NNA) while what remained of the AG aligned with the NCNC to form the United Progressives Grand Alliance (UPGA). Both mega alliances went into the highly controversial federal parliamentary elections of 1964 and 1965 characterised by widespread voter suppression, rigging and violence. Amid the controversy, the NNA emerged with the most parliamentary seats to form a government. In the months that followed Prime Minister Balewa's reconstitution of a national government, violent reactions to the flawed elections claimed nearly 2000 lives. The worsening crisis led sections of the population (mostly the intelligentsia), to call for a military intervention to forestall a total breakdown of law and order and restore probity in governance (Sufyan, n.d).

As a journalist with more than 28 years of investigative experience remarked, due to fierce scramble for public resources, corruption reached a disturbing height as ethnic political and bureaucratic elites effectively privatised public institutions that they held captive. As a result, Nigeria was 'fast heading for a political cliff', the respondent noted. In the competition for access to and control of public resources, regional politicians viewed one another not 'as countrymen and women, but as strange foes'. Hence, the outrage by the educated middle class was both over the escalating violence and corruption in the national government (J. Patrick, personal communication, January 17, 2018). Some respondents shared Patrick's point of view. They emphasised that by failing to moderate political behaviour and minimise corruption, ethnic politicians sent a clear signal to military elites – most of whom were young, well-educated, intelligent and ambitious – that some kind of intervention was necessary to maintain order. By 1963, Nigeria's West African neighbours Togo had experienced the first successful military coup on the continent, thereby setting a standard for Africa's men in uniform (Kohnert, 2015).

3.2 A Duration of Political Instability

Tumultuous ethno-regional politics and pervasive corruption led to a period of political instability characterised by military coups and civil war. It is crucial to mention that for almost similar reasons, this was a period of general political instability in SSA. McGowan (2003) describes the disorder in the subcontinent during this time as 'elite political instability' and 'military-led instability' (p. 339). As shown in the tables below, in the case of Nigeria, except for the 1967-1970 civil war, military coups would remain the highest points of elite-led political instability until 1998.

Table 6: Total Military Interventions Score (TMIS) for SSA states (1956-2001)

1956-1979		1980-2001	
Above average TMIS		Above average TMIS	
Sudan	**NIGERIA**	Sudan	Niger
Benin	CAR	Ghana	Mauritania
Ghana	Togo	Uganda	Comoros
Uganda	Sierra Leone	Burundi	Equatorial Guinea
Ethiopia	Somalia	**NIGERIA**	Liberia
Congo, Brazzaville	Madagascar	CAR	Cote d'Ivoire
Burundi	Burkina Faso	Togo	Gambia
DRC	Guinea	Sierra Leone	Lesotho
		Burkina Faso	Guinea Bissau
		Guinea	Zambia
Below average TMIS		Below average TMIS	
Chad	Tanzania	Benin	Tanzania
Niger	Angola	Ethiopia	Gabon
Mali	Gabon	Congo, Brazzaville	Mozambique
Mauritania	Mozambique	DRC	Kenya
Comoros	Senegal	Somalia	Malawi
Equatorial Guinea	Liberia	Chad	Cameroon
Rwanda	Kenya	Mali	Djibouti
Seychelles	Cote d'Ivoire	Rwanda	Sao Tome & Principe
Swaziland	Malawi	Swaziland	
No TMIS		No TMIS	
Botswana	Guinea Bissau	Madagascar	Botswana
Cameroon	Lesotho	Seychelles	Cape Verde
Cape Verde	Mauritius	Angola	Mauritius
Djibouti	Sao Tome & Principe	Senegal	
Gambia	Zambia		
Average TMIS=10.0		Average TMIS=9.6	

Note: The table shows the TMIS for 44 Sub-Saharan African states in two periods – 1956 to 1979 and 1980 to 2001. Nigeria ranked among states with a TMIS above average.

Source: Adapted from McGowan (2003, p. 349).

The TMIS model computes total successful coups, failed coups and coup plots for 44 SSA states. Each type of event is assigned a numerical value as follows: coup plot (discovered) = 1;

failed coup = 3; and successful coup = 5 (McGowan, 2003, p. 346). As shown in Table 6, between 1960 and 1999, the frequency of military coups in Nigeria surpassed the subcontinental average.

Table 7: Nigeria's TMIS ranking (1956 - 1979)

Rank	Country	Plots	Failed Coups	Successful Coups	TMIS
1.	Sudan	8	9	2	45
2.	Benin	3	2	6	39
3.	Ghana	7	3	4	36
4.	Uganda	2	8	2	36
5.	Ethiopia	4	1	4	27
6.	Congo, Brazzaville	3	4	2	25
7.	Burundi	2	1	3	20
8.	DRC	6	1	2	19
9.	**NIGERIA**	**0**	**2**	**3**	**18**
10.	CAR	2	2	2	18

Note: By 1979, Nigeria was among SSA states that experienced severe political instability.

Source: Adapted from McGowan (2003, p. 369).

Between 1960 and 1979, there was one (1) failed coup and three (3) successful coups. Nigeria's TMIS was eighteen (18), making the country the subcontinent's 9th most politically-unstable.

Table 8: Nigeria's TMIS ranking (1980 - 2001)

Rank	Country	Plots	Failed Coups	Successful Coups	TMIS
1.	Sierra Leone	3	5	3	33
2.	Burkina Faso	6	2	4	29
3.	Burundi	0	6	2	28
4.	Comoros	0	6	2	28
5.	Sudan	9	2	2	25
6.	**NIGERIA**	**4**	**1**	**3**	**22**
7.	Liberia	8	3	1	22
8.	Mauritania	5	1	2	18
9.	Ghana	4	3	1	18
10.	Guinea Bissau	5	2	1	16

Note: Between 1980 and 2001 (ideally 1998 for Nigeria), political instability worsened in Nigeria.

Source: Adapted from McGowan (2003, p. 370).

Between 1980 and 1999, there were four (4) coup plots, one (1) failed coup and three (3) successful coups. With a TMIS of twenty-two (22), Nigeria dropped further to become the 6th most politically-unstable SSA state.

Nigeria's maiden coup was in January 1966. The mutineers cited divisive politics, political strife and widespread corruption as reasons for the deadly intervention (Muhammad, 2014). The military suspended the democratic Constitution. National and regional democratic institutions, including elected parliaments, were dissolved. The military instituted martial law and proscribed political, ethnic, cultural, and trade union activities (*Vanguard*, 2010). The coup, however, caused more harm than it may have intended to solve. It widened the gulf of hatred and suspicion between the north and south. First, the coup was executed by officers mostly of southern origin, key among whom was Major Kaduna Nzeogu. Second, principal northern elites, including Prime Minister Balewa, dominated the death count. President Azikiwe and other prominent southern elites survived the coup. Third, the coup effectively transferred power to the south as the most senior military officer and south-easterner, Major General Aguiyi Ironsi, took control from the mutineers and announced himself Head of State and Commander-in-Chief.

General Ironsi promulgated the infamous Decree 34, which abolished the federal structure set at colonisation under which the regions had substantial powers and resources devolved to them. The decree stripped the regions of their powers and proclaimed Nigeria a unitary state under the command of the military. Northern elites perceived the coup and Ironsi' unitary decree as a southern strategy to seize the leadership of Nigeria (Muhammad, 2014). Northern soldiers' call for a 'retaliation' resulted in the counter-coup of July 1966 (Ukiwo, 2005, p. 8). The counter-coup achieved the gruesome murder of Major General Ironsi along with other southern military and civilian elites. The counter-coup transferred power back to the north, with Lieutenant Yakubu

Gowon as Head of State. The turn of events triggered the 1967-1970 Nigerian Civil War (the Biafra War), which claimed no fewer than one million lives (Muhammad, 2014, p. 5).

With the coups of 1966, the military established themselves in Nigerian politics. The years that followed would witness massive corruption by military elites, same concern Major Nzeogu claimed compelled the first coup. The General Gowon regime reversed Decree 34 and reorganised Nigeria into a 12-state federal system modelled after the US (Oyedeji, 2016). In practice, however, the military operated a unitary state, vesting in the national government, enormous powers and resources, particularly oil resources discovered in the south in the late 1950s. One military regime begot another on claims of wanting to fight corruption but each military regime, except two, oversaw more corruption than the regime they ousted. A former member of Nigeria's House of Representatives suggested that the achievability of seizing and exercising governmental power for rent-seeking set in a coup-culture and created factions in the military. Worthy of note, from the Gowon regime, successful coups were executed by northern military personnel. Hence, power remained in the north for most of the period, a situation that sustained the north-south acrimony (A. Razak, personal communication, July 8, 2017).

A professor of political science vast in Nigeria's political history noted that the composition of each military regime was limited, consisting of the Head of State, a few senior military officers in the ruling council and a handful of regional military appointees. Only an insignificant number of civilian elites vital to the functioning of the military regimes participated in the governance process. The reason, as mentioned earlier, is that democratic institutions were prohibited, thus closing out the space for civilian elites' involvement. The constitution remained suspended, political activities stayed proscribed, and political parties remained illegal (I. Ibaba, personal communication, July 25, 2017). The military arrogated to themselves, executive and legislative

powers while keeping the judiciary under firm control. Therefore, whereas power stayed in the north, both northern and southern civilian elites remained largely excluded from full participation in the political system bequeathed to them at independence in 1960. As a veteran journalist and executive officer of a major broadcast consortium put it:

> …the military was a small group of people, and being primary beneficiaries of political corruption, they kept it at close quarters…their friends of course who were civilians were also benefitting. The military was a unitary system. By and large, the political core under the military was small because the system itself was unitary and under the control of one individual (T. Abolade, personal communication, July 13, 2017).

This exclusion also meant civilian elites' inability to access public resources, therefore, placing before them, at least two tasks. The first was to take power back from the military. The second was to deny the military any further justification to usurp power. While civilian elites put pressure on General Gowon to reinstate democracy, a coup occurred in 1975. General Gowon was alerted to his removal while attending a summit meeting of the Organisation of African Unity (now African Union (AU)) in Uganda. The coup brought to power another northerner, General Murtala Muhammad, as Head of State. General Murtala died a year after in the foiled 1976 coup and his second-in-command and southerner – General Olusegun Obasanjo – became Head of State. In response to the growing pro-democracy demands, the General Obasanjo regime announced a plan to transition Nigeria to democracy.

3.2.1 Second attempt at fostering stability

The democratisation programme took into account the imperative to foster consensus among regional elites, national unity and political stability. The constituent assembly constituted to draft what became the 1979 constitution inserted provisions that abolished the parliamentary system in operation until 1966. In its place was a presidential federation. As noted previously, the ethnic colouration of the support base of political parties immensely defined the nature of political competition and elite cooperation. In a bid to prevent the reappearance of sectional political parties that helped to destabilise the First Republic, the 1979 constitution mandated parties to have nationwide spread in terms of membership and offices. Also, a party would be declared the winner of the presidential election not only for simply garnering the most votes cast but upon securing no less than 'one-fourth' of total votes cast in 'two-thirds' of the states of the federation (Joseph, 1981, pp. 17-19).

Ahead of the transition, the General Obasanjo regime expanded the federation from 12 to 19 states. However, delimitation of the new states was mostly along ethnic and regional lines, therefore maintained the divisiveness. The 'quota system' was enshrined in the constitution to ensure that government appointments and recruitment into the bureaucracy was sensitive to the country's demographic diversity (Ademolekun, Erero, & Oshionebo, 1991, p. 75; Mustapha, 2006, p. 34; Oyedeji, 2016, pp. 5-6). With these pro-stability reforms in place, executive and parliamentary elections held in 1979. Though highly flawed, the elections ushered in Nigeria's first presidential system with a northerner, Shehu Shagari, as President of the Second Republic. This democratic interregnum fell again to the 1983 military coup led by a northern General Muhammadu Buhari. The General Buhari regime claimed it was constrained to intervene to address widespread

corruption, divisive party politics and the violence that followed the controversial 1983 elections which returned President Shagari for a second term (Graf, 1985).

A successful coup in 1985 brought another northerner, General Ibrahim Babangida, to power. In 1992 the Babangida regime organised elections at the subnational level to usher in the Third Republic. In 1993, the regime organised a presidential election, and the candidate from the south – Moshood Abiola – defeated his northern opponent. General Babangida annulled the presidential election, claiming widespread fraud and irregularities (Jannah, 2018). The annulment sparked elite-led unrests mostly in the south that compelled the Babangida regime to step aside in August 1993. On his way out, he installed an Interim National Government (ING) headed by a southern business mogul Ernest Shonekan. In November of the same year, barely two months after, General Sani Abacha, again a northerner, ousted the ING in a palace coup (*The New York Times*, 1993). Recognised as Nigeria's most brutal dictator, General Abacha tightened the military's grip on the state and further restricted civilian elites' participation in the political process (Amuwo, 2001).

North-south relations reached a breaking point during General Abacha's reign due to his resort to kidnapping, indefinite detainment and assassination of perceived threats to his regime, most of whom were southerners. He detained Moshood Abiola the projected winner of the annulled 1993 presidential election for treason after Abiola declared himself the lawful president. Abiola would die in detention in 1998 (Amuwo, 2001). A hit squad believed to be working for the Abacha regime assassinated Kudirat Abiola while she was working to secure the release of her husband (Kaufman, 1998). A prominent environmentalist and human rights activist, Ken Saro Wiwa, was executed with eight other southerners for protesting human rights abuses by multinational oil companies and the Nigerian government in the oil-producing Niger Delta (*Sahara Reporters*, 2012).

3.2.2 Third attempt at fostering stability

Cognisant of the deteriorating political relations between the regions, the Abacha regime called a national constitutional conference in 1994/1995. Based on the recommendations of the conference, the regime promulgated Decree Number 34 of 1996. The decree sought to establish an agency to undertake enforcement of the quota system introduced in the 1979 constitution. Consequently, the regime established the Federal Character Commission. The commission's task was (and still is) to ensure that no section of the country is disadvantaged in the distribution of government appointments and public service recruitment.[9]

These measures notwithstanding, the political atmosphere remained tense. Turning up the heat was the National Democratic Coalition (NADECO) formed in May 1994 to denounce the Abacha regime and push for recognition of Moshood Abiola as president. NADECO comprised mostly southern elites believed to have enjoyed enormous goodwill from the US government who immensely supported efforts to institute democracy in Nigeria (*The New York Times,* 1997). Following the regime's violent reaction to NADECO, including kidnapping and illegal incarceration of its members, growing public sympathy turned the group into the arrowhead of organised civil society opposition to Abacha's rule. As local and foreign pressure mounted on the regime to quit, General Abacha set rolling a self-succession plan wherein he would cease being a military dictator and continue as a civilian president (*News Watch*, 1998).

3.3 Anti-corruption Enforcement

Anti-corruption enforcement was weak during this period. Some have suggested that from colonial times until the civilian elites-led early post-independence government, the fear of popular

[9] See http://federalcharacter.gov.ng/

uprisings in the event of imprisonment of prominent politicians for corruption may have ensured the moderation of anti-corruption measures. The reason is that through patron-client relations, politicians, including those implicated in corruption scandals, commanded the devotion of their ethnic groups (Nwaodu, Adam, & Okereke, 2014). Two prominent examples involved the then Premier of the south-east region Nnamdi Azikiwe and the then Premier of the Western region Obafemi Awolowo probed in 1956 and 1962 respectively for corruption.

Azikiwe faced prosecution for conflict of interest in the running and use of finances of the African Continental Bank and Eastern Regional Financial Cooperation. Awolowo faced prosecution for misappropriating funds of the Western Region Marketing Board. Although all evidence pointed to their culpability, they received light punishment ranging from asset forfeiture to restitution (Nwaodu, Adam, & Okereke, 2014, pp. 156-157). Both individuals were major voices not only for their ethnicities but for the southern region. The outcome of their cases tends to give credence to the suggestion that the fear of provoking politicians' support base to revolt compelled the government to exercise caution in pursuing anti-corruption policies. Without the prospects of severe punishment, corruption was pervasive and audacious during the First Republic.

Under the military, the response to corruption was largely no different than under the civilian administration. The exceptions were the regimes of Generals Murtala Mohammed (1975-1976) and General Muhammadu Buhari (1983-1985). The Murtala regime introduced an institutionalised approach to anti-corruption enforcement. It initiated a series of reforms to strengthen the bureaucracy and organs of government to prevent and swiftly respond to corruption. The regime's strict anti-corruption campaign designated 'Operation Purge the Nation' dismissed more than 11,000 allegedly corrupt or incompetent public servants found to be in breach of public morality (Nwaodu, Adam, & Okereke, 2014, p. 158).

A deviation occurred when upon taking office as Head of State in the 1983 coup, General Buhari vested the responsibility to tackle corruption in the Supreme Military Council, or more appropriately, in himself. Some respondents asserted that it was because accompanying the General's abhorrence of corruption was distrust for bureaucrats', and the bureaucracy's ability to address corruption without bias. Also, he loathed the lethargic judicial process of bringing the corrupt to book. Hence, his preference for a martial approach which made his anti-corruption programme swift, stern, but extremely arbitrary (A. Razak, personal communication, July 8, 2017; J. Patrick, personal communication, January 17, 2018).

Notable among the Buhari administration's extreme anti-corruption measures, was the nearly fruitful attempt to smuggle into Nigeria, a fugitive former Transportation Minister Umaru Dikko, who allegedly stole government money while as a minister. Frightened by General Buhari's touted anti-corruption temperament, the former minister who was at the centre of a major corruption scandal in the preceding administration fled to the UK where he received asylum. UK airport officials discovered Dikko anaesthetised in a crate marked 'Diplomatic Luggage', only moments before his abductors would have loaded him on a waiting Nigeria-bound flight. The highly resourceful abduction attempt involved a Nigerian intelligence officer, a medical doctor and an Israeli mercenary believed to be a former Mossad agent. Although the government denied any involvement in the act, many regarded the incident as a demonstration of the extent the Buhari junta was willing to go against corrupt politicians (Last, 2012).

These efforts notwithstanding, both the Murtala and Buhari regimes failed to stem corruption. Some attribute the failure of these anti-corruption measures not to anti-anti-corruption reactions, but factors that characterised this phase of Nigeria's political evolution. A suggestion is that embedded in the General Murtala purge campaign was political 'score-settling'. As a result, the

regime's war on corruption lost direction (Nwaodu, Adam & Okereke, 2014, p. 156). Another suggestion is that General Buhari's war on corruption had elements of vindictiveness as it also targeted individuals who criticised the administration's poor human rights record. One example is the imprisonment of Fela Kuti for money laundering. Fela was a famous musician and political activist whose music was devoted to denouncing bad governance. He was a major critic of the Buhari regime for what he believed to be the violation of the rights and dignity of Nigerians following the implementation of the 'War Against Indiscipline' – the symbol of the regime's anti-social vices correction policy. A widely held opinion is that Fela's travails had nothing to do with corruption and everything to do with his opposition to the regime (Denselow, 2015). As a result, the Buhari war on corruption faltered.

Besides the inherent flaws in the anti-corruption efforts, the atmosphere of instability contributed immensely to the failure of anti-corruption efforts during this period. The sudden end to administrations reset anti-corruption efforts, just as Doig, Watt and Williams (2005) have observed about the setbacks to the success of anti-corruption commissions in Africa. Also, north-south struggle to capture government structures and extract rent made public institutions highly contested and politicised turfs. Due to sectional loyalties, it was difficult to secure the devotion of all bureaucrats to a particular course of action or policy against corruption, thereby hampering effective institution building to support anti-corruption activities (Nwaodu, Adam & Okereke, 2014).

Anti-corruption enforcement was much weaker under the General Babangida regime (1985-1993) that many agree was the first to mould corruption into a tool for political settlement and stability. Described as Nigeria's most subtle military dictator, a respondent noted that General Babangida deployed highly enticing illicit rents to secure the cooperation of individuals and groups

believed to constitute a danger to his regime's stability and longevity (T. Abolade, personal communication, July 13, 2017). Austine, Charles and Raymond (2013) have made a similar observation:

> The main distinguishing feature of corruption in the Babangida regime was the pervasive culture of impunity. [Many of his acolytes, however high or low in states, could loot the treasury to their own hearts'] contents with impunity, provided they remained absolutely loyal and committed to the leaders. [He] introduced the 'Settlement Strategy', many actual and potential [critigues] rested on the impeccable presupposition that if he corrupted enough Nigerians, there should be nobody to speak out on the issue of corruption or public agenda. To some extents, the strategy worked as many university [professors and other academicians, leaders of their main professions, leading trade unionists, top clerics, evangelists and movers and shakers of the organised private sector] jumped on the Babangida regime's gravy train (p. 25).

A respondent suggested that General Babangida's decision to allow elective politics at the subnational levels in 1992 was an ingenious strategy to co-opt civilian elites into the corruption that characterised the regime to minimise opposition. Despite this strategy, the regime's Achilles heel was its decision to annul the 1993 presidential election (U. Dennis, personal communication, August 17, 2017). General Abacha's junta (1993-1998) earned a reputation as one of Nigeria's most corrupt military regimes. However, the proceeds circulated within his family and an even tinier band of loyal military and civilian elites. Abacha offered no such enticements to politicians or other civil entities as the Babangida regime did. He instead resorted to repression and extreme

violence to maintain control, a strategy that further strained the polity while he looted the national treasury. By 1998, the following corruption scandals characterised this period.

Table 9: Major corruption scandals (1960-1998)

Corruption Scandal	**Nature of Scandal**
The Nigerian Railway Corporation Scam	The sleaze occurred during the 1960 to 1966 civilian administration. It involved the incorporation of phoney companies by government ministers to secure contracts for themselves. The massive corruption violated procurement rules.
The Nigeria Ports Authority Scam	It followed a similar pattern as the Nigerian Railway Corporation scandal. Members of the first post-independence civilian government used bogus companies and proxies to channel government contracts to themselves.
The Electricity Corporation of Nigeria scam	The scheme was in every respect similar to the Railway Corporation and Ports Authority scam. The General Ironsi regime opened an investigation into this and other scandals. His death six months later in the reprisal coup of 1966 practically ended any further investigations.
The 'Cement Armada' scam	By many accounts, this is one of the major corruption scandals to rock the General Gowon regime. It involved inflating the purchase of cement for the Ministry of Defence. The Ministry needed 2.9 million tons of cement for critical construction. However, officials of the government conspired to purchase 16 million tons instead. The proceeds from the sale of the excess went into private pockets. The deal cost the government nearly $500 million by the exchange rate at the time.
The $16 billion oil windfall scam	President Shehu Shagari's administration could not account for more than $16 billion of oil revenue. Government buildings and records often went up in flames before scheduled financial audits. Many believed that the arsons were part of the strategy of corrupt government officials to erase records of their corrupt dealings.

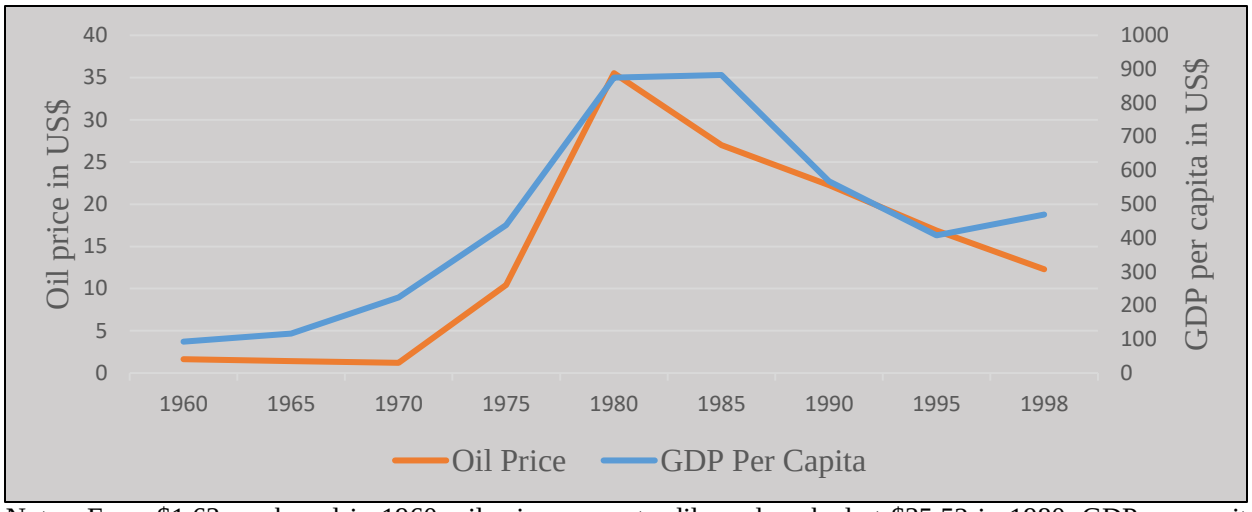
The Umaru Dikko rice scam	As Minister of Transport, Dikko was among the most influential and untouchable members of the Shagari administration. As alleged, Dikko blatantly diverted more than $2 billion of government money meant for rice importation. He remained untouchable until the coming of the General Buhari administration when he fled to seek asylum in the UK. A common belief is that his failed abduction attempt was in connection with this scandal.
The General Ibrahim Babangida money rain	It is unclear how much Nigeria lost to corruption during the General Babangida regime. Anecdotes put the figures between $6 billion and $12 billion. As noted in the preceding discussions, the Babangida administration was unlike previous military regimes as it expanded opportunities for looting to civilian elites.
The $4 billion General Sani Abacha loot	General Abacha and his family looted no less than $4 billion, much of it taken directly from the vaults of the central bank. Between the time of his death and the time of the study, Nigeria was still receiving tranches of his loots amounting to more than $2 billion in cash and assets. Much of the recoveries were from banks overseas.

Source: Adapted from Ogbeidi (2012, p. 6-9) and Austine, Charles and Raymond (2013, p. 20-25.)

3.4 Public Dis-welfare

A casualty of elite hostility and predatory rent-seeking that characterised this period was public welfare. The state maintained its non-welfare posture set at colonisation. Formal wealth distribution and redistribution remained inadequate, and the socioeconomic conditions of many ordinary Nigerians declined steadily. For the better part of this period, Nigeria made huge earnings from crude oil sales. Much of the revenue came during the 1970s-1980 oil boom occasioned by the global energy crisis following the Yom Kippur War (1973 Arab-Israeli War) and the 1979 Iranian Revolution. The windfall reflected in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita.

Figure 3: Average global oil prices and Nigeria's GDP per capita in US$ (1960-1998)

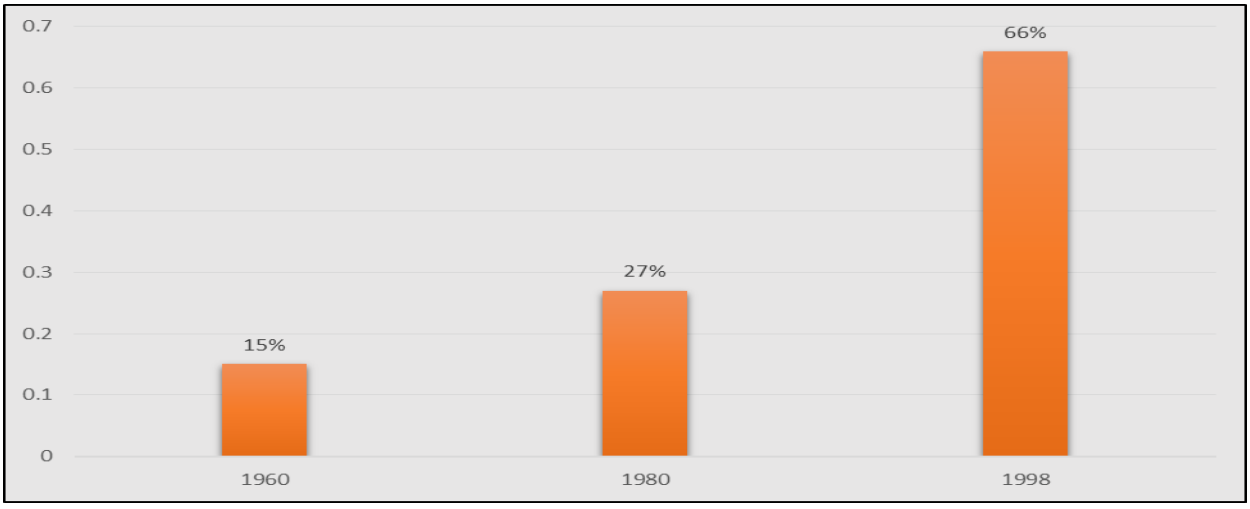


Note: From $1.63 per barrel in 1960, oil prices rose steadily and peaked at $35.52 in 1980. GDP per capita followed a similar trajectory, increasing from $92.9 in 1960 to a high of $874.4 in 1980 before declining.

Source: Oil prices data adapted from Statista (2019). GDP per capita data adapted from World Bank (n.d).

The data for the period shows that despite increased oil revenue and positive GDP per capita postings until the early 1980s, the number of Nigerians in poverty grew steadily until 1998. The chart below shows the poverty figures for the period.

Figure 4: Poverty rate in Nigeria from 1960-1998 (% of the total population)



Note: The percentage of Nigerians in poverty increased from 15% in 1960 to 66% in 1998.

Source: The chart combines data available in Buba and Ibrahim (2016, p. 20) and Dapel (2018).

3.5 Synthesis and Inference

The study surmises that this period did not fulfil the vital condition for corruption to function to promote stability articulated in Table 4 – *Elites form informal cross-ethnic alliance and institutions to share rents*. Ethnic elites engaged in a fierce struggle to capture public institutions and resources and monopolise corruption. The involvement of the military compounded the situation. By restricting corruption to a small group of military elites – the majority of whom were northerners – civilian elites, particularly from the south, remained largely excluded from access to power and rent accumulation. Hence lasting trans-ethnic elite cooperation was impossible. Attempts to foster cross-ethnic elite cooperation mainly focused on political and bureaucratic reforms. These formal efforts involved a shift in the mode of governance from parliamentary to a presidential system; constitutional review to prevent the re-emergence of ethno-regional political parties and facilitate the growth of cross-ethnic parties; and the distribution of opportunities in the civil and public services between the regions. However, these measures failed to achieve a cross-ethnic alliance and stability.

Several factors may have accounted for the failure of these measures, especially the weak formal capacity to address historical triggers of ethnic disagreement on account of which the bitter struggle for rent became a key driver of instability. However, an important factor seems to be the absence of an appeasement system or better put, settlement politics. Giving credence to this claim is the unusual duration of relative stability under the General Babangida regime that both the literature and interview responses agree was the first to apply corrupt enticement to secure regime stability and longevity. General Abacha's disinterest in settlement politics made the political system vulnerable again.

The period also did not fulfil the conditions listed in Table 5 to provoke mass anti-anti-corruption retort like the BBOC resistance.

Regarding condition 1 – *The masses were embedded in patron-client relations* – the literature suggests that poor and vulnerable masses seemed embedded in patronage exchanges with politicians only until 1966 when the political ecology supported such exchanges. Ekeh (1975) supports this observation. Under the military, however, the channels and structures of patronage exchanges may have been dormant due to the proscription of democratic politics which this study claims is a prerequisite for robust elite-masses patronage relations. Military regimes did not rely on public consent but coercion to take, exercise and keep power. It may be for this reason that there is no evidence that military elites maintained patronage exchanges with the masses. Ikpe (2000) has noted that the military only engaged in administrative patron-clientelism, given that they needed bureaucrats more than they needed the masses and politicians.

Regarding condition 2 – *The masses were dependent on patronage for their livelihood* – whereas formal welfare provision was weak throughout this period, citizens' dependence on patronage for their subsistence seemed to have been for a short period. Until 1966 when patron-clientelism thrived, patronage might have to some degree supported the wellbeing of poor and vulnerable Nigerians. Though the state under the military remained insouciant to public welfare, due to the restriction on democratic politics, civilian elites' participation in governance, and conceivable dormancy of patron-client structures, patronage might not have been available in sufficient measure for the masses. Even though corruption thrived under the military, the proceeds mainly circulated within this exclusive group and an insignificant number of civilian elites (the selectorate) indispensable for the functioning of the regimes.

Regarding condition 3 – 'the intensity and comprehensiveness of anti-corruption enforcement' – the evidence is overwhelming that anti-corruption efforts were largely ineffectual. Although the Generals Murtala and Buhari regimes executed Nigeria's only recognised fierce anti-corruption programmes during this period, they failed to stem corruption. Regimes that came after Murtala and Buhari failed to restrict illicit access to government money. However, if as the study infers, corruption under the military had no identifiable functional value to the poor in the first place, an implication is that anti-graft measures, regardless of how intense and comprehensive they were, could not have provoked popular anti-anti-corruption reactions similar to the BBOC resistance.

CHAPTER FOUR

Relative Stability (1999-2014)

4.1 Elite Cooperation and a Duration of Democratic Governance

This chapter argues that from this period, corruption became observably functional in terms of promoting political stability and providing a safety net for vulnerable Nigerians. Elites showed greater capacity to create and maintain an informal cross-ethnic alliance, informal institutions and rules to coordinate access to rent to enhance cooperation and stability. The informalities enabled a regime of pervasive and scot-free corruption. Elite-masses patronage exchanges reappeared on a bigger scale. However, the period did not experience anti-anti-corruption sentiments in the magnitude of the BBOC resistance, because, anti-corruption efforts lacked the intensity and coverage to undermine the informal welfare function of corruption.

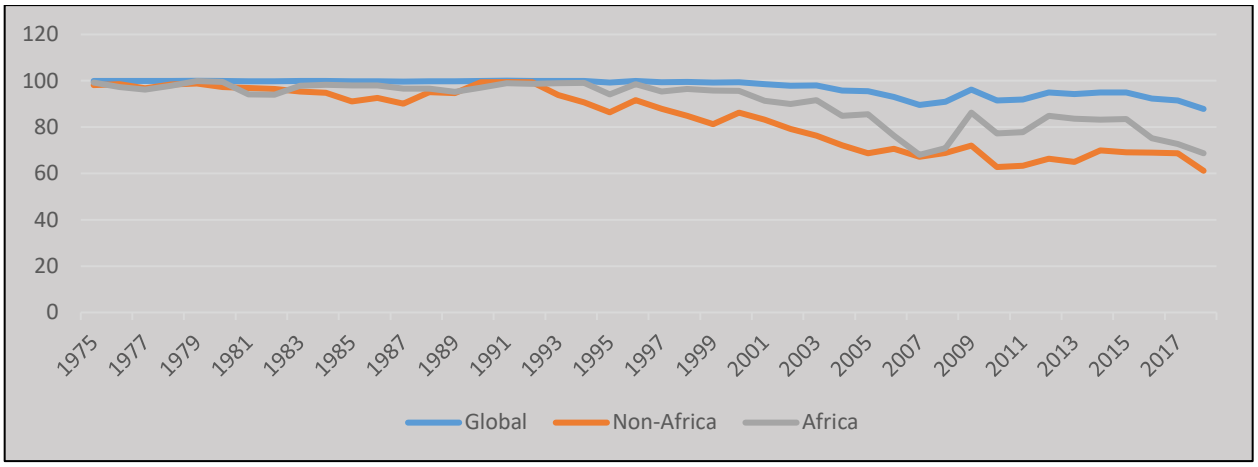
The nature of corruption, dynamics of politics, re-emergence and scale of patron-client relations, and the unprecedented duration of democratic governance during this period call into question the adequacy of the non-functional understanding on corruption in the contemporary context of Nigeria. The process of transition to this period began with the sudden death of the brutal dictator General Abacha in 1998. His widely celebrated demise to cardiac arrest, according to rumours, was orchestrated with help from foreign intelligence agents of the Central Intelligence Agency of the US. General Abdulsalami Abubakar, who was next in the military hierarchy, became Head of State. Abdulsalami swiftly announced a programme to transition Nigeria to democracy in May 1999, a declaration that received praise from pro-democracy activists, civilian elites and Nigeria's Western partners.

Political interactions during this period were not free of the usual discord. The indices show that political stability was highly fragile due to social, economic and political pressures.[10] However, ethnic elites – civilian and military – became observably more cooperative and supportive of stability. As Nomor and Iorember (2017) have noted, the 16 years of uninterrupted democratic governance is a testament to the relative stability when viewed against the preceding period. Following democratisation and election of a civilian administration in 1999, there were elections in 2003, 2007 and 2011 that transferred governmental authority from one civilian administration to another. Unlike in the period before, when there was an average of one coup every three-and-half years, there were no coups during this period.

Worthy of note, this was a period most hitherto coup-plagued developing countries began to record a decline in the frequency of coups. Figure 5 below shows findings from a study on the occurrence of coups around the world, while figure 6 shows the outcome of another survey on public perceptions on the likelihood of coups occurring in Africa. As both studies found, during this period, not only did developing countries experience fewer coups, perceptions on the likelihood of coups taking place declined.

[10] The Fragile State Index shows that Nigeria's stability hovered in the danger zone. Although more non-political indicators are utilised for the measurement, the yearly releases revealed that Nigeria performed poorly on all indicators, including political indicators.

Figure 5: Perceptions of the likelihood of coups

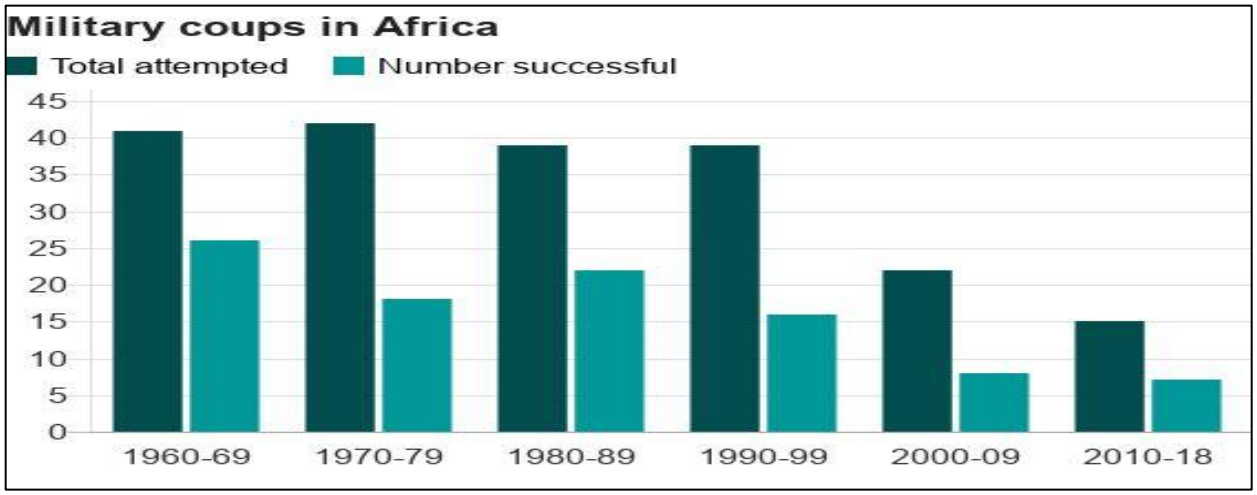


Note: There was a drop from 99% to 88% in global perceptions that coups will take place somewhere in the world each year. For Africa, coup perceptions declined from 99% in 1991 to under 70% in 2017.

Source: Adapted from Rulers, Elections, and Irregular Governance Dataset cited in Besaw and Frank (2018).

In the specific context of Africa, and particularly SSA, the number of attempted and successful coups per decade declined remarkably. From being the hotbed of military intervention in governance, the continent began to experience longer-lasting 'democratic' governance.

Figure 6: The diminishing threat of coups in Africa since the 1990s

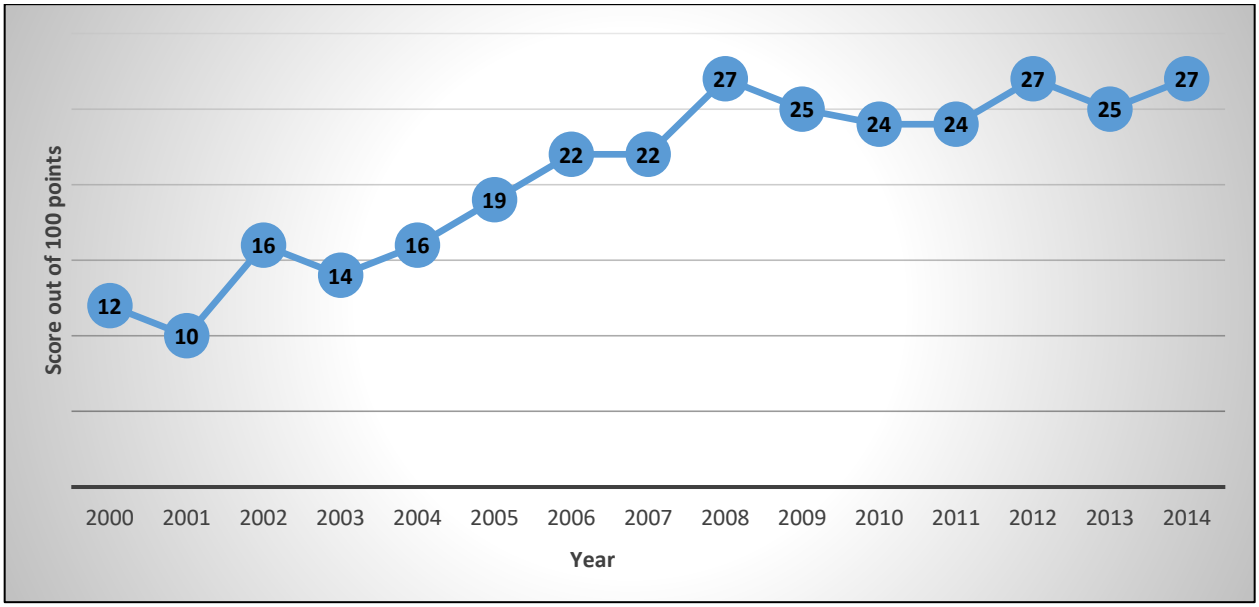


Note: By the 2000s and 2010s, the frequency of attempted and successful military interventions in Africa had dropped to an unprecedented low.

Source: Research by Florida and Kentucky Universities cited in Giles (2019).

This period of relative political stability also saw public corruption attain new heights in SSA (Pring, 2015; Powell, 2018). In Nigeria, the dominant perception was that compared to the period until 1998, corruption became more pervasive (see Figure 7). Perceptions on the effectiveness of government anti-corruption efforts stayed largely negative for much of the period as most Nigerians surveyed believed that anti-corruption policies were too weak (see Figure 8).

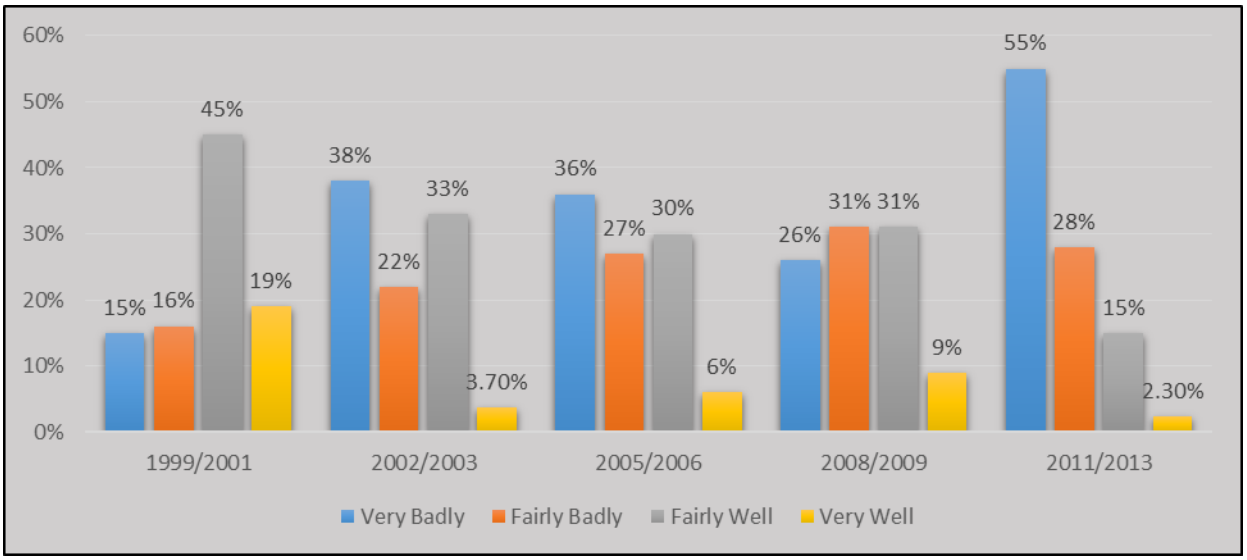
Figure 7: Perceptions of the pervasiveness of corruption (2000 - 2014)



Note: Nigeria's score increased from 12 in 2000 to 27 in 2014. However, the seeming progress was due less to improvement in the fight against corruption and more to other countries in the same category doing worse. Hence, despite this result, the index makers considered to be Nigeria one of the most corruption-plagued.

Source: Adapted from TI CPI.

Figure 8: Perceptions of the effectiveness of anti-corruption efforts (2000 - 2013)



Note: By 2001, 64% of Nigerians polled said the government was doing well in the fight against corruption. From 2003 the positive perceptions declined. By 2013, 83% said that anti-graft efforts were ineffective.

Source: Adapted from Afrobarometer.[11]

There are no studies that have attempted to determine what correlation may have existed between the relative political stability, increased public corruption and weak anti-corruption enforcement in Nigeria during this period. Although Ovadia (2016) has alluded to the record duration of relative stability, the scholar expresses perplexity that the relative stability was despite mindboggling corruption and poor development indicators. Given the role of corruption in the Arab Spring, Greece and Venezuela upheavals, Ovadia's observation opens up a puzzle that should elicit a reconsideration of the adequacy of the non-functional view on corruption in a state like Nigeria. The unusual duration of stability, albeit a fragile one, may have been because of the massive corruption. To appreciate this claim, we have to call to mind the core motivations for civilian elites' push for democratic governance and the kind of democracy that emerged in 1999. We also have to

[11] See link for access to data set https://afrobarometer.org/online-data-analysis/analyse-online

examine the nexus between the roles created for military elites in the democratic regime, the perks they had access to, and the surprising absence of military coups.

4.2 A 'Cease-fire Democracy'

Discourses on the deficiencies of post-dictatorship democracies in developing countries seem to pay a different kind of attention to the antecedents out of which the democracies emerged. It is common to find commentaries showing how democratic regimes in a post-dictatorial state like Nigeria have not been more public-oriented or less corrupt than the autocracies they replaced. We may have come across commentaries that interpret the situation simply as a hangover from the many years of corrupt dictatorships. However, it is important to ask if these democracies, from the perspective of civilian and military elites, emerged out of genuine concern for improving public wellbeing and accountability.

As was mentioned in chapter three, Nigeria's transition to democracy in 1999 was the result of persistent civilian elites` clamour for an end to military rule, international pressure, and pro-democracy activism by the organised civil society. As it appears, external and civil society demands for democracy only converged with elites' intention to institute a democracy even though the driving motivations differed. While for the international community and the organised civil society the motivation may have been to set the country on the path of progress, for politicians, the motivation seemed to have been to create a system where access to rent would be inclusive to promote cross-national cooperation and stability.

This assertion stems from respondents' observation that the relative stability during this time may have largely been a function of the broadening of elites' access to power and rents following democratisation. Given the role of access to public power and rents to elite hostilities and political

instability until 1998, lifting the limitations to open access may have motivated politicians` pro-democracy push. It is also plausible that general Abdulsalami realised that broadening access would rationally promote elite cooperation and minimise the propensity for instability. Undeniably, the return to democracy opened up elective and appointive offices in the national and subnational governments and created huge prospects for access to power and rents. A respondent noted:

> …democratic governance…created more access for the political elite, more access to the machinery of governance, unlike in the military time when we had…a military council, a Head of State and the military governor which limited access to the state. …we have more members of the political elite getting involved. The National Assembly alone [gives] access to close to 500 persons (I. Ibaba, personal communication, July 25, 2017).

A major theme that emerged both from the literature and interviews was that addressing the north-south stand-off required a system that would allow for political inclusiveness, especially as southern ethnicities remained embittered over what they described as marginalisation by the northern oligarchy. The southeast region was persistent in their demand for redress over the human and material losses they suffered during the civil war (Smith, 2014). The oil-producing southern people demanded to take back ownership and control of their oil resources vested in the northern elites-controlled federal government while oil-producing communities suffered human and environmental carnage. The southwest region demanded justice for the illegal detention and death of Moshood Abiola, acclaimed winner of the annulled 1993 presidential election (U. Dennis, personal communication, August 17, 2017).

In the view of a journalist, state capacity to address these grievances was extremely weak. Furthermore, due to local and international pressure on General Abdulsalami to stay true to his

promise to transition Nigeria to democracy in just under a year, there was insufficient time for elaborate formal dialogue among the ethnic nationalities to address real and perceived grievances (J. Patrick, personal communication, January 17, 2017). Therefore, one likely explanation is that the managers of the transition programme may have realised the need for an informal solution – provide the right inducements to galvanise regional elites as a means to having them manage their politically-charged ethnic groups. This is plausible as elites were cognisant of the role of disagreement over rents in inter-ethnic hostilities inimical to stability. Another plausible explanation is that given the extent of rent-seeking, elective and appointive offices were not in themselves sufficient unless they provided inducements sufficient to incentivise elite cooperation and support for political stability.

If we were to examine events preparatory to the transition through the prism of de Waal`s Political Marketplace argument, we could say that it was during this time that elites laid the foundations to put the political marketplace in the control of elite informalities. Lending support to this observation is the informal system by which elites coordinated access to wealth and power. The approach involved aggregating principal elites in a single political party that oversaw the apportionment of pacifying rewards to elites within the coalition. While this observation is arguable as it is difficult to prove when elites agreed to such a strategy, one fact that could back this claim is the emergence of what became Nigeria's first most trans-regional, trans-ethnic political party – the Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP). Though an informal institution, the party more or less supplanted the state in terms of the exercise of authority, allocation of rents, and in defining the scope and limits of government anti-corruption policies.

4.2.1 The PDP and the politics of settlement

The PDP was in many respects analogous to the actors-aggregating-and-pacifying 'dominant coalition' described in North, Wallis, Webb and Weingast's (2013, p. 1-19) LAO framework discussed in chapter two. What transformed into the PDP began as a group of influential individuals called the 'G-18' formed in 1997 to push against General Abacha's brutal dictatorship and self-succession plan. By 1998, the group expanded to 34 members and was renamed the G-34 before metamorphosing into the PDP. A foremost civil society activist involved in pro-democracy activities during the later years of military rule believed that the G-34 was hijacked by politicians who wanted to enter into a peace pact in their interest. As a result, the PDP only catered to elites' interests and began another round of elite gang-up 'to create order in the chaotic political landscape' and enable coordinated access to wealth and influence (J. Gaskia, personal communication, July 24, 2017).

The 1999 Constitution which the Abdulsalami regime crafted to guide the succeeding democratic government retained the multiparty presidential system and the rules on the national spread of political parties introduced in the 1979 Constitution. More than three political parties were registered to contest in the elections of 1999. However, the PDP brought together the largest number of influential elites across the country. An emeritus professor and public analyst believed that the PDP became the first political party in Nigeria to have such a huge trans-regional and trans-ethnic influential membership because, by 1998, elites found it in their best interest to aggregate under a single party. In his words: 'It is based on the discovered unanimity of interest – a common interest, and the common interest is: ''What can I get from the system?'' It is this common interest that is in their politicking, their coming together' (E. Iji, personal communication, August 4, 2017).

The PDP won the 1999 presidential election. Elected as president was General Obasanjo who was military Head of State from 1976 to 1979. The party also won the majority of seats in the twin chambers of the national parliament and subnational executive and legislative offices. The PDP shaped and manipulated inducements. The party operationalised the 'power zoning and rotation formula'. Still applied today by political parties, the power zoning and rotation formula is an informal agreement to alternate the Offices of President and Vice President, President and Deputy President of the Senate, and Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives between the north and south. This informal agreement is the political equivalent of the federal character principle (discussed in chapter three) designed to ensure that recruitment into the civil and public services is sensitive to Nigeria's demographic diversity. Like the federal character principle, the power zoning and rotation agreement does not give primacy to merit and competence. The overarching aim is to guarantee each region access to key national political offices in alternation.

A respondent informed the study that the idea to alternate power between the regions was a major recommendation at the 1994/1995 constitutional conference convened by the General Abacha regime to foster stability. Delegates to the conference had hoped that enshrining power rotation in the constitution and dutifully implementing it would significantly reduce north-south strife (I. Ibaba, personal communication, July 25, 2017). The idea was borne out of the desperation to get the regions to maintain some level of cordiality even though it would have greatly sacrificed merit and competence on the altar of national consensus building. The Abacha regime shelved the recommendation nonetheless. The PDP picked up the idea and enforced it informally as though it was an official state rule.

Ololajulo (2016) has noted that although such a framework to alternate power has the potential to minimise political conflict and build consensus in deeply-divided states, the informal

enforcement of this agreement by the PDP only helped elites to consolidate power and corruptly accumulate public resources. He further asserts that the mode of enforcing this informality played a significant role in weakening democratic institutions meant to control the public behaviour and actions of elites. His observation is in line with Helmke and Levitsky's (2006) argument concerning the experience of Latin American democracy. As they demonstrate, similar informalities have either weakened or bolstered formal institutions and overall democratic performance in much of Latin America.

From a rational choice point of view, one could conjecture that in the case of Nigeria, the actors realised that the impending 1999 Constitution would not accommodate such an idea on the formal level as doing so would have violated the democratic doctrines of merit and fair competition. Hence, the utility of an inclusive political party wherein such informality could prevail with broad elite consensus. However, having the party's informal agreements prevail over formal rules required as a crucial step, subjecting the state and its institutions to the party's dictates, and this the PDP did with great accomplishment. The capacity of state institutions to ensure public officials acted according to the law, some respondents mentioned, was undermined by the party as it compromised the bureaucracy, security services, and judiciary. Head of one of Nigeria's leading civil society organisations – Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project – noted that one area most critically compromised was the judiciary (A. Mumuni, personal communication, August 7, 2017). A professor of political science corroborated this observation:

> …in those early periods, there [was] clear progress toward institutionalisation…aimed at addressing…corruption. The civil service was developed, and to some extent, became largely autonomous of both civil society and the state in certain respects…political elites

> were fringed to operate…in the context of certain norms…the post-1999 period has seen a lot of deinstitutionalisation…the politicisation of the armed forces…, the bureaucracy…, the judiciary and the entire criminal justice system… (U. Ukiwo, personal communication, July 24, 2017).

By 2014, the PDP had become synonymous with corruption. Under the party's watch, the governing class plundered the country. Corruption was widespread in the executive, legislature, judiciary, the civil service and security services. Many senior bureaucrats and military officers with ties to the party participated in several corruption schemes that would be later exposed. Hoffmann and Patel (2017) put the amount stolen by the elite during this period in the neighbourhood of $200 billion (p. 1). The modes of looting include illegal economic concessions, fictitious contract awards, kickbacks from the award of contracts, self-awarding contracts, non-execution of contracts after substantial financial mobilisation, and direct removal of cash from the national treasury under false pretexts (Page, 2016, 2018). Table 10 shows some of the major corruption scandals that became the PDP's legacy.

Table 10: Major corruption scandals (1999 to 2014)

Corruption Scandal	**Nature of Scandal**
The $16 billion electricity project scam	The scandal emerged early into the President Obasanjo government. It involved the violation of due process and other dubious acts in the award of contracts in the electricity sector. Investigations revealed that contractors received payment and walked away. Industry experts claim that the administration failed to add even a megawatt of power to the national grid

	from the spending. Despite demands for a probe, the government turned a deaf ear. Allegedly involved in the scandal are strongmen, military and civilian, from across the country.
The $1.1billion Malabu oil scandal	Perhaps one of the most dumbfounding scandals as it had the full participation of the government. Shell and Eni paid the sum to purchase the oil field OPL 245 belonging to a Nigerian politician convicted for corruption in France. Top officials in the President Jonathan administration became middlemen in the controversial deal that revealed bribery of principal elites by Shell and Eni with the government as a conduit.
The $20billion national oil company scam	The then governor of Nigeria's central bank – Lamido Sanusi revealed that officials of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) had failed to remit at least $20billion oil proceeds to the government. The Jonathan government denied the allegation, firing the governor for raising a false alarm. Revelations since 2015 have shown that the allegations had some veracity.
The $2billion Boko Haram arms deal	The money was removed directly from the vault of the central bank by retired colonel Sambo Dasuki who was national security adviser to President Jonathan. Released in the official pretext of purchasing military equipment to contain Boko Haram terrorists, much of the funds ended up in the pockets of PDP bigwigs through fictitious contracts and outright giveaways.
The oil subsidy scandal	While Nigeria exports its crude, it relies substantially on fuel imports for its domestic energy needs as the oil mafia undermined local refining capacity.

	To minimise the cost implication of imported fuel on the populace, the government began a subsidy scheme. The subsidy regime became the oil mafia's goldmine. From 1999 to 2014, Nigeria lost billions of dollars to fabricated subsidy claims.
The rice import waiver scam	Like the oil mafia, the rice mafia undermined Nigeria's capacity to produce rice locally, making the country dependent on rice imports mostly from Thailand. By securing rice import concessions, they exploited both the state and citizens. Rice became expensive, and Nigeria lost jobs that could have come with local rice production. As was later exposed, beneficiaries of the scam were PDP heavyweights.

Source: Author's compilation from available public information.

These scandals involved elites from the north and south. The PDP's condonation of corruption emboldened elites to accumulate illicit rents without fear of the law. A respondent believed that if there were an 'audacity of corruption index', it would reveal that this period saw corruption in its most audacious form in Nigeria's history. According to the respondent, the PDP made the state 'a sitting duck' in the face of the massive looting (J. Gaskia, personal communication, July 24, 2017). Another interviewee asserted that 'Nigeria became one big customs house' where routine 'clearing' of public resources to private hands happened with impunity (E. Ekekwe, personal communication, July 13, 2017). Elites gained notoriety for their brazen display of corruption. A rickshaw rider in Nigeria's capital Abuja noted that the popular 'Share the Money!' chant which became the public's version of the PDP's official motto 'Power to the People!' was an indication of public awareness of the party's synonymy with corruption (O. Ifieanyi, personal communication, July 19, 2017).

A central element in Gaskia, Ekekwe and Ifieanyi's observations is that a key feature of this period was the open display of corruption by key figures in the PDP or persons affiliated to the party. A journalist noted that her news agency's investigation into the link between local spending by elites and the over-saturation of the local economy by foreign currencies revealed that politicians often paid for goods and services (especially in night clubs) in the US dollar, British pound and the euro. The respondent attributed it to the excess amount of proceeds from corruption available to the elites that they could not have conveniently carried around or spent in the low-exchanging domestic currency (M. Meli, personal communication, February 2, 2018). Meli's viewpoint seems highly credible as it was common to observe the audacious display of bribe money (denominated in foreign currencies) offered to delegates and voters at the PDP's conventions and internal elections. Figure 9 shows a picture of bribe money caught on camera in one of the party's conventions in Abuja. Pictures like it often emerged during the parties events.

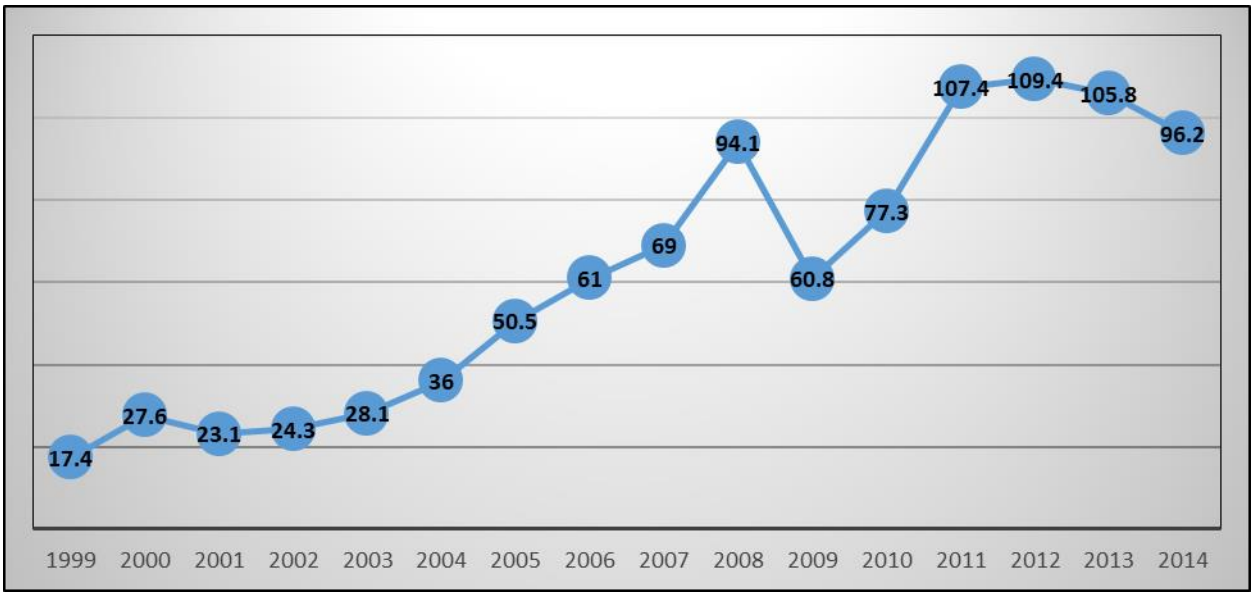
Figure 9: Alleged bribe money

Note: Inducement money denominated in US dollars allegedly paid to delegates at a convention of the PDP.
Source: Samuel-Wemimo (2018).

4.2.2 Public diswelfare

As Barma, Kaiser, Le and Vinuela (2012) have observed, a common feature of natural resource-rich rentier states is that corruption tends to upsurge with an increase in accruals from the exploitation of natural resources. Another shared characteristic is that, due to corruption, public wellbeing may not necessarily improve with the increase in derived revenue. During this period, Nigeria's macroeconomic indicators were in the positive – a 7% average annual GDP growth rate and steady appreciation in GDP per capita (World Bank, 2014). Accounting for the positive macroeconomic indicators was the increase in revenue from oil, thanks to the surge in global crude oil prices. The figures below show average oil prices and Nigeria's GDP per capita for this period.

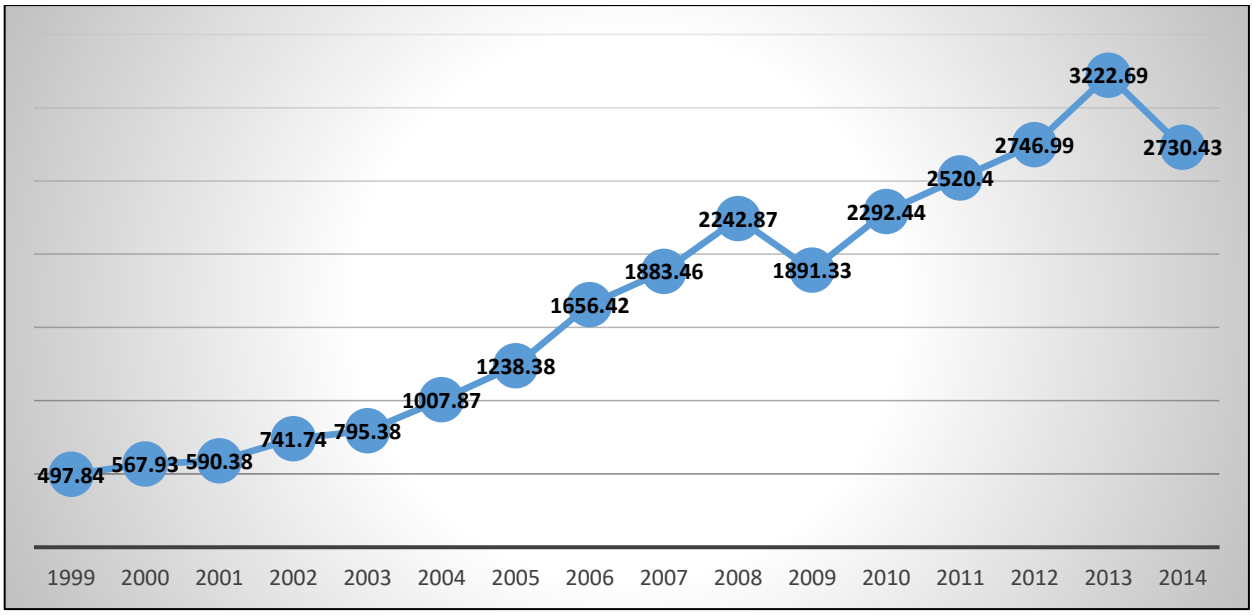
Figure 10: Average global oil prices in US$ (1999-2014)



Note: From $17 per barrel in 1999, average oil prices rose steadily, peaking at $109 in 2012 and steadying at $96 per barrel in 2014.

Source: Statista (2019).

Figure 11: Nigeria's GDP per capita in US$ (1999-2014)

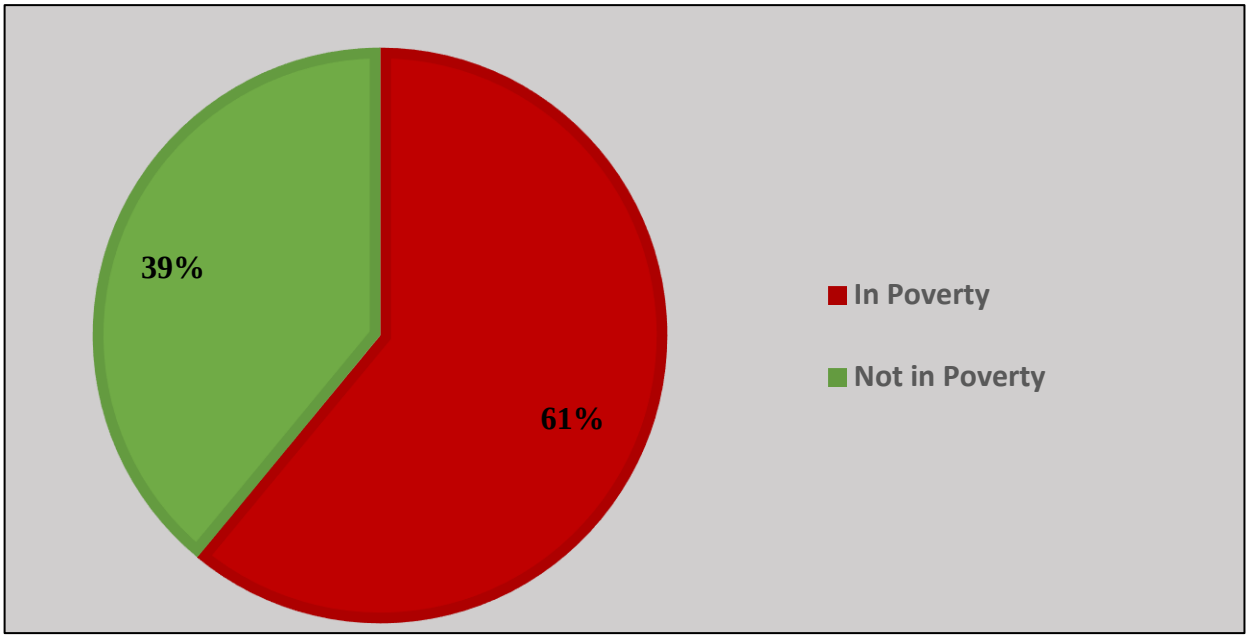


Note: From $498 in 1999, GDP per capita rose to $2730 in 2014.

Note: World Bank (n.d).

Despite the oil windfall and positive GDP per capita postings, the quality of life of ordinary Nigerians declined tremendously (Magnowski, 2014; World Bank, 2014). Public infrastructure remained in decay, the health and education sectors received almost no attention, and social security remained inadequate. By 2014 the combined figure for unemployment and underemployment stood at about 25% of the workforce (National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), 2016, p. 4). There was widespread poverty and economic vulnerability as more than half of the population lived on less than $1 per day.

Figure 12: Poverty rate in Nigeria as of 2014



Note: By 2014, no fewer than 111 million of the 180 million population were poor.

Note: Adapted from World Bank (2014).

About 70 million of the poor lived in extreme poverty, placing Nigeria third among five countries home to over 60% of the world's extremely poor. The World Bank blamed the situation on the failure of trickle-down economics – lack of effective and adequate policies to distribute macroeconomic gains to the larger population (World Bank, 2014; Gabriel, 2014).

In 2001, the government introduced the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP). NAPEP replaced the failed Community Action Programme for Poverty Alleviation initiated in 1994 by the General Abacha junta. Supplementing NAPEP was the National Poverty Eradication Council (NAPEC) tasked with finding actionable solutions to the worsening poverty crisis. In 2012, a social safety net programme, the Subsidy Reinvestment and Empowerment Programme (SURE-P), was also introduced.

Table 11: Poverty alleviation policies

Programme	Objectives	Specific Tasks
NAPEP/NAPEC	Oversee public and private institutions and provide guidelines for plans for poverty reduction. Create 200,000 jobs annually.	• Train as many young people in vocational skills. • Organise internship programmes for beneficiaries. • Provide micro-credit for small and medium-scale businesses. • Support employment in the auto industry. • Provide treatment for Vesicovaginal Fistula (VVF) patients.
SURE-P	Create a database of the unemployed and ascertain vulnerability levels. Support unemployed graduates to find work through internships. Support infrastructural development.	• Conditional cash transfers to participants. • Vocational training. • Improve maternal and child healthcare. • Supplement public expenditure on infrastructure (roads, bridges, and others).

Source: Adapted from Wohlmuth et al. (2008, p. 61) and available public information.

NAPEP trained about 130,000 young people in vocational trades and engaged another 216,000 in paid employment. However, the programme fell far short of meeting its objective of creating 200,000 jobs per year. The number of beneficiaries represented less than one per cent of the poor and vulnerable. Furthermore, allegations of corruption and abuse embroiled the programme. There was severe elite capture, diversion of allocated financial and operational resources, and coverage for undeserving individuals. The majority of the beneficiaries were relatives and cronies of influential individuals (Wohlmuth et al., 2008, pp. 60-61). According to Omafume (2014), SURE-P helped in infrastructural development as physical infrastructure critical to the national economy received an uplift. The programme also created employment and internship opportunities for more

than 150,000 persons. Nonetheless, the programme faced similar challenges that marred NAPEP, therefore, failed to address poverty (Akinkuotu, 2017).

4.2.3 The resurgence of patron-client exchanges (stomach infrastructure politics)

Largely dormant under military rule, patron-client relations reappeared on a much larger scale during this period, and ostensibly provided a crucial safety net for the poor. The concept 'stomach infrastructure politics' appeared in the Nigerian political lexicon as a reference to entrenched elite-masses informal welfare exchanges (Ojo, 2014; Ojo, 2019). The poor would besiege the homes and offices of political patrons in demand for material support such as food and money. Patrons would oblige their clients who reciprocated with unalloyed political support. As the practice became deeply-rooted, politicians increasingly dreaded harming their political career should the masses adjudge them to have failed to sufficiently provide stomach infrastructure. A respondent made the following remark regarding stomach infrastructure politics in Nigeria:

> Nigerian politics is embedded with what we call 'moneybag' politics. …you have to have lots of money to distribute to the electorate. …the latest title given to this is 'stomach infrastructure', in the sense that [many] people are hungry. [Many] people are poor. [Many] people are unemployed, and because of that, they can compromise their principle. They can compromise their integrity by allowing themselves to be bribed for voting. Politicians know this and get very much involved in it (E. Iji, personal communication, August 4, 2017).

The case of then-Governor of Ekiti State, Kayode Fayemi, revealed the extent to which patronage from political elites was crucial to the masses. In his first term in office, Governor

Fayemi invested in physical infrastructure and education. However, his bid for a second term was rejected by voters who accused him of giving too little attention to stomach infrastructure. His opponent and eventual winner – Ayo Fayose – would claim that his victory was because of his commitment to stomach infrastructure. Governor Fayose and members of his government became famous for sharing cash and food items to the poor while spending less on physical infrastructure and human development projects. As the practice endured, patronage structures multiplied. The endless streams of illicit funds available to politicians due to massive corruption would sustain the practice.

4.3 Anti-corruption Enforcement

There were attempts to address corruption during this period. President Obasanjo's 2000 to 2007 anti-corruption programme initially targeted private sector corruption, particularly advance fee fraud and syndicated online scams. The programme soon broadened in scope to include public corruption (Adebanwi & Obadare, 2011). A respondent mentioned that the administration's anti-corruption drive was largely in response to persistent demands by the governments of the US, UK and the EU who gave Nigeria enormous financial aid, thus prevailed on the government to demonstrate a commitment to the fight against corruption (A. Razak, personal communication, July 8, 2017).

In response, the administration established the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) in 2000 and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) in 2003. The regime ratified international anti-corruption agreements – the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption and the United Nations Convention Against Corruption in 2003. In the same year, Nigeria joined the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, and in 2007, the

government enacted the Nigerian Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative Act to tackle corruption in the domestic oil sector.

Under the leadership of a fearless police officer Nuhu Ribadu, the EFCC became the driver of government anti-corruption efforts. The anti-corruption commission under Ribadu showed commendable courage. It achieved the conviction and imprisonment for embezzlement and graft of Diepreye Alamieyesiegha, then-Governor of Bayelsa State of Nigeria. Also convicted was the then Inspector-General of the Nigerian Police Force Tafa Balogun. The Commission recovered about $5 billion in looted funds, much of it being repatriated sums from late General Abacha's secret off-shore accounts. However, the anti-corruption campaign began to wobble when the elite launched a ferocious counterattack. Given Ribadu's centrality to the intensity of the anti-graft war, the Obasanjo administration came under intense pressure to relieve him as head of the EFCC. President Obasanjo refused to accede to calls for Ribadu's removal (Adebanwi & Obadare, 2011, pp. 202-206), perhaps to protect what remained of the administration's integrity following public criticisms that the war on corruption had become weak and compromised by executive interference.

Elite pressure to maintain the regime of corruption began to yield fruits during the administration of President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua (2007-2010). Succumbing to the pressure, President Yar'Adua approved the termination of Ribadu's appointment as head of the EFCC. The Yar'Adua administration pursued a weak anti-corruption campaign, ostensibly realising the implication of undertaking such a venture on elite consensus and the administration's survival.

The Administration of President Goodluck Jonathan (2010-2015) added the Freedom of Information (FOI) law to the list of reforms to combat public sector corruption. Still in force today, the FOI mandates public institutions to provide upon request, non-classified information to individuals and groups seeking to scrutinise the government. Nonetheless, the Jonathan

administration performed poorly on anti-corruption (Page, 2016). The majority of monumental corruption claims during this governance period occurred during the Jonathan regime. Farida Waziri, head of the EFCC during the Jonathan presidency, revealed how President Jonathan prevailed on the anti-graft agency to discontinue probe into the oil subsidy scandal (Nwachukwu, 2017). Two sources at the anti-graft agencies also noted that more times than they could count, their agencies' leadership received orders from political quarters to terminate the investigation of many corruption scandals.

The agencies came under pressure to scuttle cases that had reached the courts due to civil society pressure. The plug-pulling techniques include skipping court appearances, improperly filing prosecutorial evidence, and feigning difficulty with presenting witnesses. By taking these measures, the trial judge who most of the time was in on the plan, found the legal grounds to dismiss the cases or rule in favour of the accused, citing the agencies' failure to prove their case (Analyst, ICPC, personal communication, August 17, 2017; Prosecution Official, EFCC, personal communication, August 19, 2017). These are claims that the study had no means of substantiating. However, coming from individuals playing different roles in the anti-corruption agencies, their opinions may point to a reality with the fight against corruption in Nigeria during this period.

4.4 Elite Fragmentation and Reorganisation – the Collapse of the PDP

In 2010, the political system witnessed a breakdown in elite consensus within the PDP, due remotely, to the violation of the power zoning and rotation agreement. The turn of events began with the death of then-President Yar'Adua and ascent of then-Vice President Goodluck Jonathan to the Office of President. After the south's eight-year turn to hold the presidency terminated in 2007 with the end of the President Obasanjo regime, Yar'Adua held the presidency for the north.

President Yar'Adua surrendered to a terminal ailment in 2010 – just three years into what should have been an eight-year term for the north. Northern elites demanded to pick another northerner to complete the rest of the north's presidential term. However, Vice President Jonathan – a southerner – insisted on rising to the Office of President as stipulated in the 1999 Constitution in the event of a temporary or permanent absence of the President. As the north-south tension partly suppressed by this informality reignited, protests by organised civil society groups and international pressure compelled the Senate to recognise Jonathan as President.

The grapevine and the rumour mill had it that the Senate's decision came after Jonathan reached a gentleman agreement with the northern oligarchy to complete the last year of the Yar'Adua administration and step aside for a northern candidate to run on the platform of the PDP in the 2011 presidential election. President Jonathan reneged on the alleged agreement, secured the PDP's nomination by capturing the party's structures, and ultimately won a four-year term in 2011. Jonathan's violation of the informal power alternating agreement reached its height when he made it clear that he would seek re-election in 2015. His decision to further violate the accord sounded a definitive end to any prospects for broad elite consensus in the PDP.

4.4.1 The advent of a new elite alliance – The All Progressives Congress (APC)

The exodus from the PDP, of principal northern elites and their southern allies who were out of grace with the Jonathan administration, and their alignment with fringe political parties led to the formation of the APC. The APC became the next dominant cross-ethnic political party. The party participated in the 2015 election as the most formidable trans-ethnic challenger to PDP's 16-year hegemony.

The breakdown in elite agreement in the PDP and rise of the challenger APC coincided with renewed pro-anti-corruption demands led by donor-funded organised civil society groups. For example, the researcher was part of the implementation team of the Strengthening Citizens' Engagement with the Electoral Process (SCEEP) project. The SCEEP project was an ODA-funded nationwide good governance engagement with citizens preparatory to the 2015 general elections. Tens of engagements like the SCEEP encouraged the public to demand a shift from the politics of settlement that produced mass misery and underdevelopment. These demands were most forceful on social media due to enormous support from social media influencers. Aware of the dominant public mood regarding corruption, APC elites leveraged the innumerable corruption scandals which trailed the Jonathan administration and pledged a vigorous onslaught on corruption if elected to power.

The selection of former military ruler Muhammadu Buhari of the 'Umaru Dikko' fame as the presidential candidate of the APC was momentous. The retired General's undying anti-corruption resolve propelled his unsuccessful but impressive presidential bids in 2003, 2007 and 2011 on the platform of a peripheral party that merged to form the APC. Buhari had tremendous appeal among the masses who regarded him as incorruptible and an individual with the proven capacity and courage to confront Nigeria's obdurately corrupt civilian and military elites. Untypical of Nigerian elites, General Buhari had no questions of provable corruption hanging over his reputation. Therefore, most Nigerians welcomed his nomination as the APC presidential candidate with glee in high hopes that he would bring the same intensity that marked his 1983-1985 anti-corruption campaign (Mark & Smith, 2015).

Some respondents, however, believed that Buhari's nomination was a smoke and mirrors strategy to advance APC politicians' goal of wrestling power from the PDP to continue the regime

of looting. They argued that given the growing public clamours for tougher anti-corruption measures, APC politicians chose Buhari to give a veneer of sincerity to their duplicitous anti-corruption vows. This perception rests on the fact that a good number of APC elites had allegations of corruption tagging behind them. Some partook in the corruption that characterised the PDP's reign (J. Patrick, personal communication, January 17, 2018; M. Meli, personal communication, February 2, 2018). Perhaps oblivious to the ulterior intentions of his party men and women or simply trusting in his capacity to override their agenda when elected, General Buhari accepted the nomination. Vowing to deal corruption a fatal blow, he faced off against heavily-scandalised President Jonathan of the PDP in the 2015 presidential election.

4.5 Synthesis and Inference

Ethnic elites' appetite for rents continued through this period. Hence, the threat of instability hovered. However, going by the minimal indicators of stability adopted in the study – 'legitimate constitutional regime' and 'governmental longevity' (Hurwitz, 1973, p. 449-463) – the period was remarkably relatively stable. The study infers that the duration of relative stability was, because, unlike the pre-1999 period, this period fulfilled the necessary condition for corruption to become facilitatory to stability – *Elites form informal cross-ethnic alliance and institutions to share rents* (refer to Table 4).

The duration of relative stability seemed to have been due to the creation of a cross-ethnic elite alliance (the PDP) that oversaw the politics of corrupt settlement. Access to rent, legitimate and illegitimate, was broadened beyond region and ethnicity to include elites who demonstrated devotion to the PDP. Enabling inclusive access to corrupt rents was the transition to democracy in 1999, which not only liberalised politics to create elite polyarchy but also democratised corruption

to enhance elite cooperation. The power zoning and rotation agreement added to the strategy to improve cross-ethnic elite cooperation. Some respondents disagreed on whether the relative elite cooperation and stability might have been a function of the inclusivity of corruption organised through informal avenues.

A civil society activist conceded that elites demonstrated greater capacity to manage disagreements that in the past, rocked the boat. The respondent, however, disagreed that corruption played a functional role (N. Amara, personal communication, July 19, 2017). A former legislative aide argued that elite solidarity might have been the outcome of a resolve to cease hostilities and give the democratic regime a chance to succeed. The respondent believed that having realised that combative exchanges led to the ouster of democratic regimes in the past, elites may have chosen to conduct exchanges more peacefully (N. Clifford, personal communication, August 17, 2017). Another respondent noted:

> …the argument has been made that political corruption is necessary to maintain political stability. I say no, what it has done is to maintain some level of elite gang up against society. The situation remains highly unstable; the system remains delegitimised and undermined by corrupt practices…the indicators we find are not those of political stability. If we were to look at comparative experience even within the African continent, we have seen that countries where there no such high level of corruption have been more stable – talking about Botswana, Tanzania and Senegal. These are countries that have experienced more stability. If you look at their governance indicators, no high levels of corruption. …in those cases where systems have been maintained by elite pacts and corrupt practices,

> once there is a crack to the elite pact, the system comes unravelling. A case in point is Côte d'Ivoire [in the 1980s]… (U. Ukiwo, personal communication, July 24, 2017).

Other explanations exist for the unprecedented duration of political stability. One explanation is that it was largely a function of the military choosing not to intervene in governance. For example, Ehwarieme's (2011) study on the first 11 years of the democracy (1999 to 2009) found that improvement in democratic governance accounted less (as there were no remarkable improvements) compared to the military factor. He acknowledges that political exchanges featured the usual strains that prompted military coups until 1998, yet, unlike in the past, the military stayed away. As to why the military did not intervene, considering that coups were often justified as missions to rid the polity of corruption and political strife, some have suggested that it is because of the fear of international sanctions. According to a civil society activist:

> …some of these analyses cannot be divorced from the context of the world we find ourselves today. After the collapse of the Berlin Wall…President George Bush (Snr) talked about the new world order, and [President] Clinton and the Washington establishment came up with the democratic theory…military coups are no longer fashionable. For instance, the AU, ECOWAS [and] the UN have come up with conventions and protocols that ban [military intervention in governance]. …one of the major things discouraging coups in Nigeria and Africa today is that the international community frowns at it (J. Austin, personal communication, August 4, 2017).

Miller (2016), on his part, argues that the military was reoriented and disciplined to submit to the leadership of democratic institutions. Miller identifies three key factors that helped to

discourage military intervention in governance during this period. The first is the contracting of a US consortium – Military Professional Resource International – to 're-professionalise' and 'civilianise' the military (p. 42). The second is the compulsory retirement of 93 top military officials who held political offices during the various military regimes. The third is the probe of military personnel for human rights abuses committed during military rule (p. 1).

While these arguments are valid, they cannot sufficiently account for the duration of relative stability while the political causes of ethnic distrust remained unaddressed and corruption was pervasive. On the argument of the military keeping away due to reorientation or fear of international sanctions, a counter-argument is that, between 1999 and 2014, some failed, and successful coups took place in Asia and elsewhere in Africa, even though the data shows that coup rates were generally down. Some of the successful coups occurred in Niger (2010), Egypt (2011, 2013), Mali (2012), Thailand (2014), and Yemen (2014). The study contends that the institution of informalities to enable settlement politics might have played a crucial role in keeping civilian and military elites cooperative and supportive of stability.

Campbell's (2017) observation that the top echelon of Nigeria's military was 'incorporated into the political class' provides a veiled backing for this claim. Campbell stopped short of giving details about military elites' involvement in the political class, an understandable caution, given his position as a former US envoy to Nigeria. However, the evidence shows that military elites not only participated in the nitty-gritty of governance in a way too strange in a democracy; they also took part in the corruption that marked this period (as we shall find in the next chapter). A respondent asserted that the military brass became fully absorbed into the political process

following the coup scare of 2004.[12] The co-optation of the military hierarchy into the political class, according to the respondent, was to create an incentive for the military authority 'to protect the democratic regime' (J. Patrick, personal communication, January 17, 2018). Another interviewee noted that, while the fear of international sanctions was a valid deterrent, the fact that the military hierarchy was involved in the looting while not directly in power could have been a crucial reason they found it needless to seize power (I. Ibaba, personal communication, July 25, 2017).

Worthy of mention, civilians who demonstrated the capacity to undermine the frail stability also had the doors to the alliance and regime of looting opened to them. For example, in the oil-producing Niger Delta region in the south where armed insurgency threatened stability, the governing elites integrated the insurgents into the rent distribution system. The 2009 Presidential Amnesty Programme pacified armed Niger Delta militants with corrupt oil facilities surveillance contracts. Although hardly was any surveillance done, the government rewarded the combatants with millions of dollars per year (Zibima & Allison, 2013, p. 5). The settlement calmed the warlords who also were integrated into the political class. A lecturer of politics believed that elites were tactful in response to strains on the delicate stability because there seemed to have been a shared realisation that individuals and groups would poke the system for rents. Therefore, when the pokers' disruptive potential was deemed substantial, they were integrated into the reward system (T. Zibima, personal communication, July 13, 2017).

As to why a mass resistance like the BBOC movement did not emerge during this period, the study infers that the period did not fulfil all three conditions articulated in Table 5.

[12] The coup scare, which was not really a coup scare as was later determined, was said to be at the behest of Major Hanza Almustapha, then-Chief Security Officer (CSO) to the late dictator Sani Abacha. Following the death of his principal in 1998, the former CSO was in detention facing court martial over human rights abuses and murder. It is alleged that his loyalists in the army caused the coup scare to compel his release and acquittal (Meldrum, 2004).

Condition 1 – *The masses were embedded in patron-client relations* – was fulfilled. The evidence shows that due to the failure of formal welfare, high unemployment and poverty, patronage exchanges (stomach infrastructure politics) thrived on a larger scale, embedding the masses (Ojo, 2014; Ojo, 2019).

Condition 2 – *The masses were dependent on patronage for their livelihood* – was fulfilled. Due to the scale of patron-client relations and multiple structures through which the masses drew patronage from elites, patronage functioned as a safety net for poor masses. As a result, for much of the period, the masses remained devoted to political patrons. There were isolated instances where the masses defended elites who faced prosecution for corruption. The masses often took protests to anti-corruption agencies and the courts to denounce the prosecution of their patrons (Ramon, 2017). As explained in the next chapter, these protests were in no way similar to the BBOC resistance, which was a protest in the interest of the masses.

Condition 3 – 'the intensity and comprehensiveness of anti-corruption enforcement' – was not fulfilled. The reason is that the politics of settlement created conditions that weakened government capacity for strict anti-corruption enforcement. Anti-corruption efforts mostly went through the motions. Where such efforts seemed severe, they mostly targeted elites outside the PDP and those within the party deemed persona non grata for violating the party's dictates. Drawing on Adebanwi and Obadare's (2011) account, what could have been a far-reaching anti-corruption programme under the Obasanjo regime lost the momentum when attacked by the elite. Perhaps, cautious not to strain elite relations, succeeding administrations until 2014 deprioritised enforcing severe anti-corruption measures.

According to Martini (2014), 'executive interference' and 'political pressure' weakened anti-corruption agencies during this period (p. 10). Since anti-corruption measures failed to restrict the

illicit outflow of government money, the patronage system upon which the subsistence of many vulnerable Nigerians seemed to have relied stayed largely operational. With the flow of patronage hardly undermined, anti-anti-corruption reactions similar to the BBOC resistance could not have occurred.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Unravelling (2015-2019)

5.1 The Onset of an Unfamiliar Dispensation

This chapter argues that this period further unravelled the foundation of elite cooperation and political stability – the politics of corrupt settlement facilitated by informal cross-ethnic alliance and institutions to share rent. Also, the period shone more light on the overlooked linkage between corruption and informal welfare in Nigeria. Giving credence to the functionality of corruption during this period was the collapse of the elite alliance, threats to the frail stability, and elite and popular hostility to what began as a strong anti-corruption programme.

If measured against Hurwitz's (1973) minimal indicators of political stability – 'legitimate constitutional regime' and 'governmental longevity' (p. 449-463) – this period, like the preceding one, remained relatively politically stable. As of the time of the study, the democratic regime entered its twentieth year uninterrupted. However, political stability came under severe strains. This period diverged from the preceding one in at least four respects.

First, with a resonating campaign anchored majorly on ridding the polity of corruption and corrupt elites, then-candidate Buhari of the APC defeated incumbent President Jonathan of the PDP in the 2015 presidential election. Second, the APC won the majority of seats in the national parliament and controlled nearly two-thirds of the 36 subnational governments previously in the grip of the PDP (British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), 2015). Third, Nigeria shifted from a single-party-dominated multiparty democracy to a two-dominant party system. That is to say, although the PDP lost its 16-year hegemony, it held the numbers to form a formidable opposition. Fourth, after a period of weak anti-corruption enforcement under the PDP, the period opened with

a vigorous anti-corruption programme that irked elites and set them against the administration. Elite antagonism first emerged when President Buhari seemed unable to constitute a cabinet.

As a gesture of his commitment to depart from the norm, the-candidate Buhari had vowed on the campaign trail to constitute his cabinet with technocrats immediately after inauguration. Past presidents often waited two to three months before unveiling a cabinet often fraught with old, spent and corrupt politicians. This norm drew the ire of many who believed that a cabinet should comprise vibrant technocrats and constituted as soon as a president assumed office. However, President Buhari spent his first six months in office without a cabinet (Ojibara, 2017), an unprecedented delay that opened a floodgate of criticisms and speculations. Allison (2015), for example, attributes the delay to put together a cabinet to President Buhari's carefulness to balance competence, patronage, and demographic diversity in his appointments.

As a ranking member of the APC mentioned, the cause of the delay was much more than the need to balance capacity, patronage and diversity. It was instead due to a fierce standoff between President Buhari and the leadership of the APC whose preferred cabinet nominees included PDP defectors and other politicians with allegations of corruption, most of whom bankrolled the party's electoral success. The standoff eventually ended with an overwhelmed President Buhari succumbing to his party (APC official, personal communication, July 25, 2017). The composition of the cabinet supports the respondent's claim given Buhari's vow to keep corrupt elites at bay. With tainted politicians revealed as minister-designates, the integrity of a man voted for his anti-corruption stance came under doubt. Most Nigerians who had expected a tough war on corruption began to question the President's capacity to stand up to the corrupt political class (Olateju, 2015).

A central theme that ran through some interviews was that the fragmentation of the PDP under President Jonathan and reorganisation of most of its elites in the APC was more a reaction to

changes to the pecking order in access to corrupt rents than President Jonathan's violation of power the agreement. Civilian and military elites who saw to Jonathan's rise to the Office of President in 2010 became the new powerbrokers and first accessors of opportunities for illicit rent accumulation. As a result, elites whose access to public resources was adversely affected by the sudden change plotted to take back power and reassert their relevance. A respondent also held the view that the opposition to President Buhari's choice for a cabinet came from politicians who walked him to success to re-establish themselves in the highest positions of influence and wealth (A. Razak, personal communication, July 8, 2017). The cabinet incident was only the beginning of elite counter-reactions that this period would experience.

5.2 The Buhari War on Corruption

The Buhari administration's first anti-corruption measure was to consolidate the revenue flow of the national government through the Federation Account as mandated in sections 61(1) and (2) of the 1999 Constitution. PDP administrations since 1999 failed to uphold this constitutional requirement. The Buhari administration implemented the Treasury Single Account (TSA) policy. The TSA consolidated all federal financial receipts in the Central Bank of Nigeria to ensure oversight of government financial flows. Before the TSA, public institutions operated accounts in commercial banks where, in addition to questionable bank charges, withdrawals were made almost without control. The government claimed that as a result of the TSA policy, it made millions of dollars in savings in just over a year of implementation (Onuba, 2017).

A related measure was the strict enforcement of the Bank Verification Number (BVN) policy initiated in 2014. Before the Buhari administration, concerns were that many public looters hid their loot under false identities with local commercial banks. The BVN linked all bank accounts in

Nigeria to a single biometric identification system, thus identifying the real owners of bank accounts. Accounts not linked to a BVN were deactivated and the financial deposits forfeited to the government. Like the TSA, the BVN cost commercial banks financial losses as banks were major beneficiaries of the corrupt system. The administration also ensured strict oversight on the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) and other revenue-generating agencies. Many Nigerians believed that the lack of oversight of the FIRS in the past enabled politicians and bureaucrats to loot internally-generated revenue as easily as they stole oil proceeds.

The administration moved against the outrageous pork-barrel finance called the 'constituency development fund'[13] officially provided in the annual national budget since 1999 for federal legislators (a practice also commonplace at subnational governments). Like the ostentatious parliamentary emoluments,[14] this unregulated settlement money had become a major concern for many who saw it as legal corruption and called for its abolition (Ademolekun, 2016).

Anti-corruption agencies sprang back into action after years of dormancy. The ICPC retained its leadership, while a police officer Ibrahim Magu, was appointed to head the EFCC. The ICPC began the probe of then-Senate President and APC strongman Bukola Saraki for breach of the assets declaration law mandating individuals to correctly declare their assets and liabilities with the

[13] Funds allocated to each legislator since 1999 to provide roads, hospitals, water, electricity, etc., for their constituents. Although legislators deny having access to the money and that they determine how it is spent, it is believed that they syphon the allocations through proxies and phoney companies. The constituency development fund is a primary feature of most high-corruption developing states such as Kenya, the Philippines, Uganda, Sudan and Tanzania. The monies serve patronage purposes than it supports development (Baskin, 2010, p. 4). In the Nigerian case, the actual amount paid to each lawmaker is a highly-guarded secret, but it is rumoured to be in the neighbourhood of $554,000 to $600,000 per annum.

[14]Since the return to democracy in 1999, Nigerian politicians, mostly parliamentarians, rewarded themselves with outrageous monthly emoluments. It was revealed in 2018 that each federal senator earned about $36,000 in salary and allowances per month for a country where the monthly minimum wage at the time of study was less than $50 (*BBC*, 2018). This placed Nigerian legislators among the highest paid in the world. The unjust self-reward was one of many facets of legal corruption that combined with illegal corruption to impoverish ordinary Nigerians.

Code of Conduct Commission before assuming public office. The EFCC also opened probes into some of the corruption scandals that came to light during the PDP regime, especially under the Jonathan administration. The investigations led to the recovery of billions of dollars (*Sahara Reporters*, 2019). Partly responsible for the recoveries was the 'Whistle-blower Policy' introduced to incentivise members of the public to report corruption. The policy promised a-5% commission on the total value of recovered loots to the whistle-blower if their information leads to a recovery. By early 2017, the policy had facilitated the recovery of $151 million, some of which were abandoned by individuals whose identities remain unknown (*Vanguard*, 2017).

Figure 13: Loots recovered at a home

Note: $43m, £27,000, ₦23m recovered at Osborne Towers, Lagos, Nigeria.
Source: *Punch* (2017).

Figure 14: Loots recovered at an airport

Note: ₦49m abandoned at the Kaduna airport, Nigeria.

Source: *Punch* (2017).

Some of the recoveries came from the prosecution of senior military officials who participated in the colossal corruption that characterised the PDP's reign. From the trial of three Airforce chiefs – Air Marshal Adesola Amosu, Air Vice Marshal Jacob Adigun, and Air Commodore Olugbenga Gbadebo – the EFCC made an initial recovery of about $5 million out of the $55 million stolen by the trio from the Airforce (Iriekpen, 2018). The trial of a former Chief of Army Staff General Kenneth Minimah, led to the recovery of about $5 million being some of the retired General's share of the $2.1 billion Boko Haram arms scandal (Alli, 2018). The EFCC also prosecuted a former Chief of Defence Staff Air Chief Marshal Alex Badeh for alleged embezzlement of about $10 million belonging to the Airforce. The anti-corruption agency was pursuing Badeh's case until his assassination in 2018 (*Premium Times*, 2018). Some have speculated that his assassination was

part of a desperate plot by the cabal of corrupt elites to ensure that he did not expose the system of corruption in Nigeria's defence sector (Adepegba, 2018).

The administration began a feud with the judiciary when it ordered the 2016 secret service-led siege on the residences of federal judges for alleged judgement racketeering and misuse of official privilege to protect corrupt politicians facing prosecution. The nationwide raids, according to the government, followed investigative efforts that showed that some judges received financial and other forms of inducement to stall the prosecution of politicians answering to cases of corruption. The feud would consume the then Chief Justice of Nigeria (CJN) Walter Onnoghen. The EFCC opened a case against the nation's number one judge at the Code of Conduct Tribunal for nondisclosure of about $1.7 million found in an account registered in his name – a breach of the assets declaration law. Suspended from office by the President while facing trial, the CJN resigned his position following reports that the National Judicial Commission had recommended his compulsory retirement after an investigation into the allegation (Okakwu, 2019).

The government secured the conviction and imprisonment of two former state governors – Joshua Dariye and Jolly Nyame, and a Senior Advocate of Nigeria[15] – for graft, embezzlement and perversion of justice respectively (*Channels TV*, 2018). Although in light of disappointment over the cabinet issue many Nigerians harboured scepticism over President Buhari's ability to address corruption, these early strides brought some reassurance. Due to these efforts, some Nigerians expressed satisfaction with the Buhari anti-corruption campaign (see Figure 15).

[15] A person awarded with Nigeria's most prestigious honour for outstanding legal practice.

Figure 15: A citizen pleased with the war on corruption

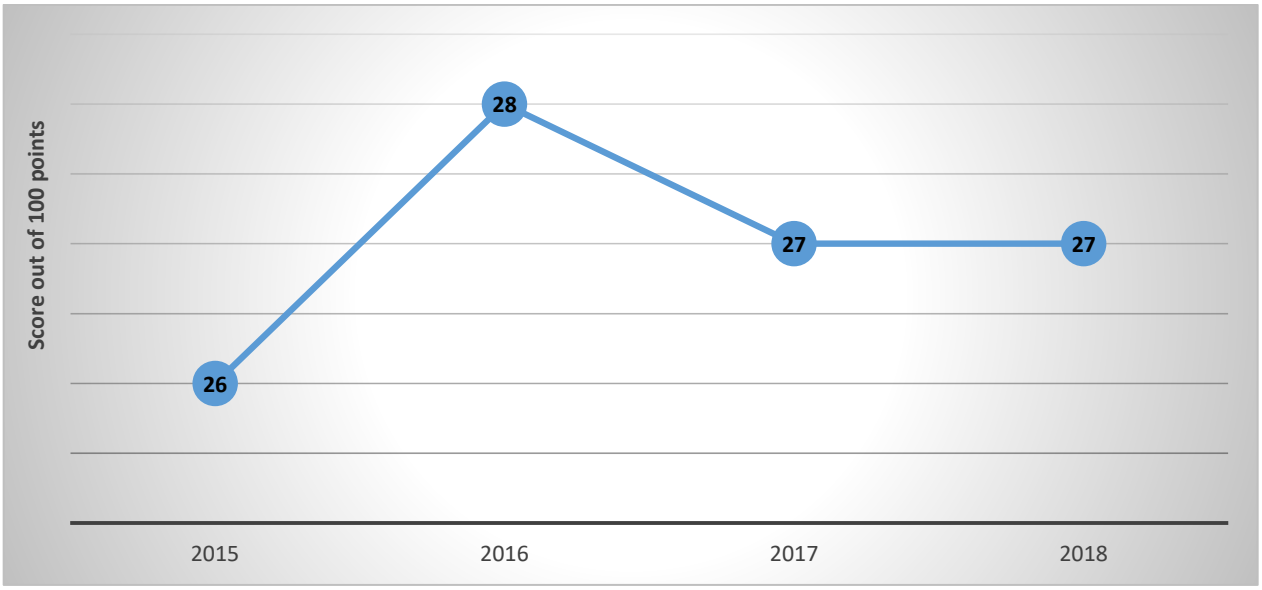
Facebook user (January 28, 2019).[16]

Impressed by the administration's early anti-corruption achievements, the then US Secretary of State John Kerry was full of praise for the Buhari administration. At the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, Kerry urged the world to appreciate the strides made by the Buhari administration by providing developing countries with every support needed to confront corruption (Bada, 2016). The AU also recognised the administration's commitment to the fight against corruption with the appointment of President Buhari as the Union's anti-corruption chair (*Premium Times*, 2018).

It is essential to point out that despite these strides, perceptions of the administration's war on corruption remained divided. The lack of consensus is observable in major corruption barometers. As shown in the charts below, TI CPI and Afrobarometer show contrasting results on public perceptions on the experience of corruption under the Buhari administration.

[16] For original post, see https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=10211039352174363&id=1671965508

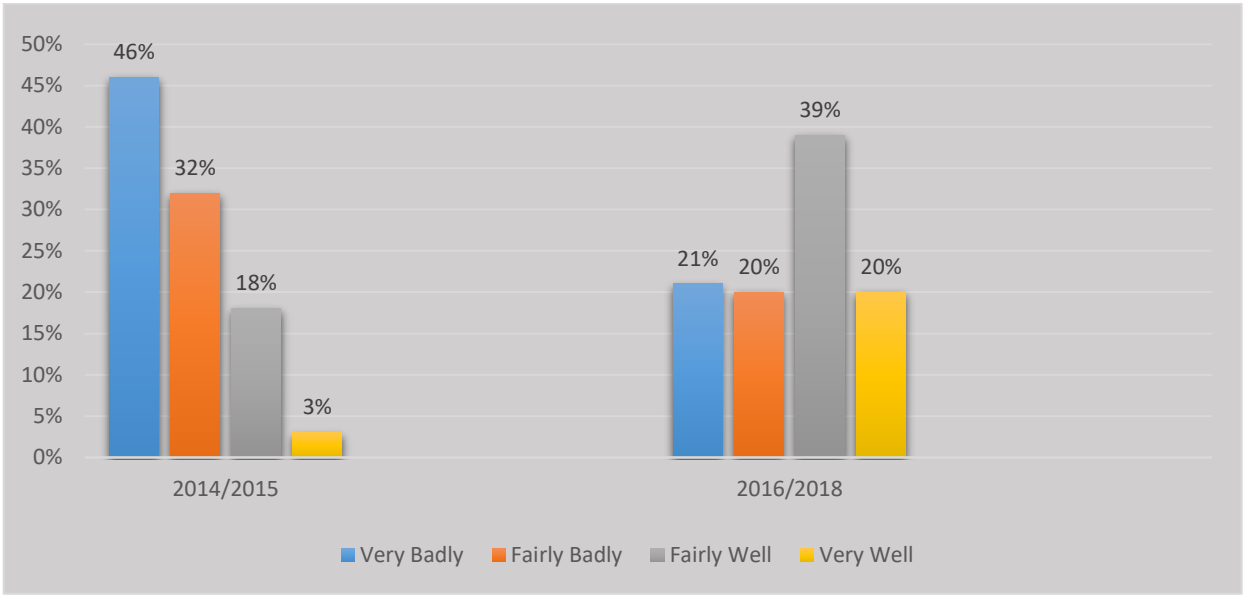
Figure 16: Corruption perceptions (2015-2018)



Note: Perceived corruption remained high as the administration's efforts failed to push Nigeria past the dismal score of 27 in points.

Source: Adapted from TI CPI.

Figure 17: Government performance in the war on corruption (2015 - 2018)



Note: Combined positive ratings for the war on corruption increased from 21% in 2015 to 59% in 2018. However, many Nigerians polled wanted the government to do more.

Source: See footnote 12. Also, see Afrobarometer (2018).

Informing the negative perceptions, as it seemed, were perceived and actual biases in the execution of the anti-corruption campaign. Some argued that mostly targeted for prosecution were members of the PDP (Abosede, 2018; Mossman, 2019). The US government that was once effusive in praise of the anti-corruption programme expressed worry over unaddressed corruption allegations involving APC elites and allies of President Buhari (*Sahara Reporters*, 2019). One case involved Babachir Lawal, then-Secretary to the Federal Government. Lawal, a principal APC elite and appointee of the President, was implicated in the theft of relief funds meant for victims of Boko Haram's reign of terror in northeast Nigeria. President Buhari turned a deaf ear to calls by civil society groups for a probe into the allegation.

After almost a year of public outcry, the Secretary was relieved of his appointment and left unprosecuted. Further criticisms compelled the EFCC to invite the politician for questioning (*Sahara Reporters*, 2018), but the move revealed a face-saving strategy as the administration made no charges against him. Same do-nothing attitude followed allegations that the management of the national oil company – NNPC – may have violated procurement rules and due process in the award of oil sector contracts to the tune of $25 billion. The Vice President of Nigeria Yemi Osinbajo came forth to clarify that the allegation was untrue. However, given the company's infamy as elites' cash cow, many had expected the EFCC to open an investigation to dispel any doubts (Ogundipe, 2017).

Furthermore, politicians who defected from the PDP to the APC while being probed for corruption received absolution as the EFCC suddenly backed down on their cases. Two notable cases involved a former minister Misuliu Obanikoro, and a former governor Orji Uzor Kalu who had the EFCC on their heels for alleged graft and embezzlement of public funds while as PDP politicians. Obanikoro was facing trial for his role in the Boko Haram arms deal while Kalu faced

prosecution for looting funds belonging to the state he served as governor (International Centre for Investigative Reporting, 2017). Like many others, following their defection to the APC, the administration became uninterested in their trial. Kalu would go on to win election to the Senate on the platform of the APC.

A common opinion was that, like President Obasanjo's anti-corruption war, the Buhari anti-graft campaign lost the initial fervour. A critical examination of the capitulation of both the Obasanjo and Buhari anti-corruption drives tends to reveal the role of hostile elite reaction expressed as threats to the administrations' longevity and the frail stability. In the case of the Buhari administration, the threats seemed more pronounced because the anti-corruption campaign was distinct from President Obasanjo's in one crucial way. While both anti-graft wars shared a common weakness – partisan prosecution of corrupt elites, unlike the Obasanjo war on corruption, the Buhari anti-corruption campaign placed a considerable limitation on illicit outflows of government money, hence, the scale of ferocious elite counter-reaction. Akinyemi et al. (2018) attribute the success at restricting illicit access to public money mainly to the TSA policy and other oversight measures. Hostile reactions to the anti-corruption programme tend to support the observation that despite its shortcomings, the anti-graft war's uniqueness was its relative success at limiting illicit outflows of government money.

5.3 Elite Resistance to the Anti-Corruption Campaign?

Elite counter-reaction to the anti-corruption campaign began in the APC-dominated Senate when senators turned down President Buhari's request for the confirmation of Ibrahim Magu's appointment as head of the EFCC. The President appointed the EFCC Chair in an acting capacity for nearly a year before requesting the Senate's statutory clearance to make Magu's appointment

substantive. The Senate rejected the President's request, basing their decision on a report by the State Security Service which they claimed indicted Magu for corruption, an allegation the President dismissed for lacking substance to prevent his appointee's confirmation. A respondent claimed that the legislators' opposition to Magu's appointment was because 'the EFCC under him [Magu] has been giving them sleepless nights' (APC official, personal communication, July 25, 2017). The respondent argued that the aggrieved lawmakers hoped to ease Magu out just like Nuhu Ribadu during the administration of President Yar'Adua.

Despite the Senate's repeated rejection, President Buhari retained Magu – a decision that the Senate interpreted as unlawful executive defiance (George, 2017). The Magu incident and other spats set the parliament in open defiance of the executive. The parliament routinely withheld action on crucial executive requests, particularly appropriation bills, thereby slowing down the machinery of governance. The crisis over the 2018 appropriation bill which stayed in the parliament unattended for eight months would be the most dramatic. When eventually, the legislators returned with an approved version of the budget, the executive made claims of unacceptable alterations and insertions meant to benefit parliamentarians (Omilana, 2018).

Violent events erupted across the country. In the south, new armed militias, chief among them the Niger Delta Avengers, launched a fresh string of attacks on oil infrastructure that caused the government huge revenue losses. The groups demanded justice for the oil-producing Niger Delta people and discontinuation of the probe of southern politicians for corruption (*Sahara Reporters*, 2016). The Independent People of Biafra (IPOB) also emerged as the new militia pushing for the secession of the south-eastern region from Nigeria, same agitation that was the immediate trigger of the 1967-1970 civil war after the coups of 1966. IPOBs' demonstrations attracted violent military responses that led to hundreds of deaths and loss of property. The secessionist clamour

threatened to reignite north-south hostility when northern and southern youth groups with demonstrable violent capabilities issued ultimatums for non-northerners to quit the north and non-southerners to vacate the south (*Sahara Reporters*, 2017; Ebiri, 2017). Adding to these threats were violent farmers-herders clashes in the north and some southern locations that claimed thousands of lives and raised fears of nationwide Christian-Muslim violent confrontations (Akinleye, 2018).

Furthermore, fears emerged in 2017 that some politicians and military officers mooted a coup. The coup threat came to light when the Nigerian Army issued a direct warning to its officers and politicians believed to have engaged in talks with political connotations (Aluko, 2017). Within the same period, the Deputy Senate President Ike Ekweremadu remarked on the floor of the Senate that undemocratic events in the country could trigger a coup (Olaifa, 2018). Worthy of note, the Senator's coup remarks which attracted a barrage of criticisms followed revelations that the EFCC had uncovered multimillion-dollar fixed assets alleged to belong to him but undeclared and hidden overseas. The administration, through its stolen wealth repatriation agreement with some countries, was making plans to confiscate the assets and prosecute the Senator (*Sahara Reporters*, 2018). In 2019, the government made another claim of an uncovered coup plot (Ogundipe, 2019) that was dismissed by the public as a mere hoax.

Although such threats are not entirely strange to Nigeria, the Buhari administration remained insistent in blaming rent-seeking politicians, mostly PDP elites, for stoking the threats. The government claimed it had proof that the violent events across the country were orchestrated by pro-corruption elites to derail the fight against corruption (*The Guardian*, 2017; Aziken, Ajayi & Yakubu, 2017). As claimed by an official of the APC who may have spoken from a partisan standpoint, in addition to sponsoring violence and making inciting comments, 'the stranglehold of proceeds of corruption in the Nigerian economy' was another major weapon deployed to unsettle

the polity. Corrupt PDP elites and their private-sector cronies, the respondent claimed, were among the biggest investors in the economy. Therefore, when the government began the anti-corruption campaign, they retaliated both through violence and by scaling back reinvestments, placing embargoes on recruitment, and effecting systematic retrenchment of workers to cause panic and revolt against the government (APC official, personal communication, July 25, 2017).

On the contrary, a respondent extricated PDP politicians from what he called the Buhari government's 'deceitful anti-corruption programme'. The respondent argued instead that the Buhari administration was pointing accusing fingers everywhere to conceal the hypocrisy in their fight against corruption (PDP official, personal communication, August 9, 2017). Another respondent, however, suggested that if the administration's claim was true, then APC politicians could have as well been behind the threats. The respondent believed that APC elites must have held the Buhari government in as much contempt as their PDP counterparts given the limitation placed on corrupt wealth accumulation (A. Razak, personal communication, July 8, 2017).

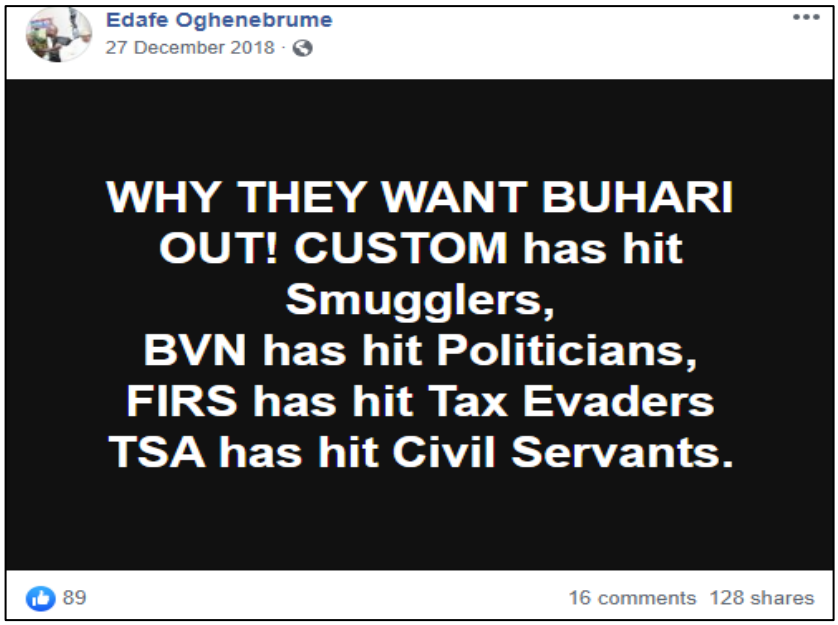
Some dismissed the government's claim that pro-corruption politicians sponsored threats to the fragile stability to derail the war on corruption as a mere conspiracy theory. As they argue, if the Buhari administration had evidence that certain individuals were working to undermine the state, the administration would have exercised the authority of the state to see to it that such individuals faced trial for treason. What critics ignore is that in weak states such as Nigeria, it is nearly impossible to bring down the full weight of the state on certain individuals and groups even where the evidence is palpable that by their actions, they put the state in jeopardy. The reason remains as Migdal (1988) has noted that the state is too weak to exercise the monopoly on the use of violence. Often, influential elites and groups possess the capacity for violence, and when confronted, can further endanger the political system.

5.3.1 The disintegration of the APC

An internal crisis began in the APC in 2017 that began the party's gradual division. A professor of sociology suggested that the crisis may have erupted because of the restriction on illegitimate rent accumulation traditionally open to the party in power, and the spate of prosecution of influential elites (C. Okolocha, personal communication, August 5, 2017). A faction of the party – the Reformed APC (R-APC) as they called themselves – emerged. It comprised politicians who openly berated President Buhari for lack of patronage and many influential APC elites prosecuted for corruption, including then-Senate President Saraki. Having failed to seize control of the core structure of the APC from President Buhari's henchmen, the R-APC organised a grand defection to the PDP. The development handed the PDP control of the Senate, House of Representatives and some subnational governments that the former ruling party lost to the APC in 2015.

The re-enlarged and reinvigorated opposition vilified the administration and amplified calls for President Buhari's resignation on account of the growing instability across the country. Some observers, however, believed that the enlargement of the opposition was because of the adverse impact the Buhari anti-corruption programme had on the politics of corrupt settlement to which elites had become accustomed (see Figure 18).

Figure 18: A citizen links elite hostility to the war on corruption



Facebook user (December 27, 2018).[17]

The administration had to contend not only with elite counteractions and strains on the delicate stability but with citizens' anti-anti-corruption reaction to the same anti-corruption programme they helped midwife by their votes in 2015.

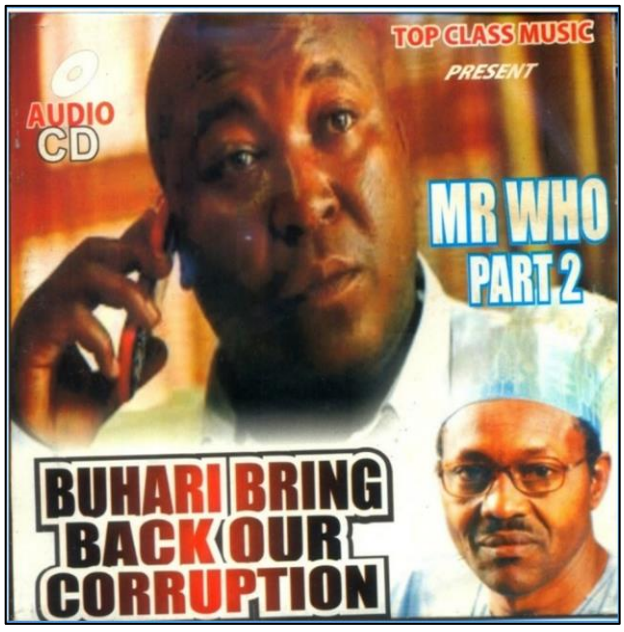
5.4 Citizens' Resistance: The BBOC Counter-campaign

The BBOC pushback contradicts the notion espoused by studies such as Kos (2014) and TI (2017) that suggest that as victims of corruption, the masses are eager to support anti-corruption stringent anti-corruption enforcement. When it began, the BBOC riposte seemed no more than a mimicry of the Bring Back Our Girls campaign demanding the release of more than 200 schoolgirls abducted by Boko Haram in Chibok town in northeast Nigeria in 2014. However, as it intensified, it became the symbol of the masses' resistance to the Buhari anti-graft war.

[17] To see original post, see https://www.facebook.com/edafe.oghenebrume/posts/2118816118179601

The BBOC counter-campaign exposed the paradox in the masses' clamour for stringent anti-corruption enforcement that propelled President Buhari to power in 2015. Unlike the more familiar ethnic elites-instigated citizens' denunciation of anti-corruption proceedings against political patrons, the BBOC resistance was citizens-led, nationwide, and had no discernible ethnic colouration. Promoters of the BBOC counter-campaign denounced the Buhari war on corruption, not in defence of the elite, but for what they claimed to be the campaign's role in the deterioration of socio-economic conditions since the coming of the Buhari administration. The BBOC campaigners fervently demanded a return to the pre-2015 period when, despite colossal corruption, life was more liveable for ordinary citizens. The BBOC proponents claimed that citizens' economic state was much better under the corrupt PDP regime.

Figure 19: BBOC sympathisers



Note (A): A BBOC musical album.

Source: Author.

Note (B): Little boy holds out a BBOC placard.

Source: Gistmania.[18]

[18] The photo is available at https://www.gistmania.com/talk/topic,284535.0.html

Many Nigerians expressed nostalgia in everyday conversations, on public transportation, talkback radio, and social media, particularly Twitter.[19] Two stanzas from a BBOC poem read:

Bring back our corruption; we need it back!
It is better than the white hunger seen in the street,
Hunters hunting the haunting spare of illusion,
Jagabanized faces fashioned to kill our pride.
Bring back our corruption we pray thee our lord,
bring back our black heart and return the whites,
Silence isn't empty; it is full of answers to questions.

Bring back the street light to light the street,
bring back the tomatoes from the cow's belly,
Bring back the tooth you took from the child!
Bring back our corruption! Bring back our pride!
It is better than the hardship that rapes us daily.
We can still bank our heart in corruption than
the horse of promises made in the blank cheque.[20]

The BBOC retort underscores a weakness in neoliberal anti-corruption ideals in non-welfare neopatrimonial states. Neoliberal anti-corruption demands and reforms are often informed by understandings that tend to overlook the reach of proceeds from corruption by elites. As the BBOC

[19] See https://twitter.com/search?f=tweets&vertical=default&q=%23bringbackourcorruption&src=typd

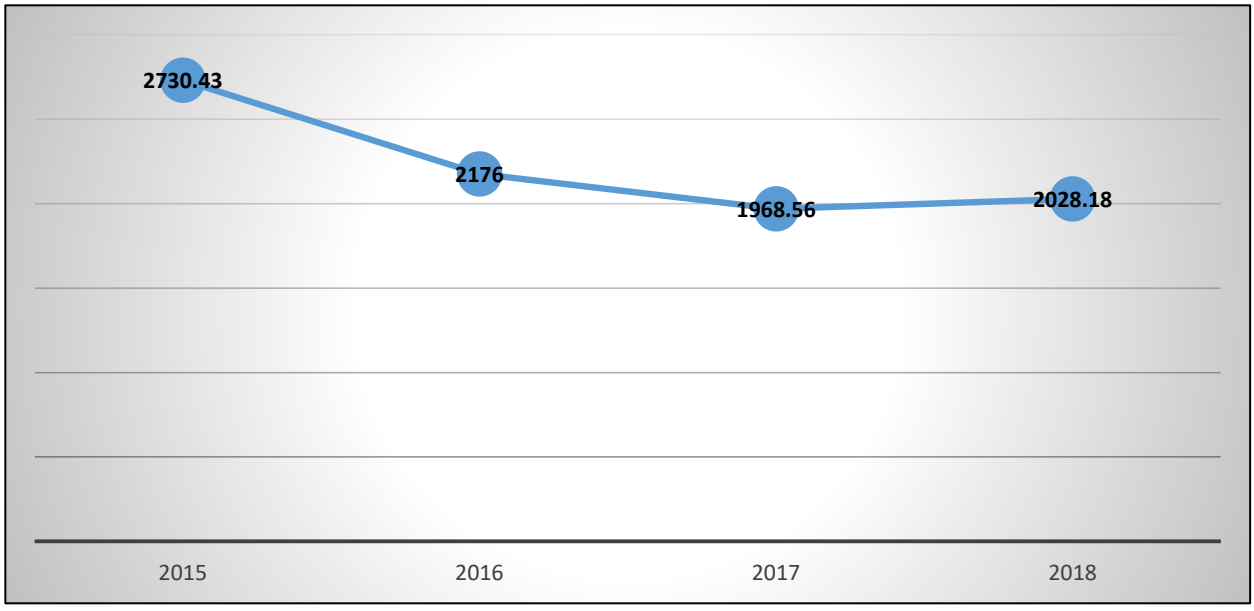
[20] Poem by John C. Vincent. For complete version see https://www.poemhunter.com/poem/bring-back-our-corruption/

counter-reaction suggests, more than scholars may have realised, proceeds from corruption may be a lifeline for ordinary citizens where formal welfare provision is weak, poverty is rife, and patronage exchanges are widespread. A professor at Tennessee's Vanderbilt University remarks:

> In their desperation for respite, many Nigerians are now paradoxically yearning for the corruption that they and their leaders blame for their economic woes, but theirs is not a nostalgia for corruption per se but for a period in which, despite or because of corruption, the flow of illicit government funds created a sense of economic opportunity and prosperity (Ochonu, 2016).

Under the Buhari administration, average GDP growth rate dropped from 7% as of 2014 to 1.8% (World Bank, n,d). GDP per capita similarly declined.

Figure 20: Nigeria's GDP per capita in US$ (2015-2018)

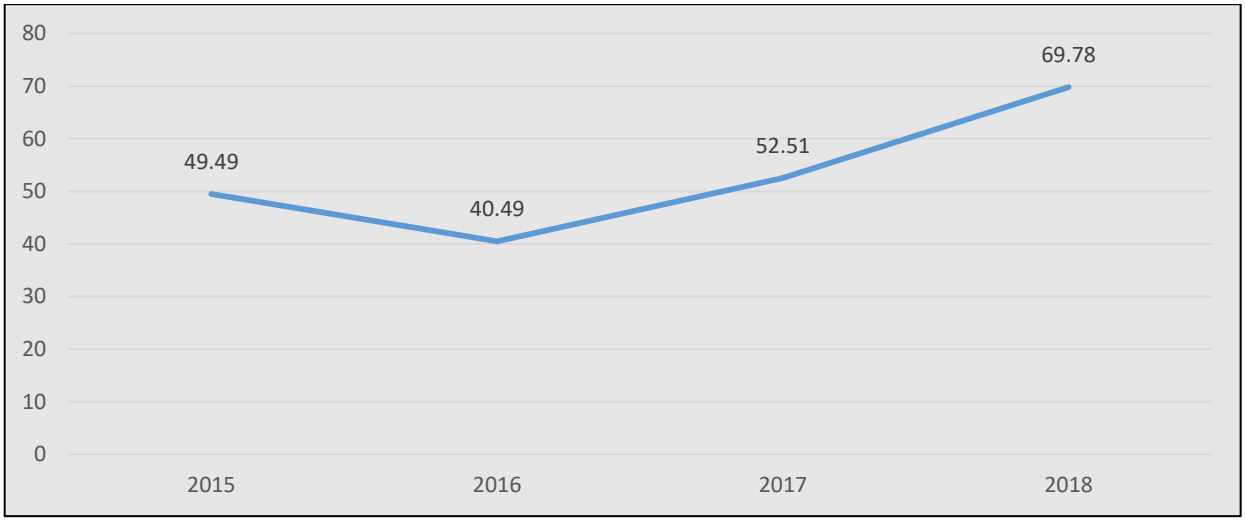


Note: In the first year of the administration, GDP per capital maintained the 2014 rate of $2,730 (see Figure 11) but began a decline to $2,028 by 2018.

Source: World Bank (n.d).

Mainly responsible for the decline in GDP per capita was the slump in global oil prices, that began in 2015. As shown in the preceding chapters, Nigeria's economy fluctuates with events in the global oil market. Oil constitutes about 90% of Nigeria's export and about 70% of total government revenue. Thus, being an oil-dependent economy, the drop in oil prices had catastrophic impacts on Nigeria as it had on Venezuela, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Russia.

Figure 21: Average global oil prices in US$ (2015-2018)



Note: From $96 per barrel in 2014 (refer to Figure 10), oil prices declined to an average of $49.49 in 2015, $40.49 in 2016, before peaking at about $70 per barrel in 2018.

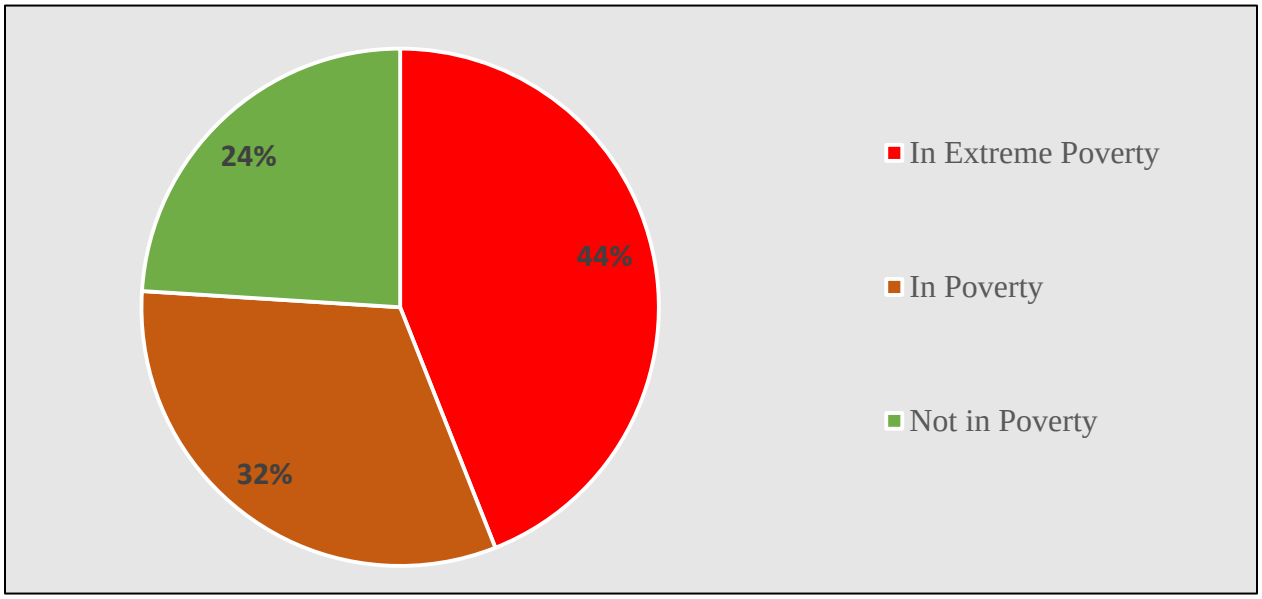
Source: Adapted from Statista (2019).

The drop in oil revenue caused acute shortages in foreign exchange (forex) to finance importation. Due to decades of poor industrialisation and deindustrialisation, Nigeria is highly dependent on imports for most consumer and industrial products. With less forex to finance importation and an intense scramble by importers for the little available forex, the local currency depreciated more than 120% against the US dollar (Olakoyenikan, 2017). Imported goods tripled in cost, triggering double-digit inflation in 2016 that persisted until 2018. Firms that could not

finance the high cost of importation or purchase imported items critical for production either retrenched workers, cut down on wages or went out of business. The chain of events resulted in Nigeria's worst economic recession in 30 years.

Unemployment and underemployment took a further dip. By 2018, unemployment had jumped from 7.8% in 2014 to 22.5% while underemployment stood at 20.1% compared to 17.1% in 2014. That is to say, about 43% (39 million citizens) out of the 90.1 million workforce comprised the unemployed and underemployed (NBS, 2018, p. 21-23). As a consequence, more Nigerians fell into poverty. Data is scarce on how many Nigerians went into poverty since the start of the Buhari administration. Anecdotal remarks put the figure at between 130 million and 150 million. Many rely on the extreme poverty data to paint a picture of poverty under the Buhari administration.

Figure 22: Nigerians in extreme poverty (2015-2018)



Note: Based on unsubstantiated claims, the number of Nigerians living in poverty grew from 111 million in 2014 (compare with Figure 12) to 150 million (76% of the 198 million population). Verifiable data shows that by 2018, no fewer than 87 million Nigerians became extremely poor, measured by their inability to afford $1.90 per day. In 2014 the extreme poverty figure was about 70 million.

Source: Adapted from Kharas, Hemel and Hofer (2018) and anecdotes.

Nigeria moved up from number three to number one on the global extreme poverty rollcall (Kharas, Hemel & Hofer, 2018). Despite the decline in oil revenue, the Buhari administration's annual budgets for 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018 showed a much larger sectoral and overall appropriation compared to previous administrations that made huge earnings from oil. The Buhari administration augmented its budget by increasing domestic and foreign borrowing and internally generated revenue. The increase in budgetary appropriation, however, had no observable impact on the economic wellbeing of the masses who grew increasingly impatient and hostile to the administration. Many everyday people blamed the President's preoccupation with combating corruption for the growing despair. A government employee, for example, wondered why President Buhari chose to give too much attention to the fight against corruption when, in her opinion, many issues needed his 'equal attention'. The respondent believed that the obsession with fighting corruption accelerated the onset of the recession and protracted its duration and impact on citizens (Civil servant, personal communication, January 22, 2018).

Such sentiments may have triggered the BBOC pushback. As it seems, the BBOC resistance emerged when, amid the deteriorating socioeconomic conditions, vulnerable masses realised that they were without the safety net of patronage from political patrons due to the constriction of illicit access to government funds following the enforcement of the Buhari war on corruption. A retired civil servant who at the time of the study was a taxi driver in the city of Port Harcourt informed the study that before the Buhari administration, politicians' handouts supported reproduction in the informal economy where, as Yelwa and Adam (2017) have noted, the majority of Nigeria's poor and neglected eke out a living. Through patron-client exchanges, the respondent claimed, most constituents were able to raise money not only for daily subsistence but to start and sustain micro-

businesses like corner shops, beauty parlours, sport-screening centres, automobile repair shops, transportation, and many such informal ventures. (W. Mbakwe, personal communication, August 17, 2017).

A mid-level executive officer in one of Nigeria's new generation banks noted that while it is difficult to measure the share of proceeds from public corruption that went toward meeting the livelihood needs of poor Nigerians, it is a fact that politicians' handouts supported reproduction in the informal economy. The respondent based his opinion on the extent of transactional exchanges that characterised political relations between the governing elites and their support base and what he claimed was many years of engaging with micro-business operators (U. Chukwura, personal communication, February 17, 2018).

5.4.1 The BBOC sentiment and elites' innuendoes

As was mentioned, unlike the usual anti-anti-corruption protests orchestrated by elites determined to scuttle anti-corruption proceedings instituted against them, the BBOC counter-campaign was spontaneous and citizens-led. However, the study found that through carefully crafted innuendoes, aggrieved elites may have exploited the popular despair to pressure the administration to back down on the fight against corruption. For example, a grocery seller narrated how her parliamentarian suddenly cut down on the frequency of his constituency visits. It was during the visits in the past that the legislator provided material assistance to constituents. When anxious constituents visited the legislator's office in Abuja to seek support, he allegedly told them 'the senseless war on corruption' had adversely impacted his ability to sustain the giveaways (K. Grace, personal communication, August 29, 2017). The legislator's alleged inference may have

been about the dwindling and closely monitored Constituency Development Fund that financed much of the patronage politics until 2014.

A respondent, who like hundreds of others joined his political representatives in defection from the PDP to the APC in 2014, told the study that in the PDP years, financial rewards for attending party events helped to provide livelihood needs as well as support petty trades. When the PDP was in control, according to the respondent, extravaganzas held regularly. Attendees returned home with 'mobilisation fees', a reference to cash payment for participation. However, with the coming of Buhari and the APC, there were far fewer materially-rewarding party gatherings. 'Buhari don block everywhere' – a Pidgin English expression meaning the President has closed avenues for funds to host such events – was according to the respondent, the explanation politicians provided for the fewer party jamborees (J. Ebiabowei, personal communication, February 18, 2018). With such innuendoes, politicians may have worsened citizens' irritation with the Buhari regime and its anti-corruption programme.

5.4.2 BBOC and the political economy of anti-corruption

As Ochonu (2016) has pointed out, the masses may have taken for granted while voting for stringent anti-corruption measures in 2015 that their wellbeing depended somehow on the flow of proceeds from corruption. However, there is also the argument that the BBOC counter-reaction holds crucial lessons for developing states looking to design policies to address endemic corruption. A law professor at the University of Ghana expressed this view:

> I just returned from Nigeria [and] everybody is chanting 'Bring back corruption!'…addressing corruption without understanding the political economy of

> corruption is dangerous…Buhari did a very suboptimal theorisation of corruption in Nigeria and…the critical role of corruption in keeping the scope, structure and success of the Nigerian economy in the near term. If you eliminate corruption in Nigeria or Ghana today, many will starve…the only way to avoid this is to find a social safety net for those who depend on corruption on the secondary and tertiary levels for survival and implement that simultaneously with the crackdown on corruption… (Atuguba, n.d).

The Buhari administration may have failed to recognise the nature and extent of informal exchanges between politicians and the masses, the centrality of the flow of proceeds from corruption to the exchanges, how the war on corruption would impact the exchanges, and the implications for citizens' reception to the anti-corruption programme. A journalist shared a similar view:

> …This is not to glorify corruption. You have to understand that in a dysfunctional country…corruption has its advantage, and the advantage is that if you have [many] people who have [illicit] access to the public treasury as you do in Nigeria, there is a ripple effect to that access…A government comes in and in less than a year says 'No more!', and in a cold turkey manner [sic] tries to cut people off. That reaction was [to be] expected (T. Abolade, personal communication, July 13, 2017).

Underlying Atuguba and Abolade's positions is the view that the Buhari administration pursued the anti-corruption programme oblivious to the function corruption performs in keeping the Nigerian economy running and giving the poor some succour. Nigeria's then-Minister of

Transportation and key ally of President Buhari, Rotimi Amaechi, acknowledged that the economy until Buhari's inauguration ran on corruption:

> …this country cannot continue to move the way it is moving. Corruption cannot continue to be the only basis by which this country can run its economy. You know we ran a rent economy. An economy where you visit the Minister [and] he says: 'Hey! How are you! Director of Finance, please give me $100,000'. He gives you [the money], you go home. [You give] $10,000 to your wife, $20,000 to your father, $50,000 to your mother. And then you go to market [and you say]: 'Carpenter, fix my door, take $5000. You pay [for] school fees. So, the economy is just revolving around that corruption. No! We must be a productive economy (Nija Eye International, 2018).

The Minister did not say if the role of proceeds from corruption in the functioning of the economy might have triggered popular opposition to the anti-graft war. The implication, therefore, is that where the state cannot substantially create legitimate opportunities for wealth generation for the masses within a short time, it is vital to be tactful with anti-corruption policies. Some observers have shared this view. In a sermon televised internationally, Pastor Femi Faseru of one of Nigeria's mega Christian ministries – Kingsway International Christian Centre – faulted the Buhari administration for lack of sensitivity. The pastor claimed that elites who stole government money became too afraid to invest their loots in the economy.

According to the preacher, when people steal money, they do not 'eat the bills'. Instead, they spend in the economy and 'the money goes round'. The anti-corruption campaign, Faseru argued, undermined new investments in the economy and compelled many Nigerians who could have benefitted from the investments to resort to survival crimes such as armed robbery and kidnapping

for ransom. He asked the government not to construe his comments as a defence for corruption or corrupt elites, but a call to rethink its counterproductive anti-corruption strategy. He recommended a two-year moratorium on the fight against corruption so those who stole public funds can invest their loots in the economy, after which the war can continue without leniency.[21]

Faseru's argument underscores Atiguba's observation that in states as dysfunctional as Nigeria, the masses may be secondary and tertiary beneficiaries of corruption. Therefore, anti-corruption policies may have better prospects for success if framed as part of broader governance and economic reform agenda, including making the state more public welfare-oriented. In 2016, the administration unveiled four social safety net programmes to support vulnerable citizens. However, it is unclear if the administration framed the social security programmes as a response to the BBOC counter-reaction.

Table 12: The Buhari social investment programmes

Programme	Objectives	Specific Tasks
N-Power	To equip young people with knowledge and technical skills for inclusive economic participation. To provide trainees with practical experiences in diverse sectors of the economy to prepare them to run their businesses. To reduce youth unemployment.	• Place 500,000 trained graduates on employment with a monthly stipend of about $83 monthly. • Support about 100,000 non-graduates to develop innovative ideas in different sectors of the economy.
Conditional Cash Transfer	To undertake cash transfer to poor and vulnerable individuals.	• Dispense about $14 monthly to an unspecified number of extremely poor Nigerians.

[21] The sermon was televised on Channels TV on 19th of August 2019, from 11am to 11:30am Nigerian time.

	To organise skills acquisition training to help beneficiaries become financially independent.	
Government Enterprises Empowerment Programme	To provide soft loans to small-scale businesses.	• Dispense $27 to $278 interest-free loans to an unspecified number of small business operators, farmers and artisans.
Home Grown School Feeding	To lessen the financial burden on poor households, nourish school kids and stimulate local agriculture and job creation.	• Provide food for school-age children at public schools daily.

Note: Four main social welfare initiatives begun by the government in 2016.

Source: Compiled by author from publicly available information.

The government announced that the programmes had covered nearly seven million vulnerable Nigerians (*Premium Times,* 2018). Nonetheless, the programmes failed to create a sense of economic security to the majority of the nearly 90 million extremely poor citizens. One may conjecture that this might have been why the programmes failed to prevent popular hostility to the administration and its war on corruption. The wife of the President, Aisha Buhari, joined the growing number of critics of the social investment programmes. Citing the limited coverage, she called the programmes a failure (Ogundipe, 2019). Another shortcoming of the programmes (except N-Power) is that the financial handouts to the beneficiaries remained below the already dismal national minimum wage, therefore, was not sufficient to help pull the poor out of poverty.

Moreover, as Ferguson (2015) has observed concerning social welfare especially in the developing world, the administration's perception of the causes of socioeconomic vulnerability might also account for the programmes' failure to address poverty at its core. The programmes seemed premised on the assumption that by regimenting the poor to acquire entrepreneurial skills, the state can transform them into agents of their economic emancipation. This hegemonic

outsourcing of government's welfare responsibility to the poor themselves individualises the causes of poverty as much as it downplays structural causes of it. The approach lacks introspection on the part of the government and tends to imply that the poor ought to take responsibility for their poverty and go through a process of reformation to conform to an idealised notion of the good citizen capable of availing themselves of opportunities (Ferguson, 2015).

The administration also probably failed to realise that illicit proceeds from corrupt politicians are to the poor, akin to basic income and therefore critical to their immediate economic wellbeing. As some respondents maintained, the BBOC pushback was unavoidable, given the adverse impact the Buhari war on corruption had on the material flows from political patrons to the masses while formal welfare measures remained weak (T. Abolade, personal communication, July 13, 2017; W. Mbakwe, personal communication, August 17, 2017).

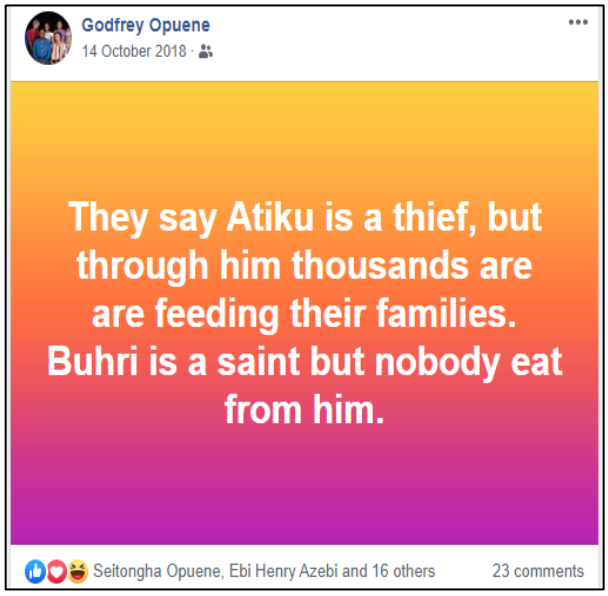
5.4.3 Elite-masses solidarity and the de-emphasis on anti-corruption enforcement

The mobilisation for the 2019 presidential election saw a convergence of anti-Buhari sentiments among opposition politicians and the masses. The PDP harped on a weak economy, unemployment, poverty, hunger and rising insecurity as the major failures of the Buhari administration. As it seemed, also accounting for the joint opposition to President Buhari's second term bid was the shared disdain for the anti-corruption programme. In a leaked audio recording allegedly obtained from a closed-door meeting between then-Senate President Bukola Saraki and his supporters, the senator said that his defection to the PDP was due to lack of patronage from the Buhari administration despite having committed about $4 million to President Buhari's election in 2015. He disparaged his trial for corruption despite being in the ruling party and asked his followers to reject President Buhari's quest for another term (Olawoyin, 2018).

Perhaps cautious not to further agitate the masses, the PDP was ambivalent about fighting corruption if re-elected. The party nominated a capitalist Abubakar Atiku who was Vice President of Nigeria from 1999-2007, as its presidential candidate. Atiku was the subject of several corruption allegations, including a $40 million money-laundering probe by the US Senate in relation to which his accomplice US Senator Williams Jefferson, was imprisoned (US Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigation, 2010, p. 173). Despite these allegations and his overtly pro-corruption declarations on the campaign trail, his candidacy resonated with a large section of the masses. Atiku declared that if voted as president, he would enrich his friends and grant amnesty to looters (Chukwuma, 2019). The Buhari campaign weaponised this statement to weaken Atiku's electability. Nonetheless, his popularity soared among the masses (Yakubu, 2019) as many were only interested in his widely rumoured stomach infrastructure politics.

Figure 23: Atiku's candidacy resonates with citizens despite allegations of corruption

Facebook user (November 1, 2018).[22]



Facebook user (October 14, 2018).[23]

[22] To see original post, go to https://www.facebook.com/Mampasse/posts/2499565546724719

[23] To see original post, go to https://www.facebook.com/godfrey.opuene.3/posts/502025630263515

In all fairness, many ordinary Nigerians turned against President Buhari for what they believed to be his administration's dismal response to the economy, the Boko Haram insurgency, and lack of sensitivity to Nigeria's demographic diversity in his political appointments. However, the BBOC pushback and citizens' disinterest in anti-corruption enforcement in the 2019 election tend to show that when vulnerable masses feel (rightly or wrongly) that anti-corruption policies are counterproductive to their livelihood, they are not only likely to resist such policies but may become disinterested in moral governance and anti-corruption altogether.

5.5 Synthesis and Inference

This period fulfilled the condition for corruption to support stability – *Elites form informal cross-ethnic alliance and institutions to share rents*. The APC replaced the PDP as the new dominant elite coalition. However, as to why political stability came under stress despite the presence of an elite-agglomerating informal institution, the study infers that it was because the regime of unhindered corruption crucial for elite cooperation, was interrupted, at least during the opening years of the Buhari administration. A counterargument may be that the breakdown in elite relations and threats to stability was the spillover effect of elite fractionalisation in the PDP in 2014 following President Jonathan's abandonment of the power zoning and rotation agreement and rise of two main elite alliances (APC and PDP). A related contrary argument could be that the shift to a two-dominant party system made the breakdown in elite relations and the emergence of threats to stability inevitable given the depth of political competition that came with this shift.

However, the perceived lack of elite support in either party for the war on corruption, and the nature of the threats to stability (which the Buhari administration believed was organised by elite

angered by the war on corruption) suggest a correlation between preserving the regime of corruption and maintaining elite consensus and stability. The hostility to the anti-corruption programme, especially within the ruling APC which led to the party's balkanisation only two years into its rule gives further credence to this observation. Both secondary and interview data suggest that unlike previous administrations, the Buhari administration, to some degree, upset the politics of corrupt elite settlement instituted at democratisation in 1999.

As a respondent remarked, the coming of the Buhari administration saw the unravelling of alliance relations and fragile political stability due to President Buhari's decision to attack the 'free-for-all' corrupt system that had been a major pillar of elite cooperation. As the respondent put it: '…2015 was the most significant expression of the dual but dialectical process of the breakdown of elite consensus. The post-2015 period is but more politically unstable…because that process of reconstructing elites' consensus is ongoing…' (J. Gaskia, personal communication, August 17, 2017). The respondent believed that elites both within and outside the APC were making efforts to re-establish the old order and rebuild elite consensus.

However, the reconstruction agenda seemed undermined by President Buhari's disruptive anti-corruption mien, an apparent factor for the by-partisan discontent for his administration. A respondent was of the view that by abandoning the politics of settlement, the Buhari administration drew the battle line with elites who, through many years of looting, had developed the capability to fight back. The respondent described corruption in Nigeria as 'insulin to a diabetic person' – a necessity for elite survival. As a result, the hostile elite reactions to the war on corruption were to be expected (W. Mbakwe, personal communication, August 17, 2017). The disruption to the pre-existing elite informalities no doubt had tremendous impacts on the masses' attitude toward the Buhari administration and its fight against corruption.

Concerning condition 1 for why the BBOC pushback emerged – *The masses were embedded in patron-client relations* (see Table 5) – as noted in the previous chapter, by 2015 when the Buhari administration began, most poor Nigerians were already saturated in patronage exchanges with politicians. Accounting for the masses' saturation in patronage relations was the high poverty rate and inadequate welfare (Ojo, 2014; Ojo, 2019).

Regarding condition 2 – *The masses were dependent on patronage for their livelihood* – the data also suggests that due to the extent of the masses' exposure to patron-client relations and multiple patronage structures through which patronage flowed, their subsistence was considerably dependent on the availability of patronage. However, far less patronage was available under the Buhari administration compared to the experience until the end of the PDP leadership.

To condition 3 – *The post-2015 war on corruption began with unprecedented intensity and coverage.* As already noted, there is a lack of consensus on the intensity of the Buhari anti-graft war. While some respondents believed that the failure to ensure impartial prosecution dented the campaign (I. Ibaba, personal communication, July 25, 2017; J. Austin, personal communication, August 4, 2017; A. Razak, personal communication, July 8, 2017), others believed that the campaign succeeded in stemming looting (C. Okolocha, personal communication, August 5, 2017; A. Mumuni, personal communication, August 7, 2017). The eruption of an unprecedented popular anti-anti-corruption retort in the nature and scale of the BBOC pushback could lend support to the claim that the Buhari war on corruption, despite the identified deficiencies, was relatively more intense and comprehensive (at least in its opening periods) to undermine elites' access to illicit rents. The limitation on illicit outflow of public money, in turn, disrupted the flow of patronage to the masses even though citizens' socioeconomic conditions declined further.

Another crucial factor for the trans-ethnic character of the BBOC resistance appears to be the trans-ethnic and trans-regional nature of the Buhari war on corruption. The anti-graft campaign impacted all elites irrespective of their ethnicity or origin. Perhaps this was inevitable as the existence of cross-ethnic elite alliances designed to share rent – first the PDP and later the APC – created the situation for well-intended anti-corruption efforts to have such far-reaching coverage and intensity. Had previous post-1999 anti-corruption programmes showed similar political will in blocking illicit access to rent, the possibility is that they too would have been far-reaching.

CHAPTER SIX

Summary and Conclusion

6.1 Summary

The study set out to examine the adequacy of the non-functional approach in the study of corruption for understanding the struggle against corruption in developing countries, and whether the functional corruption perspective can offer any significant insights, specifically in the context of Nigeria. In pursuing this goal, the study interrogated two things. The first is the overwhelming tendency among scholars to correlate corruption with political instability. The second is the notion that, as victims of corruption, the masses are or will be inclined to support anti-corruption measures.

This study argues that in developing countries, a different reality may exist. As the study has attempted to show, Nigeria's experience appears to call this orthodox tendency and notion into question. Not only has corruption seemed to support political stability, albeit a fragile one since Nigeria's return to democracy in 1999, but the post-2015 war on corruption suffered popular opposition. Through the BBOC movement, the masses denounced the fight against corruption, blaming it for deepening poverty and despair. Underpinning these counterintuitive experiences, the study suggests, is the overlooked functionality of corruption in developing states with a history of elite-led political instability and weak formal welfare system.

Nigeria is the quintessence of a developing state bedevilled by ethnic civilian and military elites-driven instability and state capture-induced public diswelfare. Given the centrality of the struggle over rent to elite hostility and instability in Nigeria, the institution of a system for inclusive access to rent or more appropriately, a framework for corrupt settlement seemed to have been the basis of trans-ethnic elite alliance and relative stability since 1999. The resultant regime of

corruption and public diswelfare produced a related outcome – the entrenchment of elite-masses transactional exchanges through which patronage (money, food and other material handouts) from patrons became a vital safety net for their poor clientele.

Given the study's line of argument, it situates within the precincts of the neglected functional corruption scholarship – an offshoot of the functional approach. As already noted, the application of the functional approach in the study of corruption began in the 1960s. Its application elicited criticisms, chief among which was what critics saw as a rationalisation of unethical practices that produce deleterious consequences for nations. Hence, the greater tilt has been toward studying corruption from the viewpoint of its non-functional outcomes. Since the rise of the global anti-corruption industry to its current prominence, nongovernmental organisations engaged in good governance and anti-corruption outreach have mostly framed their activities off the non-functional understanding of corruption.

Undeniably, the non-functional consequences of corruption are palpable and abundantly documented. It is almost impossible to find an analysis of obstacles to progress in developing countries that has not identified corruption as a prime factor. Revenues derived from public taxation, exploitation of natural resources and foreign aid receipts are lost to state captors who make no distinction between what revenue pools to deplete to satisfy their avarice. The observable consequences include a growing infrastructure deficit, rising unemployment and underemployment, poverty, high mortality, insecurity, and political instability as the Arab Spring, Greece and Venezuela uprisings have demonstrated. These incontrovertible corruption-induced poor governance outcomes underscore the legitimacy of the non-functional perspective on corruption.

Nonetheless, the overwhelming tendency to view corruption mainly from the prism of its non-functional consequences, this study emphasises, may be counterproductive to a balanced

understanding of the obstinacy of corruption in developing states. Nigeria's experience may provide valuable theoretical insights on the functionality of corruption in the developing world, especially SSA, and why attempts to combat the menace continue to fail. As the study argues, a context may exist in developing countries where, although corruption is largely non-functional, it is also functional in overlooked ways.

On the assumption that corruption functions to promote political stability in Nigeria, the overall data shows a lack of consensus. A share of the data supports the counter-claim that political stability in post-1999 Nigeria is due to factors other than corruption. However, variations in the nature of corruption, elite relations, the dynamics of politics and political stability in the three eras delineated in the study tend to support the assumption that corruption may have become critical to maintaining stability. A key piece of evidence is the fierce elite opposition to the anti-corruption campaigns of 1999-2007 and the post-2015 which threatened the settlement arrangement on which basis a cross-ethnic elite alliance thrived.

On the assumption of whether corruption functions to support the subsistence of poor and vulnerable Nigerians and if this could explain the BBOC pushback, there is less disagreement in the literature and empirical data. The data suggests that where formal welfare provision is weak, poverty is widespread, and patronage politics is pervasive, the masses may be secondary and tertiary beneficiaries of proceeds from public corruption channelled through patronage schemes. Hence, when the masses perceive anti-corruption programmes to be counterproductive to their wellbeing, they may resist, rather than back such programmes.

6.2 Conclusion

In answer to the research questions, the study infers as follows:

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.

6.3 Policy Implications

The conventional literature and transnational corruption barometers such as TI CPI and Afrobarometer help us appreciate the extent of corruption and magnitude of its adverse impacts in the developing world. Developing countries shape anti-corruption responses based on recommendations from the conventional 'corruption-as-non-functional perspective'. Often recommended include legal and institutional reforms to prevent and respond to corruption, mustering political will for bold and impartial anti-corruption enforcement, and changing prevalent social norms permissive of corruption. Given that developing countries continue to be blighted by corruption despite the implementation of these recommendations, a reassessment of the optimality of current understandings may be imperative. In light of this, the study has three policy implications.

First, while it is incontestable that corruption in much of the developing world is largely a problem of legal/institutional failure, lack of political will, faulty social norms, in states such as Nigeria corruption may be an adaptive response to a political and material reality that continues to evolve. Therefore, it may benefit anti-corruption policy formulation if policymakers undertake a careful determination of the political and economic functions of corruption in countries that seem unable to curb corruption. It may be vital to determine how once-highly politically unstable states

manage to maintain relative stability even though the structural and political drivers of instability remain unaddressed, and what role corruption may be performing to the sustenance of stability.

Second, where it is determined that corruption is the basis (or partly the basis) upon which political stability, albeit a tenuous one, is sustained, framing a decisive formal response to the drivers of political instability may cause a shift from stability hinged on a system of corrupt settlement. Post-crisis Rwanda seems to represent an example of how a process of national dispute resolution can help troubled states achieve genuine stability. Rwanda's enduring stability after the 1994 genocide may be attributed partly to the commanding nature of the government, particularly under President Paul Kagame. Nonetheless, it is plausible that the process of national reconciliation removed the need to hinge political stability on a corrupt system of elite appeasement.

Third, in designing anti-corruption policies, it may be vital to take into account that in elective systems where formal welfare measures are weak, and socioeconomic misery is widespread, through patron-client exchanges, public corruption may perform an informal welfare function to the masses. Therefore, to minimise the likelihood of citizens' hostility, such policies may best be framed as part of a broader governance reform agenda to make the state more responsive to public welfare. The more the state fulfils its welfare obligations, the more likely that elite-masses exchanges will deviate from a patronage-based form and the more likely that the masses will be inclined to support government anti-corruption efforts.

6.4 Opportunities for Future Research

Due to methodological imprecision, which is a main limitation of the study, the conclusions drawn constitute major hypotheses for further inquiries. As was stated in the methodology section, although the study draws inferences from the actions of elites and the masses, it is not a behavioural

study. The conclusions are the researcher's interpretation of the data. Therefore, the researcher's interpretation of the data represents an outsider's viewpoint that may not necessarily reflect the viewpoint of the insiders (elites and masses). Also, being that this is single-case research with its methodological limitations, it is impossible at this time to make authoritative generalisations. For these reasons, the following are avenues for further research (at the post-Doctoral level) to provide deeper understandings of the key issues raised in this study.

i. Validate or invalidate, through extended multi-country studies (Nigeria and at least two more states with similar characteristics), the assumption that, in high-corruption developing states that have transitioned from a period of political instability to one of relative stability, corruption may be playing a critical role.

ii. Determine the role of corruption in informal welfare and the scale of it in developing states where the formal welfare system is weak and patronage politics is pervasive.

iii. Determine how ordinary citizens in developing state characterise corruption – a legal/institutional issue, a problem of weak political will, a normative crisis, or a necessary response to a certain reality.

iv. Determine what implications citizens' perceptions of corruption might have had (and do have) on anti-corruption efforts in selected countries.

A major task, therefore, is to develop a reliable methodology for collecting, collating and analysing quantitative and qualitative data in multiple national contexts to aid generalisation. Such a method will be one that integrates tools for reliable behavioural analyses.

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APPENDIX

Interview Questionnaires

Dear Sir/Madam,

Request for Assistance/Consent for Participation

I am a student at the Graduate School of International Development, Nagoya University, Japan, where I am presently pursuing a Doctoral degree in International Development.

As part of the degree requirements, I am conducting a study titled: **'Functional Corruption in Nigeria: Political Stability, Inter-ethnic Elite Alliance and 'Bring Back Our Corruption' Movement'**. The study's objectives are: first, to determine why Nigeria has been relatively politically stable since 1999 despite a disturbing level of corruption; and second, to understand the reasons behind citizens' opposition to President Buhari's anti-corruption programme even though he was elected by the majority of Nigerians to fight corruption. The outcome of the study will provide new and important understandings concerning Nigeria's experience with corruption.

I would be grateful if you could support the study by responding to some interview questions. Rest assured, every information you give will be used strictly for academic purposes. Unless you choose to be named, your identity will be protected as it is the researcher's ethical obligation to do so. Although your responses will be crucial to achieving the objectives of the study, participating as a respondent is voluntary. Opting not to participate will not bring any damage to your personality.

If you permit, I will like to make an audio recording of the interview. Transcripts will be made from the recording and used for analysis. Please do not hesitate to let me know if you have any concerns, whether about the overall research or the interview.

Thank you,

ALLISON Felix Timipere.

Questionnaire for Elites (politicians and business executives)

For Research Question 1

1. Are you aware of reports indicating that corruption in public governance is still a big problem in Nigeria? If yes, what do you think about the reports?
2. How would you say the pre-1999 and post-1999 periods compare in terms of the prevalence of corruption in Nigeria?
3. How would you say the pre-1999 and post-1999 periods compare in terms of political stability in Nigeria (what period has experienced more stability)? Why do you think so?
4. Do you think that there has been/has not been any changes in inter-ethnic elite cooperation since 1999 compared to the period before 1999? If yes/no, why do you think so?
5. What would you say are the major causes of conflict among ethnic elites in Nigeria? Is access to government money one of them?
6. In the past, political parties were mostly ethnic and region-based. Why do you think elites from all ethnic groups have been able to build nationally-spread political parties like the PDP and APC?
7. Do you think such nationally-spread political parties like the PDP and the APC have had any positive outcomes? If yes, what are the outcomes?
8. In the past, military coups which were the major evidence of political instability in Nigeria were justified by the military as necessary to address hostile inter-ethnic elite political exchanges and pervasive corruption. Do you agree?
9. What do you think can explain why since the return to democracy in 1999, Nigeria has experienced no coups even though corruption appears to be more pervasive?

For Research Question 2

10. What do you think is the reason why many Nigerians are resisting President Buhari's anti-corruption programme through the Bring Back Our Corruption (BBOC) protest?
11. How would you react to the claim that the BBOC resistance is because the Buhari war on corruption has blocked illegal access to government money by elites, thus disrupting the informal flow of money and food from politicians to poor followers?
12. How would you describe the Buhari war on corruption, more stringent/not stringent?

Questionnaire for Professionals (academics, journalists, civil society activists)

For Research Question 1

1. How would you say the pre-1999 and post-1999 periods compare in terms of the prevalence of corruption in Nigeria? What period has had more corruption, and why do you think so?
2. How would you say the pre-1999 and post-1999 periods compare in terms of political stability in Nigeria (what period has experienced more stability)? Why do you think so?
3. Do you think that there has been/has not been any changes in inter-ethnic elite cooperation since 1999 compared to the period before 1999? If yes/no, why do you think so?
4. What would you say are the major causes of conflict among ethnic elites in Nigeria? Is access to government money one of them?
5. In the past, political parties were mostly ethnic and region-based. Why do you think elites from all ethnic groups have been able to build nationally-spread political parties like the PDP and APC?
6. Do you think such nationally-spread political parties like the PDP and the APC have had any positive outcomes? If yes, what are the outcomes?
7. In the past, military coups which were the major evidence of political instability in Nigeria were justified by the military as necessary to address hostile inter-ethnic elite political exchanges and pervasive corruption. Do you agree?
8. What do you think can explain why since the return to democracy in 1999, Nigeria has experienced no coups even though corruption appears to be more pervasive?
9. How would you react to the assumption that coups may have become a thing of the past in Nigeria because military elites share in the corruption despite not being directly in power?

For Research Question 2

10. What factors do you think triggered the Bring Back Our Corruption (BBOC) opposition to the Buhari war on corruption even though the masses elected him in 2015 to curb corruption?
11. How would you react to the assumption that the BBOC resistance emerged because the Buhari anti-corruption campaign has curtailed illicit outflow of government funds to elites, thereby adversely affecting the informal material flows from elites to their followers?
12. Compared to previous efforts, would you say that the Buhari anti-graft war is more stringent?

Questionnaire for Bureaucrats (civil servants – especially employees of anti-graft agencies)

For Research Question 1

1. Would you say that the Nigerian government has performed better in the fight against corruption since the return to democracy in 1999? If yes, why do you say so?
2. What do you think is the major challenge to the government's fight against corruption?
3. Would you say that Nigeria has been more politically stable since 1999 than it was in the period before 1999? Why do you say so?
4. Do you think that corruption plays any significant role in facilitating inter-ethnic elite cooperation and political stability since 1999?
5. What specific duties do you perform in your bureaucracy's anti-corruption operations?
6. Do you encounter influential elites as you perform your duties? How would you say your relations with them have been?
7. Has your bureaucracy had to exercise caution in investigating/prosecuting any influential elites? If yes, can you give an instance?
8. How do elites usually respond to anti-corruption activities conducted by your bureaucracy? Supportive/not supportive?
9. What would you say accounts for the kind of response you described in question 8?

For Research Question 2

10. What do you think is the reason why many Nigerians are resisting President Buhari's anti-corruption programme through the Bring Back Our Corruption (BBOC) protest?
11. How would you react to the claim that the BBOC resistance is because the Buhari war on corruption has blocked illegal access to government money by elites, thus disrupting the informal flow of money and food from politicians to poor followers?
12. How would you describe the Buhari war on corruption, more stringent/not stringent?

Questionnaire for Everyday Citizens (students, the unemployed, traders, transport providers)

For Research Question 1

1. Do you think that Nigeria has been more politically stable since 1999 compared to the past (before 1999)? Why do you say so?
2. What would you say are the major causes of conflict among ethnic elites in Nigeria? Is access to government money one of them?
3. During which of these periods do you think there has been more corruption in government in Nigeria: (A) from 1960 to 1998. (B) from 1999 to now? Why do you think so?
4. Between these two periods, when do you think Nigerian civilian and military elites (big men) from the various ethnic groups have cooperated more: (A) from 1960 to 1998. (B) from 1999 to now? Why do you think so?
5. If you chose option 'B' for question 3, do you think that Nigerian elites (big men) cooperate more because they all equally partake in sharing government money since 1999? If yes or no, why do you think so?

For research Question 2

6. Do you or anyone you know have any relationship with politicians? If yes, what kind of relationship: (A) official. (B) unofficial? Can you explain why?
7. Do you or anyone you know receive money or any material support directly from politicians? If yes, how often does this happen?
8. When you have a chance to meet your political representative, what kind of requests do you usually make (e.g., personal requests; requests for the development of your constituency; others)?
9. Compared to previous fights against corruption since 1999, do you think that President Buhari's fight against corruption has been very strong/very weak? Why do you think so?
10. What do you think is the reason why many Nigerians are resisting President Buhari's anti-corruption programme through the Bring Back Our Corruption (BBOC) protest?
11. What will you say to the suggestion that the BBOC protest started because the Buhari fight against corruption has made it difficult for elites (big men) to steal government money, and as a result, many Nigerians no longer receive money and other material support from elites?