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Nigeria's corruption score card

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Nigeria's Corruption Score Card

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Abstract. *Corruption in Nigeria is so lucrative that the threat of jail term is not enough to deter perpetrators, and the president's body language is also worsening the situation. The National Bureau of Statistics has estimated \$4.6 billion as the cost of corruption in Nigeria, confirming the country's worsening Corruption Perceptions Index of the Transparency International. Nigeria's 2018 CPI ranking became worst-off after scoring 27 out of 100 points, far below the world average of 43, and Sub-Sahara Africa average of 32.02. Given that Transparency International relies on the perception of institutions rather than measuring actual corruption experiences of the citizens, this study is set out to capture the experience of the latter. The study employs a quantitative research methodology based on a sociological questionnaire. The findings reveal robust evidence that corruption reacts to standard economic incentives, as it is tagged as an economic cost of getting the job done. Corruption, therefore, became institutionalized and thus a telling effect on the emerging political culture and behavior. The anticorruption strategy has also been that of media trial and seizure of accused persons' assets. Hence the effects of anti-corruption policies are often weakening as businessmen, politicians and public officials often find alternate strategies for rent seeking.*

Keywords: *bureaucracy; corruption perception, government failure; political witch haunting; rent-seeking.*

Introduction

Despite being modeled as the giant of Africa, Nigeria has failed to improve its scores on the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) by a statistically significant amount. The rampant corruption in the country led citizens to voice their frustrations through the ballot system in 2015, resulting in an incumbent president losing an election for the first time in Nigeria's history.

Even though African leaders declared 2018 as the African Year of Anti-Corruption, this did not translate into tangible progress. Corruption in Nigeria undermines democratic institutions, retards economic development and contributes to government instability (ICPC, 2019). Nigeria stood at the 148th position of the 180 countries and territories ranked globally in 2018 CPI. Of the 54 countries on the African continent, Nigeria was considered the 19th most corrupt nation (Transparency International, 2018), this is seven points decrease from that of 2016, scoring 27 out of 100 points. This score indicates the perceived level of public sector corruption on a scale of 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean). The 2018 CPI provides a good baseline for the country's anti-

corruption efforts in 2019, as the country prepares for its general election in March 2019.

Given that Nigeria's current President Muhammadu Buhari came to office on an "anti-corruption ticket", this study aims to assess whether his administration has lived up to their pledges to deliver corruption-free services to their citizens. To investigate whether they are committed to the principles of good governance, democracy, and human rights. By strengthening the institutions that hold governments accountable.

Literature review

The reason why some countries are rich and other poor depends on many things, but the main three determining factors are culture, natural resources, and the quality of their institutions. For this paper, we will only focus our attention on the quality of institutions. Broadly speaking, rich countries have good institutions and poor countries have awfully bad ones. The correlation between poverty and corruption is direct (ACET, 2000; Zúñiga, 2017). The richest countries in the world are quite simply consistently and the least corrupt ones. While the most corrupt countries are invariably also the poorest. When countries are corrupt, they cannot collect enough taxes to get good institutions they need to escape the poverty trap. Corrupt individuals in the poor country often put both their legitimate and stolen wealth in offshore accounts, hence loss of revenue for the government (Ajaz & Ahmad, 2010; Alm, Martinez-Vazquez, & McClellan, 2016; Jacobsen & Piovesan, 2016; Litina & Palivosb, 2016). Meanwhile, without an adequate tax base, poor countries cannot invest in police, education, health, and transport.

A more generous way to look at corruption is that it is really a case of clan-based thinking. When you are hiring someone for a job position in the rich countries, by default you are expected to base your selection simply on merit, interviewing lots of candidates before picking the best one notwithstanding whether you have any personal connection with any of them. But in poor countries under the influence of clan-based thinking, that approach would by itself be seen as corrupt: you are expected to disregard the so-called best candidate from an anonymous bunch, in order to pick someone from your own family, friends list, or someone from your own tribe or religion. As a result, poor countries do not allow themselves access to the intelligence and talent of the whole population.

Corruption can, therefore, be seen as a monster that needs to be dealt with immediately, as an estimated \$1trillion is paid each year in bribes around the world, with the total economic loss from corruption many times that amount. Nigeria is not immune to the virus of corruption, as billions of dollars attributed to corruption are making the news daily headline. The National Bureau of Statistics (2017) has an estimated \$4.6 billion in purchasing power parity (PPP) as the cost of corruption in Nigeria from 2015-2016. This sum is equivalent to 39% of the federal and state education budgets combined in 2016. Apathy, fear, and ignorance of authorities may explain limited reporting of bribery, even as 28.2% average monthly salary is paid as cash bribe by Nigerians (UNODC, 2017). PwC partner Mark Anderson has considered what the future holds for corruption prevention, enforcement, and compliance (Anderson, 2015, 2018). Among other things, he predicts

that automation and artificial intelligence will enable faster compliance and predictive prevention.

It is clearly seen in Nigeria that if you fight corruption, it will aggressively fight back. Therefore, the subsequent government has been unable to curb these manners once and for all. This is so because corruption has become economic incentives of getting the job done (Stober, 2016). These incentives were created by lengthy and difficult bottlenecks in the name of administrative due process. So, it is not surprising that (Huntington, 1968; Leff, 1964; Leys, 1965) attempted to justify corruption as an economic necessity which compensates for excess bureaucracy. They argued that corruption can allow the private sector to correct government failures and, thus, “grease the wheels” of the economy. The highest threat to Nigeria’s economic development is not just corruption; among other causes such as leadership recruitment, political will and interest, the citizen’s level of education, number of educated people, and level of productivity, etc.; ignorance mostly stands out. This is because the citizens cannot really define corruption, or their idea of corruption is not necessarily how it is perceived elsewhere. Former President Goodluck Jonathan (2015, 2018) got into hot waters when he said stealing is not corruption even though the reason behind his argument was that 80% of the cases his administration was dealing with were a straight act of stealing. He argues that people use corruption to cover all cases because of the ignorance level of the citizens – people react aggressively to a thief than the way they react to a corrupt person. Perhaps part of what the former president wanted to say was the fact that corruption does not necessarily need to involve the exchange of money. And top profile people should not be immune from being prosecuted. This fact has been demonstrated in other developed and developing countries.

Romania’s top court sentenced former Prime Minister Adrian Nastase to four years in jail for taking bribes. That was 10 months after he finished serving an initial term for illegally funding raising during his 2004 election campaign when he ran for president (CNN, 2012; Reuters, 2014). A most recent case in Romania is that of Liviu Dragnea, the de facto strongest man and most powerful politician in the country – President of the Chamber of Deputies, President of Social Democratic Party. He was found guilty for instigating abuse of power, thus sentenced to 3 and a half years’ imprisonment on 27th May 2019 (Euronews, 2019). Pakistan’s ex-Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was sentenced to 7 years’ jail term for corruption case involving his ownership of a steel mill (NPR, 2018). Ivo Sanader, the ex-Croatia Prime Minister was also sent to jail for 6 years after court ups his corruption sentence in a 2009 property sale in Zagreb (AP News, 2019). Nikola Gruevski, the former Prime Minister of North Macedonia is now a fugitive politician who was charged with two-year jail sentence over luxury car purchase (Council of Europe, 2018), while former Thai Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra was sentenced to 5 years in jail for neglecting knowledge of corruption in a rice-pledging scheme (UPI, 2017). Other top officials in recent time that have faced the wrath of their respective country’s law are former President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva of Brazil (BBC, 2019), ex-South Korean President Lee Myung-bak (The Guardian, 2018), the former South Korean President Park Geun-Hye (The Guardian, 2018), Brazil’s former President Michel Temer, Antonio Saca (El Salvador) and Alberto Fujimori (Peru) (Americas Quarterly, 2019), Khaleda Zia former Bangladesh Prime Minister (Irish Times, 2018), Ehud Olmert, former Israeli Prime Minister (ABC, 2015), and Setya Novanto, the former speaker of Indonesia’s parliament (Associated Press, 2018) among others; why the

highest jail term of 33 years and four months was issued to Luis Barcenas, the former treasurer of Spain's ruling Popular Party (The local, 2018).

The power and independence given to a country's anti-corruption and judicial body will determine the success they would archive in fighting corruption cases. Meanwhile, there is one common tendency about most corruption cases in Nigeria: they kick off fast attracting public attention, but throughout months the story fades off and the citizens simply forget about it, even though the trials continue for years without any reasonable verdict. Some random corruption cases with the unclear outcome are:

Back in 2013 when Stella Oduah (ex-Aviation Minister) alleged corruption case broke, she was accused to have spent over N255 million (\$0.7million) on luxurious cars, the money of which she was said to have taken from the ministry's budget. Six years after, the investigation is still ongoing. The official agencies vowed to ensure a fair investigation and corresponding punishment if she is ever found guilty. However, the constant adjournment of the cases makes everyone wonder if they are ever going to witness the outcome of this case.

Femi Fani-Kayode faces at least seventeen count charges against him. One of the most discussed issues is his allegedly receiving huge sum of money from the former President Goodluck Jonathan just a few days before the 2015 election. The politician has been arrested, re-arrested, accused and called for investigation so many times that we have lost count.

Ex-pension boss Alhaji Maina is believed to have misappropriated billions of naira of pension funds. Back in 2013, he was accused of mopping up money from banks and depositing it into his private account, as a result, thousands of pensioners across the country had no money for maintenance for months. On completion of the investigation, the Senate issued a warrant of arrest against Maina, but soon the man disappears into hiding. Even though he is not yet cleared of the charges, given that he is still wanted by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (hereafter as EFCC), he was reportedly being reinstated by the government. The quietly made decision was followed by outraged comments from the public. The question is, will Maina be duly tried over his alleged involvement in the scam? The answer is not clear.

The biggest corruption allegation is that of the former National Security Adviser, Colonel Sambo Dasuki (rtd), who was accused to have embezzled \$2.1 billion meant for arms procurement to fight against Islamic insurgency in the country. The presidential investigations committee reports suggested that part of the disbursed fund was diverted for the sponsoring of the re-election of former President Goodluck Jonathan (Yusuf, 2015). Even though he had been granted bail by four different high courts in Nigeria and ECOWAS Court of Justice, after over two years in the detention of the Department of State Services (DSS). The government has turned deaf ear to the court order citing national security as an excuse. Meanwhile, Dasuki had filed a fundamental human rights suit against the Federal Government to obey all court orders for his release from detention.

Nigeria's ex-Chief of Defense Staff Alex Badeh faces ten count charges of alleged diversion of N3.9 billion (\$20 million) meant for the purchase of arms (EFCC, 2016). In

2016, Badeh could afford an N2 billion (\$5.5million) bail and the trial has since continued, but the public has not heard much about trial since then.

Another person that is connected to the arms deal scandal is Major General Kenneth Minimah who reportedly returned the sum of N1.7 billion (\$4.7million) to the federal government coffers (The Nation, 2018), following the EFCC investigation of his involvement in the missing \$2.1billion which has kept Colonel Sambo Dasuki (rtd) in prison since 2015.

The famous slogan “Who is the Presidency?” brought us to the case of Babachir Lawal the former Secretary to the Federal Government. He was arrested and detained for questioning by the EFCC in January 2018 for alleged fraud, following an indictment by the Senate, and a presidential panel that investigated misuse of funds meant for people displaced by Boko Haram (EFCC, 2019). The arrest came a day after former President Olusegun Obasanjo accused President Buhari of condoning corruption where persons close to him are involved. Babachir Lawal has longed been released from EFCC custody but was relieved from his position. Meanwhile, he considered his sack from the office as a blessing (Ogun-Yusuf, 2018), and in the meantime, his case remains inconclusive.

The Nigerian situation shows how almost impossible it is for political expose persons to be convicted. The anti-corruption strategy has been that of media trial and seizure of accused persons’ assets. So, the question that the public is pondering about is: will any final verdict ever go to be heard?

Methodology of research

This is an empirical analysis aiming to find the institutional corruption level and the government anticorruption effort as seen or perceived by the citizens.

The paper is made of quantitative research, carried out through online direct survey method, based on a sociological questionnaire. The methodology of analyzing the collected data is of simple percentage obtained by converting responses from respondents in each question. The responses were collected from 5720 random volunteers from 19 states in Nigeria - including Federal Capital Territory (FCT). The FCT accounted for the second highest number of respondents (1600) after Lagos state (1850 respondents). Seventy-three percentage (4180 respondents) of this random population are male, and female makes up the other percentages (1540 respondents). The largest age group among the respondents is 26-35 years which represented 51.6%. Age group 18-25 years made up 33.3%, while age 36-45 accounted for 11.8%. The minimum educational attainment of the volunteers is the Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (SSCE). In all the five levels of educational attainment of the respondents, the highest percentage is that of respondents holding a bachelor’s degree (54.8%). The holders of master’s degree represent 23.7% of total surveyed, a doctoral degree (7.5%), post-doctoral degree (1.1%), and SSCE (12.9%).

Empirical analysis

The study contains 33 questions, from which 28 relevant questions and 5 profiling questions were analyzed as revealed in the following tables and figures.

One thing majority (86%) of the respondents agreed on is the fact that corruption is a common practice in Nigeria, while another 11.2% somewhat agreed (see Figure 1).

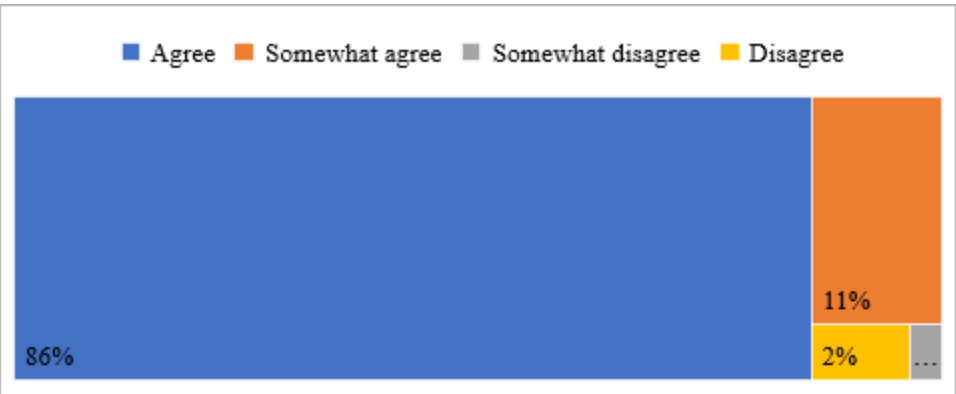


Figure 1. Corruption, a common practice in Nigeria

The optimistic level of Nigerians concerning the fight against corruption seems to be exceptionally low. Only 14.1% of the surveyed population thinks that corruption has either decrease a little or decrease a lot. Majority of the population frowned upon the level of progress the government claims to have made concerning the fight against corruption (Figure 2).

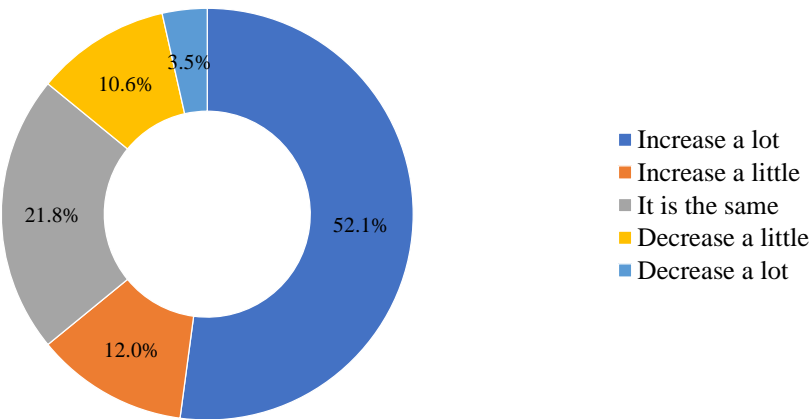


Figure 2. Changes in the Nigeria level of corruption in the past 3 years

If we compare the trend of corruption in the last 3 years, then we can understand how the respondents access the future. The governments' body language might as well be the

reason why people are not optimistic. Many of the population (72.5%) thinks that corruption will decrease a little, which means that there is still a lot of work to be done by the government in making appropriate laws and supporting the anti-draft agency to fight corruption effectively (Figure 3).

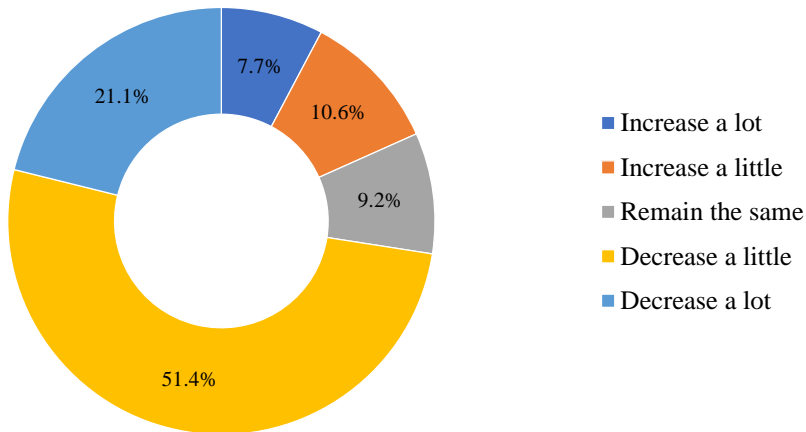


Figure 3. The expectation of the corruption level in the next 3 years

Corruption has become a parasite, eating deep into the fabric of the country's economy, thus becoming a common practice in the country. Hence, the impact of corruption on one's personal life or business is seen to be large (Figure 4).

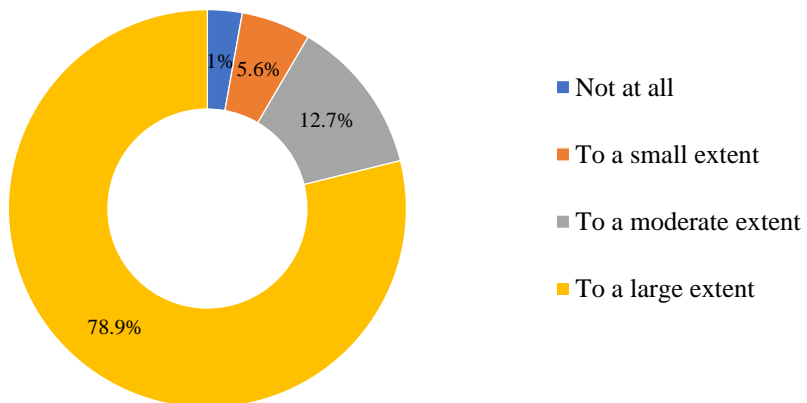


Figure 4. How corruption affects personal life and the business environment

Be that as it may, the definition of corruption is still somewhat unclear depending on the situation. On average, only 33.3% of the respondents, agreed that helping a friend to get a job, obtaining licenses, or influencing a project bidding process to benefit a choice candidate is considered corruption to a large extent. Meanwhile, 27.1% says it is corruption to a small extent, while 19.9% of them think it is only to a moderate extent. Surprisingly, the response to the participant varies depending on the situation. The largest chunk of the people surveyed (33.3%) thinks influencing a recruitment process

to help a friend or relative in getting a job is corruption only to a small extent. When it comes to helping a friend or relative in getting licenses or favoring in public bidding, the largest percentage of the people (36.3% for Licenses, and 40.2% for favoring in public bidding) says it is corruption to a large extent (see Figure 5).

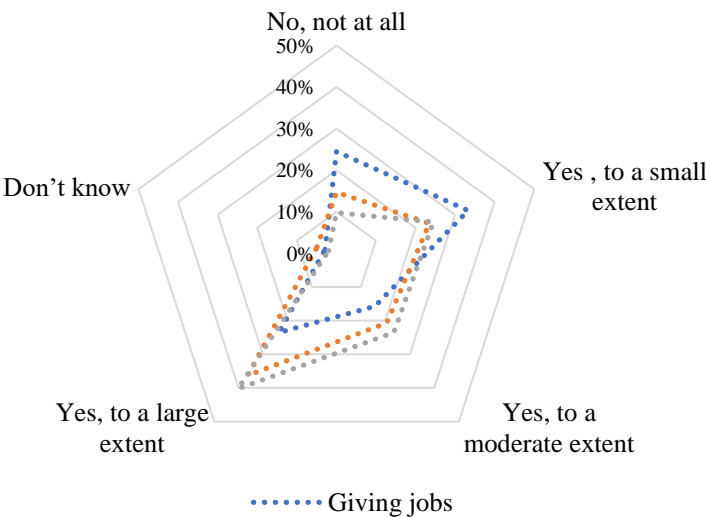


Figure 5. Using a public position to help friends or relatives

In relation to the above questions, there is a consensus against the distribution of gifts or money in an election campaign (see Figure 6). It is for this reason that political donors could also be considered guilty if the money they donated is for the sole purpose of election campaign gift. It is a general knowledge that there is no free lunch even in Freetown – thus the reason for financing political parties whether justifiable or not, is solely to get favor such as political appointment, undeserving advantageous policies, and public contract in return.

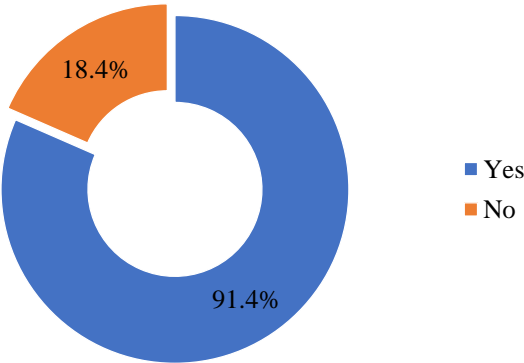


Figure 6. Distributing gifts or money in an election campaign

With no doubt, Nigerians have the same attitude towards the role of politicians, civil servants, and big businesses in corruption. Irrespective of where the money is going, almost everyone agreed that diversion of state fund from one project to an unauthorized one, or to favor another group of people is illegal and should be condemned (Figure 7).

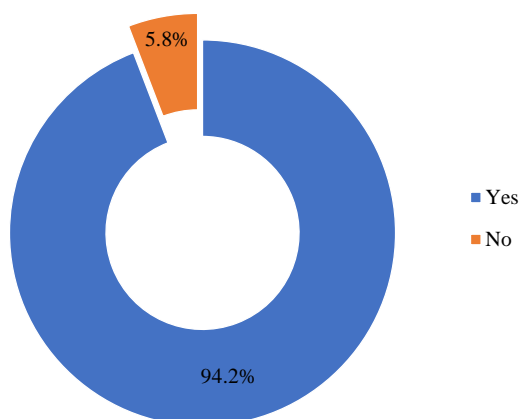


Figure 7. Diverting state funds to other constituents

Table 1. Business and political corruption

Questions	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree
Do you agree that politicians have no real will to fight corruption as they may benefit from it?	4170 72.8%	890 15.5%	390 6.8%	280 4.9%
Do you agree that small and medium businesses are more negatively affected by corruption than large businesses?	3310 57.8%	1460 25.5%	390 6.9%	560 9.8%
Do you agree that large business is one of the main sources of corruption?	2470 43.1%	1790 31.4%	950 16.7%	500 8.8%

In 2015 Goodluck Jonathan, the former Nigeria president was quoted as saying that stealing is not corruption. The truth was that he was quoting the former Chief Justice of the Federation, who told him of how he had to distinguish straight acts of stealing from other forms of corruption. This is because most people cannot make a difference between the straight act of stealing from corrupt practices. The behavior of Nigerians has shown that they dislike thieves more than corrupt people, hence corruption becomes an umbrella to cover the lapses of direct stealing. Even so, if someone should attempt to explain to them in their local tongue by describing a corrupt person as a thief, they will still say we agree that he is a thief, but he is our thief. This might explain why it becomes acceptable in some quarters for politicians to divert money meant for the commonwealth of a state to his/her own constituency. The Nigerian government has often been unable or unwilling to bring the grand corrupt to justice, even though it is considered a major obstacle to the achievement of sustainable development. This is

because grand corruption undermines and distorts sound financial practice and clean business. Thirty-three percent of the respondents sees grand corruption as one that pervades cases causing high-level damage to the country, while 29.1% understood it to be cases with involvement of high-level public officials, consequently, leading to a far-reaching wearing down of confidence in good governance, the rule of law and economic stability.

The most popular type of corruption reported is cash, closely followed by a position in the administration, while gift such as apartment or car stays at the 3rd place among Nigerians as revealed in Figure 8.

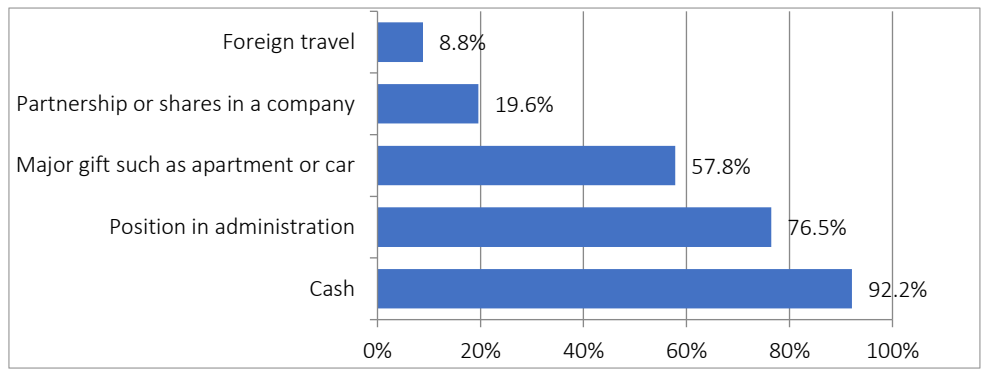


Figure 8. Most common bribe types (%)

To show the level of institutional corruption, the below institutions were ranked like the hotels from (1-5) stars; (1) as less corrupt and (5) most corrupt. Political Parties were ranked the highest with 4.61 stars, police followed with 4.54 stars, then comes parliament and legislature with 4.24 stars, while Doctor/Health System received the lowest ranking of 2.21 stars, which is below the average and shows that Doctor/Health System is the least corrupt institute in the country (see Figure 9).

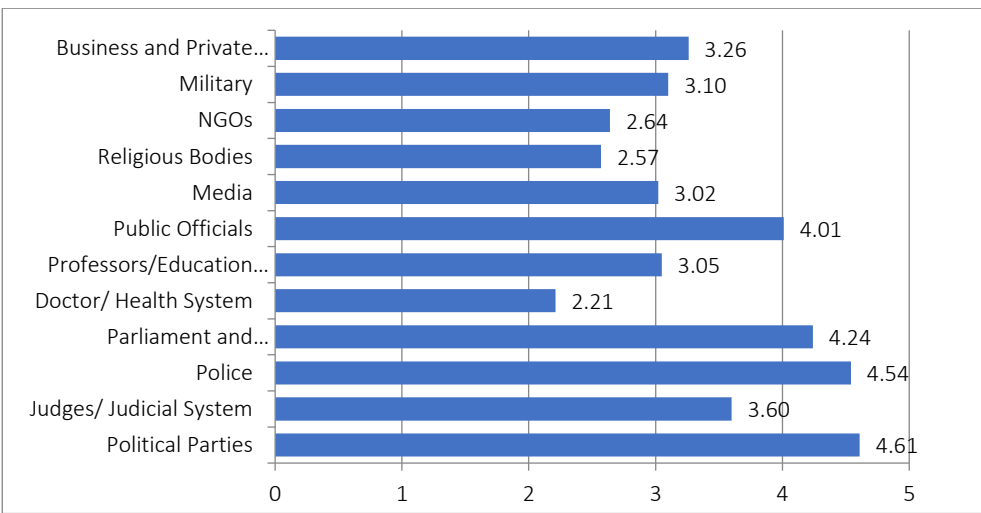


Figure 9. The perceived level of public institutions' corruption

Although there is hardly proof that the percentage of citizens directly involved in corruption has gone down. This survey suggests that Nigerians do not condone corruption at any level. Thus, for corruption to be brought to its barest minimum, 76.8% of the respondents believe that citizens should be responsible for reducing corruption. In line with this agreement, approximately 77% of the respondents disagree that paying bribes is the only way to overcome bureaucratic hurdles or unjust regulations. (see table 2).

Table 2. Business and political corruption

	Agree	Somewhat agree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Weighted Average
Do you agree that some level of corruption should be acceptable?	240 (4.2%)	420 (7.4%)	4400 (76.8%)	660 (11.6%)	2.96 / 4
Do you agree that the only way to overcome bureaucratic hurdles is to pay bribes?	240 (4.2%)	480 (8.4%)	4520 (78.9%)	480 (8.4%)	2.92 / 4
Do you agree that citizens should be responsible for reducing corruption?	4400 (76.8%)	960 (16.8%)	300 (5.3%)	60 (1.1%)	1.31/ 4

Given that there is always a conflict of interest in the fight against corruption by a politician, the citizen becomes the fittest to lead the fight against corruption in their daily activities according to 49.5% of the respondents. Meanwhile, as the head of the country, and from the point of view of authority, the president should be seen at the forefront according to 31.6% of the respondents. Only 9.5% of the people think that the anti-corruption bodies should lead the effort to combat corruption. This shouldn't be surprising given that only 7.4% of the respondents fully have confidence in the EFCC or ICPC ability or willingness to fight corruption, while 26.3% do not have confidence whatsoever in their ability. Nonetheless, 47.4% have somewhat confidence.

Table 3. Confidence in the anti-corruption bodies (EFCC & ICPC)

	Fully confident	Somewhat confident	Somewhat not confident	Not confident
Do you have confidence in the ability of EFCC & ICPC to fight corruption?	420 (7.4%)	2710 (47.4%)	1080 (18.9%)	250 (26.3%)
Are you confident that EFCC & ICPC is an impartial law enforcement body?	420 (7.4%)	2170 (37.9%)	1450 (25.3%)	1690 (29.5%)

Lack of trust, reduced legitimacy and lack of confidence in public institutions can be both a cause and an effect of corruption (Stober, 2015). The president's body language and the selective anti-corruption campaign of EFCC and ICPC are giving the Nigerian populist the impression of political witch-hunt; hence the low confidence metrics from the citizens (see Table 3, and Figure 10).

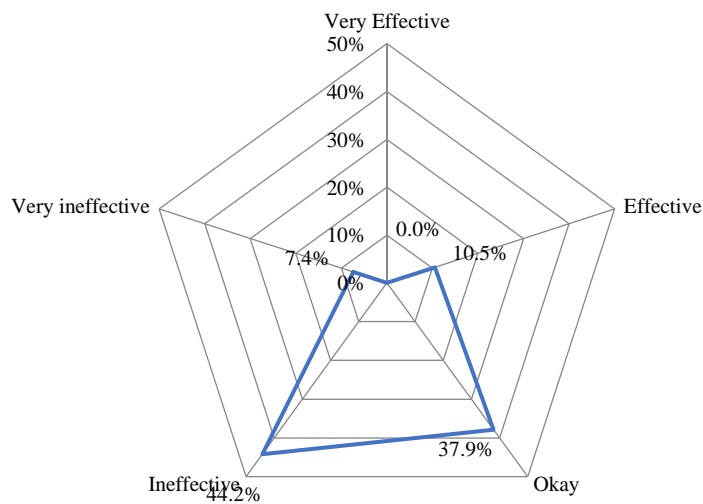


Figure 10. Evaluating the EFCC & ICPC's performance in fighting corruption

The main prevention mechanism for corruption overtime has always been transparency in administrative decision making and strong punitive measures, this is also evident according to one in three respondents as revealed in Figure 11. Approximately one-fifth of the respondents also argued for perfecting legislation (new anti-corruption laws or adopting international laws) as a solution for preventing corruption.

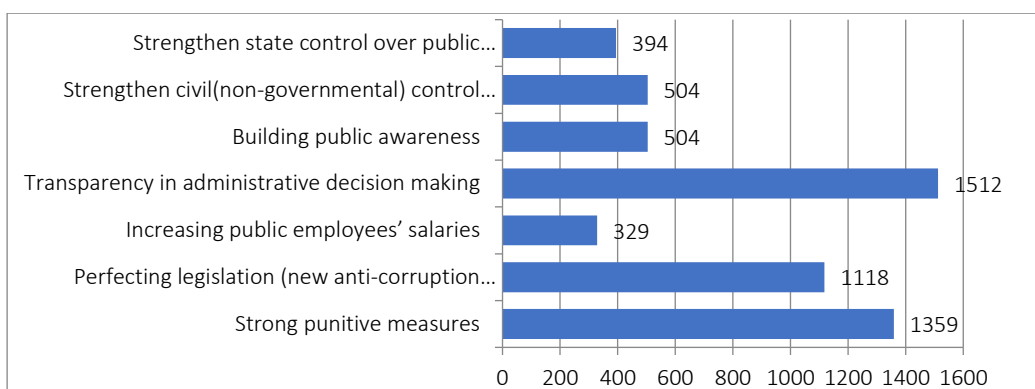


Figure 11. Corruption prevention mechanism

Even though respondents believed that some integrity mechanisms are implemented, the government's efforts are often ineffective; and the anti-graft operation is also hindered by private and political interests, which are rendering most integrity mechanisms non-existent or ineffective. This is a strong reason to argue that the government's motivation and capacity to implement reforms is mixed. The measures used by the government lacks earlier consultation, hence slowing down the speed of reforms.

Table 4. Extents at which there are legal or political penalties for officeholders who abuse their positions

	As a rule, corrupt officeholders are prosecuted rigorously under established laws	As a rule, corrupt officeholders are prosecuted under established laws but also slip through political, legal or procedural loopholes	Corrupt officeholders are not prosecuted adequately under the law but occasionally attract adverse publicity	Officeholders can exploit their offices for private gain as they see fit without fear of legal consequences or adverse publicity
All Data	420 (7.4%)	840 (14.7%)	2890 (50.5%)	1570 (27.4%)

This study has evaluated general impressions of the impact of grand corruption. More than half of the respondents (51%) believed that grand corruption had a very strong negative impact on them or their families, while another 27% experienced some degree of negative impact along with their family. This negative impact affected citizens disproportionately. The living standard had the highest negative impact, followed by lack of jobs, and good education facility (24%) as revealed in Figure 12.

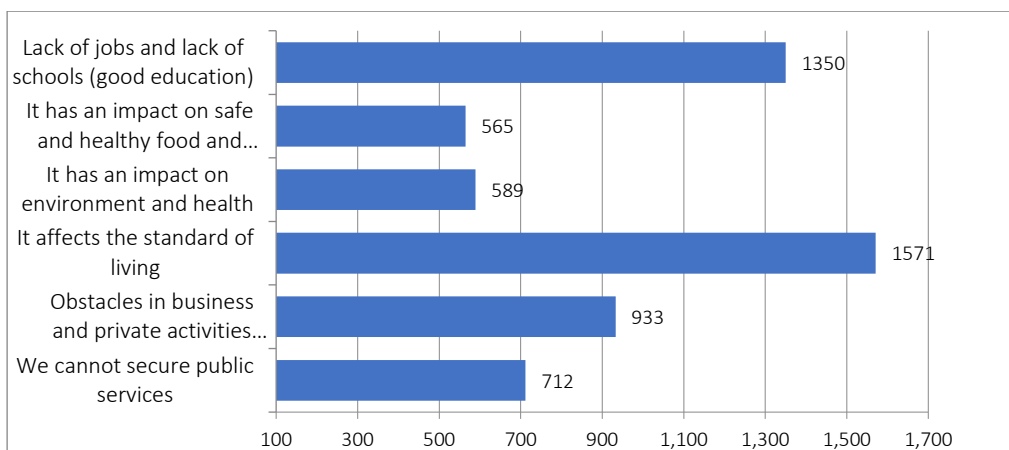


Figure 12. The impact of corruption on the household

Some might augur that corruption has become the way of living in Nigeria, since it is almost impossible to find a family that at least one of its member has not been involved (either giving or receiving) in a form of corruption in the last 3 years – it is almost a custom to paid or offered a gift to ease a process or be attended to in government institutes. Depending on the circumstances, time sensitivity or the degree at which they need help, paying bribe will be the only way to get attended to or to resolve a situation according to the claims of 55.3% of the respondents. The structural induced corruption in the country has created traps on the part of the citizens. In a situation when a passenger has a flight to catch but the immigration, police, or an airport official will rather make you miss your flight if you do not give them an unauthorized fee to board the plane. At this point, you do not have any choice but to pay the bribe so that you will not miss the flight, especially when you know nobody will come to your rescue. After the recurrent experience, you will have to succumb to the way business is done at the airport. Rather than waste time or even miss a flight, you will now build into your system a form of gratification to make things go smoothly – this is called “Smoothering the curves” or “greasing the wheels”.

The interesting part of the survey is that only 5.3% of Nigerians are ready to pay bribe no matter what, if they are directly asked by a public or private official for a service they are entitled to. This shows that the majority of the population are zero percent tolerant to corruption, but the situation often compels them to act accordingly (see Figure 13).

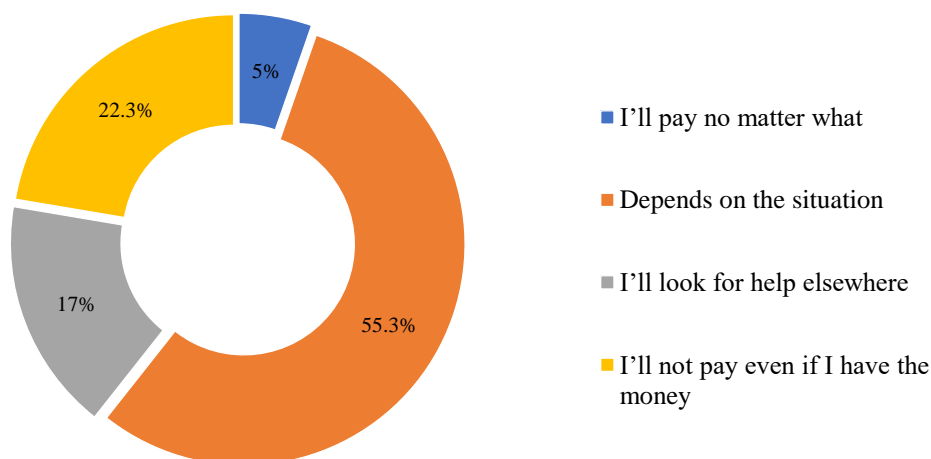


Figure 13. *If you face a situation in which you are directly asked for a bribe by a public or private official, what is your most likely action?*

Conclusions

In putting the Transparency International and this survey scores in context, we will realize that the Nigeria low ranking is plagued by the untrustworthiness and badly functioning public institutions. This is coupled with the low degrees of press freedom, lack of access to information about public expenditure, weaker standards of integrity for public officials, and lack of independence of the judicial systems.

Even though anti-corruption laws are in place, in practice they are often skirted or ignored. Corruption in Nigeria is so lucrative that the threat of jail term is not enough to deter perpetrators. The president's body language is also worsening the situation. When a corrupt person is affiliated to him or his political party, the president fights corruption with deodorant, but when the person is not connected to him, he fights corruption with insecticide. Thus, who will be afraid of jail when all it takes to avoid such a situation is to join the president's political party (All Progressives Congress).

Therefore, corruption has become not just endemic, but also pervasive, acceptable, and the norm. The National Bureau of Statistics estimated that the total amount of bribes paid to public officials in the 12 months prior to their survey was around N400 billion (\$4.6 billion) (UNOPC, 2017). This sum is equivalent to 39% of the combined federal and state education budgets in 2016. This is because bribery and other corrupt acts may not always be perceived as corruption in the country. And so, there is a need to go back to the root cause, to resolve the main reason for bribery and gratification in society. If structural bottlenecks are removed, the need to bribe will automatically be removed. For example, people do not have to pay a bribe to buy sim cards or top-up their phones because the process is effortless, they do not have to pay a bribe to buy petrol when the resource is available in all the gas stations. They do not have to bribe anyone to get foreign exchange as much as it was before. So, the way forward will be to streamline and automate all government processes. And for corruption to be truly brought to its barest minimum, effective anticorruption measures supported by other contextual factors

which are integrated into a broader package of institutional and public financial management reforms must be fast-track.

The judicial system also needs to be reformed to speed up corruption cases. The administration of the criminal justice act will have a lot of impact on the justice system if properly implemented. Part of the problem that causes a delay in the court process is the lack of court management. Nigeria needs court management professionals who are not necessarily lawyers to help the country manage its court system – the way cases are brought forward, the way cases are scheduled, the way courtrooms are assigned to judges, etc. These court management professionals can take away some burdens from the judges so that they can concentrate on what they do best.

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