

Corruption and Leadership in Nigeria: Effects on the Economy

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Abstract

Original Research Article

This study sought to examine the relationship between corruption and leadership in Nigeria, exploring how leadership styles, policies, and practices contribute to or mitigate corruption. It analyzed the nature of leadership in Nigeria and the various ways through which corruption is entrenched in Nigerian government and politics, and its general implication for Nigeria's socio-political and economic continuity. By adopting literatures from library research, the study is descriptive and analytical in nature, based on secondary methodological influence. Findings show that corruption in leadership is a major impediment to the survival of socio political and economic formations. The study concluded that development is only obtainable in a healthy political environment that is devoid of corruption, thereby recommending a drastic interpretation of the law on corrupt government officials found guilty of corruption so as to sanitize the political atmosphere, among other things.

Keywords: Corruption, Leadership, Economic Growth, Policies, Economic Development, Accountability, Transparency.

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INTRODUCTION:

Nigeria, one of Africa's largest economies, has struggled with the twin devils of corruption and poor leadership for decades. The country's immense potentials, driven by its vast natural resources and large population have been consistently undermined by these dual challenges. This study examines the effects of corruption and poor leadership on Nigeria's economy, highlighting the consequences of these issues, and proposing potential solutions.

Corruption is a pervasive problem in Nigeria, with the country ranking 149 out of 180 countries in Transparency International's 2022 Corruption Perceptions Index. Corruption manifests in various forms, including bribery, embezzlement, and nepotism. The effects of corruption are far-reaching, leading to:

- i. Diversion of Public Funds:** Corruption results in the misallocation of public resources, as funds intended for development projects are siphoned off by corrupt officials.
- ii. Inefficient Allocation of Resources:** Corruption distorts market mechanisms, leading to inefficient allocation of resources and hindering economic growth.
- iii. Loss of Investor Confidence:** Corruption deters foreign investment, as investors are wary of operating in an environment where bribery and extortion are rampant.

Poor leadership has exacerbated Nigeria's corruption problem. The country's leaders have often prioritized personal interests over national development, perpetuating a culture of corruption and impunity.

Key leadership failures common among Nigerian leaders include:

- i. Lack of accountability,** where leaders have failed to hold themselves and others accountable for corruption, allowing the problem to persist.
- ii. Inadequate institutional frameworks,** where weak institutions, such as the judiciary and anti-corruption agencies, have been unable to effectively tackle corruption.
- iii. Short-term focus,** as leaders have prioritized short-term gains over long-term development, neglecting investments in critical sectors like education, healthcare, and infrastructure.

According to the GIS Reports (2020), the combined effects of corruption and poor leadership have had devastating consequences for Nigeria's economy, including:

- i. Stunted Economic Growth:** Corruption and poor leadership have hindered Nigeria's economic growth, with the country's GDP growth rate averaging only 2% over the past decade

ii. Increased Poverty: The misallocation of resources and inefficient allocation of resources have perpetuated poverty, with over 80 million Nigerians living on less than \$2 a day.

iii. Dependence on Oil: The economy's over-reliance on oil exports has made it vulnerable to fluctuations in global oil prices, exacerbating economic instability.

Corruption, a pervasive and complex issue that affects many countries around the world, is also affecting Nigeria. It is a major obstacle to economic development, political stability, and social justice. Corruption undermines the legitimacy of government, erodes trust in institutions, and perpetuates inequality and poverty. It is the abuse of public office or power for personal gain, including bribery, embezzlement, nepotism and other forms of malfeasance, and it affects all levels of government, the private sector, and civil society. However, leadership plays a critical role in perpetuating or combating corruption in Nigeria.

Leadership is the process of influencing, motivating, and directing others to achieve a common goal or vision, including political and administrative goals. The country's leaders have often been accused of corruption, nepotism, and cronyism. The lack of accountability, transparency, and good governance has created an environment conducive to corruption. The study, therefore, aims to examine the relationship between leadership and corruption in Nigeria, exploring how leadership styles, policies, and practices contribute to or mitigate corruption.

Nigeria is one of the most corrupt countries in the world, ranking 146 out of 180 countries in the 2020 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) published by Transparency International. Corruption is endemic in Nigeria, affecting all levels of government, the private sector, and civil society. It also affects all aspects of life, including politics, business, and social services. The country's rich natural resources, particularly oil, have created opportunities for corruption and rent-seeking, and the leadership has been criticized for its role in perpetuating corruption, with many leaders accused of embezzling public funds, engaging in nepotism, and abusing their power.

Despite the widespread recognition of corruption as a major problem in Nigeria, there is a lack of empirical research on the relationship between leadership and corruption. Most studies have focused on the economic, political, or social dimensions of corruption, without adequately exploring the role of leadership. This study aims to fill this research gap by providing a nuanced understanding of the relationship between leadership and corruption in Nigeria, hence the following research questions: What is the relationship between leadership style and corruption in Nigeria? To what extent do economic, political, social and institutional factors influence corruption in Nigeria? How does corruption affect economic development and governance in Nigeria? What strategies can be employed to reduce corruption and

promote good governance in Nigeria? How do leadership characteristics, such as accountability, transparency, and integrity, influence corruption in Nigeria?

In attempting to answer the above questions, the study therefore, seeks to achieve the following objectives:

- i. Examine the relationship between corruption and leadership in Nigeria.
- ii. Evaluate the extent economic, political, social, and institutional factors influence corruption in Nigeria.
- iii. Assess the impact of corruption on development in Nigeria.
- iv. Investigate how leadership styles, policies, and practices mitigate corruption and promote good governance in Nigeria.
- v. Identify effective strategies for combating corruption and promoting transparency, accountability, and good governance in Nigeria.

This study is significant because it will contribute to a deeper understanding of the complex relationships between leadership, corruption, and development in Nigeria. The findings will provide valuable insights for policymakers, practitioners, and scholars seeking to address corruption and promote good governance in Nigeria. The study will also contribute to the development of effective strategies for combating corruption and promoting transparency and accountability in Nigeria.

Conceptual Framework

The study combines three key concepts: corruption, leadership, and development. Corruption involves abusing power for personal gain, often due to weak institutions and lack of accountability. Leadership plays a crucial role in promoting or preventing corruption, while development encompasses economic, social, and political transformation.

Effective leaders must possess certain qualities, including intelligence, projective thinking, and practical knowledge. They must be able to adapt to changing environments, identify problems, and understand institutional processes. Good leaders must also have various abilities, such as spatial, linguistic, and logical-mathematical skills (Okoye, 2012). To combat corruption, contracts, policies, and programs should be rigorously monitored and evaluated. Proper auditing and accountability are essential, and there should be a clear separation of power among the executive, legislature, and judiciary. The judiciary should remain impartial in corruption cases (Kenny & Zaccaro, 1983).

Corruption hinders development in Nigeria by diverting resources, perpetuating inequality, and discouraging investment. Weak institutions enable corruption, while strong institutions promote good governance and development. Corruption is widespread in Nigeria, affecting daily life, government, and business (Gardner, 1999). Leadership styles, policies, and practices can influence corruption. Leaders who prioritize personal



gain over public interest are more likely to engage in corrupt practices. Effective leadership is crucial for development, as it enables the creation of institutions and policies that promote economic growth and human well-being (Vernon, 1950; Carroll, 1993).

Corruption is a pervasive issue in Nigeria, with significant financial losses estimated at over \$400 billion in oil revenue since independence. Corruption can take many forms, including bribery, embezzlement, and nepotism, and can involve various individuals and sectors. Corruption can occur in any sector, including business, government, and civil society, and can involve various actors. It thrives in the shadows, often with the help of professional enablers and opaque financial systems. Corruption adapts to changing circumstances and can evolve in response to new rules and technologies.

The costs of corruption are multifaceted, including political, social, environmental, and economic costs. Corruption can undermine freedom, trust in government, and the environment, while also diverting resources away from development projects and perpetuating poverty and inequality (Roger, 1083). Corruption hinders development by diverting resources, perpetuating inequality, and discouraging investment. It exacerbates poverty and inequality, while also undermining economic growth and development projects (Lord, 1986).

Case Studies of Corruption and Leadership in Nigeria:

Some people believe that Nigeria's National Grid problems are due to genuine challenges, but Sui Ayodele disagrees. He thinks that the grid collapses are deliberate, driven by personal greed. He points to a situation where a government-owned power plant with the capacity to generate 500 megawatts is underutilized, while a private plant generates more power than it can transmit. The Ihovbor Power Plant in Benin City, owned by the Niger Delta Power Holding Company, can generate 500 megawatts of power but is not operating at full capacity. Despite being a brand new plant, it transmits little to no power to the National Grid due to its turbines being shut down.

Meanwhile, a private plant in the same area generates 461 megawatts of power, while the government plant generates only 100 megawatts. The Transmission Company of Nigeria (TCN) has a Power Purchase Agreement with the private plant, paying an average of \$30 million monthly, even when the power cannot be transmitted to the National Grid. The situation becomes complicated when a government-owned power plant is shut down to allow a private plant to operate, and the government pays a large sum of \$30 million monthly for power generated but not transmitted. The private plant even uses the government-owned plant's facilities, raising questions about the arrangement.

The NDPHC owns nine other power plants across the country, which, if optimally used, could generate 4,700

megawatts of power. However, many of these plants are not working at full capacity, while private plants receive large payments for power not transmitted. There are questions to be asked about the number of government-owned plants working, the private plants receiving large payments, and the owners of these private plants and their government connections.

The Ossiomo Power Company in Benin City is an example of a successful private power project initiated by the former Governor of Edo State, Godwin Obaseki. Despite initial resistance, the project was completed and now supplies power to government offices in the state. The success of Ossiomo shows that focused leadership and determination can make a difference. The question is, why can't we have more such projects across the nation, rather than relying on a dysfunctional National Grid? The answer lies in greed and the interests of power generating profiteers.

Different leadership styles can impact corruption. Authoritarian leaders often prioritize their own interests, creating an environment conducive to corruption. In contrast, transformational leaders prioritize the public interest and promote transparency and accountability. Leaders who practice patronage and clientelism can perpetuate corruption and inequality. The 2023 Corruption Perceptions Index shows that corruption is widespread globally. To combat corruption, leaders must invest in and guarantee the independence of institutions that uphold the law. Impunity for corruption must end, and justice systems must be able to punish wrongdoing and keep governments in check.

The Corruption Perceptions Index ranks countries based on perceived levels of public sector corruption. Most countries score below 50 out of 100, indicating serious corruption problems. The global average score is stuck at 43, with many countries showing no progress or decline in the last decade. Over two-thirds of countries score below 50 out of 100, which strongly indicate that they have serious corruption problems. The global average is stuck at only 43, while the vast majority of countries have made no progress or declined in the last decade.

Unfortunately, corruption remains a pervasive issue in Nigeria, affecting various aspects of society. Here are some common corrupt practices in Nigeria today:

- i. Bribery: Offering or accepting bribes to influence decisions or actions.
- ii. Embezzlement: Misappropriation of public funds or resources for personal gain.
- iii. Nepotism: Favoring family members or friends in hiring, promotions, or contract awards.
- iv. Kickbacks: Demanding or receiving kickbacks from contractors or suppliers.

Private sector corruption includes practices such as contract inflation, fake invoicing, tax evasion, and money laundering. These corrupt acts can occur when private institutions or individuals engage in illicit activities, often in conjunction with corrupt government officials



(Hamilton, 2013).

Judicial corruption involves misconduct by judges, prosecutors, and defense attorneys, including bribery, favoritism, and delaying justice. This type of corruption can be difficult to eradicate, even in developed countries, and can undermine the rule of law and trust in institutions (Barenboim, 2009). Electoral corruption includes practices such as vote buying, electoral violence, and ballot stuffing. Political corruption involves the abuse of public power for personal gain, including extortion, bribery, and misuse of resources. This type of corruption can have serious consequences, including undermining citizens' trust in government (Hamilton & Hudson, 2014).

Military corruption occurs when members of the armed forces abuse their power for personal gain or career advancement (Powers, 2020). This can include favoritism, sexual assault, and theft of resources. Military corruption can be difficult to detect and punish, especially when it involves high-ranking officers (Williams, 2022). The presence of natural resources such as oil, gas, and minerals can increase corruption in less democratic countries. Corruption can take many forms, including large bribes and petty corruption. The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative aims to promote good governance of natural resources (Tacconi & Williams, 2020).

Police corruption involves misconduct designed to obtain financial benefits or personal gain (Cocks & Brocks, 2015; Jonah, 2016). This can include accepting bribes, harassing witnesses, and falsifying evidence. Police corruption can undermine trust in law enforcement and make it difficult to hold officers accountable (Miller, 2021; Leon, 1989). Attorney misconduct involves corrupt practices by lawyers, such as hiding evidence or making false statements. Mob lawyers, who protect criminal organizations, are a well-known example of this type of corruption (Junior, 1985).

Corporate crime refers to crimes committed by corporations or individuals acting on their behalf. This can include practices such as insider trading, embezzlement, and environmental damage. Corporate crime can have serious consequences for individuals and society (Eddiegilman, 2016). Corruption in education is a widespread issue, with universities being particularly vulnerable. Corruption in admissions, bribery, and misappropriation of funds are common problems. This can lead to sustainable corrupt hierarchies and undermine the quality of education (Osipian, 2013).

Corruption in healthcare is a significant danger to public welfare. It can take many forms, including theft, embezzlement, nepotism, and bribery. Corruption in healthcare can occur in both public and private sectors, and can have serious consequences for patients and communities (Klitgaard, 2000; Vian & Norberg, 2008). Labor union leaders may be involved in corrupt actions or be influenced by criminal enterprises. Religious organizations have also faced corruption, with leaders

accused of hypocrisy and abuse of power (Kruse, 2019; Treisman, 2000).

Other forms of corruption include ghost workers, padded budgets, fuel subsidy scams, and land grabbing. These practices undermine development, perpetuate inequality, and erode trust in institutions (Opejobi, 2016; Ogundipe, 2017; Vito, 1998). Corruption can take many forms, including bribery, embezzlement, theft, and fraud. Graft, extortion, and blackmail are also common methods of corruption. Influence peddling and access money are other forms of corruption that can involve large bribes and kickbacks (Wang, 2013; David, 2000; Ang, 2016).

Networking can be an effective way to gain an edge in the job market, but it can also be seen as a form of corruption when personal relationships influence hiring decisions. This can lead to non-meritocratic advantages and undermine fair competition (Dobos, 2015). Abuse of discretion occurs when individuals misuse their powers and decision-making facilities. Examples include judges improperly dismissing cases or customs officials allowing banned substances through ports (Mishler, 2019).

Favoritism, nepotism, and clientelism involve favoring friends, family members, or associates, often regardless of merit. This can lead to unfair treatment and undermine trust in institutions (Alt, 2015; Friedrich, 1972; Klavaren, 1954). Several organizations measure corruption, including the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) and the Global Corruption Index (GCI). These indexes rank countries based on perceived levels of corruption and provide insights into the state of corruption worldwide.

Corruption can harm economic growth by draining public and private wealth, distorting fair competition, and increasing the cost of doing business. Different types of corruption, such as petty theft, grand theft, speed money, and access money, can have varying effects on the economy (Mo, 2001; Ang, 2024). Corruption can reduce productivity growth, investment, and job opportunities, while increasing inequality. However, some experts argue that corruption can also stimulate economic growth in certain contexts, such as in East and Southeast Asian countries (Ang, 2021; Olken, 2012).

Limiting monopoly and regulator discretion, increasing transparency, and independent oversight can help reduce corruption. Access to reliable information and media scrutiny can also play a crucial role in fighting corruption (Juan, 1981; Stephan, 2012). Disclosing financial information of government officials can improve institutional accountability and reduce corruption. This is particularly effective when disclosures include politicians' income sources, liabilities, and asset levels (Rithmire & Chen, 2021; Heidenheimer, 1993).

A country should establish a culture of ethical conduct, with the government setting a good example. This can enhance intrinsic morality and reduce corruption (Judge, et al., 2002; Foti & Hausenstein, 2007). Corruption exists in various forms and contexts, including kleptocracies,



oligarchies, and wealthy capitalist economies. Recent research highlights the complexity of corruption and its presence in venerated institutions (White, 2015; Smith & Foti, 1998; Kickul & Neuman, 2000).

Global metrics, such as the Corruption Perceptions Index, measure corruption, but may underestimate "corruption of the rich" and institutionalized corruption (Monbiot, 2022; Ackerman, 1996). Corruption can have significant impacts on infrastructure, increasing costs and construction time, and decreasing quality and benefits (Morris, 2009; Jung, 1995; Banduras, 1977).

Effective leaders possess traits such as extroversion, consciousness, and self-efficacy. They are assertive, expressive, and enthusiastic, with a willingness to accommodate changes and new experiences (Senior, 2006; Kaufmann, 2005; Goldeberg, 1992; Saucier, 1994). Corruption in Nigeria manifests in various ways, including contract manipulation, nepotism, and bribery. It is essential to consider the Nigerian context and the various forms of corruption that exist. Corruption is a complex and multifaceted concept, with divergent interpretations. It can involve the abuse of public office for private gain, embezzlement, bribery, and other forms of misconduct (Arvey et al., 2006; John, 2005; Ormrod, 2006).

Strategies Adopted to Reduce Corruption and Promote Good Governance in Nigeria:

- i. Nigeria has established several anti-corruption agencies, including the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC).
- ii. Nigeria has enacted several anti-corruption laws, including the Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Act and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) Act.
- iii. Nigeria has cooperated with international organizations, such as the United Nations and the World Bank, to combat corruption.

Theoretical Framework:

The study draws on the following theoretical perspectives to explain the relationships between corruption, leadership, and development:

i. The Principal-Agent Theory: The theory postulates that the principal-agent problem contributes to corruption. Proponents of the theory, such as Jensen and Meckling maintain that leaders are seen as agents who are entrusted with power and resources to act on behalf of the people who are seen as principals, but some of the leaders prioritize their own interests over those of the citizens. The Principal-Agent Theory explains how leaders (agents) may prioritize their own interests over those of their constituents (principals), leading to corruption and malfeasance. Corruption is bound to arise when leaders prioritize their own interests over those of the people,

leading to an agency problem. But Stigler argues that the theory oversimplifies the complexities of corruption.

ii. The Institutional Theory: The theory posits that weak institutions contribute to corruption, as leaders may exploit institutional weaknesses for personal gain, i.e. weak institutions and lack of accountability exacerbate the agency problem, enabling leaders to engage in corrupt practices. According to North, Acemoglu and Robinson, the theory explains how institutions, including laws, norms, and practices, shape the behavior of leaders and influence the prevalence of corruption. So, weak institutions enable corruption, while strong institutions promote good governance and accountability. Besides, institutional change, including reforms and strengthening of institutions, can help to reduce corruption and promote good governance. Jeffery Sachs however argues that the theory overlooks the role of economic factors in corruption.

iii. The Social Learning Theory: The theory maintains that leaders learn corrupt behaviors from their predecessors or peers, contributing to the perpetuation of corruption. Social Learning Theory explains how leaders can serve as role models, influencing the behavior of their followers, and that corruption can be a learned behavior, with leaders and followers learning to engage in corrupt practices through observation and imitation.

iv. Transformational Leadership Theory: The theory expounds that leaders can promote good governance and accountability through their leadership style, which emphasizes vision, integrity, and accountability. James MacGregor Burns and Bernard Bass posit that transformational leaders can help to reduce corruption by promoting a culture of integrity and accountability, and implementing policies and practices that promote transparency and accountability. It explains that leaders can also engage their followers in the fight against corruption, promoting a sense of ownership and responsibility among citizens. However, Jeane Lipman-Blumen argues that the theory can be overly idealistic and neglects the complexities of real-world leadership.

v. The Trait Theory of Leadership: The trait theory of leadership states that successful leaders have certain innate personality traits that make them more effective than followers. The theory suggests that leaders' traits are central to an organization's success, and that finding people with the right traits will improve organizational performance. The trait theory of leadership is also known as the Great Man Theory of Leadership, and was first proposed by researcher Thomas Carlyle in the 1800s. Some common traits associated with leadership include: intelligence, charisma, confidence, courage, creativity, and integrity. It is the concept with the notion that leaders are born with key characteristics or traits.

METHODOLOGY:

By adopting literatures from library research, the study is descriptive and analytical in nature, based on secondary methodological influence.



Official reports were utilized from government agencies, anti-corruption organizations, and international institutions, such as the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Transparency International. Search for peer-reviewed articles in academic journals focused on corruption, leadership, and governance, such as the Journal of African Studies and the Journal of Development Studies were made. Online databases like Google Scholar, JSTOR, and Web of Science were leveraged to access relevant research papers and articles.

The study employs the Narrative-Textual Case Study Research and the Normative Research Methods to analyze secondary data from official reports, academic journals, and online databases. Case Study Analysis can be used to examine in-depth cases of corruption and leadership, including successes and failures. The material used in this research is the library literature from documented print materials such as textbooks, journals, news papers, periodicals and reports. Normative research methods involve the use of norms, standards, or criteria to evaluate or prescribe behaviour, practices, or policies. This methodology is, in the field of research, regarded as the secondary method of data collection.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS:

Leadership Styles:

The study shows that some leaders in Nigeria are known to exhibit authoritarian tendencies, behaving as if they are "demi-gods" or "small gods". However, there is a growing need for transformational leaders who can inspire and motivate their followers to work towards a common goal.

Challenges Facing Leaders:

Corruption is a major challenge facing leaders in Nigeria, with many leaders being accused of corrupt practices. Ineffective governance and lack of accountability are also major challenges facing leaders in Nigeria.

Effective Leadership:

Leaders in Nigeria need to have a clear vision for the country and be able to communicate this vision to their followers, and also demonstrate integrity and accountability, being transparent in their decision-making and actions.

Leadership Development:

There is a need for training and capacity building programs for Nigerians in order to develop their leadership skills. Mentorship programs can also play a crucial role in developing the next generation of leaders in Nigeria.

The study also reveals significant relationships between leadership styles, institutional strength, and corruption levels. Here are some potential outcomes:

- i. The study shows that corruption is prevalent in Nigeria, with significant variations across different regions and sectors.
- ii. The study reveals that certain leadership styles, such as authoritarian or patronage-based leadership, are more likely to perpetuate corruption.
- iii. The study indicates that weak institutions, including lack of accountability and transparency, contribute to higher corruption levels.
- iv. The study reveals that corruption has significant negative impacts on Nigeria's economic, social, and political development, undermining economic growth, poverty reduction, and human well-being.
- v. The study recommends policy interventions, such as strengthening institutions, promoting transparency and accountability, and encouraging values-based leadership, to combat corruption and promote good governance.
- vi. The study shows that the concept of leadership in Nigeria especially at national level, envisages an individual or group of individuals who would be responsible enough for law making, law implementation, law interpretation, overseeing the activities of government ministries, parastatals, commissions, and representing Nigeria at different capacity inside and outside the country.
- vii. The study concluded that it is also the involvement of capable people who have the ability to head the mass media, political parties, educational institutions, labor organizations, traditional institutions and even religious groups that would bring about development in Nigeria.

The above-stated findings can inform policymakers, practitioners, and scholars on the complex relationships between corruption, leadership and development in Nigeria, and provide insights for developing effective strategies to address these challenges.

Summary of the Study:

Corruption is a pervasive problem in Nigeria, and leadership plays a critical role in perpetuating or combating it. Authoritarian and patronage-based leadership styles are more likely to perpetuate corruption. Weak institutions, including lack of accountability and transparency, contribute to higher corruption levels. The study highlights the need for strengthening institutions to combat corruption.

Corruption has significant negative impacts on Nigeria's economy, including reducing GDP, increasing poverty, and undermining development outcomes, and it also undermines development in Nigeria by diverting resources away from public goods and services, perpetuating inequality, and discouraging investment.

The study concludes that addressing corruption in Nigeria requires a multifaceted approach that includes strengthening institutions by building strong, accountable, and transparent institutions to prevent corruption and ensure good governance; promoting good leadership by encouraging values-based leadership that prioritizes public interest over personal gain; as well as, increasing transparency and accountability by implementing policies



and practices that promote transparency and accountability, including asset declaration and freedom of information laws.

Overall, the study highlights the urgent need for Nigeria to address corruption and promote good governance to achieve sustainable development outcomes.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Short-Term Recommendations:

- i. Strengthening the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) to improve their effectiveness in combating corruption.
- ii. Implementing asset declaration laws for public officials, in order to increase transparency and accountability.
- iii. Establishing whistleblower protection mechanisms to encourage citizens to report corrupt practices.
- iv. Conducting regular audits of government agencies and parastatals to prevent corruption and ensure accountability.

Medium-Term Recommendations:

- i. Promoting transparency and accountability in government by implementing freedom of information laws and open data initiatives.
- ii. Strengthening institutional frameworks, including the judiciary, legislature, and executive, to prevent corruption and ensure accountability.
- iii. Encouraging citizen participation in governance through town hall meetings, public hearings, and other mechanisms.
- iv. Developing anti-corruption curricula for schools and universities to educate citizens about the dangers of corruption.

Long-Term Recommendations:

- i. Fostering a culture of integrity in Nigeria by promoting value-based leadership and encouraging citizens to demand accountability from their leaders.
- ii. Establishing an independent anti-corruption agency with powers to investigate and prosecute corrupt practices.
- iii. Promoting economic development in Nigeria by encouraging investment, improving infrastructure, and promoting entrepreneurship.
- iv. Strengthening international cooperation to combat corruption by signing and ratifying international treaties and conventions.

These recommendations provide a roadmap for addressing corruption and promoting good governance in Nigeria.

CONCLUSIONS:

In conclusion, corruption and poor leadership have severely impacted Nigeria's economy, hindering growth, perpetuating poverty, and undermining

development. To break this cycle, Nigeria must adopt a comprehensive approach that strengthens institutions, promotes transparency and accountability, invests in human capital, diversifies the economy, and encourages leadership renewal. Only then can Nigeria unlock its vast potential and achieve sustainable economic growth and development.

Corruption can be reduced by raising the living standard of the people. The poorer the people are, the more cases and practices of corruption. The richer the people are, the lower the cases and practices of corruption. Admissions into universities, employment and promotion must be based on merit and qualification. An annual review of Nigerian workers and students should be considered, in order to check the sanctity of entry and level to level mobility among institutions in Nigeria. The establishment of a sincere and honest institution to hear individual's reports and experiences on bribe by duress is imperative. This will reduce officers' thirst for bribery and corruption.

Also, morality should not only be taught in religious institutions, but should be inculcated among youths in school and out of school. Teaching of moral values should be consolidated in schools of learning and moral orientations be given priority in the society. A punitive law should be made in Nigeria against corrupt practices, while capital punishment and life imprisonment should be placed on any official found guilty of financial corruption by stealing the public fund of more than one million naira.

The study concludes that corruption is a major problem in Nigeria, and that leadership plays a critical role in perpetuating or combating corruption. The study recommends that the Nigerian government and other stakeholders take urgent action to address the root causes of corruption, including weak institutions, lack of accountability, and poverty. The study also proposes strategies for promoting good governance and reducing corruption in Nigeria.

Contributions:

- i. The study will contribute to a deeper understanding of the complex relationships between leadership, corruption, and development in Nigeria.
- ii. The study provides a contextualized analysis of corruption and leadership in Nigeria, highlighting the unique historical, cultural, and institutional factors that shape these phenomena.
- iii. The study provides empirical evidence on the impact of corruption on development outcomes in Nigeria, highlighting the need for effective anti-corruption strategies.
- iv. The study's findings are policy-relevant, providing recommendations for addressing corruption and promoting good governance in Nigeria.



v. The study's recommendations will have practical implications for leaders, policymakers, and practitioners seeking to reduce corruption and promote transparency and accountability in Nigeria.

vi. The study will contribute to the development of theories and models that explain the relationships between leadership, corruption, and development.

vii. The study will provide empirical evidence on the relationships between leadership, corruption, and development in Nigeria, which can be used to inform policy and practice.

viii. The study will contribute to the development of research methodologies and instruments for studying corruption and leadership in Nigeria.

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