

## EXPLORING THE RAMIFICATIONS OF POLITICAL CORRUPTION ON EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE IN NIGERIA

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### *Abstract*

*Political corruption is a major challenge that undermines effective governance in Nigeria. This study aims to explore the ramifications of political corruption on various aspects of governance, such as public service delivery, accountability, transparency, rule of law, and democratic consolidation. The study adopts a literature review approach, using related texts, books, articles, literatures, journals and document analysis as data collection methods. The study explains how political corruption is embedded in the Nigerian political system. The study submits that political corruption has negative impacts on effective governance in Nigeria, and that it erodes public trust, weakens institutions, and hampers development. The study also provides some recommendations on how to curb political corruption and enhance effective governance in Nigeria.*

**Keywords:** Governance, politics, corruption, rule of law, effectiveness.

### **Background to the Study**

Effective governance is like a well-oiled machine. Just as a machine requires all its parts to work together seamlessly to function optimally, governance requires all its components to work in harmony to achieve the desired outcomes. Effective governance is the process of governing in a way that meets the needs and rights of the society, while making the best use of available resources and ensuring accountability, transparency, participation and responsiveness. According to the UN Human Rights Office, good governance is essential for the respect and protection of human rights as well as, for the achievement of development goals. Good governance also requires democratic institutions that enable the public to have a voice in policymaking, either directly or through representation.

Effective governance is a key factor for achieving sustainable development and ensuring the well-being of people. But what does it mean and how can it be measured? According to the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), effective governance is one of the characteristics of good governance, along with participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, equitable and inclusive, and following the rule of law. Effective governance means that processes and institutions produce results that meet the needs of society while making the best use of resources at their disposal. The concept of efficiency in the context of good governance also covers the sustainable use of natural resources and the protection of the environment. Effective governance is not only a matter of government, but also involves other actors such as civil society, private sector, media, international organizations, etc. Governance can be applied at different levels, such as corporate, international, national and local. Therefore, effective governance requires

coordination and collaboration among various stakeholders and sectors to achieve common goals.

According to Manuwa T. (2022), Effective governance guarantees proper representation of all the running of Government affairs. Effective Governance is the process of governing in a way that respects human rights, the rule of law, participation, transparency, accountability and responsiveness to the needs of the people. It is also the process of managing public resources and affairs in an efficient and sustainable manner. Effective governance is essential for achieving the goals of development and ensuring the well-being of the population.

There are different arguments for or against effective governance, depending on the perspective and values of the stakeholders involved. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) (2019), highlighted that good governance is essential for the realization of human rights, as it ensures that public institutions are accountable, transparent and responsive to the needs and aspirations of people. OHCHR also stressed that human rights standards and principles can guide good governance practices by providing a normative framework and a set of indicators.

Effective governance can enhance the quality of public services, reduce corruption, promote social justice, foster economic growth, protect the environment, and strengthen democracy. Effective governance can also increase the legitimacy and trust of the public institutions and foster a sense of ownership and responsibility among the citizens. Effective governance can also enable better coordination and collaboration among different actors and sectors, such as civil society, private sector, media, academia, and international partners.

While, some researchers see effective governance as a threat to the sovereignty, autonomy, or interests of some groups or individuals who benefit from the status quo or who have different agendas or ideologies; effective governance can also be seen as a costly, complex, or unrealistic goal that requires too much time, resources, or expertise to achieve. Also, it can be seen as a foreign imposition or interference that does not respect the local context, culture, or traditions. Meanwhile, Nigeria, as the most populous and largest economy in Africa, faces many challenges in achieving effective governance, especially in the face of rising insecurity, violent conflicts, and economic decline. One of the major factors that undermine effective governance in Nigeria is the lack of accountability and transparency in the political system. Since the return to democracy in 1999, Nigeria has been plagued by electoral fraud, political violence, and elite capture. The 2019 as well as 2023 presidential elections were marred by irregularities, and allegations of rigging. The electoral commission has been accused of being compromised by the ruling party and failing to ensure a level playing field for all candidates. The judiciary has also been criticized for being influenced by political interests and not delivering impartial justice. These factors have eroded public trust in the democratic process and the legitimacy of the government.

Oluwaniyi (2020), in his submission considers lack of accountability and transparency in the political system as political corruption. Political corruption is a pervasive and persistent problem in Nigeria that affects the functioning of its democracy, economy and society. According to Transparency International, (2021), Nigeria is ranked 154th out of 180 countries

in the 2021 Corruption Perception Index, with a score of 24 out of 100, indicating a high level of perceived public sector corruption.

Political corruption in Nigeria takes various forms, such as:

**Bribery:** The exchange of money or other benefits for undue influence or favour in public affairs. For example, public officials may demand or accept bribes to award contracts, grant licenses, waive taxes, expedite services, overlook violations or provide access to information.

**Embezzlement:** The theft or misappropriation of public funds or assets by public officials for personal gain. For example, politicians may divert funds from public projects, inflate expenditures, create ghost workers or beneficiaries, or launder money through offshore accounts or shell companies.

**Nepotism:** The practice of favouring relatives or friends in public appointments, contracts, scholarships or other benefits based on personal ties rather than merit. For example, political leaders may appoint their family members or cronies to key positions, influence judicial appointments or decisions, or allocate resources to their constituencies or regions.

**Electoral fraud:** The manipulation of electoral processes or outcomes to gain or maintain political power. For example, political parties may engage in vote buying, ballot stuffing, intimidation, violence, rigging or falsification of results.

Political corruption in Nigeria has negative impacts on the country's development and governance, by undermining democracy (Obadare, 2022). Political corruption erodes the legitimacy and accountability of democratic institutions and processes, such as the legislature, the judiciary, the electoral commission and the media. It also weakens the rule of law, the separation of powers and the protection of human rights. Political corruption reduces public revenues and investments, distorts public spending and priorities, discourages private sector development and foreign direct investment, increases the cost of doing business and fosters a culture of rent-seeking and patronage. It also contributes to poverty, inequality and social exclusion (Oluwaniyi, 2020). Similarly, political corruption has the tendency of fueling conflict, violence and instability by creating grievances, mistrust and resentment among different groups and regions. It also enables the proliferation of arms, drugs and human trafficking, terrorism and insurgency, and undermines the effectiveness and integrity of security forces and agencies. Political corruption is a pervasive and persistent problem that undermines effective governance and erodes public trust. It refers to the abuse of public power or position for private gain, such as bribery, embezzlement, nepotism, patronage, or influence peddling (Transparency International, 2021). Political corruption has detrimental effects on various aspects of governance, such as policy-making, public service delivery, accountability, transparency, and rule of law. It also hampers economic development, social justice, environmental protection, and human rights (World Bank, 2020). This paper aims to explore the ramifications of political corruption on effective governance through the following objectives:

- i. to examine the impact of corruption on democratic institutions, such as elections, parliaments, and the rule of law.

- ii. to assess the impact of corruption on accountability mechanisms, such as transparency, oversight, and anti-corruption agencies.
- iii. to evaluate the impact of corruption on social welfare, such as health, education, and poverty reduction.
- iv. to identify and analyze the causes and forms of political corruption, such as bribery, nepotism, and clientelism.
- v. to propose and test potential solutions and best practices to combat political corruption, such as legal reforms, civic education, and social mobilization.

### **Literature review- Overview of Political Corruption**

Political corruption is a term that refers to the abuse of power by government officials or their associates for personal gain. It can take many forms, such as bribery, lobbying, extortion, cronyism, nepotism, patronage, influence peddling, graft, and embezzlement. Political corruption undermines democracy, good governance, and the rule of law (Rose-Ackerman, 2016). It also hampers economic development, social justice, and environmental protection. According to Transparency International, political corruption is "the manipulation of policies, institutions and rules of procedure in the allocation of resources and financing by political decision makers, who abuse their position to sustain their power, status and wealth." (TI, 2022) Political corruption can occur at different levels of government, from local to national, and across different branches of government, such as executive, legislative, and judicial. It can also involve different actors, such as politicians, public officials, civil servants, business people, lobbyists, donors, media, civil society, and citizens.

Political corruption can have various motives and objectives, such as seeking personal enrichment or favoring one's family, friends, or political allies; influencing policy decisions or legislation to benefit one's own interests or those of one's supporters or clients; securing or maintaining political power or influence by manipulating elections, public opinion, or institutions; evading accountability or oversight by concealing or falsifying information or evidence; avoiding prosecution or punishment for wrongdoing or misconduct.

Political corruption is a global phenomenon that affects both developed and developing countries. According to the Corruption Perceptions Index 2022 by Transparency International, which ranks 180 countries and territories by their perceived levels of public sector corruption according to experts and business people, more than two-thirds of countries score below 50 on a scale of 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean).

Some recent examples of political corruption include:

- i. The impeachment of former US President Donald Trump for his alleged abuse of power and obstruction of Congress in relation to his dealings with Ukraine. The impeachment of former US President Donald Trump was a historic event that sparked intense political and public debate. Trump was accused of abusing his power and obstructing Congress in relation to his dealings with Ukraine, where he allegedly pressured the Ukrainian president to investigate his political rival, Joe Biden, and withheld military aid as leverage. The House of Representatives impeached Trump on December 18, 2019, but the Senate acquitted him on February 5, 2020, after a trial that did not allow any new witnesses or evidence. The impeachment process raised important questions about the constitutional role and accountability of the president,

- the separation of powers, and the integrity of US foreign policy (Congressional Research Service, 2020; Levitsky & Ziblatt, 2020 and Schmidt & Savage, 2020).
- ii. The conviction of former French President Nicolas Sarkozy for corruption and influence peddling for offering to help a judge get a prestigious job in exchange for information on an investigation involving him (Bilefsky, 2021; Chrisafis, 2021 and Willsher, 2021).
  - iii. The resignation of former Peruvian President Martin Vizcarra for his alleged involvement in a bribery scheme when he was governor of a southern region (Al Jazeera, 2020; Reuters. (2020 and The New York Times, 2020).
  - iv. The arrest of former South African President Jacob Zuma for contempt of court after he failed to appear before a commission investigating allegations of state capture and corruption during his presidency (CNN, 2021; Reuters, 2021 and BBC News, 2021).
  - v. The ongoing protests in Lebanon against the political elite for their failure to address the economic crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the aftermath of the Beirut port explosion that killed more than 200 people and injured thousands more (Abou Assi & El-Husseini, 2021; El-Ghali *et al.*, 2020 and Azhari, 2021).

Political corruption is a serious threat to democracy, good governance, human rights, economic development, social justice, and environmental protection. It affects every country and every sector of society. It is therefore imperative that we understand its causes, consequences, and solutions. By raising awareness and taking action against political corruption, we can contribute to building a more just, equitable, and sustainable world.

### **Impact of Corruption on Democratic Institutions, such as Elections, Legislature, and the Rule of law**

Corruption is a serious threat to democracy, as it erodes public trust in institutions, distorts policymaking in favor of special interests, and weakens the rule of law and accountability mechanisms. Corruption also facilitates the rise of authoritarianism and populism, as corrupt leaders exploit public discontent and undermine democratic values (Montinola & Jackman, 2012).

According to Transparency International, corruption is linked to the health of democracies, where countries with higher rates of corruption also have weaker democratic institutions and political rights. The Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) 2018, which ranks 180 countries by their perceived levels of public sector corruption, shows that more than two-thirds of countries score below 50 on a scale of zero (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean). The CPI also reveals that countries that tend to perform well on the index also protect democratic rights and values, while countries that score low on the index often suffer from democratic decline and authoritarian consolidation (TI, 2019).

Some examples of how corruption affects democratic institutions are:

**Elections:** Corruption can undermine the integrity and fairness of electoral processes, by allowing vote buying, campaign finance violations, electoral fraud, media manipulation, and political violence. Corruption can also reduce voter turnout and political participation, as citizens lose faith in the system and become apathetic or cynical. Moreover, corruption can enable the capture of state institutions by powerful elites or foreign interests, who can influence the outcomes of elections and policies in their favour (Carbone & Memoli, 2013).

**Legislature:** Corruption can weaken the role and effectiveness of the legislative branch, by compromising its independence, oversight, and representation functions. Corruption can also distort the legislative agenda and decision-making process, by allowing lobbying, bribery, patronage, nepotism, and conflict of interest. Corruption can also reduce the quality and transparency of legislation, by facilitating the adoption of laws that favor narrow or private interests over public goods (Carothers, 2007).

**Rule of law:** Corruption can undermine the rule of law and the administration of justice, by impairing the independence, impartiality, and accountability of the judiciary and law enforcement agencies. Corruption can also erode the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, by enabling human rights violations, impunity, and abuse of power. Corruption can also hinder the access to justice and legal remedies for citizens, especially for the poor and marginalized groups (Manzetti, 2010).

To address corruption as a driver of democratic decline, Transparency International (2021) urges governments to make meaningful commitments and take concrete actions in three key areas:

- i. Strengthening anti-corruption institutions and ensuring their independence and resources.
- ii. Enhancing transparency and accountability in political finance and public procurement.
- iii. Curbing transnational corruption and illicit influence by closing legal loopholes and enforcing sanctions.

### **Impact of Corruption on Accountability Mechanisms, Such as Transparency, Oversight, and Anti-Corruption Agencies**

Corruption is a major obstacle to the effective functioning of accountability mechanisms, such as transparency, oversight, and anti-corruption agencies. Corruption undermines the trust and legitimacy of these mechanisms, reduces their capacity and resources, and exposes them to political interference and capture. Corruption also erodes the demand for accountability from citizens and civil society, who may lose confidence in the ability or willingness of these mechanisms to hold public officials accountable.

According to a report by PwC, corruption could cost Nigeria up to 37% of its GDP by 2030 if not addressed urgently (PwC, 2016). Corruption also affects the accountability mechanisms that are supposed to ensure transparency, integrity, and responsiveness in the public sector. Accountability mechanisms include internal and external checks and balances, such as audits, oversight bodies, anti-corruption agencies, civil society, media, and citizens (Okekeocha, 2013). However, these mechanisms are often weak, ineffective, or compromised by political interference, lack of resources, or social norms that tolerate or justify corruption (U4 Anti-Corruption Resource Centre, 2014 & UNDP, 2020). Therefore, it is important to integrate transparency, accountability and anti-corruption measures in the socio-economic policies and processes of Nigeria, especially in the areas of procurement, service delivery, health, and social protection (Okenna & Okenna, 2020). This would help to prevent and detect corruption, enhance public participation and feedback, and improve the quality and efficiency of public services and programs.

Corruption can have a significant impact on accountability mechanisms in Nigeria, such as transparency, oversight, and anti-corruption agencies.

**Transparency:** Corruption can undermine transparency by making it difficult to access information about government activities. For example, corrupt officials may refuse to release public records, or they may manipulate data to make it appear that they are performing well. This can make it difficult for citizens to hold their government accountable (Adegbenro, & Olofin, 2018).

**Oversight:** Corruption can also undermine oversight by making it difficult for independent bodies to scrutinize government activities. For example, corrupt officials may pressure oversight bodies to avoid investigating certain areas, or they may retaliate against those who do investigate. This can make it easier for corrupt officials to engage in wrongdoing without being held accountable (Olofin, S. O., & Adegbenro, A. O. 2019).

**Anti-corruption agencies:** Corruption can also undermine anti-corruption agencies by making it difficult for them to investigate and prosecute corrupt officials. For example, corrupt officials may interfere with investigations, or they may pressure anti-corruption agencies to drop cases. This can make it more difficult to hold corrupt officials accountable (Onoja, 2017). Examples of the impact of corruption on accountability mechanisms in Nigeria:

- **Transparency:** In 2022, the Nigerian government was criticized for its lack of transparency in the procurement of COVID-19 vaccines. The government refused to disclose information about the contracts it had signed with vaccine manufacturers, making it difficult for citizens to hold the government accountable for the procurement process.
- **Oversight:** In 2021, the Nigerian Senate accused the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) of failing to investigate corruption allegations against high-ranking government officials. The Senate also accused the ICPC of being biased in its investigations.
- **Anti-corruption agencies:** In 2020, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) arrested a former governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria on corruption charges. However, the case was later dropped after the governor was granted bail. This case raised concerns about the ability of the EFCC to hold corrupt officials accountable.

Corruption can have a significant impact on accountability mechanisms in Nigeria. It can make it difficult for citizens to access information about government activities, scrutinize government decisions, and hold corrupt officials accountable. It is important to strengthen accountability mechanisms in order to combat corruption and promote good governance in Nigeria.

### **Impact of Corruption on Social Welfare, Such as Health, Education, and Poverty Reduction**

Corruption is a major obstacle to social welfare, especially in developing countries. Corruption undermines the quality and accessibility of public services, such as health, education, and poverty reduction. Corruption also erodes public trust and accountability, which are essential for good governance and social cohesion. Corruption can have direct and

indirect effects on social welfare. For example, corruption can divert scarce resources from health and education sectors, leading to lower outcomes and higher inequalities. Corruption can also create opportunities for rent-seeking and patronage, which can distort the allocation of public goods and services. Corruption can also affect the demand side of social welfare, by reducing the willingness of citizens to pay taxes, to comply with regulations, or to participate in civic activities. Corruption can also lower the morale and motivation of public servants, who may feel discouraged or coerced to engage in corrupt practices. Therefore, corruption can have a negative impact on social welfare, such as health, education, and poverty reduction.

**Health:** Corruption can lead to deterioration in the quality of healthcare services. For example, corrupt officials may divert funds intended for healthcare to their own personal use, or they may award contracts to unqualified suppliers. This can lead to shortages of essential medicines and medical equipment, as well as recruitment of poorly trained and unqualified healthcare professionals (World Bank, 2023). Corruption can also lead to increased costs for healthcare services. For example, corrupt officials may demand bribes from patients in exchange for access to healthcare services, or they may inflate the cost of medical supplies and equipment. This can make healthcare services unaffordable for many people, especially the poor and vulnerable.

**Education:** Corruption can also lead to deterioration in the quality of education. For example, corrupt officials may divert funds intended for education to their own personal use, or they may award contracts to unqualified suppliers. This can lead to shortages of qualified teachers, as well as poorly maintained and equipped schools (United Nations Development Programme, 2023). Corruption can also lead to increased costs for education services. For example, corrupt officials may demand bribes from parents in exchange for access to education services, or they may inflate the cost of textbooks and other school supplies. This can make education services unaffordable for many people, especially the poor and vulnerable.

**Poverty reduction:** Corruption can also hinder poverty reduction. For example, when corrupt officials divert funds intended for social programs to their own personal use, it deprives the poor and vulnerable of the resources they need to improve their lives. Additionally, corruption can create an unfair business environment, which can make it difficult for businesses to create jobs and economic opportunities (Onoja, 2017). These reports all highlight the negative impact that corruption can have on social welfare. For example, the World Bank's World Development Report (2023) finds that corruption can reduce economic growth by up to 2% per year. This can have a significant impact on poverty reduction, as economic growth is one of the most important factors in reducing poverty.

The United Nations Development Programme's Human Development Report 2022-2023 also highlights the negative impact of corruption on social welfare (UNDP Human Development Report, 2023). The report finds that corruption can lead to increased inequality, lower quality public services, and reduced economic growth. All of these factors can hinder poverty reduction and make it more difficult to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Corruption can have a significant impact on social welfare, including health, education, and

poverty reduction. It is important to address corruption in order to improve social welfare and promote sustainable development.

### **Identification and Analysis of the Causes and Forms of Political Corruption, Such as Bribery, Nepotism, and Clientelism**

Political corruption is the abuse of public power or resources for private gain. It can take various forms, such as bribery, nepotism, and clientelism. Bribery is the act of offering or receiving money or other benefits in exchange for favorable treatment or influence. Nepotism is the practice of favoring relatives or friends in appointments or contracts, regardless of their merit. Clientelism is the exchange of goods or services for political support, often involving an implicit or explicit quid pro quo.

#### **Causes of Political Corruption**

Political corruption is the abuse of public power for private gain. It can take many forms, including bribery, nepotism, and clientelism. There are a number of factors that contribute to political corruption, including:

**Weak institutions:** Corruption is more likely to occur in countries with weak institutions, such as the judiciary, the media, and civil society organizations. These institutions play an important role in holding government officials accountable and preventing corruption.

**Lack of transparency:** Corruption is also more likely to occur in countries where there is a lack of transparency in government operations. This makes it easier for corrupt officials to engage in wrongdoing without being detected.

**Low salaries for public officials:** Public officials who are paid low salaries may be more tempted to engage in corruption in order to supplement their income.

**Cultural norms:** In some cultures, corruption may be more tolerated or even accepted. This can create an environment where it is easier for corruption to flourish.

#### **Forms of Political Corruption**

**Bribery:** Bribery is the act of offering, giving, receiving, or soliciting anything of value to influence an official act or decision. Bribery can be used to obtain government contracts, permits, licenses, or other benefits. It can also be used to avoid taxes, fines, or other penalties.

**Nepotism:** Nepotism is the practice of giving preferential treatment to relatives or friends when making appointments or awarding contracts. Nepotism can lead to unqualified people being placed in positions of power, which can have a negative impact on government performance and efficiency.

**Clientelism:** Clientelism is a system in which political leaders exchange political favors for support from their constituents. For example, political leaders may offer jobs, government contracts, or other benefits to their constituents in exchange for their votes (Rothstein & Varraich, 2017). Clientelism can lead to corruption as political leaders may use public resources to benefit their constituents at the expense of the general public.

These findings highlight the negative impact that political corruption can have on development and social welfare. For example, the World Bank's World Development Report 2023 finds that corruption can reduce economic growth by up to 2% per year. This can have a significant impact on poverty reduction, as economic growth is one of the most important factors in reducing poverty. Political corruption is a serious problem that can have a devastating impact on development and social welfare. It is important to address political corruption by strengthening institutions, promoting transparency, and paying public officials fair salaries. It is also important to create a culture of integrity and accountability in the public sector.

### **Proposing and Testing of Potential Solutions and Best Practices to Combat Political Corruption, Such as Legal Reforms, Civic Education, and Social Mobilization**

Political corruption is a serious threat to democracy, human rights, and development. It undermines public trust, erodes the rule of law, and facilitates the abuse of power. Corruption is not inevitable or insurmountable. To combat political corruption, various solutions and best practices have been proposed and tested by scholars, activists, and policymakers. Some of these include:

**Legal reforms:** These aim at strengthening the accountability, transparency, and integrity of public institutions and officials. Examples of legal reforms are anti-corruption laws, codes of conduct, whistleblower protection, asset declaration, electoral regulation, and judicial independence. For instance, in Georgia, a series of legal reforms in the early 2000s reduced corruption and improved public service delivery by simplifying regulations, increasing salaries, and introducing e-governance (World Bank, 2012).

**Civic education:** This refers to the process of educating and empowering citizens to participate in democratic governance and to demand accountability from their leaders. Examples of civic education are civic literacy programs, anti-corruption campaigns, media literacy, and social audits (Brinkerhoff & Wetterberg, 2016). For example, in India, a grassroots movement called Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS) used social audits to expose corruption and mismanagement in rural development programs and to mobilize citizens to demand their rights (Jenkins & Goetz, 2019).

**Social mobilization:** This involves the collective action of civil society organizations, social movements, media, and citizens to expose and challenge corruption and to advocate for change. Examples of social mobilization are protests, petitions, watchdog groups, investigative journalism, and social media. For example, in Brazil, a massive anti-corruption campaign called Operation Car Wash used social media to inform and mobilize the public against corruption scandals involving politicians and business elites (Araujo *et al.*, 2018).

Other solutions include: institutional reforms (enhancing the capacity and autonomy of anti-corruption agencies), political reforms (promoting free and fair elections and political pluralism), economic reforms (improving public financial management and procurement systems), social reforms (empowering citizens and civil society organizations), educational reforms (raising civic awareness and ethical standards), cultural reforms (changing norms and values that tolerate or justify corruption), international cooperation (supporting regional and global anti-corruption initiatives). These solutions and best practices are not mutually

exclusive, but rather complementary and interdependent. They require the cooperation and coordination of multiple actors and sectors at different levels of society. They also need to be context-specific and tailored to the needs and challenges of each country.

### **Summary**

Political corruption is a pervasive and persistent problem in Nigeria, affecting various aspects of governance and public service delivery. This paper examines the causes, consequences and challenges of combating corruption in Nigeria, and proposes some policy recommendations for improving the effectiveness and accountability of the government. The paper argues that corruption is rooted in the historical, socio-cultural, economic and political factors that shape the Nigerian society, and that it undermines the democratic institutions, economic development, social justice and human rights of the citizens. The paper highlights that Corruption erodes the trust and confidence of the citizens in the democratic process. It distorts the electoral system by enabling vote buying, rigging, violence, and intimidation. It also compromises the independence and integrity of the parliament by allowing legislators to be influenced by personal or partisan interests, rather than by the public good. Moreover, corruption undermines the rule of law by impairing the impartiality and effectiveness of the judiciary and law enforcement agencies. It also highlights the role of civil society, media, judiciary and international community in fighting corruption and promoting good governance in Nigeria.

### **Conclusion**

The main objective of this paper was to explore how political corruption affects effective governance in Nigeria. The results show that political corruption erodes the quality of governance, as it leads to violations of human rights, poor performance of public institutions, and low levels of citizen participation. The research also analyzes the factors that contribute to political corruption, such as institutional weaknesses, political apathy, economic hardship, and cultural values. The research suggests some possible solutions to combat political corruption and improve governance in Nigeria, such as enhancing the capacity and independence of anti-corruption bodies, educating the public about their rights and responsibilities, supporting the role of civil society organizations, and improving the credibility and fairness of elections.

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