

The Culture and Normalization of Corruption in Nigeria (A focus on the Nigerian Government).

By

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## **Abstract**

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Abstract: This thesis examines the problem of corruption in Nigeria. Corruption has been theorized to be the major factor that hinders the development of Nigeria. The overarching objective was to understand the perception of the Nigerian diaspora about the culture and normalization of corruption in Nigeria. 10 in-depth face-to-face interviews were conducted with Nigerians living in Nova Scotia, Canada. The General Strain Theory (GST) was used to understand, explain and analyse the data that was collected. Four themes were identified from the data analysis. The findings reveal that there must be an overhaul of the system and a process of unlearning, re-learning and acculturation before strides can be made to reduce corruption. These findings have implications for policy makers, the Nigerian government and contribute to a knowledge base in the social sciences.

August 6, 2019

### **Dedication**

This body of work is dedicated to my creator who holds the reins to my existence. To the ones who strive to make the world a better place. To the ones who continue to strive even when it seems like their efforts are not making a dent. To the ones who do not give up when it gets tough. To the ones that try even when it seems like there is no point. To the ones that try to get their voices heard amidst the noise. To the ones that speak out against injustice even when no one is listening, keep it up, one day you will be heard. At the end of the day, all we can do is try. To Nigerians, both home and abroad, you are the real ones. Continue to do your part in trying to make Nigeria a better place, positive change is a must and it is coming.

To my Idris girls, the wind beneath my wings, I love you to infinity.

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## **Preface/Foreword**

I grew up in Lagos, the commercial capital of Nigeria. I was privileged enough to have all the essential amenities and everything I needed to succeed in life. Growing up I saw myself as the most patriotic of Nigerians, O how I love my country! I frowned at people who relocated to other parts of the world in search of “greener pastures,” I wondered what they were looking for that they could not find in Nigeria. We have a lot of natural resources and the people were the best part of the country to me. Nigerians are the most hardworking people. I could not understand why people would leave the country to go and develop other countries. I was naïve then, and as I grew up, I began to understand why bright minds left the country.

Corruption is something that Nigerians know is present and I believed/believe that we all had/have to work together to fix it. It is hard to live in a place where the government itself constrains the citizens ability to excel. I was privileged to have been passed down the love of books from both my parents, these books showed me another life and culture different from my own. The books showed me how things operate in other climes, they got me interested in law and I thought that that was what I wanted to do with my life and that was the best way I could fight for a better Nigeria. On further research I realized that I was not interested in how laws were made or whatever it is that lawyers do. I was more interested in why the laws were made, who determines what a crime is (the power dynamics) and the social and personal minutia of crimes. Coming across the work of Scholars like Edwin Sutherland in white collar and corporate crime led to my decision to acquire a Bachelor of Science degree in Sociology and to then proceed to a Master of Arts degree in Criminology.

After gaining my undergraduate degree, I saw how difficult it was for my friends to get jobs. Any time I spoke to people I graduated with, they always spoke

about how they were tired of the country and could not find jobs. The ones that had jobs, had to settle for being paid almost nothing. It was sad to hear about how they were being exploited by their employers. When prompted further to explain what the problem was, they laid the blame solely on corruption and the leaders of the country. A close friend of mine explained it best, she said "...taking an example of a big pie, the resources in the Nigeria is like a big pie, everyone has a share. If someone eats more than the others, others will suffer. That's the perfect case for Nigeria and what corruption is really like". Everyone looks forward to the affordability of basic things in life, but corruption makes it difficult to have such. People in Nigeria do not have easy access to things that their counterparts in other nations have and this influences their desire to strive to move to a more enabling environment. Corruption has made the social welfare and household economy of the people to suffer greatly. Infrastructural deficit and underemployment make them consider that moving out will better their lot and that of their family. My research on corruption was a no brainer, adding the voices of Nigerians in the diaspora came about as a result of conversations with friends.

I call it the Nigerian conundrum. Poverty in the midst of plenty. According to the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), Nigeria with a population of 197.70 million humans and land area (sq. km) of 910,770, has 5,627 billion cubic metres of proven natural gas reserves (OPEC, Annual Statistical Bulletin, 2017). The country is a member of the OPEC and the 13<sup>th</sup> largest producer of crude oil in the world. The oil and gas industry accounts for about 92% of the country's revenue. The country is home to huge deposits of other solid minerals like; talc, gypsum, Iron Ore, Lead/Zinc, Gold, Bitumen, Coal, Rock Salt, Gemstones (sapphire, ruby, aquamarine, emerald, tourmaline, topaz, garnet, amethyst; zircon, and



fluorspar) and Kaolin, though the level of exploitation of these resources is very low. With all of this, you would think that the citizens of the country would be able to afford basic human needs. However, this is not the case. I think Jeremy Reimer stated it best...*the rich get richer and the poor get poorer*, the wealth of the country is concentrated in the hands of a few.

I know that political leaders in my country are very corrupt. I believe they go into office and fill their purses instead of doing what the electorate put them into office for. I know that for you to get anything done in my country you have to grease palms. I also believe that the way the government is going about trying to fix the problem of corruption is faulty. It is not possible to fix the problem by attacking it as if it is an abstract phenomenon and abnormal in the society. Corruption is the order of the day in Nigeria and before any attempts can be made to reduce it, we first have to understand how it came about, and dismantle the institutions that have served to promote it. It is absurd that political leaders who are themselves corrupt are tasked with the job of eradicating corruption.

I must acknowledge that this study is very personal, and I have a vested interest. It is my hope that at the end of my study it has the positive features of a Participatory Action Research. My aim is to understand and bring about social change through collaboration with Nigerians in the Diaspora. I can only hope that my unique view as both the researcher and as someone who has experienced the same thing as the researched adds something tangible and valuable to our knowledge base. So far, I have had to struggle with the feeling of guilt that comes up as I point a magnifying lens on the bad parts of the nation. My only hope is that I do not paint a picture that propagates the negative stereotypical image that foreigners have of my country.

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

One of the major concerns of Nigeria today is gross corruption of the state, which affects the society and its populace on a large scale. Corruption among Nigeria's leaders and policy makers has been identified as the major cause of the underdevelopment of the country (Ojo & Ajayi, 2017; Awojobi, 2014a; Awojobi, 2014b). Corruption is a hindrance to the progress of Nigeria and has endlessly defeated realization of the goals of the country, despite the enormous natural and human resources that are present. Although the economic losses accumulated as a result of corruption in the country consistently outweighs losses from street crimes. The criminal justice system and anti-corruption agencies have continued to lose the fight against corruption (Soniya, 2018). The 2018 world poverty clock ranking shows that Nigeria has the highest number of poor people in the world, they blame this on successive governments that have mismanaged the vast resources of the country through incompetence and corruption, 44.3% of the country's population live in extreme poverty (World Poverty Clock, 2018; Kazeem, 2018). Nuhu Ribadu, former chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), which is an agency that was created to battle corruption, accused Nigerian leaders of stealing more than \$400 billion from the coffers of the country since 1963 (Awojobi, 2014a). This huge sum of money could have been better spent improving the lives of the citizenry.

The scope of corruption in Nigeria is widespread; however, this study focused on the view of Nigerian individuals currently living in Nova Scotia, Canada. The goal of this study was to understand their opinions relating to corruption, and how it has

affected their lives and the lives of their families. The main objective is to show how the history of the country has allowed corruption to be an institution with strong roots.

With the emergence of the government of President Mohammed Buhari, whose major campaign mandate was to fight corruption and who quite frankly was elected because during his time as the Head of State, he was strict and dealt with corrupt officials appropriately. For the first time in the democracy of the country (Nigeria has been a democratic state since 1999), power moved from the ruling political party (People's Democratic Party, PDP) to All Progressive Congress (APC) after sixteen years. Irrespective of the campaign promises that corruption would and could be eradicated, Nigeria is still ranked low on the corruption perception index (Transparency International).

Olusegun Obasanjo, the former president of the country, while speaking at a lecture in Lagos is quoted by Jola Sotubo as saying "Members of the National Assembly pay themselves allowances for staff and offices they do not have or maintain. Once you are a member, you are co-opted and your mouth is stuffed with rot and corruption that you cannot opt out as you go home with not less than ₦15 million a month for a senator and ₦10 million a month for a member of the House of Representatives" (Jola, 2016). The ex-president's speech highlighted the level of corruption among the supposed "leaders" of the country.

Most research work on corruption in Nigeria posit that it is caused by greed, poverty, and unemployment among other issues. In carrying out the literature review for this study, I found that only a few papers touch on how Nigeria was in fact built on corruption, how the history of colonialism, military rule and finally independence contributed to the continuous propagation of this socio-economic problem. I agree that greed, poverty, and unemployment can cause corruption in the other parts of

society. It however does not explain why political leaders who earn a lot of money and who are gainfully employed would engage in corrupt activities. The current study utilized Robert Agnew's 1992 General Strain Theory, alongside face-to-face interviews with my participants to try to understand and explain the corruption in Nigeria.

### **The Importance of Diaspora**

In recent years, there has been a large number of research, conferences, symposia, reports and publications that deal with the diaspora experience and how diasporic contribution are important for the growth of a country (Abdih et al. 2012; Beine and Sekkat 2013; Berdiev et al. 2013; Tyburski 2012). The concept of 'diasporic capital' is now being mentioned along with human, natural and social capital. "Countries are coming to the realization that this is a resource to be researched, cultivated, solicited and stewarded. Many see this as a way of addressing tough domestic economic challenges and as a key piece of their economic recovery. They also see diasporic capital as more than just economic remittances as there are also social remittances in the form of ideas, values, beliefs and practices" (Diaspora Matters, n.d.).

In the past emigration was final and, in most cases, led to a total disconnect from one's homeland, with advances in technology absence does not automatically lead to a lack of cultural identity. Diaspora can now participate in the social, economic and political life and this affords them the power to influence the institutional processes of their country of origin (Burgess, 2012). More people now live abroad but are very much in touch with the on-goings in their home country. The diasporic community is more involved with bettering the situations in their country of birth or place of emigration. According to Diaspora Matters (n.d.):

...for possibly the first time in history, absence no longer equals exile and geography does not dictate identity. People can lead 'hyphenated lives' and brain drain can become brain gain and brain exchange. There is a circularity to much movement between countries with people coming and going as never before. The countries who, historically, most suffered from emigration are now in a position to benefit the most.

Diaspora Matters (n.d.) stresses how important the role that the diaspora plays is for the development of their nation, "Diasporas constitute obvious collectives of people through which networks can be created and individuals mobilized for mutual benefit". Previously, discussions about the diaspora populations only highlighted how important the remittances that they send are to the economic development of their home countries. However, now they are currently viewed as being an integral component for new knowledge, expertise and resources. Home countries benefit from diasporic population as they leverage the skills, technology and communication of their adopted countries to improve their home country. In this study, opinions of the diaspora population is valuable, given that they are residents of a country where corruption in public offices is not seen as grave a menace as it is in Nigeria. The culture in Nova Scotia is different and it would be interesting to hear from the people who have lived through both experiences.

Due to globalization, diasporas can participate in the creation of policies in their home countries. The work of Koser (2007) shows the role that diasporic communities play in policy creation. "*Migration & corruption*" and "*migration as a result of corruption*" are part of the defining issues in Nigeria. Migration serves as a tool to escape the obstacles to economic and social development that corruption

causes. Levitt's (1998) research theorized that migration might affect the experiences of relatives left in the home country by diasporas. For example, "migrants who work in a country where corruption is less prevalent than in the country of origin may transfer good practices directly from the host country to family members back home, with subsequent reductions in corrupt practices" (Ivlevs & King, 2017).

During a 2017 conference organized by the Nigerians in Diaspora Organization (NIDO); a body made up of Nigerians living abroad, the organization asserted that corruption in the country was affecting their image and their investments (Nwabughio, 2017). The empirical evidence and conclusions from this study could be used to create policies that promote a less corrupt Nigeria. Hoffman (2010) argues that because of the vantage view diasporas have, their 'voice' is an internationalized one, which has the potential to strongly impact political reforms, anti-corruption measures and understanding perception indices of corruption.

A majority of diaspora members, 63%, cite corruption as the governance issue that prevents them from investing and saving, with four in ten (42%) also saying that political instability poses a barrier. In discussion groups, people frequently cited a lack of trust in the country's government as the driving force behind a wariness to save or invest in that country...corruption is the primary governance issue for those in the Bangladesh, Kenyan, Nigerian, Jamaican and Ghanaian diasporas (The Commonwealth, pp 11-12).

The above quote highlights how the view they have of the rate of corruption in their home country influences their decision making. In the above case, corruption has prevented diasporas from investing in the financial development of the sending country. The Commonwealth's survey is focused on financial investment and the area

of social investment (policies designed to promote growth) is one that this study seeks to explore.

It is important to note some challenges associated with carrying out interviews on the diaspora. Research on diaspora groups has the potential of letting a small group of people speak on behalf of a larger group, with the assumption that the country is homogeneous enough to be represented by a few people. In this study, all attempts would be made to properly situate the interviewees and highlight that the perception of the participant is his/her own and is not synonymous with the perception of the whole Nigerian Diaspora living in Nova Scotia.

### **Problem Statement**

Corruption seems to have pervaded all sectors of the country, with both the government and citizenry agreeing that its impact is far reaching and detrimental to the society. Resources meant to be utilized for development and addressing the needs of 190 million Nigerians has been pilfered by a “microscopic few”, with many citizens falling into poverty over last two decades thereby making the country the world’s poverty capital. The current state of the nation has not deterred citizens or leaders from aspiring to hold public positions, but rather than use their positions to alter the pervasiveness of corruption and correct this misnomer, many persons still view public office as an opportunity to engage in primitive accumulation of wealth.

Several studies and academic works of literature exist on measures for combatting and deterring the public in engaging corrupt practices. However, there seems to be a dearth of knowledge on root causes of corruption in Nigeria, activities that have normalized these actions, perception of the average person on the act, impact on the social and economic fabric of the country as well as measures that could be undertaken to stem the tide. This study is useful for anti-corruption agencies

in the creation of campaigns to stop corruption, with its wider scope. As the scope of this issue is wide and it is not only the government that is corrupt, there has to be an overhaul of the whole system and the change has to start from the citizens themselves.

### **Research Questions**

Specifically, the following questions serve as the foundation for this study:

- What is the culture of corruption in Nigeria?
- How has corruption been normalized?
- How do the Nigerian Diaspora perceive this culture and normalization of corruption?

The study addresses the paucity of knowledge regarding how the Nigerian diaspora perceive the culture and normalization of corruption. I used qualitative research and the General Strain Theory to understand this and to answer the research questions.

Although existing literature gives different views to the corruption problem, a large majority of research only looks at it with a focus on corruption among the ordinary citizen living in the country. The voices of Nigerians in the diaspora are often left out of the discussion. From a review of current literature, this study would be the first to discuss the perceptions of Nigerian living outside the country. This study bridges this knowledge gap by getting the views of Nigerian living in Nova Scotia, reviewing extant literature and applying the General Strain Theory (GST) to answer the research question: How do the Nigerian diaspora perceive the culture and normalization of corruption?



## **Research Objectives**

The overarching objective of the research is to understand the perception of the Nigerian diaspora about the culture and normalization of corruption in Nigeria. The study focused more on the executive arm of the Nigerian government which is headed by the president and ministers. I conducted interviews with Nigerians living in Nova Scotia to understand their thoughts on the phenomenon and if corruption had any part to play in their decision to leave the country. This included a brief history of corruption in the country. The second objective was to use the general strain theory to analyze corruption in Nigeria to foster a better understanding of the menace with the hope that it creates social change and impacts the creation of policies and laws that have to do with anti-corruption in the country. This thesis presented a chronological (colonialism, military rule and independence) map of the evolution of corruption into an institution with strong roots. Specifically, the objectives of this research involved the following:

- 1) Examine existing literature on corruption in Nigeria in order to create a detailed literature review on the problems associated with corruption.
- 2) Provide a detailed analysis of corruption in Nigeria. This includes a detailed analysis of:
  - a) the history of corruption in the Nigerian government
  - b) The causes of corruption in Nigeria (the factors that are in place that allows for its occurrence, including the application of theories (of corruption) to Nigeria.
  - c) Some of the consequences of corruption in Nigeria
- 3) Recommend possible solutions to the problem of corruption in Nigeria.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### **Definition/Conceptualization of Corruption**

According to Transparency International, “corruption is one of the greatest challenges of the contemporary world. It undermines good government, fundamentally distorts public policy, leads to the misallocation of resources, harms the private sector and private sector development and particularly hurts the poor”.

For the past few years, corruption has been the topic of many scholarly works and discussions, and this has produced variants of explanations, definitions, theories and solutions. For different authors the concept means different things. It is seen as everything from receiving bribes in return for some favor or the actual stealing of public funds, all in all it is when a person uses the power of their office for their private ends. This only goes to show that corruption is multi-faceted, and one definition might not adequately fit the concept. The forms of corruption are diversified in terms of who carries out the act, who profits from it and who initiates it. For the Nigerian government, it is said that anyone that joins is ultimately corrupt because in one way or the other they have benefited or been aware or been involved. The causes and the impact of corruption are varied and complicated, and it is difficult to understand why it poses a big problem for one country while another country can develop fine along with it. For a more robust understanding an array of definitions will be used in this study.

Corruption “is conventionally understood, and referred to, as the private wealth seeking behaviour of someone who represents the state and the public authority, or as the misuse of public goods by public officials for private ends.” (Amundsen, 1999, p. 2). According to Baruskova (2009) it is “an official’s use of his

position for purposes of private advantage”, it comes in different forms, bribery, nepotism and tribalism, misappropriation of funds and so on. Bayley (1966, p. 720) argues that “while being tied particularly to the act of bribery, it is a general term covering misuse of authority as a result of considerations of personal gain, which need not be monetary.” Here, corruption is a situation where the civil servant sells his public office to the highest bidder for personal gain. Benefits that go to the office holder from such a deal may be both monetary and non-monetary. Corruption is the “diversion of public resources to non-public purposes.” The public office holder directly and illegally appropriates the resources for the public for his own private use or that of his family (Werlin, 1973).

Onigu Otite (1983) used the Nigerian case to highlight a sociological perspective to the definition of corruption. Hence, To Otite:

Corruption simply means the perversion of integrity or state of affairs through bribery, favor, or moral depravity. This implies an original state or expectation of individual and societal purity. When at least two parties have interacted to change the structure or process of society or the behavior of functionaries in order to produce dishonest, unfaithful or defiled situations, we may say that corruption has taken place (Otite, 1983: 11–12).

To Otite, corruption occurs where two or more people try to change the way of doing things in the society to benefit themselves at the expense of others. Such a change serves the purpose of excluding people who follow due process. This view argues that corruption occurs in situations where accountability is weak or has failed. This is typical of the Nigerian society where people who follow the right path are not adequately compensated/lauded by society for doing the right thing. The abnormal has

now been normalized, in some instances people are accused of being *holier than thou* when they try to hold their moral ground.

Green and Ward (2004, p. 11) refer to corruption as “political white-collar crime” and define it as ‘the abuse of public office for private gain’ or “illicit transactions by officials which result in some kind of improper reward”. State corruption is different from other kinds of deviance because it involves some kind of exchange between two parties (Mény 1996), which most often takes form of a private actor providing financial payments or other forms of material compensation to a public (state) actor. The definition given by Philp (2008, p. 315) best fits my study, he states that:

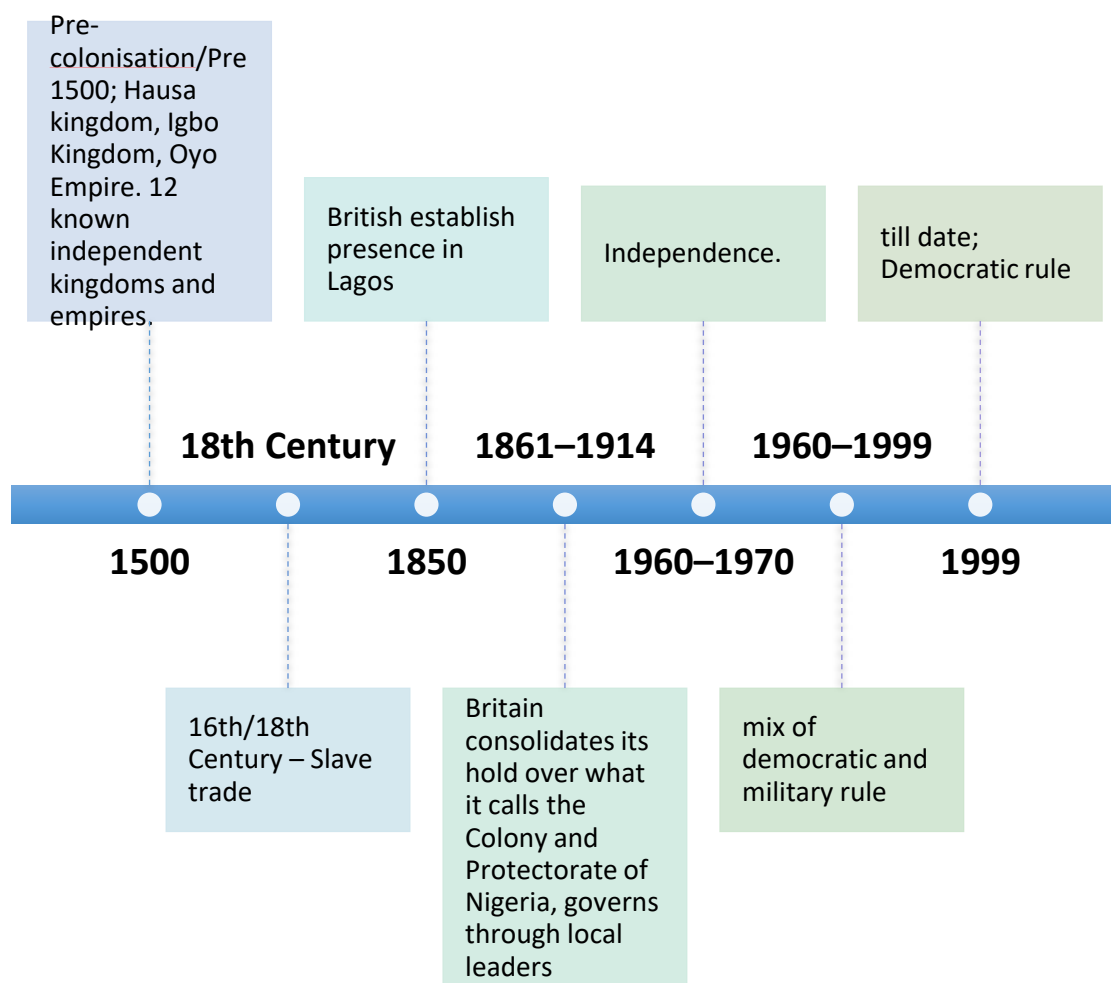
...corruption in politics occurs where a public official (A), acting in ways that violate the rules and norms of office, and that involve personal, partisan or sectional gain, harms the interests of the public (B) (or some sub-section there-of) who is the designated beneficiary of that office, to benefit themselves and/or a third party (C) who rewards or otherwise incentivises A to gain access to goods or services they would not otherwise obtain.

It important to understand the economic, socio-cultural and political history and landscape of Nigeria, to properly situate the problem of corruption and its evolution over the years.

## **Nigeria**

This study is on Nigeria, it is important for readers to know about the history of the country so they can understand the context and the uniqueness of the population that is being researched. Nigeria is located on the western coast of the African continent. The geography of the country ranges from arid to humid equatorial. It has a

diverse population and hundreds of languages are spoken in the country including Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa, Tiv, Edo, Ibibio and Fula, with English being the official language. The seat of government and capital of the country is Abuja, which is located almost exactly in the middle of the country. Abuja was specially carved out from other states to become the capital of the country in a 1967 decree. Before 1967 the capital was Lagos and it still remains the country's leading commercial and industrial city.



**Source: Adapted from Falola (1999).**

The above image shows the progression of the formation and history of the country. The country formally dates from 1914 when the British protectorate of Northern and Southern Nigeria were joined by Lord Frederick Lugard. Before 1914,

the geographical location that is known as Nigeria was made up of different kingdoms and empires. The country gained independence in 1960 and became a republic in 1963. Nigeria is bordered to the north by Niger, East by Chad and Cameroon, South by the Gulf of Guinea of the Atlantic Ocean, and West by Benin. It is Africa's most populous country. The major religions are Islam and Christianity with about 1.3% of the population being adherents of the African Traditional Religion (Falola, 1999; Falola & Heaton, 2008; Udo, Kirk-Greene, Ade-Ajayi, & Falola, 2018). It can be argued that because of the cultural elements that have been assimilated into religion in the country, the Islam and Christianity practiced in Nigeria is unique only to Nigerians. The country is multicultural, and each ethnic group is indigenous to a particular location.

There are an estimated 250 ethnic groups in Nigeria. Each inhabits a territory that it considers to be its own by right of first occupancy and inheritance. Individuals who are not members of a dominant group but who have lived and worked for several decades in the territory of the group are still considered to be aliens. In most rural areas, such aliens may not acquire outright title to land, yet considerable numbers of people have migrated from one ethnic territory to another in search of farmland. There are three major ethnic groups in the country: the Hausa-Fulani, the Yoruba and the Igbo. (Udo, Kirk-Greene, Ade-Ajayi, & Falola, 2018).

The Nigerian currency is the Naira (₦). The exchange rate as of August 3, 2019 is 1USD to 361.50NGN and 1CAD to 273.25NGN. Nigeria is prominent for its crude oil production and cocoa exports as well as cultural and musical exports to Europe and America. Pre-colonization, the entity that came to be known as Nigeria was a very

value-oriented society where wealth that did not have a legal source was frowned upon. During this period, Sculpting, Iron works, Agriculture and Trans-Saharan trading were the mainstay of the economy of ethnic groups in the geographical area. The three major ethnic groups – Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba – had independent systems of justice administration as well as normative patterns and values that guided behaviour of the citizenry. This was usually headed by a King or Chief depending on the structure of the society. Leaders in the territory were exemplary characters and value was placed on hard work (Yagboyaju, 2007).

Upon independence from Britain in 1960, some elected political officers took the opportunity to appropriate state funds for their personal use. This was against the mandate on which they were elected and formed the basis for the first military coup, which took place in 1966. The leaders of coup claimed that their mission was to rescue the nation from the “*ten percenters*” and economic saboteurs (i.e. public officials that usually collected kickbacks/bribes for contracts awarded) (Osah et al., 2014).

However, despite several military coups and restoration of political democracy, corrupt practices did not decline. In the Corruption Perceptions Index released by Transparency International, Nigeria has consistently scored low on all indices of government accountability and transparency of public offices in the past few years. In the 2018 index, TI scored the country 27% and among 180 countries, Nigeria was the 144<sup>th</sup> country listed in descending order. With the number one country being the least corrupt and the one hundred and eightieth country being the most corrupt. These numbers highlight how much of a problem corruption is. Most of Transparency International’s discussion of Nigeria, touches on the fact that anti-corruption bodies must be strengthened before there can be any improvement. Below

is a table of TI's score and ranking for Nigeria from 1996 to 2018. The Corruption Perception Index (CPI) created by TI is a measure of international corruption where countries and territories are ranked from least corrupt to most corrupt by their perceived levels of corruption. A scale of 0 to 100 is also used, where 0 is highly corrupt and 100 is very clean. A ranking of 54 out of 54 shows that the country when compared to 53 other countries was found to be the most corrupt.

**Table 2:** Transparency International Corruption Perception Index Rankings of Nigeria from 1996 to 2017.

YEAR	Rankings (Position of Nigeria among other countries)	SCORE
1996	54 of 54	0.69 out of 10
1997	52 of 52	1.76 out of 10
1998	81 of 85	1.9 out of 10
1999	98 of 99	1.6 out of 10
2000	90 of 90	1.2 out of 10
2001	90 of 91	1.0 out of 10
2002	101 of 102.	1.6 out of 10
2003	132 of 133	1.4 out of 10
2004	144 of 146	1.6 out of 10
2005	152 of 159	1.9 out of 10
2006	142 of 163	2.2 out of 10
2007	147 of 180	2.2 out of 10
2008	121 of 180	2.7 out of 10
2009	130 of 180	2.5 out of 10



2010	134 of 178	2.4 out of 10
2011	143 of 183	2.4 out of 10
2012	139 of 176	27 out of 100
2013	144 of 177	25 out of 100
2014	136 of 175	27 out of 100
2015	136 of 168	26 out of 100
2016	136 of 176	28 out of 100
2017	148 of 180	27 out of 100
2018	144 of 180	27 out of 100

**Source:** Transparency International. *Note- from 1996-2011 a scale of 0 (highly corrupt) to 10 (very clean) was used. It was changed to a scale of 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean) from 2012-2017.*

Aluko (2002) states that because of its institutionalization corruption has become ingrained in the Nigerian political system. Its citizens see it as an undeniable part of the social structure, it has affected all institutions from the educational sector to the health sector, and we would be hard pressed to find a sector of the society that has not been affected. “Corruption is a cankerworm that has eaten into the fabric of Nigerian society” (Alutu, 2007, and if the fight against corruption is not won, sustainable development and socio-political stability will not be achieved. Ogundiya (2011) says that many agencies created to improve the lives of the Nigerian citizens failed due to mismanagement and corruption. Apart from the obvious problems that corruption poses to the country as a whole, it also has a direct impact on how its citizens are seen outside the country. Other countries now have jaundiced view of Nigeria and perceive its citizens as being inherently corrupt, thereby arousing suspicion and greatly limiting opportunities for its people.

Green and Ward's (2004) definition of corruption as an organisational goal is a quintessential example of what is happening in Nigeria. Illegal gains are now seen as a goal to be achieved by officials who aim to maximise their personal profits, and when these officials are persecuted the populace sees it as another over-dramatization as we only hear about long protracted cases, without any beneficial solution at the end.

Nigeria is described as a paradox of poverty in the midst of plenty, trying to list all the publicly recorded cases of corruption in Nigeria would be beyond the scope of this study because it is innumerable from the incidences at the echelon of the government to bribing a street police officer. Leaders that are suspected of being corrupt are not thoroughly investigated talk less of being convicted. "Whenever some feeble convictions would be orchestrated, the accused elites are under the orthodoxy subsequently released in plea-bargains." (Okeke & Idike, 2016). The Table below shows examples of some of these sentences:

**Table 1. Beneficiaries of Lenient Sentences in Nigeria**

NAME	OFFENSE	SENTENCE	DATE	COURT
Cecilia Ibru, former CEO of the defunct Oceanic Bank Plc.	25 counts of bank and security fraud	Six months' imprisonment and forfeited 190 billion naira (US\$1.2 billion) assets and cash	October 2010	Federal High Court Lagos
Tafa Balogun, former Inspector General of Police.	Failing to declare his assets & his front companies were convicted of Eight counts of money laundering.	Six months' imprisonment and seizure of his assets—reportedly worth in excess of US\$150 million.	November 2005	Federal High Court Abuja
Lucky Igbinedion, former Governor of Edo State.	Failing to declare his assets and his front company was convicted of 27 counts of	Six months' imprisonment with an option of N3.5m fine and seizure of some of his assets acquired	December 2008	Federal High Court Enugu

	money laundering.	with proceeds of corruption. Igbinedion immediately paid the fine in the court room & agreed to forfeit some of his assets.		
Diepreye Alamiyeseigha, former Governor of Bayelsa State.	Failing to declare his assets & his front companies were convicted of Money laundering.	Two years' imprisonment & forfeited some of his assets.	July 2007	Federal High Court Lagos

**Source: Ijewereme (2015, p.10).**

Some of the officials are sometimes given state pardons because the government says they were convicted in error. “The politicization of corruption by the government, in which people who have been indicted and or convicted of corruption, are given state pardon for reasons of political expediency, as well as their rehabilitation by the government, weakens the fight against corruption” (Okeke & Idike, 2016).

### **Corruption during Colonialism**

Before contact with the western world, the territory that is known as Nigeria of today was made up of separate kingdoms and empires, there was little or no contact between these kingdoms and they all had different cultures, norms and system of administration. Popular among these kingdoms was the Hausa kingdom, Igbo Kingdom, Oyo Empire (Falola, 1999). “The power and influence of the British became tangible from around the middle of the nineteenth century, and by the end of the century circumstances had led to a dovetailing of British interests that resulted in the colonial occupation of the territories that would become Nigeria” (Falola & Heaton, 2008, p. 85). The process of colonialization was different in these empires/kingdoms, which resulted in it being drawn out; the southwest region of Lagos was annexed in 1861, while the Northern part of the country was occupied in

1903. British colonial administration used the concept of indirect rule- traditional rulers were used to govern local territories of the British protectorate. The success or failure of indirect rule was based upon the kind of administration that the region had before colonisation.

Chiefs that were legitimized by indirect rule employed the use of illegal and immoral techniques in their administration. They violated their colonial authority and traditional norms. Tignor (1993) believed that this lower level political corruption helped to sustain the power of the colonial rulers. These chiefs did not have traditional legitimation and were only able to keep themselves in power by forcing bribes on the people and distributing it among their supporters. In some instances, it was the “dregs of the society, the rejects, the ones that hitherto had no say in the community (that) were promoted as warrant chiefs by British authorities. Individuals without character who demanded money in exchange for manipulating the colonial masters enthroned corruption...” (ChikaForAfrica, 2012). People saw bribery as the route to go to gain access to essential amenities.

The British swept these acts of corruption under the rug and did not report the illegal acts that were taking place especially as these chiefs were indispensable in collecting levies from the populace. Though the British were implicit in the abuse of their chiefs and chose to be silent, they had a very different attitude towards nationalist activity. Officials were prompt in complaining about corruption when Nigerians challenged British authority, especially in 1917 when elections to the Lagos Town Council began. Herbert Macaulay, a giant in African nationalism was viewed as being a self-serving politician who was not representative of the African way of life (Tignor, 1993).

When the British came into the country, some of the officials that they appointed did not see the wealth of the society as Nigerians property but rather as the colonial wealth. They felt it was not a crime to misappropriate the funds of the colonial rulers, this was promoted by the belief that they were being smart and trying to meet the goals of their people since technically they did not invite the colonial masters into their territory. Officials were sometimes congratulated for this because they used the funds to benefit their people. The unequal distribution of power that the British took part in by using monetary and non-monetary gifts to induce their Nigerian born administrators to work in collaboration with them at the expense of Nigerians was also useful in creating a culture of corruption. Now, officials expect something in return for doing their jobs (Mulinge & Lesetedi, 1998, p. 15).

Ogunyemi (2016) divided the forms of corruption that occurred during colonialism into four; “(1) corrupt acts committed in the discharge of expenditure duties, (2) corrupt acts committed on revenues, (3) outright disregard for established control and audit rules and (4) direct theft and fraud.” Ogunyemi, states that corruption flourished during the colonial era because there was no accountability. “In the period under review, accountability failed because a number of fiscal laws which could have permitted its observance were not enforced. Hence funds were illegally transferred and expended on projects and services that had no budget backing.” Documents that were required by law to provide evidence of receipt of payment for services rendered for the government usually went missing. Account officers who were indicted for the disappearance of these documents (that would have been used to monitor the use of government funds) were often not punished. Queries to officers that were issued when fraud and embezzlement were detected were often left unanswered (Ogunyemi, 2016).

In 2016, the then British Prime Minister, David Cameron, referred to Nigeria as a “fantastically corrupt” country. This prompted a former Commissioner of Police, Chief Ikechukwu Aduba, to fire back by saying;

Corruption in Nigeria originated from Britain whose exploitative tendencies started when they came to colonize us uninvited. Over the years, Britain has remained a hiding place for corrupt Nigerians. British banks are harboring stolen funds from Nigeria and using same to develop their economy. Corrupt Nigerians are buying up streets in Britain to the eternal joy of British Estate business. (as cited in Amaize, 2016).

It is quite ironic to see that corruption has been the bane of Nigeria’s existence for a very long time and has also been the reason for tussles of power. After World War II, the British were concerned about Nigeria’s ability and readiness for independence. They used fear of political corruption, to argue against the independence of the country. By 1960, when the country gained independence, “many Nigerians regarded corruption as the main issue by which they and the outside world would judge the country's capacity for self-rule” (Tignor, 1993, p. 175). As we would see in following sections, nationalist leaders also took up this cry to undermine their opponents, soldiers who carried out a coup d’état in 1966 accused the civilians of malfeasance and promised to extinguish the blight of corruption. Subsequent political leaders have made similar claims.

### **Corruption Post-Colonialism**

In his paper on “Political Leadership and Corruption in Nigeria Since 1960: A Socio-economic Analysis”, Ogbeidi (2012), states that after colonialism, power fell into the hands of a political class that had more of an interest in their private gains instead of the general wellbeing of the citizens. The political leadership class succeeded in entrenching corruption by allowing it to grow and thrive in fertile ground at the expense of development of the country. The first republic headed by Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, Prime Minister, and Nnamdi Azikiwe, President, was significant for the widespread corruption in the highest offices of the land. Ministers flaunted their wealth with abandon “it appeared there were no men of good character in the political leadership of the First Republic. Politically, the thinking of the First Republic Nigerian leadership class was based on politics for material gain; making money and living well” (Ogbeidi, 2012, p. 6).

The second republic headed by President Shehu Shagari was marked by the looting of public funds by elected officials. Due to the discovery of large deposits of oil in Oloibiri there was a lot of money in circulation in the country. Dash (1983) claimed that \$16 billion in oil revenues were lost between 1979 and 1983 during President Shehu Shagari’s administration. It was common during that time for federal buildings to be burnt down before the beginning of ordered audits of government accounts, making it difficult to trace evidence of embezzlement and fraud. Shagari’s administration was symbolized by his Minister of Transport, Alhaji Umaru Dikko, who was accused of mismanaging 4 billion Naira meant for the importation of rice. This administration led to the December 31, 1983 coup of the current president of the country, General Muhammadu Buhari.

The 1983 coup was again carried out with the aim of stomping out corruption and restoring integrity to the country. General Muhammadu Buhari's regime brought allegedly corrupt officials and their associates to book, many state governors and commissioners were arrested and faced military tribunals. Though it was also marked by an absolute disregard for human life/rights, in the military regime's bid to entrench discipline and order (Ogbeidi, 2012).

In May of 1999 after eleven months in power, General Abdulsalami Abubakar, handed over power to a democratically elected civilian government. It is important to note that the third republic was between the thirteen years military rule of General Babangida and Sani Abacha (1985 – 1998). During this period, a number of commissions of inquiry were instituted, yet no inquiry and report stopped the high rate of corruption.

### **Corruption during Military Rule**

The picture painted above of the all the republics of Nigeria was among other factors the reason for military intervention. On the 15<sup>th</sup> of January 1966 middle-rank army officials overthrew the sitting civilian government. The Daily Times Newspaper of the next day, January 16, 1966 argued thus:

With the transfer of authority of the Federal Government to the Armed Forces, we reached a turning point in our national life. The old order has changed, yielding place to a new one... For a long time, instead of settling down to minister to people's needs, the politicians were busy performing series of seven-day wonders as if the act of government was some circus show... still we groped along as citizens watched politicians scorn the base by which they did ascend... (Daily Times, 1966).



The quote above shows that there was widespread support of this coup as Nigerians were expecting the military government to bail them out of the ditch that the civilian government had thrown them into. Despite the killings that took place during that period, there was jubilation around the country. General Aguiyi Thomas Ironsi became head of the military government after the coup d'état carried out by the "Young Major" led by Major Kaduna Nzeogwu. Ironsi's regime created commissions of inquiry to investigate and prosecute some government officials and ministries as well as probe the corruption that characterized the preceding administration. Reports from these inquiries showed that some ministers created companies and used their office to secure contracts from the government. They were also found guilty of disregarding procedures in the award of contracts by parastatals under their ministries (Okonkwo, 2007).

This zeal to punish offenders died six months after with the coup of General Gowon, which took place in July 1966 and ousted the Ironsi military regime. Officials who were previously sentenced or in detention for corrupt practices were freed. This resulted in more disregard for the rule of law and looting was carried out with impunity. The new rulers carried out 'white elephant' projects. This clearly showed the citizens that the military was not better than the ousted civilian leaders, coupled with the fact that the military ruled with decrees that were not accepted or good for everyone. General Yakubu Gowon ruled the country at a time when wealth the likes of which was unheard of in Nigeria, with the oil boom of the 1970s. Gowon's government certainly did a good job in mismanaging the country and revenue from crude oil. By 1974, newspapers were filled with reports of unaccountable wealth in the hands of Gowon's military governors and other public officials (Ogbeidi, 2012; Okonkwo, 2007)

In July 1975, another coup took place, this time led by General Murtala Mohammed. This regime started by the head declaring his assets and asking all other officials to do the same. General Murtala Mohammed carried out a series of probes of past leaders. The Federal Assets Investigation Panel of 1975 found ten of the twelve state military governors in the Gowon regime guilty of corruption. The guilty officials were summarily released from the military in disgrace. They were also made to return all the properties they acquired from their shady dealings (Ogbeidi, 2012; Okonkwo, 2007; Gboyega, 1996).

On the 31<sup>st</sup> of December 1983, a coup headed by General Muhammed Buhari took place. Buhari is noted as one of the military leaders who had a zero-tolerance policy on corruption. His creation of the War Against Indiscipline (WAI) showed his determination to eradicate corruption in Nigeria. However, the features of the WAI were only practiced under the watchful eye of the police. Many of the changes were a façade and likened to a coat of paint over the other ills of the society. Buhari's authoritarian nature made officials scared, corruption was at the barest minimum in his time. The regime was however characterized by the erosion of the rights of the citizens. It is interesting to note that Ogbeidi (2012), Falola and Heaton (2008) do not explicitly liken Buhari's utter disregard for human rights as corruption. This calls to mind the question of 'what is corruption?' It seems that corruption under an authoritarian rule is a foregone conclusion as the lines are blurred as to what is right and what is wrong.

The Buhari regime of 1983 was overthrown by General Ibrahim Babangida in a bloodless in-house coup on 27th August 1985. The next thirteen years saw no serious attempt to stop corruption. Researchers (Ogbeidi, 2012; Okonkwo, 2007; Gboyega, 1996) refer to this time as the period where corruption became

institutionalized in Nigeria. Leaders that were previously found guilty under the regime of Murtala Mohammed and Mohammad Buhari found their way back into the government and even got back properties previously seized from them.

Maduagwu cited in Lawal and Tobi (2006) listed the following as some of the highlights of Babangida corrupt practices:

1. US\$2 billion Gulf war wind fall in 1991.
2. 30% of oil revenue diverted to frivolous uses throughout the time.
3. Huge extra-budgetary spending: 1989 = ₦15.3 billion, 1990 = ₦23.4 billion, 1991 = ₦35 billion, 1992 = ₦44.2 billion, 1993 (by August) = ₦59 billion.
4. US\$200 million siphoned from the Aluminum Smelter project.
5. ₦400 million wasted on the Better Life Project.
6. Colossal Corruption at the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), for example, US\$101 million for the purchase of strategic storage facilitation.

As a result of the widespread opposition to the rule of Babangida, he reluctantly handed over power to a non-elected military-civilian Interim National Government on August 23, 1993. This government was later removed from power by the military under the leadership of General Sani Abacha on November 17, 1993. Maduagwu describes Babangida's administration thusly:

Not only did the regime encourage corruption by pardoning corrupt officials convicted by his predecessors and returning their seized properties, the regime officially sanctioned corruption in the country and made it difficult to apply the only potent measures, long prison

terms and seizure of ill-gotten wealth, for fighting corruption in Nigeria in the future (Maduagwu as cited in Gboyega, 1996, p. 5).

Under General Sani Abacha, corruption was blatant and systematic. Abacha himself and his family members looted the coffers of the country. The extent of Abacha's venal nature is still being felt in Nigeria today, as many countries are returning some of the loot, 25 years after. Abacha was seen by the world as one of the most corrupt leaders in history. It was estimated that the embezzlement of public funds and corruption proceeds of General Abacha and his family amounted to USD 4 billion (International Centre for Asset Recovery, 2009).

The sixteen years of unbroken military power after the second republic until the restoration of democracy in 1999 was a blight on Nigerian history, corruption was institutionalized "as the foundation and essence of governance" (Ogbeidi, 2012, p. 10).

### **Corruption in Present Times (1999-2019)**

Olusegun Obasanjo became democratic president of Nigeria in 1999. He passed the law that created the ICPC and EFCC, unfortunately these institutions made little or no impact on the fight against corruption. Obasanjo's administration was filled with allegations of election rigging, bribery and looting of the government coffers. Human Rights Watch (2007) claimed that Nigeria lost between 4 billion USD and 8 billion USD during the 8 years that Obasanjo was in power (Human Rights Watch, 2007). Transparency International (TI) also gave the country low scores for four consecutive years. Out of 10, Nigeria scored 1.6 in 1999, 1.2 in 2000, 1.0 in 2001, 1.6 in 2002, and 1.4 in 2003 (Ijewereme, 2013). In November of 2003, Nuhu Ribadu became chairman of the EFCC and the corruption perception index of the

country was slightly better; 1.6 in 2004, 1.9 in 2005, 2.2 in 2006, 2.2 in 2007, and 2.7 in 2008 (TI, 2008).

Obasanjo was head of the petroleum ministry where high-level corruption occurred with impunity. Over \$400 million was invested in the maintenance and repairs of oil refineries but they failed to yield any result. Records show that the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) was the major agency involved with corruption concerning the revenue realized from the sale of the country's petroleum resources (Ogbeidi, 2012). A report compiled by the Revenue Mobilization Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC) showed that between January and July 2002, 445,000 barrels of crude oil sold by the NNPC was not accounted for in the corporation's financial report. Within that same period, there was a shortfall of 302 billion Naira as undeclared revenue. Requests from various quarters to bring the officials that were in charge of this corporation to book were left unanswered (Adekeye, 2003; Shettima, 2009). There were allegations that the presidency hindered the indictment of these officials on the "ground that the probe would send negative signals abroad about corruption in Nigeria, particularly because the Presidency directly oversees the petroleum ministry" (Ogbeidi, 2012, p. 17).

What is interesting about the fourth republic is that the heads of anti-corruption agencies are now also trailed by allegations of corruption. There were allegations that Nuhu Ribadu's indictment of officials was selective and was "dictated by the political whims of the presidency to deal with perceived opponents and enemies, while the cronies and heavily corrupt officials in the good books of the then president Olusegun Obasanjo were untouched" (Ijewereme, 2015, p. 5). Oluwasanmi (2007) best describes Obasanjo's tenure as president:

Corruption became all pervading; electoral fraud common place, personal insecurity and unresolved assassinations characterized his regime just as much as disobedience of court rulings. Many infrastructures were left to decay while he pursued an attempt to stay longer in office by trying to amend the constitution. He pursued to jail or impeach those governors who did not agree with him using corruption as the weapon: On corruption those who agreed with him were unscathed. Though, he tried to reorganize some arms of government—The civil service and finance.

Umar Musa Yar'Adua became the president of Nigeria after Obasanjo, he came into power in 2007. According to Aderonmu (2009) and Ijewereme (2013) Yar'Adua constantly undermined efforts to bring corrupt officials to book through the office of the Attorney General of the Federation. The case of James Ibori (Former Governor of Delta State), who was a close associate and financier of Yar'Adua was an example of the president's efforts to prevent his cronies from answering to their crimes. Nuhu Ribadu, the chairman of the EFCC was forced out office after he tried to prosecute Ibori (Human Rights Watch, 2011). According to Falana (2012) Buhari allowed the ICPC and EFCC to be headed by corrupt officials.

Another example of corruption in the fourth republic of Nigeria is through the self-increment of salaries by the members of the National Assembly. This is done without recourse to the constitutional body responsible for fixing salaries of elected public officers. "The lawmakers have perfected a system of increasing their own salaries, which make them earn more than their foreign counterparts" (Awojobi, 2014). The irony of this is in Nigeria, a country with a very low standard of living, the

federal lawmakers earn more than lawmakers of countries...with high standard of living.

The trend of increasing corrupt practices continued under President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan. “Jonathan’s administration displayed lack of political will, a high degree of lethargy and cluelessness in the fight against corruption and many reported cases involving government officials” (Ijewereme, 2015). Reports from audits of Jonathan’s administration showed that there was a huge number of ghost employees (in the Nigerian Civil Service. There were more than 45,000 workers that were not accounted for on the federal government’s payroll and over 100 billion naira was being spent on them annually (Okekeocha, 2013). No one has been brought to face charges for this occurrence till date. The case of Diezani Allison Madueke, where the president allowed her to continue occupying the position of the Minister of Petroleum supervising NNPC despite her being under investigation is another mark against Jonathan. “Mrs Deziani Allison Madueke has been indicted by five different investigative panel Committees reports at different times, yet she confidently remains in charge of the Ministry unperturbed” (Melaye, 2013a, p. 2). Ijewereme (2015) argues that she was allowed to go free for a long time because she had familial ties with the president. According to Melaye (2013b), the Jonathan Administration failed to convict any corrupt official because there was a lack of political will.

### **Nigerian Economy**

The bulk of Nigeria’s economic revenue is derived from the exportation of Crude oil, with about 2 million barrels produced per day (mbpd). Thus, making it the largest producer of crude oil in Africa and 13th in the world. However, global decline in crude oil prices since 2014 as a result of increase in Shale oil exploration and demand for fossil fuels as well as transitioning to alternative energy sources have

created a black hole in the country's revenue. This has led to an increase in both external and internal borrowing by the government in its quest to fund the yearly budget (that is mostly riddled with recurrent expenditure and spurious projects) and the inability of many states to pay public service workers on their wage bill. The country's External Crude Account (ECA) seems to be rapidly depleting as a result of the need to fund government expenditure and debt financing, while external debt commitment rose by 11.77 billion (USD) between 2015 and 2018 (Amaefule, 2018).

It is important to note that Nigeria has not always been majorly dependent on oil revenue. At independence in 1960, the country was an agro-based economy, with revenue from cash crops such as Cocoa, Oil Palm, Groundnut, Cotton, Rubber. The agricultural sector accounted for 70% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), whilst employing almost similar percentage of the working population and constituting 90% of foreign earnings and Federal Government revenue. The country was a leading exporter of agricultural products, but agricultural exports tanked between 1970 and 1974 because of the oil boom, which led to a decline in agricultural exports as a percentage of total exports from 43% to 7% of Nigeria's exports (Gbaiye, et al, 2013).

Despite the discovery of crude oil in Oloibiri in 1956, commercial oil exploration did not commence until 1958 by Royal Dutch Shell and British Petroleum (BP). The civil war between 1967 and 1970 greatly hindered expansion of exploration to other areas in the Niger-Delta region of Nigeria. With the end of civil war came a drive by the military government led by General Yakubu Gowon to fully exploit the oil sector by creating the Nigerian National Oil Exploration Company (NNOC) to oversee oil extraction. Daily production of crude oil increased to about 1.5 million barrels per day (mbpd) and led to Nigeria joining OPEC in 1971. Government revenue from oil rose from 3.7 billion in 1974 to 5.7 billion naira in 1976 as result of



global scarcity and sanctions against Western nations for supporting Israel by OPEC. Oil revenue instantly accounted for 82% of government revenue (Falola and Heaton, 2008).

The sudden explosion in government revenue led to the first strings of political corruption and current crisis of government overdependence on oil revenue as a benchmark for funding budgets. During that era, the military government embarked on large infrastructural projects that had little or no contribution to the direct welfare and development of the citizens. Such projects later served as conduit pipes for siphoning public funds by awarding outrageous contracts to phony companies and individuals. The military and civil service were expanded, while worker's salaries/benefits was greatly increased in what was termed "Udoji Award" (named after the Udoji Commission on Civil service reforms) and preparations to host a Festival of Arts & Culture (FESTAC) were also in earnest. The FESTAC hosting preparations included building a 5,000-seater theatre and 5,000 housing units, to serve as a FESTAC Village. A military tribunal later discovered that the contracts relating to FESTAC were greatly inflated, with many foreign firms acting as conduits and Umaru Dikko was singled out as a major culprit in the award of unauthorised consultancy fees (Falola and Heaton, 2008; Nebo and Nnamani, 2015).

As government's focus switched to oil revenues, the economy began to dwindle as a result of neglect of taxation, custom duties and a myriad of ill-thought import waivers (some of which resulted in the Cement Armada crisis of 1975). Inflation seemed to skyrocket due to increase in wages and public expenditure. New states were created for political reasons and military governors appointed to further widen the spread of government spending. Amidst these events, the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation was formed by joining the ministry of petroleum with NNOC.

Military administrators and their acolytes soon controlled allocation of oil mining licenses and public resources. (Falola and Heaton, 2008).

The attendant decline in oil prices in 1978 worsened the state of the economy and led to austerity measures by the Obasanjo-led military administration. The educational sector was greatly affected, and public university tuition fees had to be increased, resulting to a national protest (Alli-Must-Go!) by students and calls for the resignation of the Education Minister, Lieutenant-General Ambrose Alli. Between 1983 and 1985, Nigeria pursued different policies in order to stabilise the economy. A price control and regulatory board was created by the Buhari administration in order to curb price inflation for consumer goods and commodities, but this was counterproductive as it led to the creation of black markets. The exchange rate of the naira to dollar, which just a few years earlier had been at par was worsening. The military coup and diplomatic rows with allies such as United States and United Kingdom over human right abuses and prosecution of pro-democracy advocates also worsened the fate of the economy.

Neo-liberal policies were introduced due to the failure of leadership and a need to reconstruct the economy (Ekanade, 2014). Ekanade (2014) asserts that neoliberalism is inherently contradictory with the communal nature of most African states. The provision of social welfare was a “state responsibility in both developed and developing countries. However, the introduction of privatization, which was meant to help curtail government expenditure, created new social problems or exacerbated existing ones which required supplementary public spending in order to contain them (Adejumobi as cited in Ekanade, 2014 p.3). As at independence there was a legacy of a welfare system that was designed to only cater for the needs of

colonialists. This system was not favorable to the needs of the masses and neo-liberalism was introduced to help the dwindling economy.

The military leadership of 1985-1993 led by General Ibrahim Babangida grappled with a deteriorating oil dependent economy. The government in 1986 decided to adopt the IMF-World Bank economic policy model for a truly capitalist economy by creating the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP). SAP was supposed to be an economic recovery programme which would change production and consumption patterns in the economy as well as remove price instability and dependence on the proceeds from sale of crude oil and importation of consumer goods. The programme had an external debt management strategy of rescheduling, refinancing and negotiating new loans agreement. However, SAP induced inflation in the economy (increased from 5.4% in 1986 to 40.9% in 1989). Despite all the austerity measures undertaken such as removal of subsidies, there was widespread unemployment, commodity goods became expensive, petroleum product prices skyrocketed, the naira also took a nose-dive in the foreign exchange market, brain drain (exodus of skilled labour to Europe and America) and massive strike actions labour unions and students of tertiary institutions. The Human Rights Watch reports that about 12.2 billion (USD) in proceeds from the Oil Windfall disappeared and are unaccounted for by the Babangida government (Anyanwu, 1992).

After just a few months of inauguration of an interim transition government set up by Babangida in 1993, General Sani Abacha squashed the transition process and took over as military leader. Sani Abacha is most prominent for human rights abuses, gestapo-styled arrests/incarceration of civil rights activists and corrupt practises. However, his administration managed to increase Nigeria's foreign reserve from 494 million (USD) in 1993 to 9.6 billion (USD) by the middle of 1997 and

reduced external debts from 36 billion (USD) to 27 billion (USD). Also, the administration managed to reduce inflation rate from 54% inherited in 1993 to 8.5% in 1998, while oil prices were at an average rate of \$15 per barrel. However, all these economic achievements were whittled down by his gross abuse of political power and several bouts of human rights abuse. This led to sanctions from international organizations and countries, Nigeria had to resort to the Paris club for loans since the IMF-World Bank could not continue funding a dictatorship. Debts soon rose and amidst his pilfering of public funds using proxies and escrow accounts in Switzerland and America. Poverty level however increased as commodities such as Kerosene (a cooking fuel) was extremely scarce and people began to resort to the alternatives like sawdust (also known as Abacha Stove), firewood, etc. Education and Public Health care system was also in shambles despite funding from the Petroleum Trust Fund (PTF) established by the administration. Human Rights Watch estimates that between 1-3 billion dollars was personally stolen by Abacha, while between 2000-2018 321 million (USD) was repatriated to Nigeria by the Switzerland government and 700 million (USD) has been located and frozen from the Abacha family hidden abroad. Recently, 237 million (USD) has been recovered in the Island of Jersey and would be shared by the Nigerian government, United States and Jersey authorities (HRW).

Nigeria's transition to a civil rule and democracy in 1999 was accompanied by high hopes of a better economy. Developmental projections were made and economic plans such as the Millennium Development Goals (which Nigeria did not attain) and an agreement with the Paris and London Club for a Foreign Debt Relief Programme (amounting to 18 billion dollars) were adopted by the government. The government set up an economic team saddled with reversing the economic debacle it had found itself. The government set up the Excess Crude Account (ECA) as a way of collecting

and saving up the proceeds from the sale of crude oil. The foreign reserves grew from 2 billion (USD) in 1999 to 43 billion (USD) in 2007. The government focused on rebuilding Nigeria's image in the diplomatic community and strengthening ties with its allies and major purchasers of its products. As a way of tackling institutional corruption and economic saboteurs, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and Independent Corrupt Practises Commission (ICPC) were established. Education was a key priority for the government through the implementation of the Universal Basic Education Program. The Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) was also established to cater to the infrastructural and social development of oil producing states and royalties to the states was increased from 3% to 13% by the government. However, like preceding administrations lots of scandals plagued the administration e.g. failed investments and privatization of the Power sector, granting oil mining licenses to cronies, sale of refineries without due process, several strike actions as a result of increment of petroleum prices, etc. (Nnamani and Chilaka, 2012).

In between the short administration of Umaru Musa Yar'Adua (2007-2010) and Goodluck Jonathan (2010-2015), a number of economic policies and issues emerged. The Yar'Adua administration campaigned and won elections on the economic plan called the 7-point Agenda. However, to effectively address the issues raised in the agenda there was a need to resolve the lingering problem in the Niger-Delta (Oil theft, Militancy and Kidnapping), which was affecting the volume of crude oil production and revenue. Thereafter, government implemented an amnesty programme that sought to rehabilitate and re-integrate the former militants. This paid off and oil revenues increased, and the foreign reserves grew to about 60 billion (USD) at that time. However, the sale of refineries by the previous administration

were reversed and government decided to subsidise petroleum. The government later subscribed to the eight (8) Millennium Development Goals as well as Vision 20:2020, which sought to make Nigeria's economic GDP to be ranked amongst the top 20 economies in world. Power Generation capacity increased to 4,000MW, but in actuality the power generation still did not meet the requirements of a country with a large population and economy like Nigeria (Ajiye, 2014; Oke, Oluwasuji and Simon-Oke, 2011; Gadzama, 2013).

The Goodluck Jonathan administration decided to consolidate on the achievements of Yar'Adua and continue its policy. There was a major focus on agriculture and healthcare, with fertiliser distribution programmes to aid commercial agriculture and also a drive to ensure primary healthcare systems and vaccination of children were effective. The vaccination drive soon paid off as the government totally eradicated the menace of Polio during its administration. The economy was rebased (re-calculating the total number of services and goods produced in a country to include sectors or industries that were not added previously either because there was no available data or the sector did not exist few years before), and GDP grew to 576 billion (USD) in 2014 and funds were made available for entrepreneurs and the entertainment industry because the government attempted to reduce unemployment (as at 2014 the unemployment rate was 4.6). In 2014, inflation rate was at 8.0%, international reserves at 34.5 billion (USD) and external debt percentage to the GDP at 1.7%. However, despite the economic gains, the administration was tainted by corruption allegations ranging from fuel subsidy scandals in which subsidies were paid for non-existent or diverted petroleum products, non-remittance and unaccounted oil revenue of about 20 billion (USD) as indicated in the PWC audit of NNPC, arms deal saga (funds meant for purchase of arms to fight insurgency were diverted to

private pockets), issuing of licenses to rookies with no industry experience by the petroleum minister – Diezani Allison-Madueke, etc. (Oyedele, 2017; Focus Economics, 2019).

After three attempts at being elected President Buhari was elected in 2015 amidst great expectations and concerns about the economy. The global decline of oil prices in 2015 coupled with the delay in selection of ministers that would drive economic policies worsened the situation. The exchange rate which was pegged at 197 naira to 1 dollar was simply unrealistic, but rather than float the currency, the government used other monetary and fiscal policy instruments such as banning 40 imported items from being accessed at the official rate and ensuring that the Monetary Policy Council (MPC) pegged the lending rate at the same percentage after each meeting of the council. The manufacturing industry suffered the most from this debacle, food commodities such as rice increased astronomically, and black-market exchange rate was more than double in comparison to the official exchange rate. There was a lot of forex round-tripping. The economy began to contract and after two successive negative GDP growth, Nigeria fell into recession in 2016. A lot of companies shut down operations leading to massive unemployment and downsizing of labour as well as decline in foreign direct investment as a result of the economic situation and government policies. The government resorted to a Sukuk bond and currency swap with China amongst other borrowing to fund infrastructural projects and finance budgets. Due to the pressure on the naira, foreign reserves became depleted (from 43 billion dollars to dollars) in the government's forex wars. The GDP shrank to 376 billion (USD) in 2017, unemployment was double figures and at the height about 18%, external debt percentage of GDP in 2017 was 5.0%. (PWC publication, 2016; Focus Economic, 2018)

The government also tried to diversify the economy by focusing on the agricultural sector, particularly cultivation of rice by giving loans to rice farmers. Also, programmes such as N-Power was created to address unemployment and train graduates, while loans to boost trading and farming activities were also given through programmes such as Farmer Moni, Market Moni, Trader Moni, etc. The government believes that banning items, refusing to float the naira and focusing on agriculture, has been able to bring the economy out of recession and reduce the food import bill of the nation. However, facts show that smuggling of items through illegal borders is still rife and inflation is still high. With the exchange rate officially at about 361 naira to a dollar and external debt increasing by 11.77 billion (USD) in three years, the worst may still be yet to come. This is not to forget that Nigeria currently has 87 million people living in extreme poverty as stated by the World Poverty Clock, accompanied by the increasing spate of insecurity in different parts of the northern region, the personal economy of the average Nigerian might not be looking good. Hence, there is no surprise that increasingly migration of skilled labour to Europe and Canada is increasing astronomically (Amaefule, 2018).

The Nigerian government spends most of its revenue on subsidies and fighting the foreign exchange rates rather than allowing the forces of demand and supply dictate it. The 2019 budget estimates a total revenue at N6.97 trillion, a total expenditure of N8.83 trillion and the government has set aside N305 billion (\$1 billion) for fuel subsidies. A major chunk of the budget is spent on recurrent expenditures such as salaries and debt repayment (N2.14 trillion of the 2019 budget) while the rest is budgeted for infrastructural projects. The Federal Government of Nigeria spends little on education and health compared to the revenue and population of the country. In the 2019 budget, personnel costs takes 40% of the projected revenue



which is estimated at N2.29 trillion while N462.24 billion and N315.62 billion is budgeted respectively for the payments of salaries and overhead costs for the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health. More money was allocated to other ministries like the Ministry of Interior (N569.07) and the Ministry of Defence (N435.62) (Ojekunle, 2018). Government hospitals and schools are grossly underfunded, and individuals have to resort to private schools and hospitals which are expensive to get the best service. Most of the social welfare institutions have been privatized, Etieyibo (2011) argues that privatization has not helped Nigeria and that it undermines the wellbeing of Nigerians as the 400 state owned enterprises that have been privatized have had problems since the beginning. Etieyibo goes on to say that corrupt government officials make the privatization program unjust as they use it to misappropriate money. What the privatization process has done is to reduce the people who were employed by the public sector and render them unemployed (Etieyibo, 2011). Josephson (2017) asserts that a new welfare policy is needed and that “unless the policy deals not only with a better model, but with the issues of corruption in the country and with the social divisions in Nigeria” (p. 189) it would fail.

### **Anti-Corruption Efforts in Nigeria**

Different efforts have been made to tackle the corruption menace through constitutional means. The section of the Nigerian criminal code that discusses corruption states that:

Any person who – (1) corruptly asks, receives, or obtain any property or benefit of any kind for himself or any other person on account of anything already done or omitted to be done, or to be afterwards done or omitted to be done, by him or any other person, with regard to the

appointment or contemplated appointment of any person to any office or employment in the public service, or with regard to any application by any person for employment in the public service; or (2) corruptly gives, confers, or procures or promises or offers to give or confer, or to procure or attempt to procure, to confer upon, or for any person, any property or benefit of any kind or account of any such act or omission; is guilty of a felony, and is liable to imprisonment for three years. (Section 112(1) of the Criminal Code).

The above quote shows that the Nigerian Criminal Code does not explicitly define what corruption is, it also highlights a set of actions that are punishable under the Criminal Code. The code fails to account for the “deliberate over-padding of expenditure votes, fraudulent encashment of cheques, charging of private expenditure to the public treasury, outright refusal to answer audit queries on discrepancies in the record of public finances, etc.” (Ogunyemi, 2016, pp 61-62). These acts have characterized the Nigerian public sector from independence till date and a major reason for the lack of accountability. The code concentrates on overt acts of corruption while ignoring covert corrupt activities like nepotism and tribalism (Ogunyemi, 2016).

The Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) was inaugurated on 29th September 2000 by the administration of President Olusegun Obasanjo. The commission was tasked with investigating and prosecuting cases of graft, abuse, misuse of public office, bribery and other forms of corruption (The Corrupt practices and other Related Offences Act, 2000). The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), was created in 2003 in response to the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering (FATF), which listed Nigeria among the twenty-three

countries that were frustrating efforts to fight money laundering in the international community (EFCC (Establishment) Act, 2002). The anti-corruption efforts of Nigeria has been doomed to fail from the start. The political leaders of the country talk the talk without walking the walk and in some cases actively hinder the agency's ability to do their jobs. They instead use these agencies to fight their adversaries. The agencies drag their feet when prosecuting prominent members of the country, the case of Joshua Dariye highlights how much time it takes for the EFCC to carry out their mandate.

In his oft-cited work "An Image of Africa," the Nigerian novelist Chinua Achebe (1983, p. 58) noted that Nigerians are corrupt not because they are "different fundamentally from any other people in the world" but "because the system under which they live today makes corruption easy and profitable; they will cease to be corrupt when corruption is made difficult and inconvenient." The EFCC was specifically mandated to "curb the menace of corruption" in the country. By 2010 under Nuhu Ribadu, a senior police officer, the commission had listed 55 high-profile cases on its website. By 2011 only four convictions were secured. Ribadu's successor Farida Waziri recorded over 600 convictions and recovered \$12 billion" (Olabulo, HRW & Campbell as cited in Osah et al., 2014, p. 3). The fight against corruption is greatly affected by the failure to establish special courts and the dependence of agencies on the people they are investigating. Apart from these, there is an immunity clause in the constitution that prevents many public officials from being prosecuted. No matter how much anti-graft bodies fight, they are powerless. "These 'untouchables' even when prosecuted only serve a short term in jail, only to be granted state pardon" (Osah et al., 2014, p. 3).

It is ironic that most of these anti-corruption agencies fail at their tasks due to corruption in their ranks. Farida Waziri a former chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission of Nigeria (EFCC) in an interview, said that when she was investigating an official for corrupt practices the then President Goodluck Jonathan called her to release the person, “I came to Lagos on a vital intelligence on the subsidy scam and as soon as I arrested a key culprit, I got a call from the Presidential Villa asking me to release the suspect, because, in their words, ‘he is our person’, but I refused to let him off and days after, I was removed from office.” (Nwachukwu, 2017). Melaye (2013b) is of the opinion that the situation would continue, except the power to appoint the EFCC, and the ICPC chairman is removed from the president.

The various political regimes in Nigeria talk a lot about anti-corruption reform, the only edge that the current president had over his opponent during the last general election was the perception the citizens had about his stance on corruption. The regimes come into power with promises to make a change but at the end of the day they do not deliver. In some cases, they really have the intention to solve the problem while in other cases they just make promises, so they can get into power. “In too many cases... far from attempting to improve the situation, governments, or at least major parts of them, are the problem. Anti-corruption campaigns then degenerate into [feckless] political rhetoric designed more to appease foreign donors and international financial institutions than to address the major issues” (William, 1987, p. 125). Olowu (1993, p. 231) also maintains that in Nigeria “political actors often talk of accountability and integrity but this by itself does not translate into a genuine commitment to detect and penalize unethical behavior.”

## **Notable corruption cases and panels**

### Foster-Sutton Tribunal of Inquiry

In 1956, the Foster-Sutton tribunal of inquiry was set up to investigate the then Premier of the Eastern Region, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe for his connection to the affairs of the African Continental Bank (ACB). The code of conduct for government officials at that time stipulated that when an individual assumes public office, he must relinquish his holdings on private business. The tribunal found out that Azikiwe did not cut off his connections with the ACB and used his position as premier to promote the interest of the bank (Report of the Foster-Sutton Tribunal of Inquiry, 1956: 42; Sklar, 2004: 185). Azikiwe, his family and company; Zik Group of Companies were also the principal shareholders of the ACB.

The report showed that the ACB loaned £163,000 to the Zik Group of Companies at a lower interest rate and over an extended period. The company did not have to repay the loans until 1971. The failure of Azikiwe to return the money on time made the ACB become a distressed bank and in 1952, there were not granted a license of operation. According to a colonial government official, “Were a UK minister to be involved in a series of transactions the result of which public funds were used to support an otherwise shaky institution in which he was directly interested, he would be forced to leave public life” (Okonkwo, 2007). However, the colonial government did not prosecute Azikiwe and correspondence showed the colonial government preferred to support the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC) because they saw it as the only party organized on the unity of Nigeria. They felt that they had to protect the national interest of the country and this meant Azikiwe had to continue as the leader of the NCNC (Okonkwo, 2007; Sklar, 2004: 186).

### The Okigbo panel

The Okigbo panel was set up to investigate military Heads of State, General Babangida and General Sani Abacha; and the former governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria, Abdulkadi Ahmed. All three accused persons were indicted by the 1994 Okigbo Panel Report on the Reorganization and Reform of the Central Bank of Nigeria. They were indicted for mismanaging \$12.4 billion gotten from the oil boom between 1988 and 1994. A summary of the report submitted to the Federal Government revealed that Babangida and top officials of the Central Bank of Nigeria wasted monies on shady projects (Okigbo Panel Report, 1994; Anazodo, Okoye, & Chukwuemeka, 2012; Ijewereme & Dunmade, 2014).

Babangida sanctioned the dedication of crude oil of 65,000 barrels per day (bpd) for the financing of projects like the Ajaokuta Iron & Steel, Itakpe Iron Mining, and Shiroro Hydro-electric. In 1994 the quantity was increased to 150,000 bpd, a Stabilization Account and a Special Account for Mining Rights and Signature Bonus were opened. \$12.4 billion was deposited in these accounts from 1988 to June 1994. By 30<sup>th</sup> June 1994 it was only \$206 million that remained in the accounts (Executive Summary of Okigbo Panel Report, 1994, item 0.38). The Okigbo panel investigations on the accounts showed the money was used for things other than its intended purpose. Ogbeidi (2012) summarized the contents of the report thus:

The Okigbo Panel's appraisal of the operations of these accounts indicated that the use of the Dedication Account was stretched far beyond its original scope just as the utilization of the Stabilization Account completely undermined its fiscal objectives. It was further observed that the list of projects to be serviced from the Dedication and other Special Accounts did indeed contain some projects of importance

to the rest of the economy, although there were many large projects of doubtful viability and many more of clearly misplaced priority. Better described, the Dedication and Special Accounts became a parallel budget for the Presidency. Decisions regarding what expenditure items to finance out of these dedicated accounts were the exclusive preserve of the President, depending on the pressures brought to bear on him by the sponsors of the items. (p. 12).

It is important to note that till date the report of the panel has not been officially released by the Federal Government. Ogbeidi (2012) argues that the reason for this is that the report shined a light on the shady activities of many prominent Nigerians. Contents from the report was published by a national newspaper that kept the identity of their source hidden. The act of sweeping this report under the rug has encouraged leaders to continue their corrupt acts with impunity.

#### The Joshua Dariye Trial

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of January 2004, during a search at “127 Chiltern House, Portland St, London SE17, in connection with a suspected case of theft of computer equipment via internet purchase, officers of the UK Metropolitan Police arrested Christopher Mekwunye, who was in possession of a briefcase containing £11,560” (EFCC Alert, 2018). Under interrogation, he revealed the money was owned by Joshua Dariye, then Governor of Plateau State, who told him to deposit the money at the Barclays Bank account in London. Dariye was summarily arrested, questioned and granted bail. He jumped bail and left for Nigeria, the EFCC “received a petition through the Office of the Attorney General of the Federation, AGF, in which the UK Met Police asked for assistance to probe some companies linked to Dariye for alleged money laundering activities” (EFCC Alert, 2018).

The investigation revealed that Dariye, who was Governor of Plateau State from 1999-2000 was guilty of 15 out of the 23 count criminal charges that the EFCC filed against him. Dariye pleaded to the court to have mercy on him as he was just a victim of circumstance. The courts found evidence that showed that he misappropriated funds and breached the public trust and the oath of his office. He blamed the pervasive corruption in the country for his predicament (EFCC Alert, 2018; Nnochiri, 2018).

Rotimi Jacobs, the EFCC lawyer begged the court to impose the maximum punishment on Dariye, accusing him of showing no remorse for his actions. Jacobs is quoted as saying;

My lord should consider the conduct of the defendant who has stalled his trial since June 2007. Is he remorseful about what he has done? He is not! He has not shown any remorse. He still believes that he has not done anything wrong. The prisons are congested with the poor and those that cannot afford their daily meal, but the big men are not there! (Rotimi Jacobs as cited in Nnochiri, 2018).

Jacobs pleaded with the court to give a sentence that would serve as deterrent to public officials. The case had dragged on from 2004 to 2018. In the end, the defendant was sentenced to two years in prison for misappropriation charges and 14 years for breach of trust.

### **Causes of Corruption in Nigeria**

Chinua Achebe was resounding in his condemnation of Nigerian leaders; he laid all the problems of the country at their feet:

...the trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership. There is nothing wrong with the Nigerian land or climate or



water or air or anything else. The Nigerian problem is the unwillingness or inability of its leaders to rise to the responsibility, to the challenge of personal example which are the hallmarks of true leadership" (Achebe, 1983, p. 22).

Consequently, the venal nature of the people who have managed to find themselves in positions of power in the country is one of the leading problems facing Nigeria. As shown in previous sections, before the entry of colonialism and imperialism in Nigeria, vices such as corruption was minimal if not inexistent. Ngamen (2016) opines that the African traditional religious belief system was a strong force that prevented people from doing anything wrong because the repercussions were brutal. Claude Ake, a prolific writer from Nigeria explained perfectly how colonialism caused corruption:

...the colonial state by virtue of its violent and arbitrary nature which it used to subjugate the colonial territory, could neither appreciate nor incorporate the captives' cultures, policy and experience into the emergent state system. In the process the state became estranged from society and came to be regarded as an alien force by the people who later discovered a safe haven in their community realm where they are not only recognized and appreciated but their basic needs are catered for, where they feel obliged to contribute their human and material resources freely for the community development. (Ake, 1993, Cited in Osah et al. 2014).

Colonialism also brought about the coming of different ethnic groups with varied value systems together, this was not of benefit to Nigeria and is still causing a problem today. For instance, there are many ethnic groups that are different from each

other. When an official is put in a position of power, he only looks for ways to benefit his ethnicity even if it is at the expense of others. We have had Presidents who built infrastructure in their states or only appointed officials from their ethnic group. The “seed of corruption was sown by the colonial masters by dividing the nation along regional lines before independence, thus inculcating in the psyche of modern Nigerians regional and tribal consciousness” (Ngamen, 2016, p. 8). To Ngamen (2016), the British Government ensured that Nigeria would never have a spirit of Nationalism that is found in other developed societies. Nigerians would identify with their tribes and ethnic group firstly before they identify as Nigerians. This has made it quite impossible for Nigerians to be objective in their assessing of the political leadership since 1960.

De Sardan describes Africa as the most “social capital”-rich continent in the world, but this “strength of weak ties” (Granovetter, 1973) also incorporates each person in a system of almost general obligation of mutual assistance. This is underpinned by the increased monetization of the public and the private interpersonal realm, as well as a social morality that is based on other people’s opinion as opposed to an individual’s conscience. The latter clearly belong to the cognitive and normative pillars that increase conformity to a common standard” (Van den Bersselaar & Decker, 2011, p. 743).

De Sardan (1999) argues that corruption is a result of the institutional dissonance between domestic informal institutions and imported formal institutions. Corruption became a bridge used to navigate the gap between the two incompatible systems. The colonial government was not corrupt by definition, but its administration was different from the pre-existing Nigerian way of doing things and this resulted into “different normative and cognitive standards of behavior. For example, to encourage

chiefs to coerce a percentage of their population to work as forced laborers on road clearing and railway construction made perfect sense in the colonial mindset, as a way to make inhabitants contribute to the development of their country. However, it translated as simple abuse of authority on the local level, where it significantly diverged from people's expectations, both in terms of the role of authority and the processes by which it was imposed." (Van den Bersselaar & Decker, 2011, pp. 743-744).

The political system of the country with a mix of military and democratic leaders also caused corruption. During the military rule, corruption became more pronounced and the official looting of the treasury of the country took place. In 1975, the Murtala/Obasanjo military regime retired civil servants before their retirement age, this caused an increase in looting, as civil servants that were not retired believed their jobs were not secure and decided secure their future through looting (Osah et al., 2014). When speaking about corruption during the military rule Wole Iyaniwura (2014) said:

Military rule by nature is characterized with arbitrariness. By virtue of the fact that they are not accountable to anybody or representatives such as parliament or National Assembly makes them vulnerable to all sorts of abuses. The consequence of which is corruption. Corruption flourishes in a situation of unaccountability and is exacerbated by absolute discretion. Corruption grows like cancer and pushes whatever limits there may be if there are no limits and controls. A corrupt regime is the one most likely to abuse human rights in order to repress the accountability and transparency which would reveal the dishonesty of the culprits. These appear to be the fate of Nigeria which have had to

be under one form of military administration or the other for almost 29 years out of 39 years of political independence (p. 4).

The military regimes supposedly took over power because they wanted to combat corruption. However, we are still waiting for foreign governments to return some of the monies that was siphoned abroad during their rule. Weak governments and get-rich-quick syndrome in Nigeria causes corruption. Everyone wants to take their part of the “national cake.” Pressure from family members and loyalty to one’s ethnic group as well as apathetic attitude of law enforcement agencies promote corrupt activities. Punishment has to be certain and swift for it to have any chance of dissuading people to commit crimes. Officials believe they can get away with anything and they are most times proven true. This influences new officials to also join their cronies in the bad acts.

### **Consequences of corruption in Nigeria**

Corruption has affected the political and economic wellbeing of Nigerians both home and abroad. A notable impact of corruption is how it distorts governmental expenditure. Funds meant for the provision of services like roads, housing and education for the populace diverted to projects which have little or no impact on the personal economy of the average citizen. The government budget is mostly spent on projects like stadiums and airports because these kinds of contracts are easy to inflate and makes fraud easier. Projects are made unnecessarily complex to justify the huge amounts on the budget, making it possible for the money to find its way into private pockets. Poverty keeps on growing and unemployment is high. Nepotism and tribalism are the order of the day; mediocrity is lauded over intelligence and skill. You have to have connections to high places to achieve anything (Ogbeidi, 2012).

The healthcare and education system are on the brink of collapse. The amounts spent by Nigerians on getting quality healthcare and education abroad is just ridiculous. Even the president goes to the United Kingdom for treatments and none of his children are schooled in the country. If the president of the country does not have confidence in the institutions, what is the average man or woman supposed to do? The lack of government expenditure and corruption in the health sector has caused the loss of lives, with counterfeit and substandard drugs finding their way to unknowing consumers (Ogbeidi, 2012).

One of the most disheartening consequence of corruption is that Nigeria has consistently failed to achieve its potential. We are the “Giant of Africa”, been referred to as one of the world’s fastest growing economy but this does not affect the lives of the people. As of January 2018, Nigerians were the most educated group in the United States and Nigerian Americans have a median household income that is higher than the average American household (Smith, 2015; Casimir, 2018). This only shows how much potential the country holds.

Corruption is very visible as you walk past any police checkpoint or meet any staff of the electricity distribution company in the community. Every stratum of society has been affected negatively, especially the economic growth and development. The footprints are the abundance of bad roads, epileptic power supply, and lack of potable water, failure of the health sector, inadequate housing and general lack of social amenities for the large population (Osah et al., 2014).

In his article “Corruption in Nigeria: A New Paradigm for Effective Control,” Victor Dike (2003) perfectly captures how corruption has impacted the country, it has led to "slow movement of files in offices, police extortion, tollgates and slow traffic on the highways, port congestion, queues at passport offices and gas stations, ghost

workers syndrome, election irregularities, among others.” In the post-colonial and post-independence era of Nigeria, corruption has increased the economic inequality, it has allowed a few individuals to amass enormous wealth for themselves and their family and significantly reduced the standard of living.

The ability for the government to create and execute policies, especially the ones driven towards poverty alleviation programmes is greatly limited. Ironically, foreign aids sent to the country, to help the people do not reach the people in need. The officials in control of the aids appropriate it for their personal use. Development aid “is also captured by corruption and misdirected to the bank account of individuals or unproductive projects; ... reliefs targeted at the Internally Displaced Persons which were found in the bank accounts of non-governmental organizations” (Ogunmupe, 2016).

Corruption also causes brain drain (the emigration of highly trained or intelligent people from a country). Youths who are supposed to be the leaders of the future are emigrating out of the country in search for better opportunities. Young people feel that their chances of succeeding and meeting their goals legally are greatly limited and they would rather go to other countries. This further affects the workforce in the country as incompetent people hold positions of authority. “Many of these educated young people are either ‘brain drained’ to other lands in search of greener pastures or get diverted into various criminal ways of eking out a living like armed robbery, prostitution, drug peddling and trafficking and all manner of racketeering” (Osoba 1996, p. 384). There is no importance placed on intellectual capital and this has caused the mass exodus of Nigerians to other countries. The decision to carry out my research on the Nigerian population in Nova Scotia was in part, informed by this. There was a clamour by the Nigerian government for the diasporic community to be

more involved in the development of the country and this study of corruption from their perspective has provided useful insights that can create social change. It is also be beneficial for policy makers in creating an environment that is more conducive for the Nigerian population.

Corruption has drained the country of many resources that could have been used to better the lives of the people. According to Ribadu (2006) a one-time chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), “when you look across a nation and a continent riddled with poverty and weak institutions, and you think of what this money could have done only then can you truly understand the crime (and impact) of corruption, and the almost inhumane indifference that is required by those who wield it for personal gain.” Ultimately, corruption breaks the trust of citizens in the government of the day. When this loss of confidence happens, it affects the government’s ability to enforce the rule of law. When the leaders are corrupt, why are citizens held to higher standards? The value system is also weakened as people now have the view that being honest and hardworking does not pay. This is why corruption is now a countrywide problem. In the words of Ihonvbere and Shaw (1998, p. 151):

Corruption has reduced the legitimacy of the state, eroded the credibility of political leaders, replaced merit and hard work with strong and complex patron-client relations, accentuated inefficiency, ineffectiveness and general disorder in the bureaucratic apparatuses and led to mismanagement, waste and, ultimately, economic crisis.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THEORY

Historically, theories that were used to explain crime largely focused on the idea that there was something in the makeup of a person that automatically makes them predisposed to crime. As a result, there was the belief that the psychological or biological makeup determines who is a criminal (Lilly, Cullen, & Ball, 2002). The emergence of the Chicago school (Cortese, 1995) started discussions about nature vs nurture; pondering whether or not a criminal is made or born. The Chicago school emphasized the impact environment has on criminal behavior. Robert K. Merton (1938) was one of the scholars that rejected this idea of the individual being the sole explanation for criminal behavior. Merton's article on *Social Structure and Anomie* and the Classical Strain Theory emerged from Emile Durkheim's Theory of Anomie.

Durkheim believed that technological advancement resulting from the industrial revolution was changing the way people worked and related to one another in society. "Industrial work created a disjointing of interconnectedness among members of society. This disjointing decreased restraints on individuals, causing them to feel less connected to, and less responsible toward, one another" (Durkheim as cited in Bergsma, 2015 p. 33). There was a weakening of barriers that prevented people from committing crimes. Anomie theory argued that the weakening of bonds between people in society caused a person *strain* and thereby increased delinquent behavior in that individual (Durkheim, Spaulding, & Simpson, 2010).

Durkheim defined the term *anomie* as the perceived relationship between culturally desired goals and one's ability to achieve those goals through socially accepted means. Merton later improved on Durkheim's work by rejecting the idea of the individual as a person without the capacity to act independently and to make their



own choices. Improving on this theory further, Quinney (2000) argues that there is an interaction between individual and societal dynamics, where he states, the “question of what precedes crime is far more significant to our understanding than the act of crime itself. Crime is the reflection of something large and deeper” (p. 21). As a result, other versions of Strain Theory began to focus on the experiences that arose in a person’s life before they committed the crime. Robert Agnew’s General Strain Theory is one of these versions.

I am using this theory because the rising numbers of corruption incidences indicates that there is a need for an overhaul of the system. The literature review shows that strain is linked to corruption which is why General Strain Theory (GST) is useful in providing a foundation to answer the research question; what is the effect of the history of Nigeria in institutionalizing corruption? General Strain Theory argues that certain strains can lead to negative responses, which can further lead to delinquent behaviour arguably like corruption. General Strain Theory is based on both the individual and society; and is useful for explaining why two people in the same society can react in different ways to a particular type of strain. Merton (1938), expanded on the ideas of Classical Strain theory by suggesting that strain was caused by the disconnection between a person’s ability to meet socially determined goals and the means to achieve these goals.

Agnew’s GST states that “strain originates from three categorical perspectives: (a) the failure to achieve positively valued goals; (b) the removal of positive stimuli; and (c) the introduction of negative stimuli, leading to negative emotional responses” (Agnew, as cited in Bergsma, 2015, p.3). “From this social psychological perspective, criminal behaviour is intended to be viewed as a corrective

or subjective response to the perceived injury or slight experienced by the individual in these types of social interactions” (Polizzi, 2011, p. 1052).

These 3 categories produce an environment where; (a) there is low social control; (b) there are beliefs favourable to crime; (c) the benefits of crime are higher than the cost; (d) there is low conventional social support. General Strain Theory posits that the possibility of negative emotions such as frustration, anger, depression and hopelessness are as a result of strain (Agnew, 2001) and “creat[ing] pressure for corrective action, [with] crime is one possible response” (Agnew, 2001, p. 319). Agnew further gives insight on the different types of strain which can influence crime; he argues that there is both an objective and a subjective strain. Objective strains are “events or conditions that are disliked by most members of a given group” (Agnew, 2001, p. 320), while subjective strains are “events or conditions that are disliked by the people who are experiencing (or have experienced) them” (Agnew, 2001, p. 321). Subjective strains are influenced by the duration, frequency and severity of the strain.

To Agnew not all strains lead to crime, for crime to occur certain conditions must be met. The strain must (a) be seen as being high in magnitude or significance; (b) be seen as unjust; (c) be associated with low social control; (d) create an incentive for crime (Agnew, 2001, p. 343). Strain theory explains how the pressures of society (in this case colonialism and military rule) can exert pressure on the citizens and thus cause them to engage in illegal acts. When Strains are perceived to be high and unfair it can cause a negative response and crime is one of the tools that might be used as a way to cope. Those under this pressure from the society are therefore conditioned to engage in corrupt behaviors. Looking over the history of corruption in Nigeria we can see that the stress from different events (such as, military intervention in politics)

made people involve themselves in wrong acts like bribery, misappropriation of funds, and looting to name just a few (Bergsma, 2015). In the context of corruption in Nigeria, some of the strains which are likely to lead to crime could include the failure to achieve goals (Agnew, 2001, p. 343) due to gross economic inequality, prejudice like nepotism and tribalism, adverse negative events like loss of employment, breakdown of the rule of law or the various bloody coups that took place in the country.

Nigerian society has a value system that places importance on wealth, with the tendency to turn a blind eye to wrong behaviour if the person is wealthy or powerful. The pressure from an official's family to send money or to cater to them can lead to corrupt activities. "In Nigeria, the society does not accept any reason as good enough for an employed graduate not to have a good car and a good visiting home. Political leaders, contractors, managers in a public sector, and so on have no acceptable reason to the society for not living in affluence, donating much money at launchings" (Azelama cited in Ijewereme, 2012). This pressure is there even when the person does not have a good job, catering to not only your nuclear family but also your extended family is important. There is a tendency to place emphasis on individual goal attainment without regard for how people can achieve them; wealth accumulation becomes the top goal. There is a great disconnect between the goals of the society and means of achieving them. How is a person supposed to achieve his/her goals when the means to achieve the goals have been corrupted? This results in people looking for other ways to attain such goals by engaging in corrupt activities. There is a cyclical relationship between the strains that caused corruption pre-independence and why it is still happening in Nigeria today. The strains that were present pre-independence was as a result of the imbalance and inequality that was occurring at that time which

caused corruption. Now corruption is a strain in and of itself, it has made employment difficult and due process to be abandoned. In other societies it is a given that when you graduate with good grades and work hard your reward would be commensurate to the effort you put in. This is not the case in Nigeria, the people you know and who you are connected to is more important. There are people who are either unemployed or under-employed because they do not have access to those in power. This creates a situation where the means to achieve goals has been twisted and one has to look for other ways to achieve them.

Failure to achieve positive stimuli includes an individual's ability to attain goals that members of the society strive to get. Agnew posits that this is money, status, autonomy and respect. This is typical of the Nigerian society where even with the cultural differences in the ethnic groups, the values that all the ethnicities place importance on is; money, status, autonomy and respect. According to Agnew (1992), the "strain theory focuses explicitly on negative relationships with others: relationships in which the individual is not treated how he or she wants to be treated. GST has typically focused on relationships in which others prevent the individual from achieving positively valued goals". Agnew (1992) argued that "this negative affect creates pressure for corrective action and may lead adolescents to; (a) make use of illegitimate channels of goal achievement; (b) attack or escape from the source of their adversity; and/or (c) manage their negative affect through the use of illicit drugs" (p. 49).

All the eras (colonial, military and democratic) that I discuss in my literature review had the similarity of negative events/experiences where things were not working the way they should normally. The mix between colonial culture and pre-existing "Nigerian" culture is contradictory and leads to strain in the Nigerian society

as the categories propounded by Agnew are present. Pre-colonial Nigeria was very communal while the British way of life was individualistic. The fight for nationalism was a clear depiction of Agnew's failure to achieve positively valued stimuli "African politicians had discovered corruption as a weapon. Formerly used by outgoing colonial governments against inopportune nationalists, by the 1970s military coups were justified as being the displacement of "corrupt democratic governments." (Van den Bersselaar & Decker, 2011, p. 749).

In the case of loss of positively valued stimuli, an example can be found in the broken relationships between the traditional leaders and the masses that occurred in the colonial era due to the indirect rule that was used in the administration of the country. In the past, traditional leaders were trusted by citizens as they put the desires of their people before any other thing. There were extreme cases in pre-colonial Nigeria where a king would commit suicide when his people lost faith in him. The introduction of warrant chiefs caused problems in Nigeria, the chiefs were more beholden to the colonial masters than to the people they were supposed to represent. Similarly, examples of presentation of negative stimuli encompass negative experiences of taxes, and adverse relations with the chiefs who promoted the wishes of the British leaders as against the wishes of their own people (Ogunmupe, 2016).

Strain theory assumes that most individuals have similar aspirations as determined by societal norms and values, but unfortunately enough, not everyone is exposed to the same set of opportunities or abilities. When individuals fail to meet society's expectations through the approved means such as hard work, they may attempt to achieve success through other means and in this case through engaging in corrupt activities. General strain theory helps to understand that strain is not specifically tied to economic status. Individuals from all different social classes can

be involved in crime because they can experience negative emotions arising from strain. The theory explains this as an individuals' psychological reaction to what is happening in his/her environment (Agnew, 1992; Choi, 2013). So far in my review of existing literature, I have found no research that adequately uses GST to explain corruption in the public sector.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **METHODS**

For this study, qualitative research methods were employed. Qualitative research allows the researcher to “inductively and holistically understand human experience and constructed meanings in context-specific settings” (Patton 1990). This type of research enables one to engage in research aimed at understanding a social problem. Qualitative researchers assume an instinctual position which allows them to be steadily aware of their “self” as they employ a methodical enquiry directed at bringing about a better understanding of the phenomenon under study (Ahammed, 2015).

The impetus for a qualitative researcher to embark on a topic of inquiry is often his/her interest, curiosity, direct experience of the phenomena, values, philosophical stances, tacit theories etc. as they seek to explore, describe and explain the phenomena. Such a positioning allows the researcher to be more conscious of the dialectic relationship between theory, practice, research questions and personal experience...

(Ahammed, 2015, p 349).

Quantitative research is flexible and dynamic, which means there are no rigid parameters and the possibility of changing plans in response to occurrences during the data collection. The study was exploratory in nature and the outcome of the fieldwork

could not be assumed prior. Hence, the method of enquiry best fitting for this study was qualitative research methods. Qualitative methods are useful in studying the experiences of people, it offers a description of their perception and how they interpret the world around them (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Munroe-Chandler, 2005). This research method enables the reader to find meaning in the context of peoples' lived experiences.

Giving participants the opportunity to expatiate and describe as much as they deem fit, allows readers opportunity to critically analyse the data and have a wholesome understanding of a participant's perception (Holloway & Wheeler, 2002). This meaning is derived not only from the words but on the silences, the emotions behind the words and how the response is structured.

In the study, I was interested in understanding the perceptions of the Nigerian diaspora about the culture and normalization of corruption in Nigeria. This method was chosen because though there are many studies on corruption in Nigeria, there is no research from the perspective of Nigerians in the diaspora. The objective of the study was to understand the thoughts of the diaspora population. Qualitative research, according to Pitney & Parker (2009, p. 5-7),

Focuses on people; uses textual data; aims at discovering and exploring the experiences of participants in a natural setting; interprets data with inductive reasoning; is systematic yet flexible; uses a small sample size to gain insight; provides rich, detailed descriptions so that readers can understand the participant's experiences and the meaning they assign to their situations and environments. It also identifies data patterns by helping discover information about the participant's perceptions of

their experiences that reveals commonalities and builds theories as researchers interpret the data.

### **Participant Selection**

The participants in this study were selected through a mix of convenience sampling and a snowball sampling technique. Convenience sampling was used to select respondents for the study through a set of prequalification criteria and on first-come-first-served basis till the required number of respondents was achieved. Snowball sampling technique was used to identify the participants in the study due to subject of research and target population. Using the Snowball technique provided opportunity for one participant to introduce another Nigerian citizens who had emigrated, and the chain continued till the total participants were selected. The use of snowball sampling in this study was accidental. At the beginning of the research the goal was to use only convenience sampling. Posters (Appendix A) were sent to the Association of Nigerians in Nova Scotia (ANNS) to disseminate to their members, interested participants contacted the researcher, to communicate their interest to be interviewed. These participants told their friends about the study who contacted me and so it went on.

The only recruitment criteria for the participants apart from them being Nigerians and living in Nova Scotia was that they had to have migrated to Nova Scotia. I wanted participants that understood what it was to live in Nigeria. It is this two-sided vantage point that was beneficial for this study.

### **Sample Size**

The sample in this study was made up of 10 Nigerians living in Nova Scotia. Patton (2002) argues that in qualitative research there are no rules of sample size. He asserts that the number of participants in a research study is dependent on what the



researcher wants to find out, the objective of the study and what can be undertaken with the time and resources that are available. The size of a sample does not influence the quality of a study (Holloway & Wheeler, 2002). Pitney and Parker (2002) stipulate that the guiding principle should be "saturation of data and redundancy of data" (p.244), this means that when it gets to a point that the participants are saying the same thing and there is no new information then there is no need for more participants.

Qualitative research most often uses a sample size that are small enough to allow participants to have a unique voice within the study and for a critical analysis of each case to be carried out. For this reason, qualitative researchers use a guideline of 3-16 participants for a study (Smith, Flowers & Larkin 2009). This number allows a lens for generalities while also preventing an overload of data. It also enables each participant within the sample to have an identity (Robinson & Smith, 2010). In this study, the sample size of 10 was enough to fulfill the objectives of the study, gain insights and to answer the research questions which formed the foundation of the research.

### **Ethical Considerations**

Permission to carry out this study was granted by the Saint Mary's University Research Ethics Board (see Appendix C). Participants were informed of their rights within the study – ability to withdraw from the study at any time before the study was published without penalty. A signed Informed Consent form was gotten from each participant after they were apprised of the objective of the study, the format of interview and other pertinent information. Participants were given the chance to ask questions so everything could be clear. All participants that were involved in this study did so voluntarily, there was no incentive.

All interviews were carried out at a place of the participants choosing, eight took place at the Saint Mary's University Library and two took place at the Halifax Central Library. Participants were pre-informed that the interview would be audio recorded and had the right to refuse to be interviewed or to stop the interview at any time. The participants were given control of the audio recorder so they could stop and start the recording at any time. The benefit of this was that it connected the participants to the researcher and made them understand that they had the power of dictating what part of the conversation went into the final product of this project. When participants were not sure of their safety or were about to disclose very personal information that they did not want to reveal to the world they stopped the recording.

I informed the participants that even though there were no direct personal benefits from the study, findings could result in new knowledge about corruption in Nigeria. Furthermore, I made all participants aware that there were no anticipated risks from participating in the study. All necessary care was taken to protect the identities and confidentiality of the participants, they were/are each represented by aliases in the study.

### **Data Collection**

Semi-structured interview is useful in discovering important parts of human behaviour, it one of the most effective and beneficial means of getting information. This type of interviewing is popular because it is flexible (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). Because it is based on the interaction between participant and researcher, it allows for the opportunity to adjust the structure and format of questions and questioning, eliciting the insightful response from the participants. The major benefit

of this type of interviewing is that the participant answers the questions in their own way. This is especially valuable when studying perceptions.

The semi-structured interview involves prepared questioning guided by identified themes in a consistent and systematic manner interposed with probes designed to elicit more elaborate responses. Thus, the focus is on the interview guide incorporating a series of broad themes to be covered during the interview to help direct the conversation toward the topics and issues about which the interviewers want to learn. Generally, interview guides vary from highly scripted to relatively loose. However, the guides all serve the same purpose, which is to ensure the same thematic approach is applied during the interview. (Qu & Dumay, 2011, p. 246).

Semi-structured interviews were used as the method to collect data, as it enables the researcher collect distinct information which is of great import in studying the social problem that is corruption. As the world is becoming more globalized and shrinking it is important for societies/countries to utilize the knowledge of its diaspora population as they bring something unique into the topic of discussion.

The research questions of this study were used as a guide in generating interview questions. Qu and Dumay (2011) asserts that semi-structured interviews correspond with a localist perspective where the interview is an opportunity “to explore the meaning of the research topic for the respondent and a site to be examined for the construction of a situated account” (p. 241). Here the participants are involved in answering the research questions of the study through “complex interpersonal interactions” (p. 241), while I was tasked with producing an account that places importance on the social contexts in which the account was told.

After the Saint Mary's University Certificate of Research Ethics Clearance was granted recruitment began. Recruitment of the participants was done by disseminating posters of the study to the Association of Nigerians in Nova Scotia (ANNS), interested participants contacted the researcher to express their willingness to be part of the study. Interviews with the 10 participants were conducted between November and December 2018. The duration of the interviews ranged from 30 minutes to 2 and a half hours.

Each participant was given the interview questions prior to the start of interview. I asked the questions given to the participants beforehand and some follow up questions when it was needed in order to get a better understanding and prevent miscommunication. The interviews were transcribed and coded by me.

### **Data Analysis**

The data collected through the interviews was analyzed using a Thematic Analysis. Thematic Analysis is a method for “identifying, analyzing, and interpreting patterns of meaning (‘themes’) within qualitative data” (Clarke & Braun, 2017, p. 297). Themes provide a way to organize and report analytic observations, the aim of a Thematic Analysis is to use the research questions and objectives as a guide in identifying the key features of the data (Braun & Clark, 2006; Clark & Braun, 2017).

Thematic Analysis looks at the underlying messages in the data, it goes beyond the surface. It can be used as a constructionist method where we examine the ways meanings and experiences are the effects of a range of discourses in society (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The procedure of Thematic Analysis that was used in this study was recommended by Braun and Clarke (2006), it consists of six steps:

1. Familiarize yourself with your data.
2. Assign preliminary codes to your data in order to describe the content.

3. Search for patterns or themes in your codes across the different interviews.
4. Review themes.
5. Define and name themes.
6. Produce your report.

Firstly, the interviews were transcribed word for word and then I read it several times to ensure familiarity with the content. I took note of the ideas that I had when reading the transcripts. On the first read there were ideas that jumped out, while there were others that slowly came to the fore after going over the transcripts again. The objective of this first step is to immerse yourself completely with the data.

The second stage as recommended by Braun and Clarke (2006) was to generate codes. Codes were used to identify interesting parts of the data. According to Boyatzis (1998) they are the “the most basic segment, or element, of the raw data or information that can be assessed in a meaningful way regarding the phenomenon”. A code is a description of what was said in the interview, this step was to connect ideas to a unique code. It is the way data is sorted into groups. Codes are dependent on the kind of research that is being carried out, is it an exploratory study where the themes depend on the data or a deductive study where you are going into the data with specific themes in mind that you are looking to connect your data to.

In the third step, I categorized the codes into broader themes. This step involved going through the codes and grouping the ones that are similar or connected together under one overarching theme. Some of my codes fell under more than one theme, and I had codes that did not fall into any grouping, so I had to make them themes on their own, there were also codes that I left alone as they seemed repetitive and I did not want to abandon them.

In step 4, I reviewed the themes identified in the previous step. I read the data/codes under the themes to ensure it fit properly in that theme. Braun and Clarke (2006) advise that “data within themes should cohere together meaningfully, while there should be clear and identifiable distinctions between themes.” For themes that were too broad I split them into another whole new theme. The emphasis of this step is to fine tune the groupings, which involved going through the codes and themes until I felt that they were coherent and unique and there was nothing else that would add significance to the analysis. In step five, I named and defined “the essence that each theme is about” (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p. 92). The final step was to produce the report which is in the findings chapter of this study.

### **Limitations of the Methods**

In qualitative research the limitations of using convenience sampling is the inability to make generalization based on the findings due to the sample. Because of my sample size and its specificity, it is important for me to note that my research does not seek to generalize its findings. This means that carrying out this same study on another population might not have the same results. The aim was to provide an understanding of a unique population and the number of participants that partook in this study was enough to do that. I must also acknowledge that all my participants happened to be highly educated, all of them had more than one degree and two of the participants were in the process of getting their Doctorate degree at the time of the interviews. This is important to point out because it highlights the fact that most migrants are usually skilled with high level of education or more privileged than average Nigerians living in Nigeria. Hence, their views might not be a representative of the realities of corruption in Nigeria, due to international exposure and societal influences from their current country of residence.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### FINDINGS/RESULTS

The study was carried out to understand corruption from the viewpoint of the diaspora population, provide insights into its causes and origin, highlight key drivers of its perpetuation as well as proffer solutions to the menace. Essentially, these objectives were critically interrogated to provide a robust research finding and provide insights on the subject of study. In order to contextualize the findings, each major theme is further divided into sub-themes, with quotations from participants.

**i. Theme #1- Root causes of Corruption:** *“Greed, our lopsided geographical structure, federalism (and) lack of contentment”*

Greed, colonialism, successive military coups and governments, cultural demand placed on wealth accumulation, lack of faith in the machinery of state, dialectical contradictions between adoption of western ideals and holding on to long established norms/values, weak nationalism and absence of social security safety nets constituted some roots causes of corruption in Nigeria. It is important to unravel the depths and foundation of corruption in Nigeria because it serves as crystal ball which introduces the context within which these acts are carried out as well as propellers responsible for the negative impact of corruption in the society.

**Corruption seems to be deeply rooted in the social fabric of Nigeria, with a foundational element of greed.** Shope puts it succinctly:

*“The main cause of corruption is greed. You want to amass so much, you really do not care about the people you are trying to lead, the people you are trying to govern. It is all part of greed. Why would a*

*governor use the senate as his retirement ground? Getting salaries twice from the government”* (Interview, November 18, 2018).

While this greed does not occur in isolation, a participant is of the opinion that the socio-economic situation is responsible for such display of negative behaviour by public officials. For Dapo, if *“I can’t feed myself there is really nothing, I mean it would be hard for me to think of anything else”* (Interview, November 29, 2018). Poverty seems to blur the lines between right and wrong and it is considered a necessitating factor for corruption activities.

**Some other participants opined that it is necessary to understand the effects of colonialism on the political structure and system, which seems to be encouraging corruption.** Arif says, *“I think that the idea of giving power to the North”* is one of the causes of corruption. He believes that prior to the incursion of *“colonial masters”* into the geographical area of Nigeria *“we had an egalitarian society where everyone shared, and the cultural values were there”* (Interview, November 26, 2018). Unification of the diverse ethnic groups in the *“Northern and Southern Protectorate”* by *“Lord Lugard* (On January 1, 1914, Lord Frederick Lugard ‘created’ Nigeria)*”* caused a lot of distrust and drive for accumulation of resources by different groups. This has led to some perceived skewedness in *“revenue allocation up until today and political seats up until today.”*

**Successive military coups and the activities of military administration is an important factor to understanding the origin of corruption in Nigeria.** There is a connection between the number of *“military presidents we (have) had”* and the volume of *“money stolen”*, says a participant. *“When the military was in power, it was actually mainly political corruption”* (Chukwuma, interview, November 19,



2018). With corrupt practices occurring at the echelon of the military ruling council and “*we are still recovering Abacha’s money (loot) from 20 years ago, which is unbelievable.*” However, the vestiges from corrupt military governments have been transferred into Nigeria’s nascent democratic system of government and has dealt deathly blows on the welfare of its citizenry. This view is echoed by Kew (2006) who notes that “the giant was brought to its knees by [twenty years] of brutal and corrupt military rule, which left a legacy of executive dominance and political corruption in the hands of Nigeria’s so-called ‘godfathers’—powerful political bosses sitting atop vast patronage networks who view the government primarily through the lens of their own personal enrichment.”

**The role culture plays by placing a demand and importance on wealth accumulation cannot be overemphasized.** Shope says:

*“Our culture does not care how you get money, the culture only gives preferential treatment and limelight when you have money and they don’t care how you get the money so far you can throw a party and make everyone happy. So far you can give out money to people on social media (giveaways) or pop bottles of Rosé. They do not care how you make the money. It is just about material things. Our culture is very materialistic”.* (Shope, interview, November 18, 2018)

Individuals in the society are only accorded respect based on their economic and financial standing on the social ladder. For instance, “*nowadays, we see that there is an importance that is placed on wealth, on material things.*” The value system has suddenly been eroded and replaced with zero concern about “*how people get their money*”. Thus, citizens will only listen or “*follow you when they know that you have*

*money*” (Eke, interview, November 29, 2018). which breeds a leader-follower system based on materialism. People would only vote for the people that show wealth even if wealth was gotten by illegal means.

**The contradiction between pre-colonial cultural values and the adoption of the western world’s idea of government.** Most of the participants believe that there is disconnect between Nigerian cultural values and the way government is run. One major part of Nigerian culture is respect, and this sometimes hinders accountability, checks and balances. In some cases, you cannot question office holders that are elders because it would seem like disrespect. Dapo says it best *“in my culture, I am a Yoruba boy I would not question my dad, it is not that I should not question, it is just part of respect. We are brought up not to question a lot of things, to just obey. So, leaders are not really open to suggestions, if I am the leader, I believe that I am in charge, others opinion may not count. If I think to do this, that is what I would do. we also carry that into government.* Eniola tells us about what happened when students at a University in Osun state went on strike because faculty staff were not being paid. The Governor was addressing the Student Union body and one of the students asked the Governor a question and he refused to answer question because he felt the student had no right to question him. *“I am like that is what you are saying to the person, like instead of actually addressing the issue that was brought up you tell the person I won’t answer that question you are very rude, go and talk to your father like that. But that is the whole thing with our respect. We place so much emphasis on respect, you can’t question your leaders/elders, and this makes them not accountable to anyone* (Eniola, interview, December 2, 2018).

**Weak nationalism as a result of ethno-religious sentiments is an arbiter of corruption.** Eke says public office holders are either in it for their *“own personal*

*development*” or “*(for) his own people*” – ethnic or religious group (Interview, November 29, 2018). Chukwuma described it with a story:

*“So, I read news where the governor of Anambra state is catholic and he has everybody, almost everybody in his cabinet are Catholics and very few Anglicans, who are complaining. And the Anglicans are complaining, and I am just like (Laughs). It (has) actually happened before, the previous guy in that post was Anglican. The thing is that when they do this, they don’t actually do it like they want to do bad to the other set of people, they are just trying to be good to their own folks...”*

Cases like the above show that not only are there issues of “*tribalism*” and dissenting religious views, but there are intra-religious sentiments among sects of the same denomination or religious groups. There are also instances where “*some people would prefer to give jobs to their relatives and persons from their tribes, regardless of the expertise or qualifications*” (Bregha, interview, November 28, 2018) These accounts for the inefficiency, bloated cost of governance and nepotism experienced in public administration. Omoniyi opined that “*there are several nations in one false nation (Nigeria)*” (Interview, November 28, 2018). Hence, there is no obligation to uphold the dignity of the country and weigh the opportunity cost on infrastructural development. Thus, “*when a government official takes money, it doesn’t feel like they are taking money from anybody*”. Everyone sees the money as a “*national cake*” which ought to be shared, but there is no modality to apportioning it equally, non-promotion of a national agenda.

Weak nationalism and cultural values are directly linked to the inability to have a **separation between public and private**. In the country the lines are blurred between what is public and what is private. The children and families of public office holders sometimes see the office as their birth right. In precolonial times this was not as much of a problem because of the hereditary nature of governing. In the present time with bureaucracy it creates a system that is broken “*we have not successfully separated the home from the office. Maybe the trouble is that we are trying to force ourselves into this shape, how about a system that more seamlessly adopts our own culture and not that of the British*” (Omoniyi, interview, November 28, 2018). This is what occurs and creates avenues for nepotism and tribalism as forms of corruption to thrive. Daramola opines that people believe that “*with your uncle in power probably as a minister you by default think you are assured of a position whether in the ministry or somewhere, whether you are qualified or not or you are the best candidate for the job. It is just... you expect it*” (Interview, November 19, 2018).

**The absence of social security/safety nets for citizens is an enabler of corruption in Nigeria.** There is the fear of the unknown and most citizens are just one disease or mishap away from poverty. Arif believes that if an individual has “*enough money to feed my children*”, there would not be corruption. But in a system, where employers (public or private) defaults consistently in paying “*my salary and I know that pension is not coming at the end of my job*”; individuals will look for “*ways to secure the lives of (their) children.*” Arif also alludes to the non-payment of his mother’s pensions “*for the past 3 years*”, with this situation “*if she were to be a corrupt person wouldn’t I be someone richer*” and wouldn’t need to be waiting upon pension administrators and government regulator to resolve these issues. Uncertainties

about the future life after current office or position occupied makes individuals to think up corrupt ways of surviving.

These revelations by the respondents is further validated by Linus (2016), he found out that the continued perpetuation of corruption in Nigeria is influenced by various factors such as “poverty, greed, poor reward system to the collapse of the core moral values of the society”. Also, Ayoola (2007) attributed the root causes of corruption in Nigeria to vices like “greed, nepotism, lack of positive values, societal pressures, excessive materialism and weak law enforcement mechanisms” amongst others.

The findings of this study is supported by the position of General Strain Theory in which some individuals seek to attain a position of material affluence by all means possible which leads to their engagement in corrupt practices. This includes wanting to benefit their kith and kin by taking advantage of positions of authority to perpetuate corrupt activities. This theory is not only applicable to poor people, people from well-to-do backgrounds also experience strain which is imbued in our culture. The culture of celebrating only those who have attained and sustained material affluence. This leads to greed and the penchant to amass more and more wealth.

**ii. Theme #2- Consequences of Corruption:** *“Poverty, Illiteracy, lack of education, lack of faith, hunger, unemployment”*

Creation of irregular social class, widening poverty gap, infrastructural deficit, lack of faith in the machinery of state and law enforcement agencies as well as unwillingness of diasporas to return and massive exodus of citizens are manifest and latent consequences of corruption. It is important to note that apart from the physical or economic impact (in terms of infrastructure decay and deficit) with regards to poverty

and huge national debts, unintended consequences include the depletion of the middle class due to massive migration. This social class usually constitute majority of the skilled workforce, possessing knowledge that ought to add value to the nation's economy, but this is transferred to other developed to other countries as a result of forced economic migration.

**The manifest consequences of corruption are the creation of irregular social class structure, widening gap of poverty and infrastructural deficit.** Arif thinks *“the impact of corruption...is so real”* and *“it (has) resulted into a kind of a higher class, a lower class and middle-class system.”* This system has been widening the gap between the rich and poor accompanied by the deficiency in basic amenities and infrastructure. Omoniyi *“lost a family member”* and members of her *“extended family who did not have the same access to education”* because they attended public school have become disadvantaged *“because the corrupt government does not properly fund public schools”*. Hence, many have become economically disadvantaged, lacking access to basic healthcare service and infrastructure due to corruption perpetrated by officials.

**Lack of faith and disappointment in the machinery of state and law enforcement agencies.** When law enforcement agencies such as the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) apprehend corrupt officials, *“I can't really rate them because I am very skeptical about them”*, because *“I always feel that EFCC cannot be totally corruption free”*, says Eke. There is a general distrust in the system with persons believing that there is no reward for good behaviour and that incentives exist for bad behaviour i.e. *“stealing pays more than being honest and being truthful”* just as *“everybody tends to feel like the end justifies the means”* while *“people would do the right thing and...would be the one to answer for the bad that they called out”*

(Bregha, interview, November 28, 2018). Eniola has become hopeless about the development of Nigeria and doesn't "*think it is going to get better anytime soon*" because we are recycling the "*same set of leaders.*". The participants communicated that they do not believe in the state anymore, the government has disappointed them countless times and the ones that are supposed to protect them are the ones harming them. This was the response I got from Chukwuma when I asked for instances of corruption:

*Do I remember? (loud laugh) it is just too much that is why I repeated the question. It is so much that is why when you said have, I heard, I am like am I supposed to think of it. It is too much. The one I read recently is the Governor of Kano who was caught on camera very clearly taking bribe, lots of money and still he was even given award recently for the best governor. I read it on the news yesterday and I was like wow this country is just upside down. and he was not even removed from seat, nothing. I don't know which (official) is under EFCC watch and which isn't. There are lot of instances, I don't really read all this news specifically especially when I see stuff like that, I tend to skip it, I don't like reading them. But when you go back home you see bad roads and you know that money was actually budgeted for those things and nobody actually does them.... stuffs like that happen every time. Things are just too much.*

**Unwillingness of migrants in diaspora to return and massive exodus of persons living in the country.** This unwillingness is a latent consequence of corruption leaving many wondering "*why should I go back to Nigeria? I cannot go back to have a stressful life*" (Eke, interview, November 29, 2018). There seems to be a dying sense of

connection or affiliation to their place of birth. Shope *“would love to move back”* but says *“it is hard for you to develop any initiative, considering the terrible state of almost everything in the country”*. The perception of the Nigerian life and living in Nigeria makes *“going back to Nigeria to set up an initiative”* seem like a herculean task or a tortuous journey where *“you would be hitting roadblocks.”* Dapo has observed the quest by a mass of the populace to *“leave the country”* because of poor infrastructure and irregularity in payment of salaries/pensions. He says, *“if corruption was not there, corruption in terms of you thinking of your pockets when you are in government...if things are done right then people would stay.”* Participants feel that their country and government has betrayed them and believe there is no end in sight.

According to Lipset and Lenz (2000), corruption negatively affects the social, economic and political development of a country. Corruption affects investors' confidence in an economy, leads to investment risks and reduced level of investments which stunts economic growth and perpetuates national poverty. Urien (2012) opined that corruption creates and perpetuates poverty, making it difficult for economically disadvantaged people to survive and grow. Corruption *“engenders political instability, breakdown of law and order, brain drain, and inefficient public service”*. Here institutionalized corruption has caused people strain thereby leading to negative coping mechanisms of lack of faith in the nation and its government, disrespect of national symbols, social vices like alcoholism and hooliganism and inefficient public service.

**iii. Theme #3- Limitations to Anti-corruption Efforts:** *“we have a society that seems to reward corruption”*

Non-neutrality of anti-corruption agencies, public perception of the use of anti-corruption agencies for the purpose of witch-hunting, lack of political willingness and public orientation on the opportunity cost of corruption, structure and composition of



governance as well negative reinforcement for whistle blowing are amongst the factors limiting the efforts garnered towards defeating corruption in Nigeria. These issues are important to the study because a cursory look into the deficient policy measures undertaken by the government and its agencies show that there is a lacuna in anti-corruption efforts.

Different efforts have been made by past administrations to curb the spate of corruption in Nigeria. Anti-corruption agencies such as: Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) have been created for the purpose of investigating and prosecuting corrupt practices by public officials and private individuals. **However, the sincerity and non-neutrality of these agencies has made their work suspect in the eye of the public.** Femi describes it here:

*Well for the ICPC and EFCC, they are known to be a tool in the hands of the political class to fight their opposition so from time to time they do. The garment that they wear changes, when a new government is in power. The new government uses them to fight their opposition out* (Femi, interview, November 16, 2018).

The participants of this study perceive the agencies to be biased. There seems to be some public distrust and lack of faith in the activities of anti-corruption agencies. Omoniyi says; *“I just don’t have faith in any of that. I don’t think it is real, I think the people that they...the people that they arrest/indict are people who don’t have enough power.”* Hence, every move is seen by members of the Civil Society as a ploy to shutdown opposition members or critics of the government. This has made the agencies to be handicapped and financially incapacitated because members of certain political

groups believe increasing the funds allocated to these agencies would be reinforcing bad behaviour - biased and non-neutral anti-corruption bodies.

**This negative perception is nevertheless founded on the history of witch-hunting by the Executive arm of government from time immemorial.** At inception, EFCC and ICPC seemed to deviate from its fundamental purpose and became an appendage of the government for pursuing an ulterior agenda. Shope claims that *“EFCC was created as a tool to go against the enemies of Ribadu (then Head of the Agency) that were not on his side.”* Thus, in subsequent years of operation a culture of witch-hunting and *“scape-goating”* of dissenting voices evolved. There are frequent switching of camps or political parties by public officials just to avoid criminal prosecution for their actions. For instance, if *“you are corrupt and you are part of the APC (the current ruling political party), EFCC won’t really come close to you.”* This view was reinforced by Dapo:

*“.....it seems the present government kind of uses it to take on the opposing party. Maybe once the person/individual is not a member of the ruling party they could chose to make him a good example, so it is as if you are kind of targeting individuals, to persecute them. This is not even scapegoat as that is when the person did it and you are trying to make an example. This time it is more like they are being targeted specifically.... But what I am trying to say is more like you being specifically selected out of the whole crew. And at times some individuals that might be accused of the same thing, once they are part of the particular political party like for instance the present governor of Kano is being accused of taking bribes, there has been so many videos of him on social media and still EFCC has not gotten to him yet*

*as at the last time I checked. And recently I learnt he was given the award of the best governor.”*

Witch-hunting of politically exposed persons and protection of others has really impeded the growth and efforts made at combating corruption.

**Some pertinent issues to note are lack of political willingness and inadequate orientation on the cost of corruption.** Prosecuting corruption cases seem to be herculean task despite the “*existence of laws*”. The missing ingredient, lack of “*political will by the political class to enforce the laws.*” Often times, a lot of probe panels and allegations are investigated, but end up in the dustbin of history because a “*particular corrupt situation favours someone*” who is in government or group of persons in control of the political apparatus of state (Femi, interview, November 16, 2018). This echoes what was discovered in the literature review chapter, where I highlighted some corruption panels/investigations and the end results.

There seems to be inadequate public orientation on the cost of corruption. Femi says “*we also have to look at the orientation of Nigerians...we have to take anti-corruption, knowledge of corruption to the schools. I think it would go a long way to reduce the propensity for wanting to engage in corruption acts.*” Basic amenities such as: clean water, power supply, good road network/transportation system, etc. are largely non-existent or provided by private individuals. Even with this, there is not enough public outcry and a normalization of corruption because of the dearth of information and low literacy level.

**The structure and composition of governance poses a challenge to the strides made by Anti-corruption agencies in Nigeria.** The political system seems to be “*framed*” in a way that institutionalizes corruption. “*If we had maintained the rigid*

*regional structure of the 1960s*”, perhaps we might have true “*federalism*” as opposed to the masked “*unitary system of government*” currently in operation (Daramola, November 19, 2018). “*The political construct of the Nigerian state*” as designed by the British colonial government on departure, concentrated powers of the “Nigerian state to the North” without recourse to factors such as: “*Competence, Equity and Justice*”. Different vested interests from diverse ethnic groups make it harder for the anti-corruption warfare to proceed effectively. Issues such as “*separation of powers*” and locus of authority amongst the three tiers of government consistently seem to emerge on the political space with different interpretations and unending court cases aimed at resolving this dilemma.

**There seems to be negative reinforcement and no reward for whistleblowing or whistle-blowers.** Daramola believes that this was exemplified by the run-up to the 2019 General Elections in Nigeria. Here,

*“we have a society that seems to reward corruption. We have a country that rewards corruption and punishes integrity. Sorry that’s a bit of an extreme way to put it but it is a system that does not recognize the worth of integrity. So, a good example is 2019 we go to the polls the frontrunners Atiku and Buhari, but we know that these guys are corrupt we know, and we have options. We have Obi Ezekwesili, sound past record. We have Moghalu, splendid record but Nigerians won’t reward them by electing them, No! Then you hear people say things like well if you want to be elected...it is a politics of money.”*

(Daramola, November 19, 2018).

Bregha believes that the current system “*intimidates whistle-blowers*” by not providing systems that encourage them or provide enough protection thereafter. This implicitly encourages perpetrators of corruption, who believe that they are untouchable by the law and allegations can never be successfully completed as a result of their intimidating tactics. This notion is further reiterated by Eniola who narrates the story of a young teacher.

*“He is a teacher in a school and the students were to write an exam. The principal and vice principal got the questions beforehand and they brought it to him (the teacher) to teach the students how to work it out and teach the students the answer, he refused, he won’t get his salary increase certainly. That is if he is not sacked. So, we have a system that rewards corruption and punishes integrity.”* (Eniola, interview, December 2, 2018).

Such compromising situations with seemingly unclear channels of lodging complaints and reports greatly deters anti-corruptions efforts and drive in Nigeria. In what has been observed by critical stakeholders in Nigeria, the fight against corruption has been limited by the lack of political will to fight corruption and the use of anti-corruption agencies to fight perceived political enemies, thereby leading to loss of confidence in anti-corruption agencies and their activities by populace. The lack of political will by those charged with governance and the fight against corruption is an albatross to the fight against corruption. In 2000, during the process of the removal the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Alhaji Umar Ghali Na' Abba, it was alleged that the Obasanjo led Presidency bribed some lawmakers to the tune of ₦500,000 each for the impeachment of the Speaker (Akinkuotu, 2000). This same Presidency set up anti-corruption agencies like the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and

the Independent Corrupt Practices and other related offences Commission (ICPC) but lack the political will to implement the anti-corruption drive.

The lack of political will coupled with the use of anti-corruption agencies to witch-hunt political enemies, has made the public lose confidence in the fight against corruption. This was succinctly enunciated by the former President of the Nigerian Senate, Senator Anyim Pius Anyim, in his letter to President Olusegun Obasanjo in 2012. He said: “I regret to inform you that it is clear to us now that, while we have clear intentions that the ICPC should be used to fight corruption, we did not know that the presidency's intention is to use ICPC to protect its corrupt members on one hand, and to use ICPC to fight real and perceived enemies of Mr. President” (Anyim, 2002).

The lack of political will in the fight against corruption, the dependency of anti-corruption agencies on the executive through the composition of our governance structure are actions that causes strain to the effective implementation of the fight against corruption. These stressors (strains) causes “loss of positive stimuli” thereby impeding the fight against corruption.

#### **iv. Theme #4- The Way out of Corruption:**

Establishment of truly independent anti-corruption agencies, enforcement of checks and balances as well as equity and fairness in judicial sentencing or acquittal are action paths for eradicating the problem of corruption. There is a need to implement solutions which might seem simple but often times are glossed over or ignored for reasons best known to policy implementers and influencers.

**Creation of truly independent anti-corruption agencies or bodies will be a major milestone in the quest to drastically eliminate corruption in Nigeria.** Dissociating EFCC and allied anti-corruption agencies from the politicking process or government is greatly “*dependent on the GCFR*”. The disposition or “*body language*”

of the “*Presidency not the president himself but his office*” and this will determine the level of freedom and independence of the agencies – freedom to prosecute any person or group without interference from the Executive arm as a result of vested interests. This might mean ensuring that the power of the “*president to appoint the Chairman of EFCC*” is taken away constitutionally to avoid external influences. Selection or nomination could be “*a function of the judiciary with oversight by the legislature*” in order to attain true institutional independence (Daramola, November 19, 2018).

Emergence of truly independent institutions can only happen through reforms and decentralization of the agencies says a participant. Creation of “*smaller anti-corruption panels, just like in those days where we had Oputa panel where you have some credible judges and let them form a council where all corruption cases go through. They are the only ones that attend to corruption cases and they would be the supreme. Any judgement they give, you cannot go to any other courts to appeal*” (Shope, interview, November 18, 2018) This system could facilitate effective and efficient prosecution of corruption cases via a credible system devoid of any form of bias.

**Effective implementation of checks and balances by the different tiers of government.** Checks and balances are necessary to check the excesses of public officials and institutions. Separating functions and scope of work of anti-corruption agencies is essential says Chukwuma. he says “*let there be a different parastatal that handles the money, so whatever money is recovered does not go the EFCC, but another department that just handles only money. I think once money comes in, it can turn people who are very morally upright, it actually twists when they see a very large amount of money.*” This line of thinking must have influenced the recent passage of the NFIU (Nigerian Financial Intelligence Unit) bill by the Nigerian legislature, which

grants the unit autonomy to monitor international money laundering activities. Prior to the passage of the bill Nigeria had been suspended from the Egmont Group because of the lack of autonomy and domiciling the NFIU in the EFCC.

Also, each institution should have an agency that is checkmating its activities in order to ensure compliance and avoid witch-hunting. Bregha says that *“we have to make sure that those checks and balances you create don’t turn out to be proponents that would be used for corruption practices. For example, you say okay if people have to pay, like take for example the TSA (Treasury Single Account), which was created to fight corruption. It was supposed to be a system that checks corruption practices, if you don’t make money available to people then people can’t steal. But if people can’t steal and the TSA itself becomes a means by which people can steal, it means the people who are propagating the corruption practices are even larger than the former.”*

**Equity and fairness by the judiciary in sentencing and discharging corruption cases.** In the prosecution of anti-corruption cases, the role of the judiciary cannot be overemphasized. Punishment must fit the crimes and there must be no bias or unfair judicial practices. Femi describes some *“cases of corruption in Nigeria. One of the cases I can remember is the known case that was brought to the fore by the media about a couple of judges that were found to be corrupt; taking bribes.”* Increasingly, there is little hope in the courts because corruption cases are either stalled or confusing *“judgements given in different courts in corruption cases.”* Often times, the conflicting judgements are as a result of abuse of court processes and non-unification of allegations by the courts. Issues *“like this discourage the citizens”* who might want to report or whistle-blow on corrupt individuals.



Finally, anti-corruption agencies are often deterred by the various court injunctions granted by the courts, despite having gathered “evidence” on the group/individual being prosecuted. The courts are the last hope of the people in any democracy, it is important that judges who are the custodians of justice are above par in dispensing justice and conducting their private affairs. Thus, it is important that “*justice is not only done but is seen to have been done*”. Punishments must fit the crime and there should be no differentials in legal interpretations and judgements for public and private officials.

In corroborating this finding, Okolo and Akpokigbe (2014) in their work *Corruption in Nigeria: The Possible Way Out*, suggested the strengthening of anti-graft institutions, restoration of indigenous values and institutions, establishment of special independent anti-corruption courts, education and economic growth as the means through which Nigeria can come out of her systemic and endemic corruption.

According to the General Strain Theory, by removing the strains that encourages people to engage in crime (corruption), through national reorientation, strengthening of anti-corruption agencies to effectively fight corruption, strengthening our public institutions and the creating an atmosphere of justice and fairness where every member of the society has equal rights and opportunities to succeed, Nigeria is bound to find its way of her endemic corruption if rigorously pursued with the needed political will.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **DISCUSSION/CONCLUSION**

The objective of this research was to gain a better understanding of corruption as experienced and perceived by Nigerians in the diaspora. This was done in order to

explore how the diaspora population sees the problem. I carried out a thematic analysis of qualitative interviews with ten participants. The analysis resulted in four overarching themes which described how participants perceive corruption in its entirety, origin of corruption, its consequences and they prescribed tools or measures that they believe would help in solving the problem. To get a wholesome understanding of my findings, this chapter will draw references from the General Strain Theory (GST) and will connect the findings to relevant literature.

Drawing on in-depth interviews I engage in a comprehensive study to understand corruption in Nigeria. Using the lens of General Strain Theory, I sought to understand this problem and proffer solutions by investigating the following questions: (1) What is the culture of corruption in Nigeria? (2) How has it been normalized? (3) How does the Nigerian diaspora perceive this culture and normalization? By asking these questions, I have brought attention to a demographic of the population that is understudied. By framing the research questions in this way, participants had the power to tell and frame their stories in the way they wanted. Ultimately, this study shows the inadequacy in current anti-corruption agencies and also highlights the progression of how firstly corruption is normalized and how it then goes on to be a strong institution with its own culture. In the findings we see how the pressures in the society allows the machinery of corruption to continue working and churning out even more corruption. For example, Shope says;

*“things don’t work the way they are meant to. A process that is meant to take 2 days would take 30 days. Do you know that in the Federal Road Safety there is a place where they issue fake driver’s license, in their actual office and you would get the license on the same day. It is only the officials that create this fake license. no one knows the*

*difference between original or fake. It is a long process to get a license and during this process officials on the road would keep extorting you almost every day. So, you see all these things that we as people are contributing to corruption. We are doing these things wrong and everyone knows...I want to do something, and I just call someone, and they would tell me the easiest and fastest way to do it. If you want to do things the right way you might not get a headway and you don't want to spend so much time on one thing. You are pressured by the ills in society to just do it and get done with it” (Interview, November 18, 2018).*

The findings show how it is normalized in different ways, first because of the breakdown of the contract between the state and its citizenry, the citizens respond in a new way (corruption). Then because after more than fifty years of independence this broken relationship has not been mended, corruption becomes the new normal that enables people to survive and go about their day to day activities. Then this new normal corrupts the moral values of the citizens and people who go about things the right way are now seen as being abnormal or *holier than thou*. Daramola says:

*“So, corruption has replaced...you see it's unfortunate that yes, we came together as different people with different values systems and at least to an extent you can see the silver lining you can see the commonality of integrity whether it is Igbo land or Hausa land or the Fulani's you can see a semblance of integrity. But we've replaced it with corruption. So yes, corruption has become a culture. value is now placed on material things instead of a good name.”*

When asked about the culture of corruption Dapo said:

*“I could say corruption becomes a lifestyle for politicians in the sense that when it comes to politics people are not there for what they are supposed to do, everyone is there to take his own portion of the national cake. So, in essence being in governance is an opportunity for you to enrich yourself. It is not to care for the masses or for the general population...So yes, there is a culture of corruption.”*

As noted previously, the reputation of Nigeria has been discoloured by corruption. All the things that are seen to be hindering the development of the country can be said to be either directly or indirectly linked to corruption (Smith, 2007). The findings from this study showed that corruption takes a cyclical form in Nigeria, this means that corruption breeds more corruption. This is highlighted from the stories and instances that the participants related to me, for example

*“...there are some people that want to actually do the work but then when you get into power...for you to get into power you have to go through corruption. And then, when you go through corruption you have to appease the people that got you into power right? So, even when you have the good person... because that is what happened to Jonathan (former president of Nigeria). I don't think Jonathan is a thief but when he got there, he had to appease the people that got him there. That is the fact and when he decided that he was not going to appease them anymore they were like ok you are gone now.”*

The above quote highlights the new normal and is backed by Heidenheimer and Johnston (2002) who opined that corruption is a product of political and economic problems and it is also their cause. While corruption is typically studied from the way it presents itself in the current democratic system of Nigeria, it misses the complex

ways in which the strains that were inherent in the history and formation of the country contributed to how much it has woven into the fabric of the society and how it has been normalized (Blundo and Olivier de Sardan, 2006; Smith, 2007a). The study showed that corruption “is part and parcel of both the maintenance of social inequality and ordinary people’s struggles to respond to it” (Smith 2012, p. 476).

One major finding in this study and reflection from the interviews is how ordinary citizens have contradictory stances on corruption, as they are both active participants in its continuous perpetuation and victims as well as biggest critics of the acts. Almost all the participants told me about how they responded to roadblocks caused by corruption, by engaging in petty corruption themselves. Shope told me how difficult it was for him to get his International passport in Lagos:

*“I think the current problems in the country also impacts people to involve themselves in corrupt acts. For instance, in getting a passport in the right way you would be so frustrated because that was my experience. What is the official price of getting a passport in Nigeria? No one knows. So, if you think you want to do it. You really don’t know if you are getting extorted from the officials and it takes so much time. Why would I waste so much time when I know I could just call someone, and I get my passport and I am going to pay him.”*

(Interview, November 18, 2018).

Using the General Strain Theory (GST) to analyse this shows that absence of prescribed means to achieve one’s goals would result in people devising other means (illegal/non-normative ways) to achieve their goals. In the situation of Nigeria, where

the country has been completely broken, due to corruption. Non-normative activities and means (corruption) have now become normalised.

Strain is exemplified in the response of Shope where he said, *“what is wrong in Nigeria is that the education system has been corrupted, there is corruption everywhere and rising to the top is going to a bit challenging”*. He further noted while recounting his experience from the strain that perpetuates corruption in Nigeria, he noted *“I was opportune to work with my dad at some point and he had a contract with the Federal Government and for you to actually process your paycheck you have to pay people. For you to do anything in any of the Federal Government parastatals you have to pay people. They would tell you to your face that you have to pay for your files to be processed. For you to do anything you have to pay your way out, if you want things to move fast you have to pay so much.”*

While commenting on what predisposes people to corruption in Nigeria, a respondent Arif said, *“I think it is human culture. It is underdevelopment... The kind of resources we have in Nigeria is enough to go around.”* Arif also mentioned human nepotistic tendencies, which is a stressor that predisposes people to corruption. He said, *“It has not affected my life because I shun corruption with everything. But then it has affected people’s lives back home because nepotism is part of corruption. You see very brilliant minds but because of lack of means they are pushed down the ladder and that is something that has affected millions of bright people in Nigeria and that is why you see influx of very good brains out of Nigeria to developed countries.”*

The failure of government in providing essential services to its populace has been a source of continued strain to the survival of the average Nigerian. In order to survive in this strenuous environment, the people resort to engaging in corrupt activities. This position was noted by Arif in his reply to the question on the cultural

influence on corruption in Nigeria, he said, *“I think it's an issue of survival in the country. I think that at this point Nigerians do no longer look towards the government for help, so they find a way they like to survive. They find a way to go through the day on their own terms even if it is illegal, even if it is at the expense of another person”*. He noted further, *“Government is not giving us electricity, is not giving us water, is not giving us security. Even the police officers you are afraid of them. And because people need to survive, not everybody can afford to travel out of the country. So, at that point, people tend to throw away all forms of morality”*.

On the culture of greed as a strain towards corrupt practices, another respondent, Dapo stated that, *“...in essence being in governance is an opportunity for you to enrich yourself. it is not to care for the masses or for the general population. It is just for you to take care of yourself and feed generations unborn after you. That is what it is all about. So yes, there is a lifestyle of corruption.”* He further stated that the culture of greed, poverty and the lack of accountability in the public sector are strains that predisposes people to corruption. He said, *“A proverb at home says, if there are many problems if I can solve the one of eating, if I can have food in my stomach then I can sit down and be able to think properly to solve other problems. So, I think poverty and greed. I think absolute power too; you know there is this says that absolute power corrupts absolutely. And when I say absolute power I mean when you are not accountable to anybody.”* All these statement lays credence to the strenuous experiences people go through in Nigeria that predisposes them to engaging in corruption.

Participants were upfront about some actions they have undertaken in the past. However, they know it was morally wrong and felt they had no little or no choice in such circumstances. In one way or another, each participant felt one would be hard

pressed to survive a day in the country without engaging in an activity that is completely on the flipside of legality. “For Nigerians, corruption can be, on the one hand, a survival strategy and a moral imperative, and, on the other hand, a political ruse to be condemned for its deception and venality” (Smith, 2012, p. 477).

Although this study was focused on the Nigerian Government, the sub-theme of **Lack of faith and disappointment in the machinery of state and law enforcement agencies** is central to explaining and understanding popular discontent of Nigerians, which can be linked to citizens migrating en-masse out of the country and why this study from the view of Nigerians in the diaspora is important. Gore and Pratten (2003) argue that there are new forms of corruption viewed by the populace as more illegitimate than others. Such forms of corruption are pronounced when people feel expected promises of the postcolonial state of development and democracy has not been delivered.

Most participants perceive the major hindrance to the ability of agencies like the EFFC, to solve any problem is the lack of independence/ties to political apron strings. In October 2017, President Buhari accused “corrupt elements” of using “any weapon to fight back, mainly judicial obstruction and political diversion”. But political analyst Chris Ngwodo said: “There’s been a lot of noise and sloganeering... This administration has talked a good game. “But it hasn’t followed up in taking much action.”” (Africa Research Bulletin, January 2018). Chukwuma said the same thing “...*personally I think they are just dogs that just keep barking and making noise. I think they are just dogs that bark seriously and only bite when the government in power tells them, which defeats the concept of being an anti-corruption agency.*”



In Steven Pierce's book on the history of corruption in Nigeria (2016), he argues that corruption has become a weapon in the politics of Nigeria. Though most Nigerians believe that every politician is corrupt in one way or the other, accusations of corruption is used against some politicians while protecting others. Corruption has now become an equipment used to besmirch the reputations of people. As shown in the findings, witch-hunting by opposition parties is now the order of the day.

Smith (2018) discussed the pressures that officials and people in positions of power face that force them to engage in corruption. These pressures come from family, community and even the society. As highlighted in the previous chapter, because of a number of reasons like the communal/collective nature of Nigeria; it is not every man for himself, family depend heavily on each other. There seems to still be a preponderance of *Gemeinschaft* relations and lifestyle in the country. Perhaps, if Nigeria was a country with fewer ethnic groups maybe this would have helped to limit corruption, but in the case of over 250 ethnic groups what emerges is a situation where leaders fight for the interests of their small circle – comprising family, ethnic group and cronies/friends – rather than for the country as a whole. The subtheme of **weak nationalism** buttresses this point.

In analysing my findings, I noticed the culture of materialism is rife and a harbinger of corruption, with lines of morality blurred as a result of importance ascribed by the society to wealth. This is irrespective of the means, source or consequence of the activities that cumulated in the unexplainable material accumulation of public resources for private gain. Olivier de Sardan (1999) and Pierce (2016) support the argument that the precolonial, colonial and postcolonial history of Nigeria setup the stage for the problem of corruption. They both emphasize how much behaviours which can be tagged as corruption are used to fulfil family and community

obligations. In the present study, the participants described how there is a great disconnect between tradition and how things are done in the public sector. Both Olivier de Sardan (1999) and Pierce (2016) discuss the complex intersection of the bureaucracy of the state and traditions has played a role in creating avenues for corruption to thrive.

As the period of decolonisation wound down, the emergent African 'Big Man' was typically expected to appropriate for himself - and thence to his ethnic or regional group — a measure of capital with which he and his people were to engage in the battle against the internal 'Others' (ethnic/regional/religious) in the struggle to capture — and hold on to – power (Adebanwi and Obadare, 2011, p. 191).

Also, due to poor historical records and white-washing of history as a result of cultural beliefs that every fellow who has ever led a public/government office is some sort of hero/heroine and their “heroic deeds” should never be questioned. Pierce (2016) is correct in insisting that Nigeria’s current illness observed from a historical perspective and policies of colonial governance provide an explanation of what is happening now. Hence, it was imperative to chronologically outline different periods in the history of Nigeria, with major corruption cases and panels as well as outcome of the investigations or litigation processes. An interesting insight was provided by a participant, who admitted up front to me that he did not know much about Nigerian history because he is in the science field. However, when I brought up how the “heroic” indigenous leaders of the colonial era contributed to corruption he was adamant that it was not true. The participant could not reconcile his view of the leaders that fought for the independence of the country and the facts that showed how they basically laid the foundation for its destruction through corruption.

A major prompting for me to carry out this study was trying to understand why Nigerian elites engage in corruption. I can easily understand why ordinary citizens could venture into corrupt activities but explaining the rationale for the elite class (privileged group) seemed to be a bit difficult. General Strain Theory has been used in a number of studies to explain crime from different demographics (Agnew & White, 1992; Aseltine, Gore, & Gordon, 2000). It has also been used across genders and race (Jang & Johnson, 2003; Broidy & Agnew, 1997), and different kinds of deviant behaviors. Most strains were found to have a relationship to offending (Agnew, Brezina, Wright, & Cullen, 2002). One area that had been left un-researched was the link between strain and white-collar or corporate crimes. White-collar crimes are mostly researched using Edwin Sutherland's theory. This study shows that those strains that affect the ordinary citizens also affect the elite in the society. Principal among the strain that affects public officials in Nigeria is the fear of losing what they have gained; monetary and status losses (Wheeler, 1992). Agnew (2001b) argued that the inability to achieve desired monetary success was a great strain and he asserts that "many middle and upper class people in the United States want more money than they can have and obtain through legitimate channels." (p.162).

In most studies of GST, the theory is limited to monetary terms, with the individual "preoccupied by a desire for more money" (Langton, & Piquero, 2007, p. 4). For this study, I applied the theory not only in the monetary sense but also to social class and reputation. As discussed earlier, importance is placed on class and materialism. What happens when one leaves the position of power they have been in previously? The findings from the study show that while officials are in office, they use their position and engage in corruption to continue to either hold that space for as long as they can or to take all they can from that office. Also, we must note that absence of

social security and lack of basic amenities does not only apply to the poor in Nigeria. The structure has been so weakened by corruption that federal hospital and schools do not work as they should. What happens when an official is very sick and needs surgery? The officials themselves do not trust the hospitals in the country to give them their best because they believe that they are not well equipped. In addition to this, strain from family and community members to cater for them results in corruption. All public Officials “who have served as state officials are expected by their own [people] to enrich themselves through corruption” (Ellis, 2006 p. 206).

The three types of strain identified by Robert Agnew are useful in looking at the public sector: (1). Failure to achieve positively valued stimuli; (2). Loss of a positively valued stimuli; and (3). Presentation of a negative stimuli. The theory assumes that most people have similar goals as determined by the society, but not everyone has the same opportunities. When officials fail to achieve the expectations of their community through ethical work and following the right path, they may attempt to achieve success through crime. This is an example of failure to achieve positive valued stimuli. Findings showed that even officials that want to do the right thing are either corrupted or pushed out by their colleagues,

*“It (corruption) is creeping into the very fabric of what is the Nigerian lifestyle and it is becoming worse every day and people are learning that telling lies pays, stealing pays more than being honest and being truthful. You know when you were little you would watch a movie where the good guys win, these days the bad guys win, and everybody tends to feel like the end justifies the means. Some people would do the right thing and when they call out the bad, they would be the one to*

*answer for the bad that they called out”* (Daramola, interview, November 19, 2018).

What incentive do good people have to continue being good when they see their colleagues enjoying the fruit from the poisoned tree without any backlash? Even their community members would see them as being weak when they do not use available opportunities to eat as much “national cake” as they can. The anti-corruption agencies also contribute to the reproduction of corruption because even when they find an official guilty the punishment is not commensurate to the crime, as Agnew (2001b) posits, the benefit of crime is higher than the cost. Public office in Nigeria, in particular, is regarded by many who have had — or hope to have - access to it as an 'eatery' of sorts, or even 'fast-food' — as a one-time Minister of Internal Affairs implied (above) in accusing his colleague of not 'eating' (stealing) in peace (Adebanwi and Obadare, 2011, p. 190).

### **Reflections**

This was a huge learning curve for me, my experience as being the researcher and also having the same experience as the participants put in an advantageous but sometimes difficult position. During the interviews I had to maintain my objectivity and let participants say whatever they wanted without any fear of criticism from me. Transcribing the interviews was a strenuous experience, transcribing takes a long time and being immersed in discussions about how the Nigerian government has failed us was very painful. Hearing the same pain and betrayal that I feel in different voices and in different ways was hard. When I thought a participant suffered it worse, I hear another story that confounds me. During one of the interviews, a participant told me about how her brother died because of corruption, this was difficult to hear and process.

Having to go over these stories over and over again during transcription and analysis was not always fun.

Interviewing Nigerians living in Nova Scotia was the best part of this study. The people I interviewed gave the body of work a lot of validation and showed me why my work is important. They also helped to iron out some of the ideas that were running around in my head. I would never have had the opportunity to go into the discussions I had with my participants without this study. The participants would give a response to a question I asked, and the feeling of camaraderie I had during those times carried me through this process. My supervisor also supported me, she just got my point and ideas every single time.

The themes and findings from this study made me disappointed and hopeful at the same time. I was disappointed because participants had no qualms about telling me about the “petty” corruption they took part in for their “survival”. This begs the question, how will the country be better if the average citizen continues like this in order to survive. Though Nigeria kind of operates a plutocracy where it is only the rich and the elite that hold public offices does anything change if the average citizen gets into power? Especially if they are used to using corruption to get through roadblocks. The recommendations from participants keep me hopeful that positive change will come. I have no other country and I continue to have faith in the tenacity of Nigerians which was evident during the interviews.

### **Strengths and Limitations**

This research work provides a view into the ways in which Nigerians see corruption, within the context of the diaspora experience. The findings and recommendations of this research are particularly relevant to the Nigerian government,

its anti-corruption agencies and other researchers. The major strength of this study are the recommendations prescribed by participants: “no one else knows where the shoe pinches but he who wears it”.

Some limitations of the study include: Small sample size, which places a problem of the generalizability of the findings to other societies and populations. In addition to this, understanding the social aspects of the problem under study was from the participants' perspectives and the researcher's experience only. In this study, focus was on perception, this means that findings in the study were premised on the limited experience of participants. Also, the study was carried out in Canada, a “developed” country and perhaps, findings might have been different if it was carried out with Nigerians in the diaspora living in a “developing” country.

Another limitation was in accessing documents from the federal government of Nigeria. The Economic and Finance Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Independent and Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) which are some of the agencies under discussion do not allow citizens easy access to their files. Information that was readily available on the websites of these agencies were mostly outdated.

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

The findings of this study will be useful in creating social change as well as inform policy related to reducing corruption in not only Nigeria but in other “developing” countries. It provides insight into peoples’ perception of corruption using their experience. The viewpoint of the diaspora population is somewhat different from one who lives in the country. They have an insider-outsider experience. Future research on corruption in Nigeria should further explore each theme specifically. More specifically, follow-up studies should look at how patron-clientism supports corruption.

The literature review and the conclusions of this research has shown that there is a considerable gap to be filled and a need for further research especially with using the General Strain Theory to explain corruption. In addition to this, steps should be taken to carry out this study in different places, since findings may not have the ability to be generalized but it can be transferred.

Another avenue for research is analysing the study using a discourse analysis. In the early stages of my study, I realized that meaning was very subjective and could limit understanding. It was very important for me to define my concept to the participants before we started the interview so we would both be talking about the same thing. It would be interesting to see a study that allows the participants to define the concepts by themselves, this would set the foundation for another kind of reflective position.

## **CONCLUSION**

This was a convenience selected sample of Nigerians living in Nova Scotia. The rich retellings of their perception provided an avenue for a deliberate and contemplative analysis and interpretation. The findings revealed 4 themes; Root causes of corruption, consequences of corruption, limitations to anti-corruption efforts and the way out of corruption. Participant quotes that back these themes were presented and substantiated in the findings chapter. The objective of this study was to explore, three research questions formed the basis of the data collection, analysis, and interpretation of the findings.

In the course of carrying out my interviews I noted that it is important for me to clarify my use of “culture” as the title of this study. When I say “culture of corruption” I am not saying that corruption is part of the Nigerian culture. One of my participants



was aghast when I asked about the culture of corruption, she complained of my use of the word “culture” and I had to calm the participant down and explain further what I meant. I think the best way to explain this in writing is to give an analogy, every society/institution has a culture. In my research I was looking at corruption as an institution and exploring the culture and normalization of that institution.

One participant said something that was unique in that she believes that Nigeria is not corrupt or as corrupt as some countries in the western world and this struck a chord in me, as I have said over and over again in the study my greatest fear is that in trying to solve a problem and proffer solutions I contribute to the harmful stereotypical image of my beloved country. The participant said she does not care about Transparency International and their rankings and this opened my eyes to something new, which is an avenue for further research looking at the western world’s definition of corruption in African states and how their “aid” is corrupt in and of itself.

This research makes contributions to theory and methods in the advancement of scholarship in the social sciences, it touches on different fields like; criminology, sociology, international development, political science etc. It also contributes to the development of policy. My research contributes to the conceptual and theoretical development of the General Strain Theory by using it as a tool to understand and analyse the topic of discussion. GST was used to explain how elites respond to strains in the society.

Some measures that participants believe will help to drastically reduce events of corruption in Nigeria include but are not limited to: creation of truly independent anti-corruption agencies, equity and fairness by courts in dispensing justice, providing incentives for whistle blowing by rewarding positive actions towards calling out bad

behaviour, provision of basic amenities/social security so people do not have to engage in corruption to survive, checks and balances. The most important recommendation that my study provides is that the government of Nigeria has to restructure the country in a way that the public and personal is totally separate from each other and there has to be a process of unlearning the bad behaviour of the past. The country has to go through a process of learning, some of my participants did not really know what the mandate of the anti-corruption agencies. How can you try to fix a problem when the populace does not know anything about the institution you created to fix the problem? As Wole Soyinka said “You cannot live a normal existence if you haven't taken care of a problem that affects your life and affects the lives of others, values that you hold which in fact define your very existence.”

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## **RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS NEEDED!**

### **Help me investigate the Perceptions of the Nigerian Diaspora in Nova Scotia About the Culture and Normalization of Corruption in Nigeria.**

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**Participants are needed to take part in a study concerning the perception of the culture and normalization of corruption in Nigeria.**

This study is being conducted by Omotimilehin Idris ([timiidris@gmail.com](mailto:timiidris@gmail.com)) under the supervision of Dr. Rachael Collins ([r.collins@smu.ca](mailto:r.collins@smu.ca)) in the department of Criminology at Saint Mary's University.

#### **WHO?**

Participants must be Nigerians 18 years of age and above who live in Nova Scotia.

#### **WHY?**

Corruption is a huge problem in Nigeria and has posed a barrier to the development of the country. Understanding how the Nigerian diaspora perceives its culture and normalization can be useful in creating policies/laws that would reduce the problem. This study would recruit about 10 participants.

#### **WHAT TO EXPECT:**

You will be asked to partake in an interview about your perception of corruption in Nigeria. The interview would take about 60-75 minutes.

#### **COMPENSATION?**

There will be no compensation for your involvement in this study.

#### **WHEN?**

At your convenience, between 10am to 4pm from October - December 2018.

#### **WHERE?**

McNally South Room #322, Saint Mary's University or at a place that is convenient for you.

**If you are interested in participating, please send an email to [timiidris@gmail.com](mailto:timiidris@gmail.com) or call (902) 403-9651**

**SAINT MARY'S UNIVERSITY  
DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINOLOGY  
INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT**

**“A Thematic Analysis of the Perceptions of the Nigerian Diaspora in Nova Scotia About the Culture and Normalization of Corruption in Nigeria.”**

**Principal Investigator: Omotimilehin Idris, [timiidris@gmail.com](mailto:timiidris@gmail.com).**

**Supervisor: Dr. Rachael Collins, [r.collins@smu.ca](mailto:r.collins@smu.ca).**

**SMU REB File #19-013**

Hello, my name is Omotimilehin Idris, as part of my Master of Arts thesis, I am conducting this study under the supervision of Dr. Rachael Collins.

**INFORMATION**

You are being invited to take part in a study that is interested in investigating the perceptions of the Nigerian diaspora in Nova Scotia regarding the culture and normalization of corruption in Nigeria.

In this study you will be asked face-face interview questions about your knowledge/views of corruption in Nigeria. The interview would be carried out at Saint Mary's University, McNally South Room #322 or a place convenient for the participant. The interview will take about 60-75 minutes and about 10 participants will be recruited to take part in this study. This research is being conducted by Omotimilehin Idris and Dr. Rachael Collins in the department of Criminology at Saint Mary's University in Halifax, NS.

**RISKS**

There are minimal foreseeable risks to the participants. Discussions/conversations about the state of corruption in Nigeria may be a stressful experience for some individuals. However, this is normal and should be temporary. If at any time you feel stress or discomfort, please feel free to pause or end the interview all together. If this stress of discomfort persists you may contact the mobile mental health helpline at **902-429-8167** or **1-888-429-8167** (toll free).

**BENEFITS**

Although you may not directly benefit from participating in this study, for some participants, discussing such topics may provide an important space to reconnect with their place of origin.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

All participants will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement. All interviews will be audio recorded. All data will be stored in a locked room at the Saint Mary's University Criminology department. Only Dr. Rachael Collins and Omotimilehin Idris will have access to the data. The audio recording of the interview will be used only for analysis and extracts from the interview would not include any personal identifications (pseudonyms will be used to ensure confidentiality). The recording and transcript will be kept confidential and used for only the intended research purpose, no one outside of the research team will have access to it. Data from the study will be overwritten and destroyed after five years.

**COMPENSATION**

There is no compensation for the participants who partake in this study.

**CONTACT**

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, you may contact the researcher, Omotimilehin Idris at [timiidris@gmail.com](mailto:timiidris@gmail.com) or at 902-403-9651. The Saint Mary’s University Research Ethics Board has reviewed this research. If you have any questions or concerns about ethical matters or would like to discuss your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Chair of the Research Ethics Board at [ethics@smu.ca](mailto:ethics@smu.ca) or 902-420-5728.

**HOW CAN I WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY?**

Your participation in this study is voluntary; you may decline to participate at any time without penalty. If you decide to participate, you have the option of not responding to any question that makes you uncomfortable. Participants may withdraw up until the completion of the study without penalty by informing the interviewer. All responses collected from incomplete interviews will be destroyed.

**FEEDBACK AND PUBLICATION**

The results of this research may go on to be published in scholarly journals or chapters in books. You are fully entitled to receive an electronic copy of the thesis, please contact Omotimilehin Idris at [timiidris@gmail.com](mailto:timiidris@gmail.com).

**CONSENT**

**“A Thematic Analysis of the Perceptions of the Nigerian Diaspora in Nova Scotia About the Culture and Normalization of Corruption in Nigeria.”**

I understand what this study is about, appreciate the risks and benefits, and that by consenting I agree to take part in this research study and do not waive any rights to legal recourse in the event of research-related harm.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I can end my participation at any time without penalty.

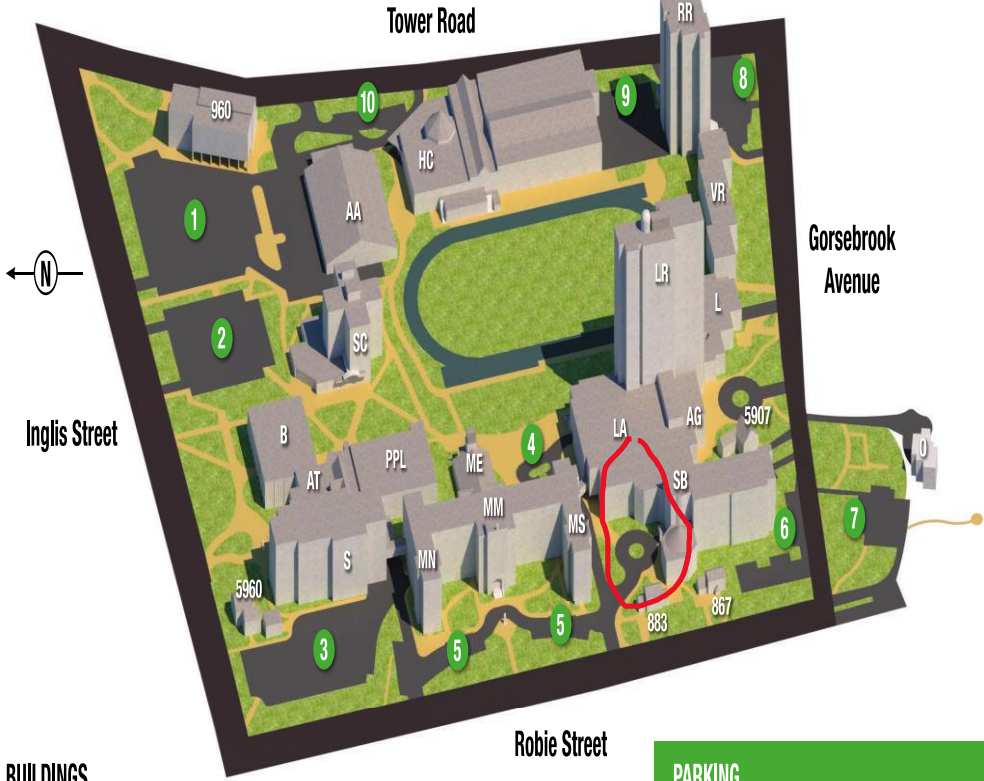
I have had adequate time to think about the research study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

I agree to take part in this interview and have it audio recorded

Name of participant	Date	Signature

Principal Investigator	Date	Signature

**It is recommended that you save a copy of this form for your records.**



**BUILDINGS**

**PARKING**

- AA Alumni Arena
- AG Art Gallery
- AT Atrium
- B Burke Building
- HC Homburg Centre for Health & Wellness
- L Link Building
- LA Loyola Academic Complex
- LR Loyola Residence
- ME McNally East
- MM McNally Main
- MN McNally North
- MS McNally South**

- O The Oaks
- PPL Patrick Power Library
- RR Rice Residence
- S Science Building
- SB Sobey Building
- SC O'Donnell Hennessey Student Centre
- VR Vanier Residence
- 867 867 Robie St.
- 883 883 Robie St.
- 960 960 Tower Rd.
- 5907 5907 Gorsebrook Ave.
- 5960 5960 Inglis St.

- 1. Arena - General, Meters, Accessible
- 2. Inglis Street - General, Pay & Display
- 3. Science - General, Meters, Faculty, Accessible
- 4. McNally East - Meters, Accessible
- 5. McNally Main - Faculty, Accessible
- 6. Sobey / Gorsebrook - General, Faculty
- 7. Oaks - General
- 8. Rice - General, Meters, Accessible
- 9. Homburg Members Parking Only
- 10. Tower Rd - Meters, Accessible