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## How Has Corruption Influenced Poverty in Nigeria

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### Abstract

Corruption has always been the cause for other people suffering while the few benefits. Nigeria suffers from the same as it is well known as one of the most corrupt countries. With the country getting most of its revenues from the oil industry there is still an increased poverty rate. From this case, there must be a relationship between corruption and the high rate of poverty in Nigeria. Moreover, the elected leaders are involved in corruption practices by diverting the resources required for developmental projects and providing service to the public to their personal use hence fuelling poverty. While expounding on the literature review, an inductive research design is used to critically identify the gap in the research.

### How Has Corruption Influenced Poverty in Nigeria

Poverty is a universal problem that has affected people in both socio-economic and political characters in their lives. The rate of poverty is increasing at a significant rate around the globe with more than 2 billion people living under the poverty line. Nigeria is one of the countries recognized to be the richest and with a bigger population in sub-Saharan Africa having approximately 170 million individuals. However, poverty level has increased at an alarming rate due to the rise in unemployment, insufficient access to credit schemes and embezzlement of public funds. Corruption is among the incidences that influence poverty in Nigeria. Narrowing down to understand the term, corruption is any form of criminal offense or dishonesty performed by an individual or organization delegated with a position of authority to obtain an unlawful advantage or abuse power for their private gains. This paper will focus on how corruption has influenced poverty in Nigeria by analyzing several pieces of literature.

### **Literature Review**

In this section, several pieces of literature are reviewed to find the causes and effects of corruption and realize the connection with poverty in Nigeria by critically analyzing using thematic arrangements to ensure the research gap is filled efficiently.

### **Issues of corruption in Nigeria**

Aloko & Abdullahi (2018) argue that political corruption is the major cause of socio-economic and political underdevelopment in Nigeria. Moreover, Newell (2018) defines political corruption as the established corruption spread by the ruling class for their own benefit. Therefore, the performance of political corruption involves both international and multinational agencies that are responsible for tapping the finances from Nigeria to other countries abroad.

According to Junior (2015), the oil industry is the most affected by corruption since it is the primary source of revenue for Nigeria. Moreover, corrupt performances have altered democratic morals and tainted the socioeconomic and political segments by suppression of the rule of law since there is no accountability and transparency. Similarly, another study conducted by Page (2018) posits that political corruption is the main cause for the emergence of weak institutions in Nigeria that protects the ruling individuals when they are involved in crimes such as using the offices they have for their benefits. Therefore, there is a direct connection of corruption and political leaders in Nigeria as people do not vie for electorate position to make Nigeria great by representing their people but for their personal enrichment and providing favors to their ethnic groups as well as political allies.

## **Causes and Effects of Corruption in Nigeria**

Nyoni (2018) argues that corruption level in Nigeria has highly increased and it is evident that corruption is in every sector of the economy. Both large and small sector indicates corruption in every level from politics, churches, police force and university and colleges. Moyosore (2015), indicate that the main cause of corruption in Nigeria is greedy since it makes politicians use funds allocated for development purposes for their own benefit. Similarly, unemployment is another cause that has resulted in a great challenge in Nigeria and therefore, since people need to make money and live a better life, they would rather involve themselves in corruption. Furthermore, a study conducted by Odo (2015), has presented another cause of corruption being poverty because there are many individuals who live under poverty level in Nigeria and hence push them into corruption practices. According to Lucky & Sam (2018), an individual is regarded as poor when they survive below 1.25 dollars in a day. Moreover, according to Enofe et al. (2016), corruption has resulted in an increase in poverty in Nigeria as

money that should be used to develop the nation and create employment is embezzled. Currently, about 69% of Nigerians live under the poverty level. Furthermore, poor national development and national crisis occurring in Nigeria are because of corruption since the corrupt individuals usually fight the government that is against them using agents such as Boko haram among other militia groups (Awortu, 2015).

### **Outlooks of Poverty in Nigeria**

Poverty has affected many countries around the globe and almost every country is working to eliminate or rather reduce it. According to Lucky & Sam (2018), 82 million Nigerians live in less than 1 dollar per day. Notably, the rate of poverty has significantly increased despite the country being <sup>1</sup>regarded as the richest in sub-Saharan Africa. Moreover, Nigeria is the major supplier of oil and earns most of the revenue from oil. Unfortunately, with the country being considered as the richest country, majority of its population live below the poverty level having real income continually reducing as malnutrition cases increase. According to Kabuya (2015), poverty is evident in rural areas of Nigeria where 70% of the population reside with majority of them being women and children. From the above research, corruption comes out as the main cause of poverty in Nigeria since the wealth of the country should be distributed equally to ensure development reaches every part of the country as well as employment is obtained by every citizen.

### **Theories**

The theory of political corruption and poverty are scrutinized using the Broken Windows Theory and Vicious Cycle Theory respectively. The Broken Windows Theory was suggested by George Kelling and Wilson in 1982 (Hira, 2016). The theory of broken windows signifies that

when a person passes through a house with a broken window, they will have the perception that no one attends to the house, and therefore trespassers might throw stones to break more windows in turn destroying the whole building. Consequently, the theory suggests that the breakdown refers to the society which does not care while the windows are the crimes that happen in the community, hence allowing them to happen freely without taking action. Society should have more attention to the insignificant criminal activities as with time they will continue to advance to a level that will be unable to control. Nigeria's government has ignored the minor processes in the ruling and thus affecting the general service delivery. In the same way, the broken window causes other supporting windows to break as it affects the whole building in general. This is when elected leaders involve themselves in corrupt practices and thus affecting the overall public welfare hence resulting in a sociopolitical crisis.

Similarly, Vicious Cycle Theory uses a flow of influential factors that acts and inspires one another to deteriorate a nation into poverty condition. This theory uses macroeconomic policy and economic development to provide an explanation of why and how people are in a continuous state of poverty despite the country putting measures and policies to improve the situation. Oludare (2015) provides a more informative extension on Vicious Cycle Theory of poverty by arguing that in underdeveloped nations the total productivity is small due to shortage of capital market flawless, underdevelopment and commercial backwardness.

### **Methods**

In this section, information concerning the design and approach of how data is researched and collected is discussed.

#### **Research design**

An inductive research design is used. Several pieces of literature are reviewed to identify the already existing knowledge about the research question. Moreover, several theories are discussed concerning the topic and observations made to develop explanations.

**Research question and hypothesis**

How has corruption influenced poverty in Nigeria?

Corruption deepens poverty as opposed to weaknesses in political and economic institutions in Nigeria.

**Data collection and sampling**

Several pieces of literature are used in data collection, where articles, books and reports are reviewed. Moreover, while searching in the existing database several terms are used to allow collection of relevant information such as on the relationship between poverty and corruption, causes and effects of corruption in Nigeria. The data is qualitative in nature as it is researched to answer the question of “how” and “why” (Silverman, 2018). Moreover, the target population in the research is citizens from Nigeria.

**Ethical Considerations**

Ethics plays a critical role when performing research. Therefore, researchers must ensure that several ethical factors are considered, for instance, acknowledgment of other authors' work when used in any part of the research is very important. Researchers are required to provide proper referencing to appreciate the work of other researchers. Moreover, when dealing with study participants they should participate based on informed consent (Canagarajah & Stanley, 2015). Besides, researchers should provide enough information and assurance concerning taking

part in the study and allow them to understand the implications of participating as well as freely make a decision about whether to do so or not without being forced or intimidated.

Confidentiality is also a significant ethical consideration as information provided by the participants should be respected.

### **Measurement Issues and Limitations**

Since the research has utilized secondary data from internet sources such as books and articles, there has been a limitation in the pieces of research done regarding the relationship between corruption and poverty in Nigeria. Nonetheless, another limitation of the research includes defining instances where corruption is held most. The research has focused on corruption in general and how it influences poverty, however, the precision of corruption such as corruption in the police force could have helped in getting more detailed information.

In summation, having focused on how corruption has influenced poverty in Nigeria by analyzing several pieces of literature, it is evident that corruption plays a significant role in influencing poverty in Nigeria. Several causes that lead to corruption in Nigeria involve greed, unemployment and poverty. Moreover, corruption has been explained using the Broken Window Theory while poverty using the Vicious Circle Theory. The Broken Window Theory focuses on the repair of the window before it leads to breakage of other windows, meaning, communities should fix small crimes before they expand to uncontrollable situations. On the other hand, the Vicious Circle Theory uses a flow of influential factors that acts and inspires one another to deteriorate a nation into poverty condition. Through people being involved in corrupt practices in Nigeria, they have led to reduced development and increase unemployment rate. Moreover, political leaders have contributed a lot to underdevelopment and reduced service delivery to citizens due to greed and hence deteriorating poverty levels.

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