16

GHANA AND NIGERIAN CORRUPTION: REALISTIC APPROACHES AND COOPERATION COMBAT IT! (2016-2018)

Emmanuel Badu Amoah
Research Scholar, Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon
Email: ebamoah@st.ug.edu.gh, emmanuel.amoah@peacecouncil.gov.gh

OPEN ACCESS
Freely available Online
www.isdesr.org

Abstract: *This article assesses the feasibility and potential cooperation in combating corruption, a shared challenge faced by two West African countries Ghana and Nigeria. It specifically examines Ghana's and Nigeria's political economy as a developing nation, critically analyses its history of corruption, and explores potential collaborative initiatives to address this issue. The selection of the specific time periods (2016-2018) for study was essential, as both administrations campaigned on anti-corruption platforms to secure electoral victory. During a similar time-frame, the heads of state implemented measures targeting individuals perceived as corrupt by previous administrations. They pledged to restore public confidence in the judicial system and recover assets allegedly obtained through corrupt practices. Their unified commitment to this cause was evident in their primary campaign themes, which revolved around anti-corruption efforts. Data collection and analysis for this article were conducted using indigenous research methodologies. The conclusions drawn shed light on the structural challenges stemming from colonial legacies and the imposition of foreign religious ideologies. These factors have hindered anti-corruption efforts in both nations*

Key words: Perception, Power, West African, Common Enemies, Corruption

Introduction
The concept of corruption has generated a great argument from all over the world, from academia, policy-makers, and the work environment. Mannion (1997:58) expresses it as "since the time of Aristotle, scholars exploring the question of corruption have adopted a variety of different definitions, associated with different sorts of research questions and normative concern. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank have noted that both causes and effects of corruption vary from country to country depending on the prevailing social, economic, and political conditions (UNDP, 1999; World Bank, 1997). Some scholars try to detach particular behaviours: seek out the cultural dialectic of corruption while imagining the setting of corrupt deeds (Jiang, 2017). The collaboration and cooperation efforts to fight this menace have generated various arguments. The structural approach from developmental and governance structures becomes very difficult in dealing with the subject. The phenomenon is a troublesome term because it is ethnocentric with strong negatives (Bunker & Cohen 1984). The concept that the political and cultural landscape has created in developing nations, with all their natural resources, is still battling with the issue of poverty.

"Your Excellency can be assured that you have a good partner in me as I look forward to any form of collaboration between Nigeria and Ghana in tackling the menace of endemic corruption." (President Buhari of Nigeria on the 61st Ghana Independence Day celebration, Citifmonline.com).

Nigerian President Mahamadu Buhari stated on the 61st Ghana Day celebration that "Your Excellency can be assured that you have a good partner in me as I look forward to any form of collaboration between Nigeria and Ghana in tackling the menace of endemic corruption." This was a follow-up statement as the President of Ghana, Nana Addo Dankwa Akuffo-Addo, had beforehand stated his readiness and willingness to fight corruption by creating the New Office for a Special Prosecutor to deal with that challenge. The President of Nigeria's statement has generated criticism both in Ghana and Nigeria about whether this statement is feasible or mere rhetoric in Africa. Corruption perception and its reality have been generated in the developmental policy and governance institutional framework.

The purpose of this paper is to critically evaluate this statement, examine Ghana's historical background with its political economy of corruption in a democratic dispensation in a developing nation, and lastly, discuss the feasible collaborative efforts with sister countries to fight corruption and the challenges these exercises would bring to society.

The General Scope of Corruption
Many authors, however, suggest that corruption is mainly a grave problem for the less developed nations (Bretton 1962; Myrdal 1968; McMullan 1961; Bayley 1966; Huntington 1968; Horowitz Although the "definitions of corruption are problematic... definitions of corruption run the scope from being too broad as to be rendered relatively useless to being too narrow and thus be appropriate to only restricted, sporadic, well-defined cases (Waite and Allen 2003:282). "*Corruption* is most commonly defined as the misuse or abuse of public office for private gain (World Bank, 1997; UNDP, 1999). (Balboa & Medalla, 2006, p. 3). "While corruption is commonly attributed to the public sector, it also exists in other aspects of governance, such as political parties, the private business sector, and NGOs (USAID, Anticorruption Strategy, 2005). (Balboa & Medalla, 2006, p. 3). Klitgaard (1988) explained that corruption can come in various forms and a wide array of illicit behaviours. These behaviours include bribery, extortion, fraud, nepotism, graft, speed money, pilferage, theft, and embezzlement; falsification of records; kickbacks; influence peddling; as well as campaigning (p. 3). Arnold J. Heidenheimer defines

corruption as the "destruction or spoiling of anything, especially by disintegration or decomposition with its accompanying unwholesomeness." (Heidenheimer, 1970, p. 3). Corruption is also "a making or becoming morally corrupt, a fact or condition of being corrupt; moral deterioration or decay; depravity," as well as "the perversion of an institution, custom, or... from its primary purity" (Heidenheimer, 1970, pp. 3, 64). Senturia (1930–1935) defines corruption as the "misuse of public office (public power, public interest, public authority) for private profit (private benefit, personal gain, family or group benefit)" (p. 449). This definition can be used interchangeably with that of Heidenheimer (1970), who emphasizes the aspect of moral depravity accompanying and reflecting corrupt conduct.

For the purpose of this paper, I employ Senturia's (1930–1935) definition of corruption but would also stress more on the scope, structure, and future of the phenomenon. His definition emphasizes that whatever has been entrusted to a person, whether position, power, interest, or authority, if misused, leads to corruption. According to Arora (1993), corruption can be differentiated into three types: collusive, coercive, and non-conjunctive. Collusive corruption occurs when those involved in the corruption process willingly and actively participate in the process and use it as an instrument for deriving greater benefits than the costs of corruption on their parts. In the case of coercive corruption, corruption is forced upon the one being corrupted by those in positions of power and authority by using their influence. In non-conjunctive corruption, benefits are obtained at someone else's cost, and victims are unaware of their victimization. Corruption in its many varieties and forms can be further categorized in terms of its nature (Arora, 1993). Individual corruption, according to Thompson (2013), is "personal gain or benefit by a public official in exchange for promoting private interests." When an official provides a favour outside his or her official job description or receives a bribe in return for any form of favour, be it political or otherwise, the action is considered individual corruption. The action of the official does not serve the interests of the institution. It rather goes through what may be considered legitimate institutional practices (Thompson, 2013, p. 7).

Institutional corruption, according to Thompson (2013), "involves political gain or benefit by a public official under conditions that in general tend to promote private interests" (p. 6). Institutional corruption is not always easy to recognize because it is so closely related to conduct that is a perfectly acceptable part of political life. This system of corruption, according to Jiang (2017; 2), could be systemic and systematic. He justified systematic corruption as a product of weak administration systems and the absence of watchdog institutions that are endemic to the system (Johnston, 1998). Systemic corruption is organized delinquency that is hunted for private notice and disrupts the very plan of the political system to deploy for pecuniary advantages. (Jiang,2017) According to Thompson (2013),

Institutional corruption can be distinguished systematically from individual corruption by examining the three key elements of the relationship between officials and citizens: the benefit to a public official, the service to a private citizen, and the improper connection between the benefit and the service. (p. 8). Corruption is considered institutional when the service provided by the official is not one-off but continuous, and the benefit derived from providing the service influences the official to bypass the laid-down process. Corruption is institutional when the benefit derived from providing the service is not personal but political (Thompson, p. 8). Political corruption includes "the behaviour of (elected) public officials that diverges from the formal components—the duties and powers, rights, and obligations of a public role—to seek private gain" (Kramer, 1997). Kramer's definition suggests that the act or behaviour of public officials can be considered illegal and constitute corruption if it is directly related to their official

duties. What constitutes illegality or political corruption may differ depending on the country. Different jurisdictions have different laws governing ethics and official conduct for specific public office holders.

Administrative corruption is the next type that is defined as "the institutionalized personal abuse of public resources by civil servants (Gould, as cited in Farazmand, 1991, p. 467). Administrative corruption thrives where there is a high level of bureaucracy and when systems and procedures are cumbersome or complex. The lack of proper accountability for public resources is one of the contributing factors to the prevalence of administrative corruption. In both cases of political and administrative corruption, public officials (elected and appointed) can abuse public office for their own private gain.

Theories of Corruption
The early philosophers postulated the phenomenon of corruption from legal perspectives, economic theory, and a sociological view. Jiang (2017) explained that the various approaches have been categorized into the realist and normalist paradigms. "Realism is a doctrine that explains the existence of the external world independently of our representation of it. The meaning of the representation includes perception, thought, language, belief, and desire; artefacts such as pictures and maps; and so includes the way in which we experience the world and ourselves. This doctrine had been rebutted by relativists, arguing that since any such external world is inaccessible to us in both principle and practice, it need not be postulated or considered" (Cromby and Nightingale 1999:6). Nominalism holds that abstract concepts, general terms, or universals have no independent existence but only a name (Barthely, 2000). It then denies the existence of abstract and universal concepts and refuses to admit that the intellect has the power to deny them (Rohmann, 1999). The two aforementioned opposite doctrines reflect all the scholars intentionally and unintentionally into the corruption paradigm. Realists believe there is a kind of behaviour in reality that is corrupt, whether one believes it or not, and their mission is to find such a pattern. It is labelled as behaviour-clarify and positive approach (Heidenheimer, 1989; Qizilbash, 2001) Nominalists pay more attention to the structural environment of corruption occurrence or the dynamics of how corruption emerges.

The realist paradigm conceptualized corruption from five main approaches: moral, legal, public-spirited, public-interest-centered, and lastly, public opinion-centered approaches. The moral approach is the oldest school of thought that measures corruption practices; for them, a shared understanding of the rules is necessary to maintain public order and confidence. Any behaviour deviating from norms is seen as immoral or bad, including corruption. Hence, researchers just "compare potentially corrupt behaviour with an absolute moral standard" to determine if it is corrupt or not (Williams 2000:127). Plato considers constitutions to be corrupt if they safeguard the rulers instead of the law (Friedrich 1972:17). Other scholars, such as Aristotle, Machiavellelli, Monstequien, and J.J. Rousseau, supported moralist claims about corruption and accepted that they were also a problem, immeasurable, and imponderable in contemporary West Africa. In a nutshell, the moralist approach develops from ancient western culture and "defines corruption as an immoral deviant form of behaviour that has serious and unfavourable effects on a whole range of political and economic activities" (Williams 2000:127). The second approach is the use of the law as a gauge stick to measure corruption. Bryce (1921:121) stated that "corruption may be taken to include those modes of employing money to obtain private ends by political means that are criminal or at least illegal because they induce persons charged with a public duty to transgress that duty and misuse the functions assigned to them. Leff (1964) sees it as an extra-legal institution that individuals use to gain action over

bureaucracy. The third approach is the public-office-centered paradigm, which measures the actions of a public officer according to the law and has other rules that guard all his actions in his office. A classical definition is what Nye (1967:417) put it;

[Corruption is] behaviour that deviates from the formal duties of a public role because of private—regarding (personal, close family, private clique) pecuniary status gains or violates rules against the exercise of certain types of private—regarding influence. This includes such behaviours as bribery (use of reward to pervert the judgement of a person in a position of trust); nepotism (bestowal of patronage by reason of an ascriptive relationship rather than merit); and misappropriation (illegal appropriation of public resources for private purposes).

The basic view of the public-of-course definition is that there are certain defined and explicit rules governing their behaviours, including the laws. A perfect public official will perform his roles by following all rules; otherwise, s/he is corrupt. The fourth approach is the public-interest-centeredness paradigm, which now shifts corruption from moral, legal, and normative to public harm or consequence for the public. The phenomenon is thoroughly measured by public interest. Noticeably, given the clear idea of what behaviour is corrupt, a distinction must be made first between public needs or interests shared by a community at large and private interest. And in this definition, public interest is always above private interest in people's value. Lastly, the realist approach is a public-opinion-centered paradigm. This seeks to resolve the lost gap between the moralist, legalist, public-office-centered, and interest-centered approaches. The reality is that the ruling class standard is imposed on the ruled class (Jiang, 2017). Heywood (1997) put it as "what the public in any given state perceives it to be." The scope and structure of corrupt practices are in the knowledge of public opinion because the people are guided more by local culture than by the words of the law.

Nominalist paradigms depend on behaviour-classifying definitions that consider three main approaches to corruption: market-centered, principal agent-client, and rent-seeking, derived from economic theory. Pouches of this paradigm are not eager to separate some precise behaviour from others but to pay attention to devices overdue for such conduct (Jiang, 2017). A market-centered approach to the nominal paradigm limits interaction between bureaucracy and the public to point on supple demand-supple curves. The non-aligned stand circumvents the muddle between objective or universalistic gears and local and relative standards. Also, this definition includes situations or conditions where norms for official behaviour are not clear or are not well defined (Banfield, 1975). The second approach is principle-agent-client (P-A-C), which sets up an interface scenario wherein corruption transpires. Jiang (2017) expresses it as a rational choice theory. This model argues that an agent is easily corrupt if his or her net benefit from corruption is greater than his or her net benefit from being honest. There is normally more betrayal of principle interest to pursue one's own needs than the greater majority. Lastly, the rent-seeking approach that is directly derived from economic theory only intends to seek selfishness, and they are concerned with maximizing their self-interests by seeking "rent" in the public administration. Buchanan (1980) says it is "directly related to the scope and range of governmental activity in the economy and to the relative size of the public sector.

The critics about these two paradigms raise two issues: problem biases in classes and the merits of the definition. The ruling ideology and interest considerations normally control the realist paradigm; they do not consider the political economy of corruption and make this paradigm just a socially constructed one with minimum control over the phenomenon.

Relativists render the realist philosophy a subjective action of the ruled, and such ideology is not a prescription to solve socio-political challenges. The definition from some of the approaches, such as moral, rent-seeking, and principal agent client, is assumed in the state logic as right. Such ideologies are lacking in the literature from researchers. Summer (1997) put it as "no particular behaviour of personality can be shown to be universally deviant or criminal, and that the censures of crime and deviance are irredeemably suffused with ideology... their definitions were constituted by the yardstick of their own ideals and norms." A good definition should reach the deep part of a phenomenon instead of its surface, but existing definitions are based on the ruling group's social construction, and those definitions do not jump out of the ruling group's logic and are about what behaviours are corrupt or how those behaviours happen (Summer, 1997:22). The definition from both the realist and nominalist paradigms should have capacity for interpretation, applicability, and contextualization for a concept.

The Political Economy of Corruption in Ghana and Nigeria Corruption
Corruption is a problem that affects countries in the sub-Saharan African region. In spite of the many efforts aimed at dealing with the menace of corruption, it continues to increase. Millions of dollars are lost annually through various corrupt practices (Hanson, 2009). Within the sub-Saharan African region, corruption has been identified as one of the key factors undermining development in countries within the region (Uneke, 2010). According to Transparency Internationals People and Corruption: Africa Survey 2015 Global Corruption Barometer, "nearly 75 million people in sub-Saharan Africa are estimated to have paid bribes in the past year, some to escape punishment by the police or courts, but many were forced to pay to get access to the basic services that they desperately need" (Transparency International Publication, 2015, p. 2).

The case of Ghana is no different from the other countries in the region. Corruption is seen as a problem in every work sector in Ghana. There is evidence to prove that corrupt activities in both the public and civil service are causing the country to lose millions of dollars annually, as indicated earlier (Quartey, 2014). Public service Corruption dates as far back as pre-independence and has been entrenched in the public service and politics of the country. Despite claims by the various ruling governments, it has yet to be dealt with. When Ghana first became a republic under Kwame Nkrumah (he ruled from 1957 to 1966), the country had its share of corrupt practices (Agbele, 2011). Agbele argues that Nkrumah's dictatorial socialist system of governance created a monopoly of power where only members of the ruling party enjoyed preferential treatment (Agbele, 2011). Agbele cites Heidenheimer (2009), who argues that the Convention people's party became very influential, and members of the party or people perceived to be aligned with the party enjoyed preferential access to state services and government contracts. Mukum Mbaku (2004) wrote that commissions set up to investigate the ousted Nkrumah government revealed that Nkrumah's party, the Convention Peoples Party, raised over $5 million for the personal use of Nkrumah. This amount was raised through 5 and 10 percent charges on government contracts, which were paid by contractors as kickback.

The National Development Commission was created in 1958 and was used as a conduit to collect illegal commissions and kickbacks. Contractors who received contracts from the government had to pay bribes to public officials in order to secure these contracts. The issuing of import licenses became a means of bribery and extortion. Traders had to pay between 5 and 10 percent of the value of the license they required as a bribe before they were issued with the license (Mbaku, 2004). There were examples of "properties like the one that A.

G. Leventis purchased in 1962 at an inflated price with the understanding that $2.4 million would be turned over to Nkrumah for his own use" (Mbaku, p. 133). According to Awoonor, after Nkrumah was ousted in the coup of 1966, Krobo Edusei, a cabinet minister and perhaps the most loyal of Nkrumahists, told a commission of inquiry that he personally carried gold bars to Cairo for Nkrumah—gold bars that were state property (Awonor, as cited in Agbele, 2011, p. 21). Subsequent governments were also guilty of using the system of patronage and cronyism to reward their supporters. Unfortunately, efforts to curb corruption have not yielded positive results, despite the use of both civil and radical means to address it. Four military interventions, all with the excuse of bringing an end to corruption, did not yield the desired result, as they also ended up with corrupt activities due to their entrenched nature in the nation's fabric (Agbele, 2011). On January 13, 1972, Colonel I.K. Acheampong led a bloodless coup to topple the government of Prime Minister Busia. This Busia administration was the democratically elected government after the overthrow of Kwame Nkrumah. The coup leaders formed the National Redemption Council (NRC), which was reorganized and replaced by the Supreme Military Council (SMC) in 1975 (Miller, 2011). They promised to stabilize the economy and improve the living standards of the citizenry. The first three years of Acheampong's government saw some steady progress, but the country began to suffer a decline in 1976. Unable to deliver on its promises, the NRC/SMC became increasingly marked by mismanagement and rampant corruption. According to Miller (2011), there was increasing discontent among Ghanaians due to the high inflation rate, shortage of goods and services, and high cost of living. This situation was aggravated by the culture of corruption in all ranks of the NRC/SMC government. High-ranking government officials were known to divert the country's cocoa sales to their personal offshore bank accounts (Miller, 2011).

The last two military interventions (1979 and 1981) in the politics of the country were partly driven by the desire to end corruption (Ayee in Hope & Chikulo, Eds., 2000). According to Agbele (2011), for instance, the government of the third republic was ousted in a coup two years after taking office due to allegations of corruption. The Provisional National Defence Council (whose leadership conducted both coups) took over the reign of government in 1981 but turned out to be guilty of corrupt practices, too (p. 7). As stated by Agbele (2011), a British court in 2009 found Mabey and Johnson, a UK civil engineering company, guilty of bribing a number of Ghanaian government officials in the 1990s in order to be awarded contracts. These officials were all members of the same PNDC/NDC government that ousted governments over corruption (p. 7).

As observed by Guimah-Boadi (2009), Mr. John Agyekum Kufuor's government, which took over from Jerry Rawlings's National Democratic Congress in 2000, promised to fight against corruption. In his inaugural address as the third president of the Fourth Republic of Ghana, President J.A. Kufuor declared zero tolerance for corruption under his administration. Despite this assurance and efforts by his government to fight corruption, the New Patriotic Party (NPP) government was dogged with the perception of corruption. As stated by Gyimah-Boadi, reports of extravagant expenditures abounded, including the president's son's purchase of a multimillion-dollar hotel that adjoined his father's private residence (Gyimah-Boadi, 2009). A member of parliament of the president's party was convicted and imprisoned in the United States in 2007 for narcotics trafficking. There were also cocaine scandals involving senior police officers, in which investigations were botched. These scandals tainted the reputation of the government. Another allegation of corruption against the NPP government was its inability to account for the lavish spending on the celebrations of the 50th anniversary of independence (Gyimah-Boadi, 2009). In 2007, one of the ruling party's Members of Parliament, the

Honourable Paul Appiah-Ofori, described the president's fight against corruption as purely cosmetic. In his view, the president's efforts at fighting corruption in the country's political system are inadequate. "As far as I am concerned, it is cosmetic, and nothing would be achieved out of it... If you establish internal units that fail to perform the functions they are supposed to perform, then the establishment of the units is useless" (VOA News, 2009).

Situation in Ghana (2016–2018)
Various research findings for the past decade indicate that corruption has become a major problem in Ghana. The governance and corruption survey conducted by the Ghana Centre for Democracy Development (CDD Ghana) in 2000 found that 75 percent of the Ghana households surveyed regarded corruption as a serious national problem. On the issue of corruption being a major problem, 59 percent of the households were of the view that it was a major problem in the private sector, and 85 percent saw it as a major problem in the public sector (Konteh, Jalloh, & Allieu, 2000). Five years later, a similar survey conducted by the Ghana Integrity Initiative (GII) showed an increase in perceived corruption among Ghanaians. The survey indicated that 92.5 percent of urban households in southern Ghana saw corruption as prevalent in Ghana, while 90 percent considered corruption to be a serious problem (NACAP Report, 2011).

The 2011 National Anti-Corruption Action Plan report has some disturbing statistics about public opinion of elected officials. According to the report, 58 percent of respondents to the survey regarded the presidency as corrupt. With regards to members of parliament, 58 percent saw them as corrupt, while 56 percent perceived the government as corrupt. The survey also revealed that the majority of Ghanaians saw "some" local government councillors (61 percent) and metropolitan, municipal, and district chief executives (56 percent) as corrupt. The same report points to a judicial monitoring exercise conducted by the Ghana Integrity Initiative (GII) in 2007 in Accra, Tema, and Kumasi that indicated that corruption is rife in the judicial service (NACAP Report, 2011). Padding of salaries, or what is generally known as "ghost names," on the public payroll alone costs Ghana GH₵ 30 billion annually, an equivalent of USD 8.3 billion (NACAP Report, 2011). The Auditor General's annual report on the public accounts of Ghana continues to show millions of U.S. dollars lost to the country every year due to corrupt practices by officials working in ministries, departments, and other agencies of the central government (Joy News, 2015). The 2013 report indicates that a total of $254 million USD was lost to the state due to various corrupt practices; this figure represents an increase of 20 percent over the previous year's figure (Quarter, 2014, p. 9). Furthermore, the print and electronic media in Ghana are constantly reporting on corrupt practices and financial scandals in almost every sector of the country. Issues of bribery, fraud, and inflation of contract sums are regular features in news items. For example, The *New Era* (2012), a Ghana newspaper, reported in its November 2013 edition that it has gathered information that suggests that despite the inactivity of the Local Enterprises and Skills Development (LESDEP) since January 2013, the entity has been paid an amount of GH₵23 million by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning as part of the GH₵84 million that was earmarked for the program by the government. Since its establishment in 2010, LESDEP has been allocated over GH₵ 200 million by the government, but the entity has not shown any credible evidence that the funding was used to train and equip the youth with employable skills. According to the paper, the LESDEP is one of the institutions that has been scandalized with reports of corruption ranging from the questionable award of contracts for the supply of various goods and accessories meant for beneficiaries (*New Era News,* 2013).

The Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA) (2015), a respected public policy institute in Ghana, in its 2014 socio-economic and governance survey report, ranked the office of the president as the second most corrupt state institution in the country. According to the report, this view was shared by 86 percent of Ghanaians. According to Transparency Internationals People and Corruption: Africa Survey 2015-Global Corruption Barometer (GCB) (Transparency International Publication, 2015), the majority of Africans perceive corruption to be on the rise on the continent. Ghana is mentioned in this report as one of the countries where the citizens perceive that corruption is on the increase. The country was ranked second as the most corrupt country among the thirty-six countries that were surveyed across the African region. (Transparency International Publication, 2015). Ghana politics has placed corruption higher, and various roles of the media, civil society organizations, and international bodies have created awareness and willingness to fight this menace so that its process will make the country economically independent and meet the country's challenging needs. For the past eight years, the current president, Nana Addo Dankwa Akuffo Addo, has campaigned on the message of fighting corruption, which prepared the background for creating a special office for a special prosecutor from the Ministry of Justice and Attorney General.

Situation in Nigeria (2016–2018)

Nigerian context and perception of corruption date back to 1950, when the elite began to replace British colonial officials. Corruption, especially misappropriation of public funds, was widely practised (Enweremadu, 2013, cited from Falola in 1998). It became a colonial legitimacy, practices, and experience handed over to the public officers in Nigeria with all support from moral values. Corruption took control of the Nigerian political economy, given its socio-economic structure. These tendencies were compounded by a massive inflow of oil and an uncountable military dictatorship, which further institutionalized these practices (Aper 2005; Smith 2007). Although a structural system on corrupt practice has been laid historically in Nigeria, sometimes it engages in some rhetoric in anti-corrupt practice that Diamond (1991) called "the perennial struggle against corruption. Eweremadu (2013) claimed that this practice of anti-corruption rhetoric was more pronounced during the 1970s and 1980s, when an unexpected oil boom was accompanied by increases in the diversion of public funds into foreign accounts.

Nigeria, after returning to democratic dispensation from the military regime in 1999, launched a campaign aimed at securing the repatriation of looted public funds being held in foreign banks (Enweremadu, 2013) by former president Olusegu Obasanyo (1991–2007) as an as an anti-corrupt campaigner. This policy failed because the international bodies were unwilling to support it. The local communities support lacked, according to Enweremadu (2013), transparency, excessive fixation with Abacha loots, inadequate legal accounting skills, the uncooperativeness of the accused persons, and limited political will. It was estimated that out of the 170 billion USD looted, only 2 billion were retrieved from these exercises after eight years. There was some result, even though, based on external factors, the "Abacha affair" was influenced by changing global attitudes towards corruption. For some time, corrupt leaders in the developing world saw Western banks as "safe havens" to hide their loot (TI 2004; Vlasic and Cooper 2011). Little has been done since 2007 in Nigeria to deal with corrupt practices. Currently, President Buhari has continued from what former President Olusegun Obasanyo started with little result, but this time creating more socio-economic effects in Nigeria. The approach to corruption in current Nigeria is dangerous because its methods consider only sum-optimal theorization without taking into consideration the political economy. From a realist

paradigm, the fight against corruption should have considered cultural and economic factors. The political economy must meet the unemployment deficit and cultural practices of Nigeria.

Feasibility for Fighting Corruption and Conclusion

The data from the field vehemently expressed what the literature had already said, but in a more serious way, it had an effect on democratic governance structures, which was not only a sense of perception but a reality that was openly expressed by the public statement, for example, a security officer, as put it in this way: "My salaries have been increased, but we must also enjoy small things as our political class, who get riches overnight when their political parties are in power.[1]" Another public officer stated that "I have to use the school lesson period to sell my clothes so that I can take good care of my children to bridge the economic hardship of our leaders."[2] These two statements from Ghana public officers put blame on the action and inaction of the governance structure, and the *blame-game* often outgrowths by the public on the existence of corruption in society. The public deliberately blames the cancer of corruption on the political class and their leadership, but unfortunately, exempt themselves from the blame. Literature reviewed in Nigeria openly supports a rooted, structured economic, political, and cultural corruption that, even in an attempt to remove corrupt practices from society, could unintended create a system of unemployment in the history of Nigeria. Largely because the benefactors are greater than those who do not engage in the practice.

The feasibility of fighting corruption between Nigeria and Ghana through cooperation and collaboration could only work externally, but internal challenges may be impossible. The local public and private sector political economies differ by using realist and nominalist theories of corruption. The internal economics of Nigeria, according to its sum-optimal theorization approach, are calling back to corruption because scope, structure, and success were not considered. The moral-legal approach to resolving the problem is causing more harm than good because of its entrenchment in the cultural fabric. Prosecuting the victim alone, as in the case described by Ghana, is not enough given its history and will not be a final solution. Such a solution is cosmetic and will require more education and a change in attitude to solve the challenges. There is a need for a theoretical framework to understand the development tragedy in Africa, especially in Nigeria and Ghana, where, in general, the pandemic and seeming insoluble problem of political corruption exist in these two nations. The theory must be conceptualized into policies, and proper enforcement could be encouraged. A practical, down-to-earth approach that will create a social safety net to fight corruption in these two nations must have a clear road map that is understood by all citizens and a willingness for change. There must be enough research work to look at those whose economic activities depend on both secondary and tertiary forms of corruption and implement that recommendation simultaneously with the current approach to cutting down on corruption from a realist and nominalist perspective. In addition, the cost of elections must be reduced, winners-take-all must be eliminated, and the issue of godfatherism in politics must be tackled with dispatch by the two nations. And because the problem is multifarious, multidimensional, and enormous, the solution may seem inexhaustible.

References

1. Agbele, F. (2011) Political economy analysis of corruption in Ghana. *European Research Centre for Anti-Corruption and State-Building (ERCAS) Working Paper* (28).

---

[1] Isaac Asamoah, a Ghana Police Officer, was interviewed on March 20, 2017 at Kumasi Sofoline.
[2] Anima Aninwaa Acheapong, Senior High School Tutor, was interviewed on April 28, 2018.

2. Ayee, J.R.A. (2000) 'Ghana: the continuing search for cures in the fight against corruption'. Hope, K. R., and Chikulo, B.C. (eds) *Corruption and Development in Africa: Lessons from Country Case Studies* Basingstoke: Macmillan.
3. Ayittey, G. (2000) Combating Corruption in Africa: Analysis and Context. Hope, K. R., and Chikulo, B.C. (eds). *Corruption and Development in Africa: Lessons from Country Case Studies* Basingstoke: Macmillan.
4. Banfield, E. C., & Banfield, E. C. (1985) Corruption as a feature of governmental organization. *Here the People Rule: Selected Essays*, 147-170.
5. Bunker, S. G., & Cohen, L. E. (1984) Ethics and Methods of Researching Official Corruption: Reply to Rabben, *Human Organization*, *43*(1), 81–84.
6. Cromby, J., & Nightingale, D. J. (1999) What's wrong with social constructionism? *Social constructionist psychology: A critical analysis of theory and practice*, 1–19.
7. Diamond, D. W. (1991) Monitoring and reputation: the choice between bank loans and directly placed debt. *Journal of Political Economy*, *99*(4), 689–721.
8. Enweremadu, D. U. (2013) The Impact of Corruption on Economic Development: Comparing the Experience of Nigeria and Indonesia (1967–1998). *Asian Tigers, African Lions* (pp. 197–226) Brill.
9. Falola, T. (1998) *Violence in Nigeria: The Crisis of Religious Politics and Secular Ideologies* University of Rochester Press.
10. Gyimah-Boadi, E. (2009) Another step forward for Ghana. *J. Democracy*, *20*, 138
11. Gould D.(1991). Administrative Corruption: Incidence, Cause, and Remedial Strategies, in Ali Farazmand, ed., Handbook of Comparative Development in Public Administration. New York, Marcel Derkker, 467–484.
12. Habermas, J. (1989) The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society. Translated by Thomas Burger and Frederick G. Lawrence. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989.
13. Heidenheimer, A. J. (1970) Political corruption: readings in comparative analysis. *(No Title)*.
14. Jiang, F., & Doudna, J. A. (2017) CRISPR-Cas9 structures and mechanisms. *Annual review of biophysics*, *46*, 505–529.
15. Johnston, A. I. (1998) *Cultural realism: strategic culture and grand strategy in Chinese history* (Vol. 75). Princeton University Press.
16. Klitgaard, R. (1988) *Controlling corruption*. University of California Press.
17. Kramer, B. J. (1997) Gain in the caregiving experience: Where are we? What next?. *The Gerontologist*, *37*(2), 218–232.
18. Mannion, A. F., Connolly, B., Wood, K., & Dolan, P. (1997) The use of surface ENIG power spectral analysis in the evaluation of back muscle function. *Development*, *34*(4), 427–439.
19. Mann, J. J., Apter, A., Bertolote, J., Beautrais, A., Currier, D., Haas, A., & Hendin, H. (2005) Suicide prevention strategies: a systematic review. *Jama*, *294*(16), 2064-2074.
20. Mbaku, J. M. (2004) *Institutions and development in Africa*. Africa World Press.
21. Smith, J. M., Van Ness, H. C., Abbott, M. M., & García, C. R. (2007) *Introducción a la termodinámica en ingeniería química* (pp. 639–671). McGraw-Hill.
22. Thompson, F. M. L. (2013) *English landed society in the nineteenth century*. Routledge.
23. Vlasic, M. V., & Cooper, G. (2011) Repatriating Justice: New Trends in Stolen Asset Recovery and Fighting Corruption. *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs*, 98–105.
24. Waite, D., & Allen, D. (2003) Corruption and abuse of power in educational administration. *The urban review*, *35*, 281-296.