

Political corruption in africa essay sample

[Parts of the World](#), [Africa](#)



Africa is known as the world's largest corrupt place which can explain the slow development and poverty among African states. According to Transparency International, the chief global regulator of corruption, six of the ten most corrupt countries originate from sub-Saharan Africa. In 2002, a research carried out by African Union that found that corruption cost the African continent about \$150 billion every year. According to Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Africa got \$22.5 billion aid from developed countries. Economists argue that African leaders should fight corruption in place of depending on foreign aid. However, the war against corruption is faced by many obstacles; for instance developed countries are reluctant to stop influencing African governments. Professionals put forward that African interest to invite more foreign investors is a very crucial step in war against corruption.

Corruption in Africa ranges from huge political graft in terms of million of dollars to small bribes to customs officials or cops. Sophisticated political graft inflict direct financial overheads to the country involved, while petty bribes have a mordant impact to the basic organizations and demoralize public confidence in the government. According to the study carried out in 2009 by East African Bribery index and compiled by Transparency International, more than half of East Africans gave paid bribes to gain access to public amenities that were supposed to be offered freely. Political graft also increases the cost of running businesses. This has dreadful impact since it will discourage many entrepreneurs which slow down economic development. Academic research reveals that a point improvement in a

given country's Transparency International corruption score is related to an increase in productivity equal to 4% of the country's gross domestic product.

Nuhu Ribabu , the former leader of Nigeria's anti-corruption commission told the Business week in June 2009 that " if you attack corruption, it's the superior approach of attacking poverty. If this high-level political grant is not addressed, it may result to national unrest. For instance, the insurgency in the Niger Delta is propelled by opinions that citizens in the locality do not experience tangible benefits from oil exploration; according to these communities much of the oil revenue meant for the Delta's people is transferred to government officials. The prevalence of corruption in African countries also deforms political practices. Professionals propose that many public officials in Africa search for reelection since holding public offices gives them access to the country's assets, as well as protection from trial. When the chances for remaining in the public office are minimal, candidates are likely to rig or buy votes, for instance the case of Nigeria in 2007 general elections. Paul Collier, an economist put across that, " These are more reliable and less difficult approaches of winning an election than trying to gain voter approval by being a good government."

In the last decade, African governments have made significant step towards war against corruption. In many incidents they are influenced by foreign donors advocating for good governance and transparency as well as domestic pressure to meet the objectives outlined in the campaign manifestos. Professionals put across that nations such as Rwanda, Liberia and Tanzania have made tremendous step towards fighting corruption

epidemic. Barack Obama, U. S. president congratulated Ghana's good governance reputation during his visit in July 2009. However, many countries such as Kenya, South Africa and Nigeria have made inconsequential improvement in the fight against corruption. These three countries have established anti-corruption organizations that aim at preventing, investigating and prosecuting corruption. Though a 2008 research from UN Economic Commission for Africa shown that the anti-corruption agencies in the three countries were futile and incompetent due to their tentative political footing. Often funded and overseen by an executive authority, anti-corruption agencies can be eradicated and leaders in charge to be sidelined or even being forced out of the country for example what happened in Nigeria and Kenya. Also in South Africa the Scorpions investigating unit was eliminated in 2009.

Indeed impunity is a chief threat which continues to demolish economies, institutions and societies especially in African countries. In TI's corruption Perceptions Index 2012, 90% of African states attained less than 50 points. In this case 0 represented high corruption while 100 on the other side imply lack of corruption. Somalia offered the most offending figure of 8 of all the African countries where they tied same outcomes as North Korea and Afghanistan. However, regardless of the imposed picture about corruption, corruption also occurs in other countries. Indeed paying close attention at corruption and opening up the mind beyond kickbacks and bribes will enable people to acknowledge that corruption exists in many countries across the world. People will also understand that even if Africa is more prevalent in corruption cases, developed countries are also extremely involved.

The corruption mentioned can be a component of African corruption since those companies can be on the less examined supply side, while African governments are deeply scrutinized on the demand side. For example, in 2010, BAE Systems, famous world's largest defense contractors, were accountable of the charges concerning contracts won from countries like South Africa and Tanzania. BAE was inspected by the UK's Serious Fraud Office in a case that took long time but they ended up paying \$460 million fines. The worldwide financial catastrophe, as a result of high-level of grants and fraud activities of financial corporations enlightens African governments. Githongo said that, " It became an affair of determined interest among Africa's chattering classes - long adapted to Western lectures on corruption - that this is not a exclusively African or even a Third World thing."

In addition, better understanding of the impact of corruption to the developing countries requires people to familiarize with the bribes and kickbacks that are calculated by TI's indices since they are forms of corruption. Enchanting a wider analysis, it can be understood that dome activities might not be corrupt in regard of explicitly contravening some policies, but they may demoralize democracy, human rights and transparency. People should also recognize the extent to which the developed countries are concerned in the issues facing Africa as they provide relief. An example is the function of governmental sell abroad credit agencies. Numerous western leaders for instance David Cameron, the British Prime Minister advocate for tackling the initial causes of poverty rather than its symptoms only. However, despite this, various western countries via export credit agencies, backs up that not merely involve monetary

corruption, but are associated to maintenance of inequality and abuse of human rights. In addition, to make the matters worse, they also develop monarch debt in the course which consequentially constrains domestic capacities of developing countries.

The fact is that crucially compounding these issues is the supreme debt they cause implying that the cost is passed to the citizens through oppression and suffering. For example, Egypt will spend an approximate of \$22 million this year to finance the debt accrued by Mubarak government for military procurement. Regardless of a pledge made by the Liberal Democrats to invalidate the ' dictators debts', UK insist that the debt should be paid although Mubarak was overthrown and criticized by international community. In other incidents countries such as Lesotho, Nigeria and Gabon still owe more than 50% of national debt to Export Credit Agencies such as the British ECGD. Reports reveal that various developing countries spend more money every year in servicing debt than they spend in other national affairs. While not all these debts are economically corrupt, they generate a favorable environment for corruption whereby moral ethics are ignored in quest of monetary gain by industrial countries.

Citizens from African countries propose that they are at the top notch of corruption issue such that their own issues surpass those from other countries. However, international corporate have a different view since they argue that issue of corruption in other countries is no different from the one existing in developing countries. NGO circles consider corruption as an end product of Western countries influence as well as effect of capitalism.

Corruption, dubious arms and toxic debt continue to haunt developing countries; however, this blame cannot be restrained to the developing countries. Thus the developed countries should understand that true change necessitates accountability and transparency in all states at all levels. The war against corruption should start with exploring the nature of corruption, the force that propel, and the necessary approach of combating this vice. Research analysis carried on the nature of corruption across the world reveal that the cause, factors fueling corruption and the necessary reform strategies are the same.

There are five chief drivers to be considered for good understanding of corruption. First key is the volume of unrecorded economy in African countries which might lead to corruption. Countries such as Nigeria has an approximate of at least 40 percent of its GDP, this creates loop holes where corrupt payments can be made from this unrecorded sectors. Second, the system of political finance where large sums of money gained through corrupt means are injected to the political process with an aim of corruptly gained recompense once authority is re-secured. This is most prevalent in most African countries. The third driver is the function of well thought-out crime in securing political cover and support for trading procedures ranging from drugs to phony pharmaceuticals. This is a very rampant activity in African countries. The fourth key is the function of local and international corporations in product price misquotation which enable a large chunk of profits to be shifted to havens where tax does do not exist or if the tax is very low. The final key is the system by which corrupt and illegally acquired products such as timber, oil and rare minerals are transferred to legal

sectors. This is a very common approach which African countries utilized to propel corruption.

The above five drivers to some extent also applies to other countries, but they are more prevalent in Africa. In exception of South Africa, there is no other African country that has its economy recording more than 60% in standard GDP figures. Dominant political parties are funded by a small group with corporate interests. Organized crime is a rampant factor in various countries especially fake pharmaceuticals and drugs. Transit of illegal product to legal sectors of oil, timber and coltan is most prevalent issue in Africa. Through this criterion, corruption in Africa is seen as more of an international model. For instance, Robert Mugabe has secured power in Zimbabwe due to an elite group of people with solid rapport with the military. This group extended its tentacles to DRC and recently operates in the domestic diamond mining industry where most of the output is unrecorded. Major politicians in Guinea-Bissau and Guinea-Conakry are active partners with Colombian drug barons in the trans-shipment of cocaine to Europe. Paul Biya has maintained power for 30 years serving as Cameroonian president, but he is sidelined for sell abroad of unlawful felled wood from Cameroon's gigantic forests coffers. In Nigeria, Delta oil ' bunkering ' supplements both local and national stakeholders in the government and the army. This is a good example of illegally acquired resources being moved to the world's legal sector through Rotterdam market. The is also a secretive and controversial world market prices of Tanzania's booming mineral exports such as platinum, gold and uranium.

These forms of corruption are general in most countries across the world so it is incorrect to argue that Africa is a victim of corrupt and global progression which it is unable to control. The size of the unrecorded sector is one of the major issues that the government should tackle as the first step towards fighting corruption. For example, Rwanda has shown interest in the question regarding the unrecorded economy. Any substantial increase in the local tax depends on the sturdy increase in the comparative size of the official sector. The management of political finance is a big challenge across the world, but the increased raid on African treasuries defense budget, Treasuries, and Central Banks can be drastically reduced. The extension of tentacles of structured crime relies on the compliance of at least some designated and non-elected officials, however the process is unavoidable. The transit of products from the illegal to the legal sector, though to some extent requires international partnership, it is mostly initiated by local rather than international agencies.

The inquiry about the price misquotation is one for which the accountability depends on the commercial world outside Africa and where African countries are indisputably regular fatalities of this, losing massive quantities of income in the practice. Here schemes such as the (EITI) Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, which entrusts both the firms and government to reporting the returns they respectively produce and obtain from utilization of mineral resources. It is only 14 countries in Africa that fully comply with EITI. Africa's corruption has many global aspects, especially owing to the fact that it originate from subterranean structural features which require a lot of power and audacity to change. Heroes such as John Githongo and Nuhu

Ribadu provided a good example, but they also demonstrated the depth of resistance by advocating the war against corruption and thus they were taken to exile. Also governments are required to address the basic issues as well as the cases associated to corruption that are usually brought to court.

Corruption in Africa contributes significantly to the study of the effects and eradication of corruption in African communities. In his book, Jogh Mukum Mbaku provide a well thought out analysis of the causes of civic malfeasance in African countries and presents a number of realistic and successful policy alternatives for change. The book express the harmful connection between bribery and abrogation of entrepreneurship and economic freedoms, a scheme that has left Africa as one of the most underprivileged regions in the world. Mbaku applies tools of public choice hypothesis to insist the function that institutions play in controlling corruption and he advocates for reconstructive self-governing constitutions as the most appropriate means of achieving development. Unless African countries' governments offering their citizens with organized procedures that adequately restrain the country and encourage wealth production, the living conditions in Africa continue to worsen.

Recent interest in political aspect of economic growth has had a crucial effect on the research to examine how manners of public servants affect a country's macroeconomic activity. Various research focus to the study of bureaucratic corruption and bureaucratic compensation. However, insignificant attention is paid to the corruption epidemic correction. Effective clean up scheme can be developed and executed only if researchers place

bureaucratic corruption in the appropriate context. Cleanup up strategies are likely to fail if bureaucratic corruption is not seen as an opportunistic behavior and is usually related to the extent and scope of government regulation of economic actions. Public choice theory is usually considered to be the most rationally rewarding and effective scaffold for combating corruption. African governments should lead in this war against corruption since political corruption is common and exists in African societies, this will enable to understand the causes which will enable them to formulate appropriate strategies.

In Africa bureaucrats endeavor to increase their reimbursement level by lobbying politicians and lawmakers and by getting into other activities to control political system and take advantage of returns that have accumulated from these activities. In other incidents, some civil servants unlawfully increase their reimbursement by providing services to interest groups that search for favors from the central authority. Political coalitions attempting to sabotage the existing policies to reallocate wealth and national income in their favor can achieve their goals by bribing bureaucrats whose role is to enforce state laws and implement national development agenda. If civil servants learn that they can earn more from the groups seeking government favor as compared to their public jobs, they may divert their focus to these interest groups rather than appropriate enforcement of national laws and regulations and successful implementation of national development agenda. In African societies where civil service reimbursement is comparatively low, the great part of public worker's entire reimbursement

may be obtained from involvement in outside activities, leading to a considerable augment of bureaucratic dishonesty.

The policies that control the socio-political rapport in a country have a momentous effect on the ability of bureaucrats to seek and secure outside compensation either legally or illegally. Bureaucrats in nondemocratic African societies face less constraint in the employment of public resources to lobby law makers and influence the group with the authority to determine the reimbursement for a given public sector. Indeed many African country leaders are stakeholders in the dominant group and have momentous influence in redistribution of resources. Due to these favorable conditions, bureaucrats act like interest group whose basic aim is to pressurize the political system so that resource allocation favors their side. African countries with inefficient and inappropriately formulated policies, opportunistic behaviors are generally pervasive. In such countries, the rules governing socio-political interaction do not function and sufficiently constrain the central authority. As a result, government intervention in private switch over is similarly pervasive. Excessive control of economic activities creates various opportunities for opportunistic behaviors which incorporate bureaucratic corruption.

Corruption has been a subject of interest for many researchers and social scientists. Modernization and political development brought up the discussion on bureaucratic corruption and function of policies and institutions in economic expansion and improvement. The markets and economies of Africa and Asia were said to be overwhelmed by incompetence, bureaucratic

inefficiency and corruption. The researchers who analyze bureaucratic corruption mainly focus on the impact of bureaucratic behavior on economic expansion and improvement. Despite many research analyses on the issue of corruption and its effect to African countries, the governments have not made efforts to combat this social vice which has dreadful effect to economic growth. To a great extent corruption can be used to explain the reason as to why Africa is generally considered as developing. African leaders should make sure that the resources are distributed in a fair manner as well as ensuring proper record of the economies which reduce loopholes that lead corruption. The government can as well increase the level of reimbursement which will also help to cover the loophole of corruption as civil servants seek compensation from outside activities.

Corruption in developing countries is argued to arise from the conflict between traditional heritage and western influence that is accompanied by social-political advancement and modernization. Researchers view bureaucratic corruption as an inevitable outcome of development and modernization. David Bayley proposes that there is relationship between bribery and corruption, but corruption is the misuse of power with an aim of personal gain, the gains are not necessarily monetary. Herbert Werlin defined political corruption as shift of public resources to nonpublic functions. Africans regard corruption as a practical predicament involving funds embezzlement, outright theft, inappropriate use of national property, abuse of public authority and position for personal gain, granting favors to groups seeking interest from government, and nepotism.

John Nye proposes that corruption involve actions which deviate from normal responsibilities of a public function for personal gain. Jacob Van Klaveren holds that corrupt leaders consider their office as a business where they are able to gain extra compensation. Therefore, bureaucratic entire reimbursement does not rely on the moral evaluation of his helpfulness for universal good, but precisely upon the market condition and their talents for identifying the position of maximal gain on the public's demand curve. Nathaniel Leff includes bribery to obtain import, investment, foreign exchange, production licenses, export, and avoid paying tax. Carl Friedrich considers corruption as reduction of social interest by the people in power that performs their duties with an aim of personal gain.

Political corruption provides leaders with an opportunity of raising their reimbursement above the one prescribed by the law. Politicians, who serve as wealth brokers, access the resources they require for self immunity and continue to monopolize the supply of law making. Corruption inflicts its dreadful impact to the society. Political corruption enable inappropriate producers to remain in business, propels governments to pursue obstinate economic strategies, and provides golden opportunities to politicians and bureaucrats to augment themselves by extracting bribes from the groups seeking favor from the government. Thus political corruption slow economic growth, dishearten entrepreneurship and deforms economic incentives.

In explaining bureaucratic corruption in Kenya, it is vital to describe the supply side which is the group in power. In most African countries, bribes from the groups interested in government favors as a momentous source of

extra-legal earnings for civil servants. It is imperative to differentiate between political and bureaucratic dishonesty. While bureaucratic corruption involves labors by civil servants to augment themselves via unlawful means, political corruption on the other hand is utilized by political parties to confine the equipment of the country or preserve monopoly supremacy. Political corruption usually includes activities such as registration of dead, unqualified or non-existent voters, the falsification of election results, vote rigging, and sale or purchase of votes.

The researchers analyzing the problem of corruption in Africa found out various factors that encourage corruption. The absence of commitment to public services such that politicians do not rule according to the majority interest but for personal gain. Many African politicians see authority as an opportunity for self enrichment. A political power maintains monopoly in the markets such that participation in economic system requires people to pay bribes. These governments provide perverse economy which impoverishes the citizens while the interest groups and national elites gain a lot.

Incompetence and inefficiency is another factor that contributes to high level of corruption in Africa. Appropriate allocation of wealth, economic resources and public goods require good governance. The hiring process in Africa is corrupt since people are picked due to their influence or relations with the group in power. The civil servants should be hired through a transparent method since a person should be hired because of his or her competence. The corruption involved in political hiring process is a major blow to the economy of a given country since unproductive and incompetent civil

servants lead to reduced development where the country remain underdeveloped.

Most African countries have a weak, poorly designed and inefficient constitutional laws, which leaves monopoly supremacy to the government to intervene in privatization. The ruling class may manipulate the monopoly supremacy through exploitation rather than serving the people appropriately. The resource allocation in this case become political issue, the ruling party may as well allocate the best or a greater share of the resources which should be distributed equally. The foreign culture influence also which include foreign aid to combat corruption causes more harm than good. They cause heavy debt to the governments in the developing countries. The debt is then shifted to the citizens in terms of taxes; corruption intensifies in this tax collection processes.

Political corruption in Africa is an issue that should be addressed just like any other epidemic. Governments should also seek to find out the amount of unrecorded economy such that there will be no corruption. Politicians have an easy access to these resources where they might be tempted to sell or utilize the unrecorded national assets for their personal gain. Political corruption also involves use of dubious strategies to secure authority; this might include voter buying, registration of non-existent or dead voters, vote rigging and other activities that are not moral. This might be very dangerous since it can provoke an occurrence of post-election war. For example, post-election violence in Kenya that took place in 2007. The greed for power has very dreadful consequences both to the candidate as well as the nation. Also

political corruption lead to differences between the ruling groups since the leader might not be willing to take advice or any idea raised by other people. This will also result to enmity between the ruling classes which eventually lead to division. Dividing people according to political basis leads to an ending war since each leader has their own ideologies.

In several African countries, postcoup commissions of inquisition are typically designed to dishonor the ousted regime and assist the incoming leaders gain legitimacy and recognition. It is also clear that corruption is also caused by concentration of power in the hands of the few elite groups. Research shows that of all the continents, Africa is the poorest. The severe inequality in resource allocation, chronic poverty, and extreme levels of material deprivation create good environment for corruption. Corruption is unbridled in Africa. Corruption has driven out expert and gifted Africans. The decree has also been warped to selectively shield some officials, for instance, remissive of guilty corrupt officials. As long as many people are still uninformed of their constitutional rights, opportunistic and corrupt regimes are still present, and political clashes continue in line with meager education systems, corruption will stay put in Africa. Regrettably, being an African is being corrupt, thus, Africans' mentality need instantaneous radical operation. Instead of people skirmishing corruption they embrace it. African leaders are the title holders of corruption and the citizens can barely wait for their turn to ransack and utilize Africa's rich national resources. Every African must inquire about their personal stance on corruption prior of getting interested in fighting corruption in the national level. Sierra Leone takes the lead and the rest of Africa is buying-off and dishonesty.

In conclusion, nothing can be done in Africa without kickback in schools, hospitals and public places and all over. Police officers and adjudicators are persuaded by bribes. The only approach of combating corruption in Africa is through salary increment; for instance, in Sierra Leone wages are delayed for about three or four months, thus people are left with no other option than to take bribes. The chief reason that encourages corruption in various regions of Africa is that corruption has been generally acknowledged as the custom. People are in a hurry such that they cannot wait for their turn, but offer bribes to obtain services and public goods. In addition, the belief that individuals can purchase everything with money has greatly encouraged corruption in all life stages. The best method to combat corruption is to start colossal awareness campaign; for example, in Kenya. Corruption in Africa is deeply rooted such that a person is considered a traitor if they are not corrupt. Most African leaders and their ministers barely earn up to 1000 USD as monthly income, but indeed most of them are dollar millionaires. It is so heartbreaking to see that African countries with rich reserves are same countries that are subjected into deep poverty, conflict and diseases. This is due to the issue of rampant corruption especially by the African politicians.

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