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## CORRUPTION AND INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT NEXUS IN NIGERIA

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### Abstract

*As a result of widespread corruption in Nigeria, this research sought to investigate why the huge government expenditures does not translate to significant infrastructure in the economy. The study adopted the distributed lag model approach in analysing the impact of corruption on government expenditure in Nigeria. The study found out that corruption, government debt stock and government revenue significantly impacted on government expenditure positively by 0.33%, 0.28% and 0.44% respectively while foreign direct investment impacted positively but not significantly on government expenditure by 0.264% in the following year. The study recommended that the institutions of governance be strengthened with transparency, rationality, responsiveness, equity, accountability, efficiency, adherence to the rule of law, economy, being the guiding principles in the utilization of public funds and further tightening of sources of embezzlements.*

**Keywords:** Corruption; Government Expenditure; Government revenue; Government debt stock

**JEL Classifications:** O11

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### Introduction

Irrespective of economic or political arrangement, it is the responsibility of the government to initiate policies that will assist to accomplish the basic macroeconomic goals, Appah (2010). According to Medee and Nenbee (2011), these goals include price stability, full employment, reduction of poverty levels, sustainable economic growth, favourable balance of payment, and reduction of the nation's debt. The government is therefore saddled with the provision of certain goods and services to invigorate the economy. However, corruption has become a factor that inhibits the fulfilment of these responsibilities by various governments in Nigeria. There seems to be obvious mismatch between the massive government expenditure and the performance of the Nigerian economy. Government spending unarguably should have a significant effect on economic growth in Nigeria. However, the extent and magnitude of this impact remains questionable when compared with the expenditure volume.

Earnings from sale of crude oil determine the expenditure profile of the country. Nigeria's annual budget estimates are bench-marked with the international oil price. This makes the Nigerian economy grow in response to the oil prices, thus replicating the boom and burst syndrome. While the aggregate economic growth in 1990 is 12.77%; that of 2003 and 2004 were 10.34% and 33.74% respectively. The economy contracted to -0.31% in 1995 and -1.63 in 2016 (CBN, 1990, 1995, 2004, 2017). Irrespective of these growth rates, the expenditure profile of the Nigerian government has been on a steady increase. This growth in expenditure profile however is not reflected in the governments' investment in physical and social infrastructures, health care, education etc. over the years, hence cannot be said to be yielding the desired results. The question that arises therefore is what is responsible for the poor performance of government expenditures in Nigeria.

Many researches on Corruption have shown that it has a long-run effect on economic growth and sustainable development. Those that align to this school of thought include International organisations such as the World bank (2000), Mo (2001) etc. According to these groups, some of the associated challenges that come with corruption are increased production cost, decrease in national and foreign investment, inefficient allocation of national resources, increase in inequality and poverty in the economy at large, uncertainty in decision making among others.

Government spending remains the fulcrum of economic growth. Thus, provision of infrastructure remains one of the major functions of governance. However, in Nigeria, despite the huge budgetary allocations for capital expenditure, the year-on-year record of sustainable infrastructures provided remains abysmal and sadly where they are provided they often fall short of the internationally accepted standards. This is same for recurrent expenditures in which case varying number of years of unpaid salaries, pensions and gratuities remains the order of the day. Many researches keep overlooking the effects of corruption on government expenditure, and this form the motive for this study.

Given that new governments are sworn in in Nigeria on the 5<sup>th</sup> Month of the year with the attendant blame games of successive governments by the incoming governments, and since most policies of past government is carried by the incoming government, causing a lag effect on the economy. This study thus makes contribution as it studies the impact of corruption by the outgoing government as carried over by the incoming government, which obviously may have a serious effect on the economy. The rest of this study is organized in four sections. Section 2 is a brief review of literature; section 3 presents the methodology; section 4 discusses the empirical results, while Section 5 concludes the paper.

## Literature Review

### Definition and Measurement of Corruption

There is no agreement to the definition of corruption among scholars. However, the interesting thing about it is that every scholar or organisation sees it as an abuse. Transparency International, TI, sees corruption as the abuse of entrusted power for private gain (Transparency International, 2007).

Transparency International classified corruption based on the amount of money lost or the sector it occurred. This classification can either be grand corruption, petty corruption or political corruption. They went ahead to define grand corruption as consisting of acts committed at high levels of government which distorts policies or the central functioning of the state, enabling leaders to benefit

at the expense of the public good. According to them, Petty corruption refers to everyday abuse of entrusted power by low and mid-level public officials in their interactions with ordinary citizens, who often are trying to access basic goods or services in places like hospitals, schools, police departments and other agencies. Political corruption is a manipulation of policies, institutions and rules of procedure in the allocation of resources and financing by political decision makers, who abuse their position to sustain their power, status and wealth (Transparency International, 2014).

Bhargava (2005), explained corruption under seven headings as either grand, political, corporate, administrative, petty or systemic corruption. According to him grand corruption involves heads of state, ministers, or other senior government officials and serves the interests of a narrow group of business people and politicians, or criminal elements. It is political corruption when it involves lawmakers, monarchs, dictators, and legislators, acting in their role as creators of the rules. Bhargava called it corporate corruption if it occurs between private business corporations and their suppliers, clients or within corporations, when corporate officials use the corporation's resources for private gain, at the expense of the shareholders. However, he explained administrative corruption to include the use of bribery and favoritism to allow certain individuals or businesses to lower their taxes, escape regulations, or win low-level procurement contracts. According to him petty corruption involves the payment of comparatively small amounts of money to facilitate routine official transactions while it is systemic corruption when it is prevalent throughout all levels of society.

Hashem, (2014) pointed out that the variable corruption cannot be measured directly. For example TI scores countries based on how corrupted their public sectors are perceived. Since 1995, TI has been publishing corruption perception index (CPI). From 1995 - 2011, CPI ranks countries on a zero to ten scale with zero being the highest level of corruption. However this changed from 2012 when they started ranking countries on a scale of 0 – 100 with zero being the highest level of corruption. The World Bank on its own uses World Bank's worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) report where they use a total of 6 dimensions (voice and accountability, political stability and absence of violence, government effectiveness, regulatory quality, rule of law, and control of corruption) of governance for 212 countries. According to him, main criticism of these methods is that since the results of these indicators are subjective, general corruption indicators risk being a reflection of citizens' general predispositions towards government rather than actual experienced

corruption. Therefore countries that suffer from negative image will also be seen as countries with high corruption under this method.

Otahal, (2010) said corruption is a term by which is called the specific act of a human. To him, it is a phenomenon which is the result of human action. Therefore any note about corruption in any form can be identified with the choice of a single person. The person is indulging in corruption because the corruption brings him/her some utility.

### Empirical Literature

Many researches on Corruption have shown that it has a long-run effect on economic growth and sustainable development. Those that align to this school of thought include International organisations such as the World bank (2000), Mo (2001) etc. According to these groups, some of the associated challenges that come with corruption are increased production cost, decrease in national and foreign investment, inefficient allocation of national resources, increase in inequality and poverty in the economy at large, uncertainty in decision making among others.

Aigheyisi (2015) employed the ordinary least squares (OLS) estimation technique in investigating the effect of corruption and government expenditures on the performance of Nigeria's economy in the pre-democratic (1994-1998) and the democratic (1999 – 2012) eras using annual time series data sourced from the Central Bank of Nigeria Statistical Bulletin, and Transparency International. The analysis indicates that corruption had no significant impact on Nigeria's economic growth in both sub-periods. It further indicates that capital expenditure component of government expenditure negatively impacted growth in the sample periods. He then recommended for measures to make government expenditure more productive.

Olarenwaju (2016) empirically examined the relationship between government spending, corruption and output growth in Nigeria and found that corruption tilts public spending away from growth enhancing projects and towards low and less productive ones.

Idris and Salisu (2016) studied the impact of corruption on infrastructural development in Nigeria. The study confirmed a high incidence of corruption and poor infrastructural development in Nigeria and therefore concludes that the high level of corruption has negatively affected infrastructural development in Nigeria. They observed that for infrastructural development in Nigeria to improve, corruption need to reduce. They recommended for the strengthening of the anti-corruption agencies, improving corruption reporting system, judicial

reform and enforcement of severer sanctions on corruption offenders, reform of the structure of public utilities and strengthening of regulatory standards and citizen participation in infrastructural development.

Delavallade (2006), using the three-stage least square method, empirically examined corruption and distribution of public spending in developing countries using data from 64 countries over a period of 1996 - 2001. Her result suggests that public corruption distorts the structure of public spending by reducing the portion of social expenditure and increasing the part dedicated to public services and order, fuel and energy, culture and defence.

Gupta, Davoodi & Tionson (2001) in studying the impact of corruption on provision of government services found that countries with high levels of corruption are associated with inefficient government services.

Hashem (2014) studied the effect of corruption on government public expenditure the Arab countries experience and found that corruption reduces education and health spending as part of total public spending. According to him, corruption stems state intervention efficiency by hampering budget equilibrium, diminishes expenditure efficiency and distorts its allocation between different budgetary functions.

Hessami (2010) did a study to determine why distortions in public budgets. According to him, the rationale behind a corrupt-induced distortion of the public budget is that bribe maximizing politicians and/or bureaucrats prefer to shift resources to areas with the best opportunities to be bribed.

According to Helgson and Mickelson (1995) discrimination, social inequalities and social class gap create poverty, feelings and relative deprivation in people thereby exposing weak people who cannot earn and increase income to by legal ways to the temptation of being involved in corrupt activities.

### Methodology

The study specified the distributed lag model. The model will show the impact of corruption on government expenditure in Nigeria in succeeding year(s). The assumption here is that government is continuum and therefore incoming government regimes inherit the fiscal plans of the outgoing regime in its first administrative year. This is in addition to it enjoying three full uninterrupted years before elections are held. In addition to the variable corruption, we also adopted government debt stock and government total revenue – that is revenue from oil and non-oil sectors of the economy. Government

expenditure here captured both recurrent and capital expenditures within the period under this study.

**Data Sources and Description**

All the fiscal policy variables data being used for this empirical study are sourced from various editions of the central bank of Nigeria (CBN), National bureau of statistics (NBS) publications and Transparency International publications.

**Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework of this research is based on John Maynard Keynes theory of fiscal policy. From this theory, we understand that governments influence macro-economic productivity level in the economy using its tax and expenditures. Thus this increases aggregate demand and spurs growth. However, it is good to add that as leakages abound, the impact of government expenditure will be minimal compared to the desired results.

Mathematically,  $AD = f(C+I+G)$ ..... (1)

Where:

AD= Aggregate demand; C= Consumption; I=Investment and G=Goods and services.

Therefore we can say that  $AD = f(C+I+G) = f(GTDS + GREV + FDI + CPI)$  ..... (2)

Where:

- GTDS = Government debt stock
- GREV = government revenue
- FDI = Foreign direct investment
- CPI= Corruption Perception Index;

**Model Specification**

This study focuses on impact of corruption on government expenditure in Nigeria. Therefore, major economic variables that also determine government expenditure are utilized in the model as the dependent variables. The predictors are made to capture the

three major fiscal tools used in Nigeria in addition to our focus – revenue, debt stock, foreign direct investment and corruption.

The following model is specified for the study as follows:

**Government Expenditure and Corruption:**

$\Delta \text{LogGexp}_t = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \Delta \text{LogGtds}_{t-1} + \beta_2 \Delta \text{LogGrev}_{t-1} + \beta_3 \Delta \text{LogFdi}_{t-1} + \beta_4 \Delta \text{LogCpi}_{t-1} + \beta_5 \text{sect} + u_t$  ..... (3)

Where: Govtexp is the Government total expenditure, which is a summation of Recurrent & Capital expenditures; Govtrev is an abbreviation for Government total revenue from Oil & Non-oil sectors of the economy; Govtds represents Government total

debt stock, which comprises of Local and Foreign debt, Cpi is the Transparency International corruption perception index, ‘ect’ represents the residual adjustment (error correction term) and ‘u’ is the stochastic error term.

**Discussion of Results**

**Unit root and cointegration test results**

**Table 1: Unit Root Tests and Interpretation**

Variables	ADF Unit Root test	Integration Order
Gexp	-2.861366	I(1)
Gtds	-4.481256	I(1)
Grev	-4.232036	I(1)
Fdi	-5.918059	I(1)
Cpi	-4.844813	I(1)

Source: Author’s Computation using E-view 9

\* non stationary at level & 1st diff. but 2nd diff

From the result of the Augmented Dickey Fuller (ADF) in table 1 above, shows that all the variables are integrated of order 1. The Johansen cointegration test in table 2 below shows that variables for the

model are cointegrated. Table 2 shows from maximum eigenvalue statistics and trace statistics, that there are 2 cointegrating equations.

**Table 2: Result of Johansen Cointegration Test**

Hypothesized No of CE(s)	Eigenvalue	Trace	0.05 Critical Value	Prob.**
None *	0.966724	117.1862	69.81889	0.0000
At most 1 *	0.819587	55.93366	47.85613	0.0073
At most 2 *	0.596547	25.10855	29.79707	0.1576
At most 3	0.385449	8.770013	15.49471	0.3871
At most 4	0.000359	0.006462	3.841466	0.9354
Unrestricted Cointegration Rank Test (Maximum Eigenvalue)				
Hypothesized No of CE(s)	Eigenvalue	Max-Eigen Statistics	0.05 Critical Value	Prob.**
None *	0.966724	61.25253	33.87687	0.0000
At most 1 *	0.819587	30.82511	27.58434	0.0185
At most 2 *	0.596547	16.33853	21.13162	0.2057
At most 3	0.385449	8.763551	14.26460	0.3064
At most 4	0.000359	0.006462	3.841466	0.9354

Source: Author’s Computation using E-view 9

Trace test indicates 2 cointegrating eqn(s) at the 0.05 level & Max-eigenvalue test indicates 2 cointegrating eqn(s) at the 0.05 level

\* denotes rejection of the hypothesis at the 0.05 level

\*\*MacKinnon-Haug-Michelis (1999) p-values

**Corruption and Government Expenditure:**

**Table 3: Lag Model Output Result with GEXP as Dependent Variable**

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
C	-0.318419	1.237950	-0.257215	0.8014
D(LOG(GTDS(-1)))	0.280778	0.074938	3.746814	0.0028
D(LOG(GREV(-1)))	0.440785	0.147410	2.990199	0.0113
D(LOG(FDI(-1)))	0.264182	0.157613	1.676147	0.1195
D(LOG(CPI(-1)))	0.328591	0.391921	0.838411	0.0182
D(ECM(-1))	-4.05E-05	3.53E-05	-1.146566	0.2739
R2= 0.960349; Adj.R2= 0.943827; F-Stat= 58.12739; Prob (F-Stat)= 0.0000; DW Stat= 1.574839				

Source: Author’s Computation using E-view 9

Table 3 above gives us the output result of the regression, the error correction coefficient followed our a’ priori expectation by bearing a negative sign. Government debt stock, government revenue and corruption perception index significantly boosts the economy by 0.28%, 0.44% and 0.33% respectively each time they grow by 1%. This is in consonance with the works of Olarewaju (2016) who found that corruption tilts public spending away from growth enhancing projects and towards low and less productive ones. Also foreign direct investment positively boosts government expenditure by 0.26%. This supports the works of Gupta, Davoodi & Tionson (2001) who found that countries with high levels of corruption are associated with inefficient government services.

Therefore, looking at the relationship between the independent variables and government expenditure, a percentage increase in the dependent variable will on the aggregate cause a significant increase in the economy by 0.96%. These predictors however explain 96.03% of the variations in government expenditure in Nigeria. This is in line with the works of Hashem (2014) who found that corruption stems state intervention efficiency by hampering budget equilibrium, diminishes expenditure efficiency and distorts its allocation between different budgetary functions.

### Corruption Level and Expenditure by Different Governments in Nigeria

Appraising all the regimes using the already established causality, it can be seen (see appendix 1) that corruption significantly impacted on government revenue by 21.2% during the Abdulsalam Abubakar regime of 1998 – 1999. The general Buhari regime of 2016 – 2017 had corruption impact on government expenditure the least with 7.1%, while the Obasanjo regime of 2000 – 2007 had the highest impact of corruption on government expenditure with 44.1%. However government debt stock significantly increased during the General Mohamadu Buhari regime to 50.83% as against its value of 14.20% during the Obasanjo regime of 2000 – 2007, while government revenue had its highest probability during the Abubakar and Buhari regimes where it is 0.846. The foreign direct investment marginally increased to 25.82% during the Yaradua/Goodluck Jonathan regime of 2008 – 2015 from its value of 25.8% during the Obasanjo regime, with its least value being 0.856% during the Abdusalami Abubakar regime of 1998 – 1999.

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### Conclusion and Recommendations

In this study we empirically investigated the impact of corruption on government expenditure for the period 1998 – 2017. From this study we found that corruption, government debt stock and government revenue had positive significant impact on government expenditure by 0.33%, 0.28% and 0.44% respectively while foreign direct investment had a positive but insignificant impact on government expenditure during the period under the study as can be seen from their probabilities. The study therefore recommends that transparency, rationality, responsiveness, equity, accountability, efficiency, adherence to the rule of law, economy, should be the guiding principles in the utilization of public funds. Until these are served, the intended objectives and goals of government expenditure will not be realised. Policy makers should ensure the strengthening of the institutions of governance and rule of law such that they will be self-accounting if corruption must be reduced to the barest minimum. Further tightening of sources of embezzlement and leakages should be encouraged and embarked upon especially in the area of procurement as this constitute a major channel through which political office holders and other government appointees connive with government contractors to siphon or embezzle public funds in the country.

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- UNESCO institute for statistics [Stats.uis.unesco.org](http://Stats.uis.unesco.org)

Appendix 1

Abdusalami 1998 – 1999

	CPI	FDI	GEXP	GREV	GTDS
Mean	1.750000	86.75000	717.4000	706.4000	2283.015
Median	1.750000	86.75000	717.4000	706.4000	2283.015
Maximum	1.900000	92.80000	947.6900	949.1900	3372.180
Minimum	1.600000	80.70000	487.1100	463.6100	1193.850
Std. Dev.	0.212132	8.555992	325.6792	343.3569	1540.312
Skewness	0.000000	0.000000	4.40E-17	-4.23E-17	0.000000
Kurtosis	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000
Jarque-Bera	0.333333	0.333333	0.333333	0.333333	0.333333
Probability	0.846482	0.846482	0.846482	0.846482	0.846482
Sum	3.500000	173.5000	1434.800	1412.800	4566.030
Sum Sq. Dev.	0.045000	73.20500	106067.0	117894.0	2372561.
Observations	2	2	2	2	2

OBJ 2000 – 2007

	CPI	FDI	GEXP	GREV	GTDS
Mean	1.637500	377.2875	1410.200	3748.093	4298.829
Median	1.600000	253.3000	1304.995	3265.765	4207.125
Maximum	2.200000	759.4000	2348.590	5965.100	6260.590
Minimum	1.000000	116.0000	701.0500	1731.840	2204.720
Std. Dev.	0.440576	258.0072	537.6456	1781.958	1420.149
Skewness	0.031642	0.464704	0.452639	0.187688	-0.135586
Kurtosis	1.776456	1.481259	2.196213	1.321218	1.919041
Jarque-Bera	0.500355	1.056791	0.488534	0.986406	0.414002
Probability	0.778662	0.589550	0.783278	0.610667	0.813019
Sum	13.10000	3018.300	11281.60	29984.74	34390.63
Sum Sq. Dev.	1.358750	465974.0	2023440.	22227620	14117761
Observations	8	8	8	8	8

Yaradua/GEJ 2008 – 2015

	CPI	FDI	GEXP	GREV	GTDS
Mean	2.562500	980.0250	4055.388	8565.950	6873.931
Median	2.550000	938.6000	4205.005	8813.195	7042.065
Maximum	2.700000	1360.300	4797.450	11116.85	10975.53
Minimum	2.400000	602.1000	3078.250	4844.590	2843.560
Std. Dev.	0.130247	258.1918	602.3370	2178.433	2812.563
Skewness	-0.084238	0.115676	-0.535656	-0.407736	-0.040915
Kurtosis	1.417950	1.934246	2.111269	1.961360	1.822250
Jarque-Bera	0.843755	0.396452	0.645851	0.581256	0.464597
Probability	0.655814	0.820184	0.724028	0.747794	0.792710
Sum	20.50000	7840.200	32443.10	68527.60	54991.45
Sum Sq. Dev.	0.118750	466641.2	2539669.	33218997	55373567
Observations	8	8	8	8	8

GMB 2016 – 2017

	CPI	FDI	GEXP	GREV	GTDS
Mean	2.850000	1042.050	4876.950	6388.850	18131.08
Median	2.850000	1042.050	4876.950	6388.850	18131.08
Maximum	2.900000	1124.100	4940.500	7098.670	21725.04
Minimum	2.800000	960.0000	4813.400	5679.030	14537.12
Std. Dev.	0.070711	116.0362	89.87327	1003.837	5082.627
Skewness	-1.52E-17	0.000000	0.000000	-2.37E-17	-3.81E-17
Kurtosis	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000
Jarque-Bera	0.333333	0.333333	0.333333	0.333333	0.333333
Probability	0.846482	0.846482	0.846482	0.846482	0.846482
Sum	5.700000	2084.100	9753.900	12777.70	36262.16
Sum Sq. Dev.	0.005000	13464.40	8077.205	1007689.	25833097
Observations	2	2	2	2	2