

An assessment of corruption among Nigerian government politicians as an influencing factor to youth-get-quick-money mindset: A study of youths in Owerri metropolis

¹Amadi, Chukwudumebi Kelechi, ²B.J.C. Anyanwu, ³Etumnu Emeka Williams & ⁴Ukonu Michael Chimezie, & ⁵Emetumah I. Fatima

¹Department of Mass Communication, Imo State University Owerri,

²Department of Public Relations, Imo State University Owerri

³Department of Mass Communication, Hezekiah University Umudi

⁴Department of Film and Multimedia Studies Imo State University Owerri

⁵Department of Mass Communication, Federal Polytechnic Nekede, Owerri

Corresponding Email: etumnuemeka@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study aimed at assessing influence of Nigerian politician's corruption on youths get-rich-quick mindset. The study examined the knowledge level and perception of Owerri youths towards corruption by Nigerian politicians as well as discovering how it has influenced the youth's mindset of get-rich-quick. The study was hinged on the theory of planned behaviour. The study employed mixed method research design using survey and focus group discussion approach. The study arrived at a population of 107,460 and used the check market sample size calculator to arrive at a sample size of 383. The focus group sample size was 12. The instrument for data collection was the focus group discussion guide and the questionnaire. The finding from the study at a mean score of 3.0, revealed that Nigerian politician's embezzlement of Nigerian public funds mindset has influenced many youths to vow to do same when given the opportunity, they even believe that resorting to fraud is little compared to the kind of frauds politicians commit. The researchers concludes that the high rate of corruption in Nigeria and the hopelessness of Nigeria having any chance to have a better future are the influencing factors to Nigerian youth's mindset to get rich quick even if it means that they will eventually die young.



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1. INTRODUCTION

Nigeria's socioeconomic and political development, legitimacy, and democratic stability have all been hampered by corruption. Corruption is a serious caterpillar that has eaten deep into Nigerian politics and the life of almost every Nigerian, however, it is believed to be on a high side on Nigerian politicians (Ogindiya, 2009). Due to the high rate of corruption in Nigeria, President Buhari made a sentimental comment that went viral, the comment states that, "if Nigeria does not kill corruption, then corruption will kill Nigeria." (Obadare, 2022). Corruption can really kill a nation and all that it stands for. This is the lane that Nigeria is plying on due to their high corruption statistical reports. Other country outside Nigeria attests that Nigerians are too corrupt and are high perpetrators of crimes. As at 2012, Nigeria was estimated to have lost over \$400 billion to corruption since its independence (Okoye, 2012; Ijewereme, 2015). In 2021, The Guardian Nigeria (2021) in a report stated that Nigeria has lost \$582 billion to corruption in their 61 years of existence. In 2022, \$18 billion was said to be lost to illicit financial crimes yearly in Nigeria (ICIR Nigeria, 2022; Shehu, 2022). Nigeria has maintained their 24th score out of 100 on corrupt countries index. Nigeria with this score was ranked out of 180 countries to take the 154 positions in 2021 and 150 position in 2022, having moved up four places in the latest 2022 Corruption Perception Index (CPI) (Sanni, 2023; Punch Nigeria, 2023; Premium Times, 2023). Most Nigerian politicians when given any political position of power resort to crimes and corruption cases. Nigerian politicians are high corruption master minds. Most Nigerian politicians' own shares with the Nigeria National Petroleum company (NNPC) industries. Vote rigging is the order of the day in Nigeria by politicians. Politicians in Nigeria do everything within their power to become wealthy through behind-the-scenes agreements, they even award profitable contracts to their favoured supporters (Naija Beat, 2022).

These corruptions include the countries development fund embezzlement and unaccountability, money laundering schemes, embezzlement of public funds, using laundered money to subvert justice or the law's punitive measures (Page & Matthew, 2018), spending on frivolities at the expense of the Nigerian masses, lack of integrity, selfishness, encouraging ghost workers so that they can collect their salaries (Page, 2018), defection to any reigning political party for their own political and personal gains, fraud, vote buying, election rigging and manipulation (Tribune Online Nigeria, 2022), assassination of rival candidates, petty bribery, contract fraud, godfatherism etc (Sahara Reporters New York, 2021). Due to corruption in almost every Nigerian governmental regime's, the Nigerian crime agencies are tied to bring corrupt people to book. Institutions like the

Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the less heralded Independent Corruption Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) are just dormant in bringing offenders to face the punitive measures of the law of the land, this is because those who are paying them have higher stakes in the day's corruption, making them to be helpless in aggressively fighting corruption as they should. These bodies are willing to put in their best effort to fight corruption if the Nigerian government wants them to, but the government have no such intentions (Obadare, 2022).

Nigerians are known to be very industrious. Nigerian youths are proven to be highly talented, gifted, educated and skilled, yet their mindset towards life lately has been reshaped and influenced by so many factors, including the Nigerian reality of economic hardship. Currently, most Nigerian youth's mindset stands out to be the limit to their earning, getting industrious and making good economic progress, making it hard for them to survive in Nigeria unlike as they perceive they would in other developed countries (Experts, 2023). Most Nigerian youths understand that time is spent like money and cannot be recovered, so they want to only engage in tasks, businesses and work that will earn them big and cool cash in little space of time. To worsen the case, most of Nigerian youths have this entitlement mentality of what the country, politicians, family, friends and everyone around them should be doing for them, when these entitlements are not met, they resort to doing anything legal or illegal to earn by themselves there due share of cash with which to use in keeping body and soul together (Akinyemi, 2019). Most Nigerian youths have known the high rate of corruption among politicians, have consciously or subconsciously taken to the mindset of getting quick money to support themselves. Most Nigerian youths have a particular wrong mentality that hard-work leaves people impoverished. They even equate formal education acquisition to be a waste of their precious time, since Nigerian politicians who are mostly illiterates are still the ones riding very expensive cars and living in luxurious mansions (Premium Times Nigeria, 2023). Most youths believe that they cannot work under others, they want to be the boss of their own, this has led to Nigeria now having more unskilled apprentices who claim to have learnt work even before their due time. This get quick mentality has boldly affected most youths mental defense on taking to cyber fraud, drug trafficking, armed robbery, money rituals, human trafficking, dirty politics, body organ sales etc (The Sun Nigeria, 2023; Akinyemi, 2019). Most youths feel it is very easy to rewrite Nigerian corruption wrongs, yet they are even worsening the Nigerian corruption perception rate towards other nations (Fasua, 2023).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Corruption is a prevalent case that has ravaged Nigeria. Nigeria is rated by most if not all the country in the world as the home of corruption. A critical look at this tells us Nigerians that these are not just claims but a fact that can hardly change about Nigerians especially with their attitude while dealing with others. Corruption is not only traced to Nigerian politicians as most Nigerians will argue, almost every Nigeria has their fair share of being or acting corrupt at one point or another. From the normal man to the highest ranked Nigeria, corruption is becoming the new normal. The constant rise of the wealthy and the constant fall of the middle class and the poor at the detriment of the rich and powerful and the unfavourable government policies. The whole hope of most Nigerian that there will be a better Nigeria is now a mirage that the normal Nigeria see as an impossibility. With the unfavourable economic policies, most Nigerians in their hopeless state now vow to get rich the quickest way they can think about. This is a serious issue, as almost every youth engaged in a discussion on what to do with their life, they always come up with quick and informal means of making ends meet, to get rich, wealthy and powerful since that it was matters most in the country, not necessarily how you got your wealth. Most Nigerians youths now resort to quickest moneymaking opportunities. There has been a clear increase in crime, theft, killings, drug trafficking, kidnapping, child trafficking, internet fraud, body part trafficking, modern day slavery, etc. these are risky yet a means of earning quick cash to use in keeping body and soul together, these are the typical mindset of most Nigerian youth. This study aims at checking the relationship between Nigerian politician corruptions as an influencing factor to youths get-quick-money mindset.

1.2 Research Objectives

The researcher aims at achieving the following objectives:

- Examine Owerri youth's knowledge level towards corruption by Nigerian politicians.
- Ascertain the youth's perception towards records of corruption by Nigerian politicians.
- Assess Owerri youth's perception of corruption as an influencing factor to their mindset towards making quick cash at all cost.

1.3 Significance of the study

This work will be of remarkable importance to scholars in the political science sector, this will include academicians, professors, students and aspiring politicians. The finding of this study will help Nigerian politicians to understand more the impact their policies, lifestyle and stupendous wealth have on the typical Nigerian youths. This study will be used for future researches, as its concepts, findings and theories will be referred to and referenced in youth related studies. It is going to continue opening the eyes of the youths on the indirect influence corruption has on their mindset and life achievements.

2. CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

2.1 A highlight of some Nigerian politician's corrupt practices

The new political defecting status-quo to APC is the new strategy corrupt politicians use to avoid probing and being prosecuted, since the APC of President Buhari is a fortress, they run into to get immunity for their intentional wrong doings (The Guardian, 2023, Premium Times, 2014). This is not only synonymous to other states in Nigeria, but recurrent in Imo state among the politicians in the state (this Day Live, 2023). A similar corrupt practice by most if not all Nigeria politician is their constant defection to the the political party of the president in power just to gain favours and cover their crimes. With corruption accusations pending against them, several Nigerian politicians and political heavyweights have sought refuge in the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC), which has been the party of President Muhammadu Buhari's administration since 2015. The prosecution of these politicians' corruption cases has been automatically halted by the APC. The self-proclaimed anti-corruption campaign of the current president's administration is undermined by this pattern of immunity (Akinwunmi, 2021). Accordingly, former APC National Chairman Adams Oshiomhole declared in public during the 2019 elections that individuals who joined the ruling party would have their "sins" pardoned. This he said to compel some "People's Democratic Party" (PDP) politicians to follow suit and defect to the ruling party. This is high level of covering corruption with corruption. Mr. Oshiomhole listed some names of some politicians who defected to the ruling party, whose sins were eventually forgiven. Those who defected were said to be forming a new gang in the APC (Sahara Reporters, New York, 2021; Independent Newspaper Nigeria, 2021). Among those mentioned to defect to APC according to Vanguard News (2022) and Sahara Reporters New York (2021) include:

- The disgraced former Aviation Minister Femi Fani-Kayode's conversion to the APC
- Former Abia State Governor Orji Uzor Kalu formally joined the ruling APC in November 2016 following nine years of a fierce court battle to escape being found guilty on corruption charges. When he was being

prosecuted by the EFCC for allegedly laundering N3.2 billion, he converted to the APC.

Former Plateau State Governor Joshua Dariye joined the APC in 2016 in hopes of having his transgressions forgiven after being found guilty in September of criminal embezzlement and criminal breach of trust. The EFCC accused him in 2007 of embezzling N1.126 billion from the ecological fund of the Plateau State government. Adebukola Banjoko, a judge of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) High Court in Gudu, sentenced him to 14 years in jail in June 2018. He was found guilty on 15 of the 23 counts that were brought against him. The Abuja Court of Appeal reduced the sentence from 14 years to 10 years in November 2018, and a five-member Supreme Court bench upheld this decision in March 2021. Former Akwa Ibom State Governor and current Minister of Niger Delta Affairs, Senator Godswill Akpabio, switched from the PDP to the APC in 2018, citing President Muhammadu Buhari as "a man of integrity and a nationalist" as justification. He took that action, however, after being charged with embezzling more than N100 billion from the oil-rich state between 2007 and 2015. Additionally, he was charged with participating in an N40 billion scam at the Niger Delta Development Commission, which is overseen by Akpabio's ministry.

The trend was followed in 2019 when former Oyo State Governor Adebayo Alao-Akala, Hosea Agboola, a former Oyo State Commissioner for Local Government and Chieftaincy Matters, and Femi Babalola, a businessman from Ibadan, were all charged by the EFCC in a N11.5 billion fraud case against Akala. Eleven charges against the trio include conspiracy-related ones, issuing contracts without budgetary provisions, collecting money through deceptive means, purchasing property with funds obtained through illicit means, and hiding its ownership. Along with other members of his cabinet, Ebonyi State Governor Dave Umahi officially defected from the PDP to the APC in November 2020, claiming that the PDP had wronged the South-East geopolitical zone. In the meantime, Umahi was accused by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission of using an armaments transaction to divert N400 million into private pockets during the 2015 presidential election. Before the governor decided to join the APC and have his "sins forgiven," his property had also been sealed. Former Aviation Minister Stella Oduah defected to the APC on August 27, 2021, claiming to have done so in order to alter the political landscape in the South-East. On the other hand, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission has been looking into Oduah and others for their alleged involvement in a fraud involving over N9.4 billion. One of the EFCC's investigations into her included a questionable contract for the provision of security equipment to 22 airports nationwide. Like other Nigerian politicians, retired lieutenant general Azubuike Ihejirika, the former chief of army staff, joined the APC in March 2021. Ihejirika was detained by the Department of State Services in 2016. The \$2.1 billion arms procurement investigation involving former National Security Advisor Sambo Dasuki was linked to his detention. The former army staff chief refuted the accusations made against him.

There are several other politicians who were charged by EFCC for committing several crimes, who defected to APC, so that the administration of President Buhari will forgive their sins and wrongdoing, to now enjoy the immunity of Baba (Punch, 2018; Page, 2018).

2.2 Nigerian Youths Get-Rich-Quick Mindset

Due to their mistaken perception that formal education has no relationship to wealth, some young people have been actively campaigning on social media platforms in recent years, believing that attending school to receive a western education is a waste of time (Blueprint House caretakers, 2020). The majority of Nigerians have consistently voiced their concern about the rise in crime and how, if left unchecked, it will alter the younger generation's propensity to become wealthy at the expense of a good education or career, and that current and future generations will continue to view education as a scam (Dakuku, 2020; Fasua, 2023). Several Nigerian reality shows, movies, social media stories have indirectly encouraged youths into believing that they don't have to work, they just need to try out various opportunities before them, that one must favour them. Youths now have more faith in ponzi-schemes, get-quick-money in space of second schemes, sports betting, reality TV shows winning, cyber-crime, theft, body part sales, human trafficking, travelling abroad, doing dirty politics etc as the more paying and less tasking source of earnings that will give them their desired millions to make something better off themselves (*The Cable View point*, 2020). The unfavourable economic state of this country, the high unemployment rate, unfavourable government politics and policies etc are even worsening the chances of most youths thinking if having a better Nigeria when they have finished tertiary education (Dakuku, 2020). The way that high school grades are disparaged has even led many young people to believe that going to school is a waste of time. After completing their education, the majority of young people face the difficulty of finding work. With an estimated 60 million unemployed or underemployed people, Nigeria has one of the highest unemployment rates in the world, with a rate of 23% in 2019 and a projected 33.5% pre-COVID 19 by 2020. This suggests that one in three Nigerians who are prepared to work are unable to find employment or a job

that suits them. As a result, young people are left with the terrifying alternatives of crime, moral decay, depression, and, for those who can afford it, emigration, which carries a significant risk. The main reasons why most young people turn to crime are hopelessness, fear, worry, and dissatisfaction (*The Cable View point*, 2020; *Premium Times Nigeria*, 2023).

Nigerian government and leaders are unwilling to make learning conducive for the Nigerian students, neither have they provided jobs, they even refused to upgrade the Nigerian educational curriculum, these have led to youths losing interest in education since they are still unemployable after spending years in tertiary institution. Some morally sound Nigerian youths have even created a gateway of travelling abroad to make something good out of themselves and their family, this in Nigeria is now referred as 'japa'. Almost every eligible Nigerian youth wants to 'japa' to any other country (Bbusari, 2023). Few of the Nigerian youths want to 'japa' for educational purposes while others use the educational link to just leave the country in search of a better and more developed life and economy.

2.3 Empirical Studies

Chukwuemeka et al. (2012) revealed that Nigerian youngsters face an endless number of difficulties. Africa's Giant is Nigeria. Nigeria, Africa's Giant, has spent a lot of money to ensure the existence of African nation-states. However, the rates of poverty, social vices, youth neglect, and unemployment seem to be higher than those of other African nations. The article makes the case that a critical assessment of Nigeria's educational system is necessary to guarantee that graduates do not depend solely on government-provided jobs or on white-collar occupations. The kind of education that is being suggested is the kind that can teach young people the skills they need to be self-sufficient; it is the kind of education that will give its graduates the ability to predict the business world and recognise and work towards societal needs. According to a study by Olaore et al. (2020), young participation in betting games was not significantly impacted by unemployment, but there is a strong correlation between technological advancement and promises of large wins combined with bonuses. The study also demonstrated that for young people who are already working in some capacity, playing gambling games offers an additional revenue stream. Last but not least, young people's participation in betting games has boosted Nigeria's economy and raised awareness of many international sports. Practical ramifications: Nigerian unemployment has been significantly and favourably impacted by the betting gaming centre industry. According to the report, betting games are a huge hit among Nigerian youngsters not only because of unemployment but rather because they provide a significant source of revenue for individuals and families. As a result, young people in Nigeria view gambling as a way to increase their income.

Bello et al. (2014) discovered that young people's preference for white-collar employment over E.S.A. and their interest in motorbike commercial operation, respectively, are significant obstacles to E.S.A. Governments' indifferent approach towards teenagers' E.S.A. and the teens' sociopolitical environment, which discourages E.S., are additional issues. According to research by Oladeji et al. (2018), corruption is a significant issue with Nigerian governance and development. However, because of the complexity of Nigerian politics, the struggle is frequently fought with little to show because judges and officials from anticorruption agencies are bribed wherever possible. To make matters worse, seized loot is frequently re-looted by individuals tasked with fighting corruption rather than being used for development and the provision of public goods. Political clientelism and capture (PCC) and Independent Electoral Commission (INEC) policy have an averagely beneficial association, according to Okpala and Itetegbe's (2018) study, which also found that INEC policy was in charge of a 51% decrease in PCC. The results also shown a considerable positive correlation between the fight against corruption (WAC) and the combined stakeholders' role (CSR). Nigerian corruption would have decreased by 71% as a result of the concerted efforts of all stakeholders. The issue, according to the participants, was the disparate actions taken by different organisations in the fight against corruption. Ineffectiveness resulted from a lack of cooperation, as many agencies purposefully and persistently worked against one another. There was no synergy gained in the campaign against corruption since the stakeholders did not cooperate.

According to a 2016 study by Olubukola and Adesina, the nation's reputation abroad is suffering as a result of the war against corruption. It comes to the conclusion that combating corruption is an extremely difficult undertaking that would need for the full collaboration of every sector of Nigerian society. According to a 2022 study by Akinola, Omar, and Mustapha, low political trust is determined by negative perceptions of corruption, and social media has a bigger impact on these beliefs than traditional mainstream media. Additionally, we discovered that while social media does not contribute much to the development of political trust during an election, conventional media does. According to a related study by Aliu (2019), political corruption made it more difficult for the government to provide public goods and services, which at the time contributed to a drop in

public confidence in Nigeria's political system and the ensuing discontent with its institutions and procedures. According to a related study by Adeniyi (2022), a number of reasons contribute to corruption in Nigeria, such as a system of administration that is poorly informed, a widespread lack of accountability in government, and inadequate political leadership. Therefore, much work must be done to promote openness in government, accountable and responsible political leadership, citizen participation in governance and an established system of informed policy formulation, exemplary leadership based on moral principles, and the re-engineering of the social construct in order to restore trust between the people and the leadership in order for the Nigerian state to be free from corruption.

If fattening is understood to indicate social and economic progress, then Ogundiya showed's 2009 study found that instead of fattening the primordial public, the 'robberies' that have occurred at the civic public have made them even poorer. Adesina (2016) study noted that the nation's reputation abroad is suffering as a result of the war against corruption. According to a 2020 study by Akpokighe and Ejorji, among other things, unemployment, a lack of fundamental and inadequate infrastructure, and a lack of social amenities are linked to youth restlessness. Ethnic militias, kidnappings, cultism, armed robberies, agitations, and involvement in societal insecurity are all examples of the cascading effect of youth restlessness in Nigeria. Youth restlessness's origins and consequences have increased uncertainty, which has resulted in failure, fear, and underdevelopment in the majority of Nigeria's sectors. Regrettably, Nigeria's government has not gone far enough in offering employment opportunities, basic amenities, and successful empowerment initiatives to enable young people to find profitable employment. According to a 2023 study by Ezeonyi and Ogugua, the emergence of social media has played a significant role in this development, since the excitement or frenzy surrounding it has engulfed both adults and children. Similarly, young people are greatly distracted from absorbing or fostering a culture of reading by the get-rich-quick mentality that permeates modern society. Because everyone wants to succeed by any means necessary, reading culture is marginalised. Young people consider reading to be a waste of time because they don't think it's a meaningful endeavour. Falore (2009) investigation revealed that in order to alleviate poverty, politicians' immunity should be lifted, the judiciary should be reinforced to provide decisions without fear or favour, and it should be mandatory for public officials to declare their holdings annually.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

This study was pinned to the theory of planned behaviour. This theory was propounded in 1975 by Fishbein and Ajzen. This is a social psychology theory that tries to predict human behaviours based on some influencing factor (Awaludin, 2014). The theory explains how people turn their intentions to actions. These intentions took time to form, based on some external factors. According to Olaore et al. (2020), the theory holds that people have the ability to choose the behaviour they choose to exhibit. Being able to comprehend one's own behavioural and normative views as well as the social norms of the society one lives in influence one's behavioural intents and attitudes towards particular behaviours. Unlike the theory of reasoned action, this theory has a higher probability of being able to comprehend an individual's true sentiments (Lumen Learning, 2023). This idea helps to explain and forecast how human behaviour is affected by their surroundings. According to TPB, human intentions can be accurately predicted based on the sum of three important factors: (1) attitude towards the behaviour; (2) subjective norm; and (3) perceived behavioural control. An individual's attitude towards a behaviour is the extent to which they have a positive or negative assessment of that behaviour. Perceived social pressure to engage in or refrain from engaging in the action is the second predictor, which is a social element known as the subjective norm. The third factor that influences intention is the degree of perceived behavioural control, also known as the perceived ease or difficulty (risks and accessibility) of engaging in the behaviour. This is thought to be influenced by both past experiences and potential roadblocks. Olaore, Adejare, and Udofia (2020); Ajzen (1991).

Politicians and youths in Nigerian have come up with these their selfish intentions of taking their own share of the country's resources. They have a lot in common, in that both can do anything quick to get wealthy, remain wealthy and die wealthy, even if it means spilling innocent blood. This theory is related to this study since these two categories of Nigerians have allowed their impoverished background to influence their quest to be wealthy through any means, even to the point of losing their integrity, credibility and good moral backings.

3. METHODOLOGY

The researcher employed the mixed method research design. This allowed for the use of a qualitative and quantitative approach. For the qualitative approach, focus group discussion approach was used, whereas for the quantitative, descriptive survey was employed. The researcher arrived at a population of youths aged 15-44 years. These ages population was given as from 15-29yrs: 67,193, 30-44yrs: 40,267, this helped us arrive at a population

of 107,460 youths (Zhuji World, 2023). The sample size for this study was arrived at using the check market sample size calculator, it was given to be 383, whereas 12 persons were selected from the quantitative sample size for the focus group discussion. The sampling technique employed was the cluster and multi-stage technique. The instrument for data collection was the questionnaire and focus group discussion guide.

4. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

The researcher selected 12 youths who are residents in Owerri Metropolis for this discussion section. These 12 youths were grouped into 3, having 4 persons per group. The proceeds of the discussion were summarized below according to the research questions. The following research questions was the basis for this focus group discussion.

- RQ1: What is Owerri youth's knowledge level towards corruption by Nigerian politicians
- RQ2: How do Owerri youths perceive Nigerian politician's corruption records?
- RQ3: What is Owerri youth's perception of corruption and how it influences their quick cash mindset?

In answering the first research question, groups 1,2,3 agreed that they are highly informed and knowledgeable about the ravaging Nigerian corruption situation. The group 3 participants pointed out relatable examples of this corruption by Nigerian politicians. The 1st group participants added that Nigerian politicians are not the only ones corrupt in the but that the entire populace has taken their own share of the corruption. They likened the corruption to be on its high among Nigerian politicians, followed by Nigerian youths within and outside Nigeria. In summary, Owerri metropolis youths are highly knowledgeable about the level of corruption among Nigerian politicians. As for how the youths perceive Nigerian politicians increasing corruption records, the group 2 participants stated that the country itself does not want to change for the betterment of its people, they keep making indirect laws and appointments encouraging and covering most over corrupt politicians. Group 1 participants aver that the increase in corruption among politicians has made the chances of Nigeria getting better very slim every day. They added that the underdevelopment of the nation's resources due to corruption is becoming a hopelessness situation to be savaged. Group 3 stated that it since the law makers and executors in Nigeria are this corrupt, the youths are bent on doing anything at all to just make themselves better, since the leaders who are to make the country better are busy making themselves and their generations better, leaving the larger Nigerian masses. The worst of it all is that they eat both the fish, the bait and still seize the net that would allow others to possibly fish to get their own daily fish through legit means. They constantly make policies that would benefit only them, while on seat and when out of the political seat, that is quite disheartening.

Nigerian youths now see themselves as sheep without shepherds, they are left to figure out their own thing their own way. The three groups agreed that Nigerian politicians corruption and how their wealth is applauded by the masses has strengthened the youths mindset to go in search of anything that means to make their own money so as to be applauded by the masses since now, the end which is just getting enough money now justifies the means at which this money is even gotten. The get rich mindset of the typical Nigerian youth was reinforced by the hopelessness of the Nigerian getting better mirage and the rate at which politicians squander, misappropriate, embezzle, launder and mis-account for the Nigerian public's fund.

The researcher distributed 390 copies of questionnaire to the youth respondents in Owerri Metropolis and was able to retrieve 382 copies of same questionnaire. The return rate got from the questionnaire was 97.9%, which is still great for the study.

RQ1: What is Owerri youth's knowledge level towards corruption by Nigerian politicians

Table 1: Respondents Knowledge level towards Nigerian Politicians Corruption

Knowledge level table	SA	A	D	SD	Mean score (%)
I am knowledgeable about high rate of corruption in Nigeria.	231	146	3	2	3.5863
I have noticed that Nigerian politicians are corrupt.	177	203	2	0	3.4581
Nigerian politicians launder money constantly.	164	193	22	3	3.3560
I know that Nigerian politicians embezzle public funds.	241	125	14	2	3.5837
Nigerian politicians misappropriate and waste Nigerian funds.	212	146	19	5	3.4790
Grand mean					3.5

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Bench-mark: Since, this is a 4point likert-scale, the following scales were used to ascertain the levels of Owerri youth's knowledge towards Nigerian

politicians' corruption. From average mean score 0-0.7: very low, 0.8-1.5: low, 1.6-2.3: moderate, 2.4-3.1: high, 3.2-4: very high awareness level.

From the above table finding, we arrived at an average mean score of 3.5, using the above bench-mark decision we interpret that Owerri Metropolis youths have a very high knowledge towards Nigerian politician's corruption. This implies that they have heard several stories of these politician's money laundering, embezzlement, misappropriation and waste of Nigerian public funds.

RQ2: How do Owerri youths perceive Nigerian politician's corruption records?

Table 2: Owerri Youths perception on Nigerian politician's corruption records

Youths perception towards Nigerian politician's corruption records	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
We see these politician's corruption to be too selfish and demeaning	209	165	6	2	3.5209	Accepted
The politicians are just wicked to Nigerians	134	195	45	8	3.1910	Accepted
The politician's corruption record is even underestimated during news report, they embezzle more than is reported to the masses	184	143	39	16	3.2958	Accepted
The corruption record is showing how hopeless this country is becoming by the day	210	133	19	20	3.3952	Accepted
I think they are just looking out for themselves, their family and their generations	5	87	167	123	1.9319	Rejected
These people don't even know how to work as much as and takeout good gains from such work, they just know how to take-out money budgeted for projects that would even benefit them.	86	142	122	32	2.7382	Rejected
The politician's mindset has made every other Nigerian to become unconcerned about the betterment of the country.	111	198	34	39	2.9973	Accepted
Grand mean			3.0			Accepted

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Bench-mark: Since, this is a 4point likert-scale, the average mean score is used to interpret the item. Since the average mean score for this table is 3, that means items with mean scores 0-2.9 will be rejected, while items with mean score 3.0-4 will be accepted.

Using the above average mean bench-mark of 3.0, we accept that Owerri Metropolis youths perceive politicians to be selfish, demeaning, wicked and unconcerned about the betterment of the country Nigeria. They as well think that the media reports on politician's corrupt money embezzlement are underestimated and not fully accounted for when reported, they as well believe that the politicians corrupt practices show's how hopeless the country is becoming by the day.

RQ3: What is Owerri youth's perception of corruption and how it influences their quick cash mindset?

Table 3: Owerri Youths perception on Nigerian politician's corruption and how it influences their mindset towards getting rich quick

Youths' perception towards corruption influence on their get-rich-quick mindset	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
Politicians' embezzlement of Nigerian funds influences youths mind towards doing same if given the opportunity	128	175	45	34	3.0392	Accepted
Youths are influenced into leaving their normal legal hustle to any illegal means of earning cash	139	94	107	42	2.8638	Rejected
Youths resort to fraud since politicians do much more than fraud when in a political position.	153	203	19	7	3.3141	Accepted
Most youths now prefer to go into drug trafficking since most corrupt politicians laid such foundation for them	95	103	106	78	2.5628	Rejected
The hopelessness of Nigerians progress has made youths mindset to shift towards resorting to join any line of	200	138	23	21	3.3534	Accepted

work that will make them earn in millions of Naira and Dollars						
Crime is on the high side yet the politicians are unconcerned, giving room to more youths to resort to crime since it gives cash more than their usual legal hustle.	131	154	64	33	3.0026	Accepted
Grand mean	3.0					Accepted

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Bench-mark: Since, this is a 4point likert-scale, the average mean score is used to interpret the item. Since the average mean score for this table is 3, that means items with mean scores 0-2.9 will be rejected, while items with mean score 3.0-4 will be accepted.

The above table finding shows three items answering for the youth's perception towards corruption and how it influences their get quick money mindset. Using the above average mean score bench-mark of 3, we see that the politician's embezzlement of public funds mindset has influenced many youths to vow to do same when given the opportunity, they even believe that resorting to fraud is little compared to the kind of frauds politicians commit. The youths as well think that they want to just join any line or work just to make quick cash in millions or Naira or Dollars since the country situation is becoming more hopeless, Nigerian politicians are even unconcerned that they are the contributing factor to rise in crime among Nigerian youths.

5. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Qualitative finding showed that Owerri youths have a very high knowledge of corruption among Nigerian politicians, this the quantitative findings supports at an average mean score of 3.5, this is because they have heard several stories of these politician's money laundering, embezzlement, misappropriation and waste of Nigerian public funds. Bello et al. (2014) adds that Nigerians know of government politician's lukewarm attitude towards influencing the youths positively. According to Akinola et al. (2022), perceptions of corruption are more influenced by social media than by traditional mainstream media. Aliu (2019) demonstrated how political corruption weakened the government's capacity to provide public goods and services, which in turn led to a deterioration in public confidence in the government's anti-corruption efforts. According to Akpogighe and Ejorji (2020), Nigeria's government has not gone far enough in offering work possibilities, basic amenities, and successful empowerment programs to enable young people to find productive employment.

Qualitative finding showed that the youths are bent on doing anything at all to just make themselves better, since the leaders who are to make the country better are busy making themselves and their generations better, leaving the larger Nigerian masses. They believe that Nigerian politicians constantly make policies that would benefit only them, while on seat and when out of the political seat, that is quite disheartening. On the other hand, the quantitative findings showed at an average mean score of 3.0 that Owerri Metropolis youths perceive Nigerian politicians to be selfish, demeaning, wicked and unconcerned about the betterment of the country Nigeria. They as well think that the media reports on politician's corrupt money embezzlement are underestimated and not fully accounted for when reported, they as well believe that the politicians corrupt practices show's how hopeless the country is becoming by the day. According to Olaore et al. (2020), young people who have alternative ways to earn a sizable individual or family income are more likely to participate in quick money schemes than those who are unemployed. According to Akinola et al. (2022), perceptions of corruption are more influenced by social media than by traditional mainstream media. According to Akpogighe and Ejorji (2020), the cascading effect of youth restlessness is visible in Nigeria as agitations, armed robberies, cultism, ethnic militia, kidnapping, and involvement in social insecurity.

Qualitative findings revealed that Nigerian youths now see themselves as sheep without shepherds, they are left to figure out their own thing their own way. They believe that the Nigerian politicians' corruption and how their wealth is applauded by the masses has strengthened the youth's mindset to go in search of anything that means to make their own money so as to be applauded by the masses since, the end which is just getting enough money now justifies the means and how this same money is even gotten. The get rich mindset of the typical Nigerian youth was reinforced by the hopelessness of the Nigerian getting better imagination. Quantitative finding showed at an average mean score of 3, that the politician's embezzlement of Nigerian public funds mindset has influenced many youths to vow to do same when given the opportunity, they even believe that resorting to fraud is little compared to the kind of frauds politicians commit. The youths as well think that they want to just join any line or work just to make quick cash in millions or Naira or Dollars since the country situation is becoming more hopeless, Nigerian politicians are even unconcerned that they are the contributing factor to rise in crime among Nigerian youths. According to Oladeji et al.

(2018), corruption is a significant issue in Nigeria's governance and development, and individuals tasked with fighting corruption frequently embezzle seized loot rather than using it for development and the provision of public goods. According to Okpala and Itetegbe (2018), the issue was the disparate actions of different authorities in the fight against corruption, and the inefficiency of this effort was caused by a lack of cooperation and coordination. According to Adeniyi (2022), a number of reasons contribute to corruption in Nigeria, such as a system of administration that lacks knowledge, bad political leadership, and widespread accountability in government. According to Faloore (2009), removing political immunity, bolstering the legal system to make decisions without fear or favour, and requiring public annual disclosure of political office holders' assets are all necessary to combat poverty.

5.1 Conclusion

It is quite disheartening that those who are old, advanced and should have good experiences and legacies to drop for the upcoming youths are the ones depleting the remaining moral upbringing left in most youths. Most youths haven't analysed the Nigerian corruption situation has taken a stand to make more through any means at all since that is what is applauded these days among Nigerians. Parents are not helping matters as most of them keep applauding and praising any person they see who has made money quick, without even wanting to know how such money was acquired. Seeing that the Nigerian politicians high and recurrent corruption record has influenced the typical Nigerian youth mindset to get wealthy, we conclude that the high rate of corruption in Nigeria and the hopelessness of Nigeria having any chance to have a better future are the influencing factors to Nigerian youth's mindset to get rich quick even if it means that they will eventually die young.

5.2 Recommendations

The following recommendations were made:

- The Owerri youth are to take a stand to be the change they desire to see in Nigeria, because if majority of youths have that mindset, it will only take time, yet we will eventually have a better, civilized and less corrupt Nigeria
- Owerri youths should take out their minds on the lawlessness and corruption of Nigerian politicians and how unconcerned they are to the future of a better Nigeria, the youths should campaign for the right thing to be done among themselves and most Nigerians, this way with God's help Nigeria will get better and less corrupt.
- Youths are advised not to allow the wrong that others did to them and the country to be a reason they will become bad, as paying bad for bad has never formed a better society for mankind. They should invest in hard and smart work, dedication, patience, perseverance and retain their integrity, as well as praying for this country's leaders, this will make the country better than their decision to make the country's reputation to grow worse.

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