



## Understanding and Addressing Political - Bureaucratic Corruption in Africa: Reflections from Tanzania

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### ABSTRACT

*Systematic literature on the proliferation of political-bureaucratic corruption and ways of fighting it barely exists in Tanzania because political and bureaucratic corruption is dealt with exclusively or is generally associated with corruption. This article, through a conceptual-analytical analysis of relevant secondary data, reveals the factors responsible for Tanzania's vulnerability to political-bureaucratic corruption, elucidates the consequences of political-bureaucratic corruption, and recommends mitigating measures. The article contends that political-bureaucratic corruption is mainly exacerbated due to fragile bureaucratic and political institutions and institutional mechanisms erected to crack down on the vice committed by bureaucratic and political elites. Such institutional fragility strips the legitimacy of the institutions charged to fight it, diminishes development endeavors, and ignites neo-patrimonial social differentiation. As such, containing political-bureaucratic corruption needs an eclectic approach, characterized by a strong political resolve to reinforce state institutions' zeal in administering law and order, particularly by enhancing the capacities of relevant officials on detection, exposure, and prosecution of politicians and bureaucrats committing corrupt practices irrespective of their status to enthrone trust in their political system.*

**Keywords:** Africa, Bureaucracy, Corruption, Politics, Political-Bureaucratic Corruption, Tanzania

### I. INTRODUCTION

The association between politicians and bureaucrats in the running of public affairs is indubitable and complementary (Park, 2021; Buchan & Hill, 2014). In modern democracies, the link is predicated on liberal-democratic philosophy, which stresses the application of checks and balances of power to limit abuse and/or misuse of the power conferred to political and bureaucratic elites (Da Ros & Taylor, 2021). In many African countries, which are characterized by the existence of state parties (parties whose existence is reliant on state resources and political power, dominating decision-making processes, and clogging space for other political actors), the implementation of checks and balances of power is no easy task (Malipula, 2021). This is chiefly because state-party politicians have a vice-like grip on bureaucrats, resulting in a political-bureaucratic fusion impeding checks and balances mechanisms (Makulilo, 2012). The challenge to implement checks and balances is partly associated with state-party cadres holding bureaucratic positions and/or having enormous influence on bureaucratic decisions, clouding the difference between the two realms (Malipula, 2016). This fusion perpetuates extensive political-bureaucratic corruption, as evidenced by Kilimwiko's examination of Tanzania, where complex interweaves between political cadres and bureaucrats conspire in corrupt transactions, mostly in public procurement (Kilimwiko, 2012). Accordingly, the term "political-bureaucratic corruption," delineating the alliance of politicians and bureaucrats in corrupt practices, is apt. The phenomenon and its dilapidating ramifications are unescapable across all polities, motivating exertions to battle it in both bureaucratic blueprints and political campaigns (Warren, 2015; Blechinger, 2005).

Indeed, corruption is a global phenomenon; however, extant literature mainly highlights its tenacious existence in least-developed countries, including those found in Africa (Mlambo et al., 2023). This is demonstrated by the Corruption Perception Index (CPI) of 2021, which ranked 180 countries across the universe, placing South Sudan and Somalia in the bottom three, with Tanzania, in the case of this study, ranking 87<sup>th</sup> (Transparency International, 2021). Tanzania has a discouraging ranking in the said CPI despite the existence of anti-corruption institutions like the Bureau for Preventing and Combating Corruption (PCCB), the Tanzania police force, the Commission for Good Governance and Human Rights, and others. Such a position has been recurring in recent years, partly because of several noticeable corruption scandals, including Richmond, Radar, and External Payment Arrears (EPA), which have resulted in siphoning off billions of taxpayer money and enriching selfish elites in the political, bureaucratic, and business domains (Cooksey, 2017). The Richmond scandal comprised a fraudulent emergency power generation contract between Richmond Development Company LLC and Tanzania Electric Supply Company Ltd. (TANESCO), leading to the dissolution of Tanzania's Cabinet in 2008 (Masebo, 2014). The radar scandal involved British



Aerospace Engineering's doubtful sale of a \$46 million Watchman Air Traffic Control System to Tanzania, implicating Andrew Chenge (Ex-Attorney General of Tanzania), Shailesh Vithilan, and Tanil Somaiya of Shivacom. Mr. Chenge, who was later appointed to the position of Minister for Infrastructure, stepped down after the SFO accused him of receiving \$1.5 million from British Aerospace Engineering (Gray, 2015). The EPA scandal involved the deceitful payment of about TSh133 billion by Tanzania's central bank to 22 companies linked with the repayment of Tanzania's foreign debt (Cooksey, 2017). These scandals depict the involvement of bureaucrats and politicians, but limited studies on political-bureaucratic corruption exist. Such deficiency is attributed to the fact that existing studies treat corruption broadly or disaggregate political and bureaucratic corruption (Kilimwiko, 2012). The current study runs away from the generalized and disaggregated approaches to understanding corruption by interrogating the interlink between politicians and bureaucrats in corruption, the ramifications thereof, and suggesting mitigating measures.

The pervasiveness of political-bureaucratic corruption in Africa is ascribed to weak law-making and judicial systems, red-tapism in the bureaucracy, and neo-patrimonialistic tendencies in the political and bureaucratic realms (Ferraz & Finan, 2008). Controlled neo-liberalism that gives Politicians and bureaucrats play a gigantic role in economic endeavors in the name of cushioning citizens against private sector exploitation, which contributes to aggravating political-bureaucratic corruption because said elite often hunt for their gains instead of the broader public's (Warren, 2015). Such self-centered acts disrupt development efforts and parade ethical depravity. The ramifications of political-bureaucratic corruption can be deduced from two contrasting viewpoints: the moralist approach to corruption and the functionalist approach to corruption (Rose, 2015). The former is of the position that political-bureaucratic corruption by all standards is unethical; it hampers economic development and diverts infrastructure and public goods from the needy (Warren, 2015). Functionalists, on the other hand, look at corruption in terms of its potential societal contributions. Functionalists like Sánchez & Goda (2018) are of the view that political-bureaucratic corruption is not innately disadvantageous, as it has proven to be apt in enhancing economic efficiency by waning bureaucratic red tape. Neumann (2013) seconds such a position by pointing out that legitimized corruption has helped Southeast Asian countries avoid the economic inefficiency related to statist economic management.

Given the pervasiveness of political-bureaucratic corruption in African countries, including Tanzania, along with its wide-ranging negative consequences on socio-economic development, coupled with scant literature illuminating the matter, an analysis to comprehend its nature and propose ways of cracking it down is not only pertinent but also timely. An examination of Tanzania's experience where incidences of political-bureaucratic corruption exist but have been inadequately addressed, this article attempts to mend the said gap by providing some insights on the occurrence of political-bureaucratic corruption, its manifestation and ramifications on socio-economic development, and suggesting measures for combating the canker.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Understanding Political-Bureaucratic Corruption

Political-bureaucratic corruption could be better understood if it emanates from the conventional conception of corruption as self-serving wealth-aggrandization behavior by public officials or their misuse of public resources for personal gains (Kurer, 2015). The gains in question could be economic or social, destined to enhance their status or that of customers close to them (Masebo, 2014). Corrupt practices involve bribery, nepotism, and misappropriation of public resources (Philip, 2015). Public officials betrothed to corrupt tendencies deviate from their mandated tasks, ranking their personal or clientelist interests over the public's (Park, 2021). Corruption functions on a transactional basis, necessitating an exchange between the "corrupted" and "corrupters." The former are responsible for allotting public resources and have to implore or be encouraged to obtain them from corrupters; the latter have to offer rewards to the corrupt officials to obtain benefits that they are entitled to or not.

Given that the benefits gained from corruption are reciprocated and illicit, parties engaged in the vice carefully assess the situations and arrangements to avoid detection or entrapment before committing corrupt practices (Warren, 2015). The definitions underpin the understanding of corruption as a pursuit of unlawful personal gain-seeking behavior. Nevertheless, they underscore a grave flaw because they are linked to the public sector and its abuse and/or misuse of public resources, while corruption is also apparent within and between private units. In this regard, corruption's scope transcends the public domain and can be influenced by cultural, historical, economic, social, or political disparities among societies (Melgar et al., 2015). This critique underscores the fact that corruption is a pattern of illegal quest for private gains, happening in both public and private domains.



Informed by the comprehensive definition of corruption that we subscribe to, political-bureaucratic corruption is a complex disorder involving illegal exchanges between politicians and bureaucrats on one side and individuals or societal groups on the other. Within the said transaction, politicians and bureaucrats privatize public goods by engaging in extortion, accepting bribes, embezzling public resources, and practicing nepotism, just to mention a few (Philp, 2015). Political-bureaucratic corruption portrays unconventionality to legal-rational ethos, including orderly misuse of public institutions, wherein rulers circumvent, overlook, or occasionally manipulate them to align with their parochial interests (Beeri & Navot, 2013). At its heart, corruption epitomizes the betrayal of public faith, as politicians and bureaucrats become representatives of decay within political systems instead of serving the general public diligently (Kilimwiko, 2012). Correspondingly, it involves politicians and bureaucrats using money to attain positions of power for their own gains and those sponsoring them with the anticipation of getting special treatment from them (Babeiya, 2011). The definition sets the obligatory participation of politicians and bureaucrats in corruption, irrespective of their level of authority (Issacharoff, 2010). However, some descriptions limit it to high-ranking political and/or bureaucratic decision-makers (Beeri & Navot, 2013).

## 2.2 Existence of Political-Bureaucratic Corruption

From a theoretical perspective, we can elucidate the occurrence of political-bureaucratic corruption by examining the interests of those who commit and receive corrupt transactions (Beeri & Navot, 2013). As earlier discussed, political-bureaucratic corruption is a result of a state-society interaction exemplified by an exchange of benefits between political and/or state agents with mixed legal personalities, granting illicit private gains to all parties involved. Rarely does political-bureaucratic corruption involve a balanced connotation of mutual exchange. Political-bureaucratic corruption involves a flow of public resources either from the state to society, commonly dubbed redistributive or bottom-up corruption, or in a reverse direction, known as extractive or top-down corruption. The direction flows are at the core of the redistributive and extractive theoretical viewpoints on corruption's crux.

The redistributive theory explains the manifestation of corruption by focusing on societal groups' deteriorating impacts on the distribution of state resources. This theory argues that state institutions are the frailer partners in the state-society resource distribution relationship (Sánchez & Goda, 2018). When individuals and societal groups engage in corrupt transactions, they stand to gain more benefits than state agents. Therefore, the power dynamics within the society where corruption occurs determine the allocation of public resources to various groups and individuals. Such a state of affairs presumes that politically sturdy groups and individuals exploit corrupt stimulus to sway bureaucrats and politicians to tailor rights and distribute public goods in their favour (Otáhal et al., 2013). In such a situation, the state's existence is dependent on the patronage of influential social groups and personalities. Accordingly, the state's capability to collect taxes, deliver public goods, and implement inclusive political ideologies for the accomplishment of lucid development policies is sternly halted (Méon & Weill, 2010). Such a circumstance regularly harms those relying on public goods and state shields (Kamuzora, 2006).

In contrast, the extractive theory of corruption deviates from the redistributive theory by claiming that state institutions are the stronger partners in the state-society corruption connection (Hellman, 2013). The theory contends that states use their apparatuses to exploit resources from society (David, 2012). This theoretical strand is of the view that politicians and bureaucrats spread corruption by shielding commercial transactions from honest market competition by preferring their businesses or those of their patrimonial commercial networks. Therefore, they prefer state-facilitated extractive capitalism over liberal productive and industrial capitalism (Miller et al., 2011). Extractive corruption is primarily fuelled by neo-patrimonial inclinations entrenched in patron-client relationships characterising neo-patrimonial administrations. In such administrations, bureaucratic and political elites exercise unrestrained power over resources, permitting them to inconsiderately amass resources and distribute them to their clients to ensure sustained support (Johnston, 2014). In this context, neo-patrimonial administrations are neither legitimate nor oriented towards inclusive development as state resources are consumed for the ruling elites' self-centred interests (David, 2012).

Empirical studies underscore that the reasons for political-bureaucratic corruption are too complicated to be comprehended in a mere cause-and-effect framework. Such complexity stems from the fact that the canker occurs in varied contexts, at dissimilar times, in diverse forms, and to various degrees (Salifu, 2008). In Africa, colonialism seems to have fashioned a pleasant atmosphere for corruption to flourish. This is said to be the case because post-colonial African states inherited colonialism's undemocratic and divisive practices that debilitated state institutions' ability to deliver public goods to the people and enforce institutional accountability (Spector, 2005). It is imperative to note that colonists barely held free, fair, and credible elections within their colonies. Equally, the principle of liberal democracy is loudly championed today, particularly insisting that the application of checks and balances is virtually



missing. Instead, colonialists created coalitions with local elites to further their exploitative agendas, with the said elites receiving clientelist favours in exchange. Such logic characterised independent African states' political systems, administration, and economy as African politicians and bureaucrats distributed resources in line with the redistributive theoretical dictates and extracted resources from extractive theoretical dispositions (Morris & Klesner, 2010). Correspondingly, the continued occurrence of corrupt incidents and other unethical behaviours by African leaders inspires rippling effects on shaping their subordinates' compliance and participation in political-bureaucratic corruption (Miller et al., 2011).

Furthermore, from a democratic perspective, political party financing in emerging democracies has the potential to breed political-bureaucratic corruption. Such a position is anchored on the fact that state parties' survival is reliant on state resources and dishonest income-generating activities (Makulilo, 2012). Such dependency is evident in political parties' nagging appeals for government subsidies to support their undertakings (Eme & Nkechi, 2014). Kilimwiko (2012) contends that political parties limited financial muscle to their operational costs, forcing them to resort to illicit practices, including generating funds through corrupt transactions independently or in collusion with bureaucrats. Likewise, the government's incapacity to sufficiently compensate public officials intensifies corruption, as they are tempted to engage in such dubious acts to meet their financial wants and needs (Yaday, 2011).

### **2.3 Effects of Political-Bureaucratic Corruption in Africa**

Moralist and functional approaches to corruption can elucidate the consequences of political-bureaucratic corruption. The moralist outlook, as pointed out in the introduction, demonises political-bureaucratic corruption based on ethical and moral factors. It argues that political-bureaucratic corruption's self-serving neo-patrimonial character violates well-established moral standards meant to judiciously inform the running of political and bureaucratic institutions and their agents (Rose, 2015). Such a situation dents the credibility and esteem of legal-rational political and bureaucratic authorities and their representatives (Madaha, 2013). According to the moralist view, political and bureaucratic corruption slows down economic growth by promoting the unequal distribution of public goods in a neo-patrimonial way, which leads to social differences and the economic undermining of others (Warren, 2015). As effective and appealing as the moralist perspective appears to be in asserting the hostile effects of political-bureaucratic corruption, it also has limitations. Principally, the moralist school individualises a societal phenomenon and oversimplifies the dissimilarity between what is good and bad within a polity. People often make such dichotomies without considering societal contexts and the difference between prescribed norms and fundamental practice-based norms (Heywood, 1997).

Contrary to the ethical viewpoint, functionalists examine the ramifications of political-bureaucratic corruption based on actual and/or potential role development initiatives. Scholars buying into this viewpoint assert that political-bureaucratic corruption can positively trigger business transactions by limiting bureaucratic red tape that obstructs private investment and redistribution of resources for growth and development (Méon & Weill, 2010). Moreover, Mohamadi et al. (2017) argue that political-bureaucratic corruption has the potential to increase public participation in public policy by providing a different channel to complement the existing policy-making processes. In this regard, politicians and bureaucrats may consider tolerating a certain degree of corruption in order to increase public participation in policy-making. Political and bureaucratic corruption may seem like a good way to get people more involved in policymaking, but functionalists often don't think about the political necessity of nonconformity or the role of power dynamics, interests, and social structures, which means that people who carry the vice may end up with uneven results. The two approaches are fundamentally divergent in elucidating the effects of political-bureaucratic corruption. Consequently, adopting either approach could lead to incomplete data on political-bureaucratic corruption. This study opted to gain a comprehensive understanding of the effects of political-bureaucratic corruption by incorporating both theories' views.

### **2.4 Fighting Political-bureaucratic Corruption in Africa**

Political-bureaucratic corruption, as described above, is a worldwide, multi-faceted phenomenon that cannot be combated by a single institution or method. It requires unshakable political will and dedicated efforts to extinguish it (Brown & Cloke, 2011). According to Johnston (2014), a resolute political will to combat political-bureaucratic corruption strengthens restrictive measures and motivates anti-corruption initiatives. Likewise, Issacharoff (2010) suggests implementing institutional methods such as psychological and technical directives to combat political-bureaucratic corruption, whereas Kaufman & Vicente (2011) recommend administrative traps to control corrupt politicians and bureaucrats. The institutional approach proposes internal controls like clear ethical rules, auditing offices, and meticulous personnel to determine and dissuade corruption (Ibid.). Indeed, internal controls are relevant,



but external controls are critical as well (Spector, 2005). It is against this backdrop that Kilimwiko (2012) accentuates the significance of an observant, well-resourced, and free press that can monitor government actions and expose key political-bureaucratic corruption scandals and their damaging ramifications on development. The effectiveness of the media in exposing corrupt scandals depends on controlling corruption within media houses and their prebendal journalists. Additionally, institutions tasked with combating corruption should recognise sectors susceptible to political-bureaucratic corruption and tackle them by establishing open procedures, strengthening corruption monitoring initiatives, and executing sanctions against corrupt tendencies (Salifu, 2008).

## 2.5 Tying the Theoretical and Empirical Discourses of Political-Bureaucratic Corruption

The debates above demonstrate that political-bureaucratic corruption is a universal phenomenon. The grounds for its existence are varied and revolve around a collection of socio-economic, political, and institutional fundamentals. Its embellishments are predominant in societies considered to have fragile democratic institutions, poorly enforced laws, fragile democratic institutions, inadequate political will to effect the democratisation process, docile citizens, and CSOs' engagement in democratic processes. This discourse links political-bureaucratic corruption to system deficiencies, feeble or missing checks and balances, the absence of an autonomous judiciary, a subdued civil society, and limited press freedom. Similarly, it points out inadequacies in transparent and accountable governance deeds, feebleness in the administration and enforcement of law, and inconsistencies in legal regimes. Factors such as poverty, societal attitudes towards corruption, and limited political commitment to fight corruption were also highlighted as catalysts for political-bureaucratic corruption. The succeeding sections present the methods applied in the current study and delve into Tanzania's susceptibility to political-bureaucratic corruption, its effects, and approaches for mitigating it.

## III. METHODOLOGY

The article is primarily a library-based review that applies a conceptual-analytical methodology that entails the analysis of concepts embedded in varied literature relevant to political-bureaucratic corruption. The analysis aims to explore connections among the reviewed concepts within a complex milieu where political-bureaucratic corruption takes place to understand the causes and effects of political-bureaucratic corruption and ways and means of reversing the vice in Africa through specific biases based on Tanzania's experience. Therefore, the researcher did not engage in primary data collection, which is a requirement for an empirical study. Rather, the article drew on concepts from journal articles, e-books and reports, local newspaper articles, as well as numerous prior research outputs relevant to understanding the causes and effects of political-bureaucratic corruption and exploring means through which it can be cracked down. The conceptual-analytical method proved useful, bringing to the forefront ideas relevant to understanding political-bureaucratic corruption in Tanzania and addressing it, as presented and discussed below. It specifically triggered in-depth discussions on the concept of political-bureaucratic corruption after most literature dealing with political corruption and/or bureaucratic corruption in isolation, while in an actual sense, they are closely intertwined. This article's discussion broadens the scope for future original empirical research on political-bureaucratic corruption.

The selection of literature used in this article was contingent on its relevance to political-bureaucratic corruption. The ideas and views garnered from varied sources were read to identify the patterns of information on the causes, effects, and ways of combating political-bureaucratic corruption they represent. Thereafter, the identified patterns were classified according to the theoretical viewpoints that informed the study. The classified data was analysed to get a glimpse of the contextual meaning embedded in the classified information and to allow the examination of relationships among the classifications to be discussed and synthesised to stake the fundamental argument of the current article. We triangulated the theoretical perspectives and the information gathered from the study's secondary data sources to enhance the validity and reliability of the data.

## IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Susceptibility of Political-Bureaucratic Corruption in Tanzania

The current research findings indicate that semi-illiteracy, poverty, and the likelihood of getting rich are the factors that perpetuate political-bureaucratic corruption. Political-bureaucratic corruption often occurs in semi-illiterate individuals due to their unbelievably gullible nature and limited understanding of their rights and privileges (Kamuzora, 2006). Most Tanzanians have only completed primary school. Politicians and bureaucrats know this fact



and exploit it to hoodwink them, taking advantage of their gullibility. As a result, people tend to believe any crap told without questioning it. Kamuzora (2006) argues that bureaucrats often deceive citizens into paying for services that they should provide for free. Moreover, it is not uncommon during elections to hear renowned politicians blessing bribes by telling citizens to accept bribes from candidates vying for political office but advising them not to vote for those aspirants (Malipula, 2016). Such practices indicate the severity of the problem and underline the centrality of comprehensive civic education programmes to empower citizens to resist corrupt politicians.

Apart from semi-illiteracy, poverty also poses a serious threat to political and bureaucratic corruption in Tanzania because poor people tend to disregard ethical principles that clog their self-serving economic benefits (Kamuzora, 2006). This position is echoed by Masebo (2014), who is of the view that the need for survival among poor citizens makes them fail to live up to their civic duty to denounce political-bureaucratic corruption. Furthermore, impoverished individuals find it challenging to question or pursue appropriate legal action against corrupt politicians and bureaucrats due to their inability to cover the associated costs (Kanywanyi, 2009). In this context, politicians and bureaucrats (2014) cannot be passionate about eradicating people's poverty since doing so is akin to disassociating themselves from richness. Such a position is anchored on the fact that politicians and bureaucrats stand a better chance of enriching themselves through injudiciously allocating public resources in a neo-patrimonial context compared to their salaries and benefits (Novat, 2015). Indeed, Novat's views hold water, benefiting a lot of scholars in comparative Novat (2015), but some elected politicians and appointed bureaucratic posts are considered, thus attracting businessmen, members of parliament, and other professionals to rush into such positions. Such a position can be evidenced by Ramadhani Lucrative, who contends the faculty, that MPs pocket an estimated monthly package of TZS 11 million (2015), around TZS 230 million as gratuity at the end of a five-year term, a car loan of around TZS 90 million for medical care locally and sometimes facilitated treatment abroad, sitting allowances during parliamentary and parliamentary committee sessions, and external trips. These benefits explicate the celebrated compliment "kuukata," which entails getting something valuable upon acquiring a political or bureaucratic portfolio. Therefore, one could argue that the legal and illicit gains from political and bureaucratic portfolios have the potential to incentivize corrupt practices, given the likelihood of wealth accumulation.

Arguing along the same lines, Malipula (2016) maintains that political aspirants splash money and other items to win political support, knowing that they will recover their costs once they take the oath of office and assume power. Remarkably, in the elections of 2015, Tanzania's ruling party (CCM) topped the list of reported cases of corruption (TEMCO, 2015). The TEMCO Report revealed that CCM itself ordered a re-run of intraparty primaries in five constituencies - Makete, Kilolo, Ukonga, Busega, and Rufiji - on grounds of election irregularities, including corruption accusations. The content of the TEMCO Report on the 2015 elections is in line with the major findings of the well-known 'Warioba Report on Corruption' published over twenty years before the 2015 elections. Warioba's report revealed overtly that it is not hard to use money or other valuable items to entice people to do political aspirants's bidding in elections in Tanzania, as the subsequent extract authenticates:

*"Politicians give bribe to members of Executive Committees of political parties or to the voters during elections so that they can vote for them or for their candidates. ... the elections of Councillors; members of House of Representatives, and Members of Parliament which were recently concluded (1995) have demonstrated vividly how deeply rooted corruption is from the time of selection of candidates to the elections themselves" (URT, 1996: 48).*

These remarks suggest that electoral corruption is engraved in Tanzania's political culture and coincide with the allegations and counter-allegations of political bribery by political aspirants and their agents captured in many EMRs. Political bribery practices give the rich an advantage in winning political offices because of their ability to offer enticing bribes to the poor. Such a situation is a tragedy, as vote-buying weakens leaders' accountability to the people, as they just need to raise money to win political office. The aspects of semi-illiteracy, poverty, and the potential for enrichment discussed advocate that the crux of acquiring political and bureaucratic vacancies is slipping from being an avenue for rendering sincere public service to society to egotistic neo-patrimonial resource-aggrandizing projects.

#### **4.2 Political-Bureaucrats-Merchants Unholy Trinity**

In Tanzania, politicians, bureaucrats, and businessmen effortlessly interrelate to forge a grave case of conflict of interest in electoral processes and beyond (Kilimwiko, 2012). This marriage is evident by the rush of wealthy businessmen into politics from the 2000 elections onwards, tied with the rising illicit money spending that characterised elections to the extent that Tanzania's fourth-phase government avowed to initiate moves to separate politics and business (Ramadhan, 2015). By and large, the said government had plans to make politicians choose



between active involvement in politics and business and to make businessmen and executives relinquish their positions when they opt to contest for political office. These initiatives to divorce the politicians-bureaucrats-merchants matrimony to curb corruption have recorded inadequate triumph as the said initiatives have to separate politicians and their businesses, as well as businessmen with active politics, have not been implemented; therefore, unholy trinity still exists and the people rush into politics to enjoy the benefits that it offers. Businessmen acquire political seats and reap the rewards while retaining their positions at the apex of their enterprises. The ability of businessmen and other affluent individuals to navigate intraparty nomination processes and entice electorates during actual elections contributes to their success in elections (Ramadhani, 2015). This situation makes the title “political merchants,” singlehandedly coined by Kilimwiko (2012), relevant.

Notably, political parties in Africa tend to prefer affluent aspirants because of their ability to finance their election campaigns and donate to their parties’ election campaigns and beyond (Babeiya, 2011). Such contributions are not for free; they are meant to protect their business interests by way of guaranteed lucrative government tenders—a typical case of neo-patrimonialism characterising the politics of most African countries (Kilimwiko, 2012). Such interplay strengthens the bond between politicians, bureaucrats, and businessmen, and allows the partner to indulge in corrupt practices. Grey (2015) supports the idea of the “unholy trinity” by saying that politicians and bureaucrats have a lot of power and authority to get involved in the bidding processes of public institutions. This shows conflict of interest and neo-patrimonial tendencies. Cooksey (2017) picks The Richmond Saga, whereby TANESCO entered into a fraudulent contract with a briefcase company upon the dictates of political and bureaucratic elites, to provide testament to the role of such elites.

### **4.3 Deficits in the Corruption Combatting Institutions and Instruments of Governance**

Political-bureaucratic corruption persists despite the existence of legislation and institutions established to curb it. Such a situation poses a serious impediment to economic growth, sustainable development, and democratic consolidation efforts (Policy Forum, 2018). This state of affairs provides an opportunity for sly politicians and bureaucrats to side-step laws and other legal frameworks meant to combat corruption with impunity (Lukiko, 2020; Popova & Post, 2018). For instance, it is common for political aspirants to distribute garments, food, salt, and other items in the name of gifts to electorates (Malipula, 2016). All these offerings are made by politicians, knowing that the PCCB lacks the muscles to deal with corruption adequately during general elections. Such a position is anchored on the fact that Tanzania is a huge country with infrastructural deficiencies and a large number of electoral constituencies, candidates, and the voting public. The situation is made worse by the fact that most PCCB district offices are understaffed and busy with routine office work, which limits their effectiveness in monitoring election campaign meetings.

Information is indispensable in cracking down on political-bureaucratic corruption, as a well-informed populace is more likely to be able to play a better role in addressing issues that affect their lives, including the war against political-bureaucratic corruption, than an ill-informed populace (Asante & Khisa, 2019). This fact requires a free press to enhance awareness and mobilise public opinion on anti-corruption initiatives. In Tanzania, the state controls the press via legislation and can ban or suspend any media at will (Kilimwiko, 2012), which is inappropriate. These state powers over the press make the free press a far-reaching cry (Malipula, 2016). More importantly, the National Assembly enacted the Media Service Act on November 4, 2016, and President Magufuli swiftly assented to it twelve days later. However, media stakeholders view the law as unfriendly to freedom of information and expression. As such, MCT, the Human Rights Defenders Coalition (HRDC), and LHRC lodged a petition at the East Africa Court of Justice on January 11, 2017, challenging the said law (Kamau, 2020; Sabuni, 2017). The petition challenges the contents of the said Act deemed to carry threats to freedom of press and expression, including Tanzania’s obligations to uphold and protect human and people’s rights under the East African Treaty (The Citizen, 12/1/2017). The legislation was followed by a hurriedly made media policy that has not been widely consulted by media stakeholders, and those consulted critically accused it of scuttling their expectations by mitigating their access to information.

### **4.4 Ramifications of Political-Bureaucratic Corruption in Tanzania**

The foregoing discussions established that corrupt political processes can undermine a body politic by providing corrupt elected leaders whose interests are altruistic, who in turn forge alliances with corrupt bureaucrats to perpetuate political-bureaucratic corruption. Such entanglement makes the public leadership chain from top to bottom join the evil quest for self-enrichment to serve the ‘holy’ few who don’t buy into the ‘unethical enterprise’. Equally, we saw that the literature on political-bureaucratic corruption can have more positive outcomes than negative ones.



Tanzania seems to align well with the dominant view, as the negative economic impacts of political-bureaucratic corruption are well pronounced. This position can be evidenced by Tanzania's first citizen, the late President John Pombe Magufuli, who has overtly contended severally that high levels of political-bureaucratic corruption have inhibited socio-economic development. The former head of state persistently questions why countries like Tanzania, endowed with abundant natural resources, languish in poverty and become desperate recipients of aid, despite their supposed role as donors. He constantly declares how money accrued from the creation of ghost workers, ghost students, ghost higher education loans, over-invoiced claims, and shoddy contracts that went into politicians' and bureaucrats' pockets. To prove his point, the President associates the financing of mega-million-dollar development projects like the Standard Gauge Railways, the Nyerere Hydro-Electric Power Project, and the purchase of 10 aeroplanes with his government's ability to mend political-bureaucratic corruption tendencies.

Complementing the President's view, Masebo (2014) argues that political-bureaucratic corruption in the liberalisation era has informed laxity in tax collection and treacherous business deals involving overpriced procurement, procurement of low-quality goods and/or services, and even ghost procurement, which in sum has impaired development endeavours in Tanzania. Such a view contradicts Neumann (2013), who believes that political-bureaucratic corruption can undermine rigid bureaucratic systems to facilitate growth and development, like in Southeast Asian countries where levels of FDI and growth are high despite claims of high corruption. Likewise, Grey (2015) points out that political-bureaucratic corruption enhances financial and capital flight as the politicians and bureaucrats involved decide to keep their money in offshore accounts to conceal their evil deeds. The fact that most businessmen engaging in such acts are foreigners or own foreign businesses exacerbates the situation. Grey's position can be evidenced by Ernst and Young's audit report on the EPA, which identified that a large portion of US\$131 million improperly paid to 22 local firms linked to politicians, bureaucrats, and businesses was sent to offshore banks, arousing apprehension about an injurious association between corrupt transactions and capital flight (URT, 2009). Inferably, such transfers of money suggest that political-bureaucratic corruption deteriorates states' revenue collection muscles, which subsequently impedes their social service provision capacity (Kanywanyi, 2009). The social service provision limits hit hard on the disadvantaged, who can hardly pay for the undermined quantity and quality of public services.

In political terms, political-bureaucratic corruption foils democracy and good governance and undermines the legitimacy of government authority as its clientelistic neo-patrimonial tendencies informing the politicians and bureaucrats' actions breed corruption (Nyaluke, 2013). Aspects like the rule of law, equity, participation, and the like are easily ignored due to the centrality of money in buying out favours and rights and concealing wrongdoings (Kanywanyi, 2009). The loopholes for using money inherent in the electoral processes, as the politicians, bureaucrats, and businessmen wedlock explained above, indicated disrespect to representative democracy and the checks and balances that it portends to uphold. On a broad spectrum, the clientelist nature of public goods allocation entails problems in ensuring sustainable development and equitable distribution of national resources and therefore perpetuates poverty, social classes, and disunity.

The state and consequences of political-bureaucratic corruption described above are in line with George Ayittey's portrayal of the corruptive tendencies of the African state. Ayittey (1999) contends that the African state has assumed a mafia-like bazaar, in which political and bureaucratic offices are occupied by an assemblage of hoodlums and brutes who utilise state apparatuses to aggrandize wealth for self-serving neo-patrimonial purposes, which breeds social differentiation, rankings, and exclusion. Such a situation entails that holding a public position in Africa guarantees unstoppable pillage of public resources and sour socio-economic and political relations between those enjoying public resources and those who are not. Ayittey's and the preceding views challenge us to confront the ugly reality of political-bureaucratic corruption. Importantly, it suggests that deliberate efforts to combat it have to be made to take African countries out of the morass of poverty and wanting social services, as well as revamping the moral authority at all levels of leadership that is seriously undermined.

#### **4.5 Battling Political-Bureaucratic Corruption in Tanzania**

This section suggests initiatives deemed relevant for battling political-bureaucratic corruption in Tanzania. The list is by no means exhaustive, but it represents the major approaches based on the discussions presented above. The suggestions are presented cognizant of the fact that political-bureaucratic corruption is not an easy wrongdoing to determine, discover, and stamp. This is because it is done stealthily, as both the corrupter and the corrupted are lawbreakers; thus, collaboration from any end can't be expected. Most seriously, the vice is committed by individuals who wield substantial political and bureaucratic powers. Importantly, as contended previously, it epitomises institutional deficiencies; thus, addressing them requires one to confront such deficiencies (Spector, 2005). It is worth



noting that the solutions are separately presented, but in an actual sense, their demarcations aren't watertight; therefore, their usefulness in combating the vice demands an eclectic approach.

Since illiteracy, poverty, and the potential for enrichment are responsible for political-bureaucratic corruption, efforts to reverse them in Tanzanian society are therefore inescapable. Such initiative will scrub off poor people's excuses for condoning bribes from politicians and/or bureaucrats, as well as disregarding their civic responsibility of condemning political-bureaucratic corruption. Growth discourages corruption, which partially informs this proposal (Blackburn et al., 2010). While the fight against poverty might be positive in reducing corruption, it obviously won't please those engraved with corrupt-seeking behaviour. As such, the fight against poverty has to be coupled with the anti-corruption ethos that upholds anti-corruption values, ethics, and conduct in all public institutions, beginning with our school curriculum (Masebo, 2014).

Furthermore, the formal and informal lucrative sources of enrichment presented above have to be addressed by making political and bureaucratic portfolios *de facto* and *de jure* avenues for serving citizens. This can be achieved by instilling a public service ethos in politicians and bureaucrats and reducing the well-paid packages that they get compared to other workers. Likewise, the loopholes guaranteeing the politicians, bureaucrats, and merchants' unholy trinity depicted above that perpetuate the vice should be at least legally mended, if not filled. Legislation (s) should be enacted to separate the unholy matrimonial by barring any of the parties to the marriage from actively belonging to two or all domains and having in place effective enforcement mechanisms to affect the legislation. A particular point that needs to be stressed here is related to election financing, which provides loopholes for unlawful use of money in elections. In this connection, the domestic political authorities should, to a large extent, finance elections through their sources to avoid politicians engaging in uncontrolled soliciting and fundraising to cater for election campaigns and spend the funds in a manner they deem fit, including offering bribes. A law requiring political aspirants to reveal their donors and amounts given, as well as how they have been used, is needed. Specifically, the legislation(s) must draw a bold line demarcating lawful and unlawful contributions and enforce it effectively. Short of such initiatives, the quid pro quo deals spearheaded by corrupt politicians, as highlighted above, will continue to transpire in perpetuity.

Broad good governance reforms are relevant to redressing political-bureaucratic corruption. This is because good governance spearheads accountability of political and public officials to citizens which deters corruption by providing room for citizens to question their leaders; appeals ardently for adherence to human rights ethos and the rule of law which by far despises corruption; insists transparency in decision making which avoids possibilities for unethical public servants to con illiterate citizens; supports tolerance of divergent views including those against corruption; and enhances the competence of a government to formulate policies and deliver services which will uplift the weak among the citizenry and contribute to overall growth and development which stands on the way of poverty induced corruption (Spector, 2005). In sum, the intents of good governance can be realised through the promotion of a free press, a vibrant civil society, the de-monopolisation of excessive political and bureaucratic powers and influence in decision-making, transparency in governance, and participatory pro-poor growth and service delivery initiatives (Warren, 2015).

For a political system to foster good governance and fight political-bureaucratic corruption, strong legal systems and anti-corruption watchdogs such as the Police Force, PCCB, and Human Rights Commission, just to mention a few, are paramount. These institutions shall be able to effectively detect, prosecute, and punish all corrupt politicians and bureaucrats, particularly the highly placed ones who normally commit such acts with impunity. Deliberate initiatives aimed at strengthening the capacities of these institutions financially, human resource-wise, and materially are important. Equally, there is a need to enhance the principle of separation of powers and its associated elements of checks and balances by making the mentioned institutions report to the National Assembly instead of to the President as they are now. This will enable nationals to demand and get accountability from their leaders and address corrupt tendencies, as the legislature is the most broadly based and legitimate representative political body in Tanzania. For these institutions to be functional in battling political-bureaucratic corruption, they have to be led by people with integrity and zero tolerance for corruption. Similarly, all individuals holding positions of power and influence in society, whether political or bureaucratic, must possess these qualities. Political and bureaucratic leaders must exhibit exemplary corrupt-free tendencies in all of their dealings to set the nation's moral tone and attract similar behaviour in their subjects. This is essential because if the governed see that their political and bureaucratic leaders are tolerating or indulging in corrupt practices, they too will follow suit, and the war against it will not bear fruit. Such leaders shall use their right to nominate and dismiss, replace, or fire corrupt officials regardless of their positions, influence, or any other patrimonial factor.

Finally, it is important to internationalise the fight against political-bureaucratic corruption since it is a result of internal and external factors. Importantly, international donors peg conditions for aid and trade on matters that are



critical in dissuading political-bureaucratic corruption, including good governance practices and honest government (Nyaluke, 2013). Time and again, the donor community has asserted its intention to freeze aid to corrupt-ridden countries in order to put considerable pressure on them to fight corruption. In this regard, the internationalisation of the war against political-bureaucratic corruption presents a viable window for Tanzania in its efforts to combat corruption because the economic and governance contributions indicated are relevant in addressing poverty, bad governance, and institutional-driven influences of political-bureaucratic corruption.

## V. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 Conclusions

This article argues that political-bureaucratic corruption is multifaceted and affects all countries in the world, with severe dilapidating effects in African countries. The article has addressed a significant gap in the existing literature by examining the interconnectedness of political and bureaucratic corruption in Tanzania through a conceptual-analytical analysis of relevant secondary data. The analysis in question established that political-bureaucratic corruption aggravates because of the flimsiness of bureaucratic and political institutions and the ineptitude of institutional mechanisms assigned to stamp on corruption and its allied negative consequences. The analysis overtly validates that the consequences of political-bureaucratic corruption are deep, causing limited trust in governmental establishments, diminishing development endeavours, and widening social differentiation. Reversal of such a quagmire requires the adoption of an eclectic approach that takes on board a myriad of strategies. At its core, the eclectic approach should be guided by an unequivocal political will geared towards strengthening the capacity of state institutions to enforce law and order.

Additionally, deliberate efforts are being made to augment the effectiveness of institutional frameworks and mechanisms dealing with detecting, exposing, and prosecuting individuals involved in corrupt transactions, irrespective of their social, economic, or political statuses. Demonstration of a firm commitment to cracking down on perpetrators of corruption is imperative in restoring the integrity of the political system, which is supposed to be at the forefront in combating political-bureaucratic corruption. As much as the role of the political system and the leadership and processes that it creates are paramount in the fight against political-bureaucratic corruption, the transactional nature of the vice and its ramifications need determined efforts from all stakeholders, including individuals, CSOs, and government officials.

### 5.2 Recommendations

The findings and discussions above have established that addressing political-bureaucratic corruption requires a multifaceted approach. At its core, the multidimensional approach to cracking political-bureaucratic corruption has to guarantee that bureaucrats and politicians charged with improving citizens' well-being discharge their duties to the public incorruptly. In the same vein, bureaucrats and politicians should have zero tolerance for corruption by exposing and punishing or facilitating the punishing of all corrupt elements steadfastly. This infers that bureaucrats and politicians should signify virtue and uphold ethical standards to stamp out corrupt tendencies. Equally, it is important to empower public organs charged with the role of combating corruption so that they can effectively monitor and check institutional gaps perpetuating political-bureaucratic corruption. Such endeavours require establishing new or strengthening existing mechanisms for controlling, detecting, and punishing corrupt politicians and bureaucrats. Fostering a free media and ensuring the existence of vibrant CSOs proficient in performing anti-corruption watchdogs and whistleblowers, free from victimisation or intimidation irrespective of the status of corrupt politicians and bureaucrats. These initiatives are imperative because the unholy trinity aggravating political-bureaucratic corruption divulged in this article cannot repudiate loopholes of enrichment.

Fostering free media and supporting vibrant CSOs are crucial for enhancing anti-corruption watchdogs and whistleblowers by ensuring that journalists and activists can operate without fear of victimisation or intimidation. As such, the media could play a vital role in monitoring government actions and advocating for the interests of citizens, thereby serving as essential allies in the fight against corruption. The transparency advocated aims at easing access to information, particularly for the general populace, so that they actively participate in decision-making processes to further their public interest. Such a measure could reduce the likelihood of information manipulation-related corruption. A transparent system could do more in the fight against corruption if corruption awareness education is provided to youngsters by integrating standalone anti-corruption subjects and/or topics in subjects like civics in primary and secondary school curricula. Providing anti-corruption knowledge to students at a young age, particularly its dilapidating effects, is critical to cultivating an anti-corruption culture. While it is significant to tame the young at



school for the future, training programmes for politicians and bureaucrats underscore the centrality of shunning conflicts of interest and illegal money grandization. Such training is deemed imperative for improving leaders' ethical values and their ability to overcome corrupt temptations.

Moreover, initiatives to battle corruption in Tanzania have to utilise available internal and external opportunities for addressing the underlying socioeconomic factors enticing corrupt tendencies and limiting the ability of state organs to fight political-bureaucratic corruption. These include taking advantage of activities aimed at facilitating economic growth, alleviating poverty, improving good governance practices, legislation against political-bureaucratic corruption, and anti-corruption watchdogs' capacities. Such a recommendation is anchored on the fact that the institutions charged with combating corruption are short on resources, and some corrupt individuals are enticed by the potential of getting richer. In this regard, any attempt at improving community livelihood and institutional capacities can contribute to reducing the factors that aggravate and perpetuate political bureaucratic corruption.

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