

**TOPIC: INTERROGATING POLITICAL CORRUPTION IN POST-INDEPENDENCE
UGANDA: MANIFESTATIONS, CAUSES AND ANTI-CORRUPTION RESPONSES
1962-2017**

Candidate's Name: Clare Cheromoi

Reg No. 2019/HD03/19256U

ABSTRACT

Political corruption is deeply entrenched in post-colonial Uganda and continues to undermine the country's economic and social development. Despite several anti-corruption initiatives since independence, corruption has remained a persistent and evolving challenge across successive governments. This study examined the evolution, manifestations, and responses to political corruption in Uganda from independence in 1962 to 2017. It was guided by three theoretical perspectives: Historical Institutionalism, Evans's State Development Theory, and the Complexity Perspective, which together enabled a comprehensive conceptualization of the intricate issues surrounding corruption, including its historical evolution, key actors, anti-corruption responses, and the deep-rooted causes that sustain it.

The study employed a historical research design and qualitative methods such as key informant interviews, document reviews, and archival analysis. Interviews were conducted with politicians and both retired and active civil servants to capture their experiences, perceptions, and reflections on corruption. Documentary and archival sources were examined to analyze specific corruption scandals and trace how corruption patterns and institutional responses have evolved over time. The findings reveal that political corruption has persisted across all Ugandan political administrations since 1962, with a notable increase under the current government. The nature and form of corruption have changed from government to government, reflecting the shifting political, institutional, and social dynamics within the country. The study identifies corruption as operating within an elite cartel, where opaque networks among political elites extend beyond state institutions to include politically connected non-state actors. These networks have enabled the misuse of state resources for private gain and shield perpetrators from accountability. Furthermore, the research concludes that trans-historical factors such as ethnicity, weak leadership, and fragile institutions have significantly contributed to the emergence, growth, and persistence of corruption, with their interconnectedness reinforcing a culture of impunity.

The study concludes that while Uganda has established a number of legal frameworks and institutional mechanisms to combat corruption, their effectiveness remains limited because of the weak enforcement, minimal public participation, and inadequate political and bureaucratic oversight. The research calls for honest reflection among the political elite, the strengthening of institutional accountability, and a collective national commitment toward positive institutional transformation. This would help shift Uganda towards a more transparent, accountable, and development-oriented governance path.