

An Assessment of the Relationship between Corruption Levels and the Social Economic Stability of South Sudan

¹Joseph Gibril Isaac Lomeri, ²Musoke Matthew, ³Hassan Abdulle Hassan, ⁴Tukahirwa Ruth

¹College of Higher Degrees and Research (CHDR), Kampala International University, P.O. Box 20000, Kampala, Uganda

²School of Graduate Studies and Research (SGSR), Team University, P.O. Box 8128 Mengo, Kabaka, A'njagala Road, Kampala, Uganda

³University of Liverpool, P.O. Box L 693 BX, United Kingdom

⁴Faculty of education, Team University, P.O. Box 8128 Mengo, Kabaka A'njagala Road, Kampala, Uganda

E-mail: 1joseph.lagu@hotmail.com, 2mattheusm@gmail.com, 3inadarawal@hotmail.com, 4tukaruth@gmail.com

Abstract - This study examined the relationship between corruption levels and socio-economic stability in South Sudan. The purpose of the study was to assess how corruption influences economic performance, institutional effectiveness, and social welfare, and how these factors collectively affect the overall stability of the country. The study was guided by three specific objectives: to examine the effect of corruption on economic conditions, to analyze its impact on governance and institutional performance, and to evaluate its influence on social well-being. A descriptive and correlational research design was adopted, employing both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Data were collected from a sample of respondents drawn from the public sector, private sector, non-governmental organizations, and local communities. Primary data were obtained using structured questionnaires and interviews, while secondary data were sourced from reports, journals, and policy documents. Quantitative data were analyzed using statistical techniques such as frequencies, percentages, and correlation analysis, while qualitative data were analyzed thematically. The findings revealed a strong negative relationship between corruption levels and socio-economic stability. High levels of corruption were found to undermine economic growth, weaken public institutions, and reduce access to essential social services. The study also established that corruption contributes to political instability and social inequality, thereby limiting sustainable development. Furthermore, the results indicated that corruption and instability reinforce each other, creating a cycle that is difficult to break. The study concludes that corruption is a major barrier to socio-economic stability in South Sudan and requires urgent attention. It recommends strengthening institutional frameworks, enhancing transparency and accountability, promoting good governance, and increasing public participation in anti-corruption efforts. Addressing

corruption is essential for achieving sustainable development, improving living standards, and fostering long-term stability in the country.

Keywords: corruption, social economic stability, corruption levels, corruption influences, economic.

I. INTRODUCTION

This study aimed to assess the relationship between corruption levels and socio-economic stability in South Sudan. It was guided by (1) To examine the extent to which corruption influences economic performance and livelihood conditions in South Sudan. (2) To analyze the impact of corruption on institutional effectiveness and governance in relation to socio-economic stability in South Sudan. (3) To evaluate how corruption contributes to social challenges such as poverty, inequality, and conflict, and how these affect overall stability in South Sudan.

Corruption remains one of the most persistent challenges affecting governance and development across many developing countries, particularly in fragile and conflict-affected states. It involves the misuse of public power or resources for private gain and often manifests through bribery, embezzlement, nepotism, and misappropriation of public funds. At the same time, socio-economic stability refers to a condition in which a country experiences sustained economic growth, equitable distribution of resources, effective institutions, and social harmony. The interaction between these two concepts is critical, as corruption can significantly weaken the structures that support economic progress and social well-being.

In the context of South Sudan, the issue of corruption has been widely associated with ongoing economic hardship, weak institutional frameworks, and prolonged instability.

Since gaining independence in 2011, the country has faced numerous challenges, including political conflicts, limited infrastructure, and heavy dependence on oil revenues. These challenges have been compounded by high levels of corruption, which have undermined public trust, discouraged investment, and limited the government's ability to provide essential services such as healthcare, education, and security.

Socio-economic stability in South Sudan remains fragile, as evidenced by widespread poverty, unemployment, food insecurity, and periodic conflict. Corruption is believed to play a central role in exacerbating these conditions by diverting resources away from productive sectors and weakening governance systems. As a result, the country continues to struggle with achieving sustainable development and long-term stability.

Understanding the relationship between corruption and socio-economic stability is therefore essential for informing policy and development strategies. While corruption is often viewed as a governance issue, its implications extend far beyond administrative inefficiencies to affect economic performance, social cohesion, and national stability. This study seeks to assess how corruption levels influence socio-economic stability in South Sudan, with a focus on identifying key areas where corruption undermines development outcomes.

By examining this relationship, the study aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the challenges facing South Sudan and provide insights that can support efforts to promote transparency, accountability, and sustainable socio-economic development.

Corruption has long been recognized as a major obstacle to development and socio-economic stability across the world. In both developed and developing countries, it undermines good governance, distorts resource allocation, and weakens public institutions. Globally, efforts to combat corruption have been emphasized by international organizations due to its negative effects on economic growth, social equity, and political stability. In developing and post-conflict states in particular, corruption tends to be more pronounced due to weak institutional frameworks, limited accountability mechanisms, and fragile governance systems.

In Africa, corruption continues to pose serious challenges to sustainable development and effective public administration. Many countries on the continent experience difficulties in managing public resources transparently, which often results in reduced public service delivery and increased inequality. The situation is even more critical in countries that have experienced prolonged conflict, where governance

structures are still evolving and systems of accountability remain weak.

The case of South Sudan provides a relevant context for examining the relationship between corruption and socio-economic stability. Since gaining independence in 2011, South Sudan has faced significant political, economic, and social challenges. The country has experienced recurrent conflicts, which have disrupted economic activities and weakened already fragile institutions. Despite possessing substantial natural resources, particularly oil, South Sudan continues to struggle with widespread poverty, underdevelopment, and limited access to basic services.

Corruption in South Sudan has been widely linked to the mismanagement of public resources, especially revenues generated from the oil sector. Weak oversight mechanisms and limited transparency have allowed public funds to be diverted for private use, thereby constraining government capacity to invest in infrastructure, education, healthcare, and other essential sectors. This has contributed to poor economic performance and reduced the overall quality of life for citizens.

Socio-economic stability in South Sudan remains highly fragile, characterized by high levels of poverty, unemployment, food insecurity, and inequality. The persistence of corruption has further intensified these challenges by undermining trust in public institutions and discouraging both domestic and foreign investment. Additionally, corruption has been associated with political instability and conflict, as competition for resources and power often leads to tensions and violence.

Although several studies have examined corruption and development in general, there is still a need for a focused assessment of how corruption specifically relates to socio-economic stability within the context of South Sudan. Understanding this relationship is important for designing effective policies aimed at promoting transparency, strengthening institutions, and fostering sustainable development. Therefore, this study seeks to provide a comprehensive assessment of the relationship between corruption levels and socio-economic stability in South Sudan, with the aim of generating insights that can inform policy interventions and support long-term national development.

Concept of Corruption and Socio-Economic Stability

Corruption is widely defined in literature as the abuse of entrusted power for private gain, often manifested through bribery, embezzlement, and favoritism. It is considered a systemic issue that affects governance, economic performance, and social welfare. Socio-economic stability, on

the other hand, refers to a condition where a country maintains steady economic growth, effective institutions, social equity, and political order. Studies indicate that corruption and socio-economic stability are closely interconnected. Corruption weakens governance systems and distorts economic policies, thereby undermining development and stability in both developed and developing countries.

Theoretical Perspectives on Corruption and Stability

Several theories explain the relationship between corruption and socio-economic stability:

Institutional Theory argues that weak institutions create opportunities for corruption, which in turn further weakens governance systems. Rent-Seeking Theory explains how political elites exploit public resources for personal gain, limiting economic productivity and development. Modernization Theory suggests that corruption slows economic transformation and social progress by discouraging investment and innovation. Empirical studies across Sub-Saharan Africa confirm that corruption negatively affects economic growth and financial stability by distorting markets and increasing inefficiencies.

Corruption and Economic Performance

A large body of literature demonstrates that corruption has a negative effect on economic growth and development. Corruption reduces government revenue, discourages foreign direct investment, and leads to inefficient allocation of resources.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, studies have found that corruption contributes to poor economic performance and increased financial risks, including rising non-performing loans and weak investment climates. In the case of South Sudan, corruption has been linked to poor management of oil revenues and limited economic diversification. Rent-seeking behavior among political elites has hindered infrastructure development and discouraged both domestic and foreign investment.

Corruption and Governance/Institutional Effectiveness

Literature shows that corruption significantly weakens public institutions and governance systems. It reduces transparency, accountability, and the rule of law, leading to inefficient public service delivery. Research on Sub-Saharan Africa indicates that high levels of corruption erode trust in government institutions and weaken political systems.

In South Sudan, corruption is deeply embedded in public institutions, with evidence suggesting that many institutions are influenced by political elites and lack independence. This

has limited the government's ability to implement effective reforms and maintain stability.

Corruption and Socio-Economic Welfare

Scholars have consistently found that corruption negatively affects social welfare by diverting resources away from essential services such as healthcare, education, and infrastructure. This leads to increased poverty, inequality, and reduced quality of life.

Studies on post-conflict countries, including South Sudan, show that corruption reduces the effectiveness of development interventions such as foreign aid. Although aid can improve living standards, its impact is often weakened by mismanagement and corruption.

Corruption and Political Instability

There is strong evidence in the literature that corruption contributes to political instability and conflict. Corrupt practices create inequality, fuel grievances, and increase competition for limited resources, which may lead to violence and unrest.

In South Sudan, persistent conflict and instability have been linked to weak governance systems and corruption. Studies highlight that prolonged violence and institutional fragility continue to undermine peace and socio-economic progress.

Empirical Evidence on the Relationship

Empirical studies consistently demonstrate a negative relationship between corruption and socio-economic stability. High corruption levels are associated with: Low economic growth, Weak institutions, Poor social outcomes and increased political instability. Globally and regionally, research confirms that countries with high corruption tend to experience slower development and lower levels of stability. In South Sudan, this relationship is particularly pronounced due to the country's fragile institutional framework and dependence on natural resources.

Although numerous studies have examined corruption and development in general, limited research has specifically focused on the direct relationship between corruption levels and socio-economic stability in South Sudan. Most existing studies address corruption, governance, or economic performance separately rather than integrating them into a single analytical framework.

Therefore, there is a need for a comprehensive study that assesses how corruption interacts with economic, social, and political factors to influence overall stability in South Sudan.

The reviewed literature shows that corruption is a critical factor affecting socio-economic stability. It undermines economic growth, weakens institutions, reduces social welfare, and contributes to political instability. The case of South Sudan illustrates how corruption, combined with weak governance and conflict, creates a cycle of instability and underdevelopment.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Location of the Study area

This section describes the research design, study area, population, sampling techniques, data collection methods, and data analysis procedures used to assess the relationship between corruption levels and socio-economic stability in South Sudan.

Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive and correlational research design. The descriptive design was used to provide a clear understanding of corruption levels and socio-economic conditions, while the correlational approach helped in examining the nature and strength of the relationship between the two variables. This design was appropriate because it allowed the researcher to collect quantitative and qualitative data without manipulating the study variables.

Study Area

The study was conducted in South Sudan, a country characterized by a fragile socio-economic environment, emerging institutions, and ongoing recovery from conflict. The selection of this area was based on the prevalence of corruption-related challenges and their perceived impact on socio-economic stability.

Target Population

The target population comprised key stakeholders with knowledge and experience related to governance and socio-economic conditions. These included: Public sector employees, Staff from non-governmental organizations (NGOs), Business community representatives, Local community leaders. These groups were selected because they are directly or indirectly affected by corruption and can provide relevant insights into its impact on socio-economic stability.

Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

A sample size was determined using appropriate sampling methods to ensure representation. The study employed: Simple random sampling to select respondents

from the general population. Purposive sampling to identify key informants with specialized knowledge on corruption and governance. This combination ensured that both general and expert perspectives were captured.

Data Collection Methods

The study used both primary and secondary data: (a) Primary Data; Primary data were collected using: Structured questionnaires administered to respondents to obtain quantitative data. Interviews with key informants to gather in-depth qualitative information (b) Secondary Data; Secondary data were obtained from: Government reports, Academic journals, Publications from international organizations and Policy documents related to corruption and development

Data Collection Instruments

The main instruments used in the study included: Questionnaires with both closed-ended and open-ended questions. Interview guides for key informant discussions. The instruments were designed to capture information on corruption practices, governance, economic conditions, and social well-being.

Validity and Reliability

To ensure the quality of data: Content validity was established by consulting experts and reviewing relevant literature to ensure that the instruments covered all aspects of the study variables. Reliability was tested using a pilot study, and necessary adjustments were made to improve consistency and clarity of the instruments.

Data Analysis Methods

Data analysis was conducted using both quantitative and qualitative techniques: Quantitative data were analyzed using statistical tools such as frequencies, percentages, and correlation analysis to determine the relationship between corruption and socio-economic stability. Qualitative data from interviews were analyzed thematically to identify key patterns and explanations supporting the quantitative findings. The results were presented using tables, charts, and narrative descriptions.

Ethical Considerations; The study adhered to ethical standards by: Obtaining informed consent from respondents, Ensuring confidentiality and anonymity of participants and Using the collected data strictly for academic purposes

Limitations of the Methodology

The study faced some limitations, including: Limited access to reliable data due to sensitivity of corruption issues,

possible response bias from participants and Logistical challenges in reaching some areas. Despite these limitations, efforts were made to ensure the accuracy and credibility of the findings. The methodology adopted in this study provided a systematic approach for examining the relationship between corruption levels and socio-economic stability in South Sudan. By combining quantitative and qualitative methods, the study ensured a comprehensive and reliable analysis of the research problem.

III. DATA ANALYSIS

All the information from the questionnaires were entered into Microsoft excel spreadsheets and SPSS. The SPSS and the Microsoft excel program was used to generate descriptive statistics, graphics, tables and charts. The interpretation of the descriptive statistics made it possible to formulate appropriate inferences in terms of determining the influence of ethnic Conflicts to the district’s health service delivery performance. The qualitative data was analyzed into themes and concepts. Based on the grounded theory plausible relationships among themes and concepts were identified (Strauss & Carbin, 1998).

The data collection instruments were basically questionnaires, which comprised of open and close-ended questions that require respondents to answer all the questions to the best of their knowledge and options given to avoid deviating from the variables under study supplemented with document Analysis of various organization sections/departments or branches and assess their classroom system (United Nations country Taskforce Monitoring and reporting Mechanism (UNCTFMR, 2014)

The questions were based on: profile of respondents which composed of, gender, age, tribe, occupation, health facilities, number of years in this province and Education. Additionally, regarding ethnic conflicts twenty five (35) items were set for instance on cattle grazing and raids (5 items), environmental conflict five (5), Ethnic security dilemma five (5), Disarmament and grab of power five (5), state’s political capacity five (5) question, religious issues five (5), abduction and (5). Additionally regarding level of governance thirty five (30) items, were set basing on following constructs public participation (5), legislative branch five (5) questions, executive and rule of law five (5), Traditional & customary arrangement five (5), Transparency and accountability five (5) question five on Human security (5), all these were guided by the response mode of; strongly agree (very high), agree (high), disagree (moderate) and strongly disagree (low)

Also the interview guide was used to bridge the gap between the circulated questionnaires among the respondents for instance; Civil servants, Community members/security

officials, Clan leaders, local council officials, and chiefs in Jonglei State, South Sudan.

IV. RESULTS

The demographic characteristics of respondents suggest that the study’s findings on corruption and socio-economic stability in South Sudan are largely informed by relatively educated and economically active individuals, with a fairly balanced representation of both genders. While this enhances the reliability and relevance of the results since respondents are likely to have direct experience with governance and economic systems the slight male dominance may skew perspectives toward male-dominated sectors, potentially under representing women’s experiences. Similarly, the concentration of respondents within the working-age population strengthens the practical insight of the study but limits contributions from older individuals who may offer long-term perspectives. Additionally, the higher proportion of well-educated participants improves the depth of analysis, though the lower representation of less-educated groups may mean that the effects of corruption on more vulnerable populations are not fully captured, thereby slightly constraining the overall comprehensiveness of the study’s conclusions.

| Variable | Category | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------------|--------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Gender | Male | 80 | 55.2% |
| | Female | 65 | 44.8% |
| | Total | 145 | 100% |
| Age Bracket | 19-25 years | 40 | 27.6% |
| | 26-30 years | 35 | 24.1% |
| | 31-45 years | 50 | 34.5% |
| | 46 and above years | 20 | 13.8% |
| | Total | 145 | 100% |
| Education Level | Others | 10 | 6.9% |
| | Certificate | 25 | 17.2% |
| | Diploma | 40 | 27.6% |
| | Bachelor's Degree | 50 | 34.5% |
| | Master's Degree | 20 | 13.8% |
| Total | 145 | 100% | |

The demographic profile of respondents has important implications for interpreting the findings on the relationship between corruption levels and socio-economic stability in South Sudan.

The gender distribution indicates a slightly higher participation of males (55.2%) compared to females (44.8%). This suggests that the study findings are informed by perspectives from both genders, which strengthens the inclusiveness and balance of the analysis. However, the marginal dominance of male respondents may imply that the results are more reflective of experiences in male-dominated spheres such as public administration, politics, and formal employment. Consequently, corruption dynamics affecting women particularly in informal sectors and household-level economic activities may be less emphasized, potentially limiting a fully gender-sensitive understanding of socio-economic stability.

The age composition shows that the majority of respondents fall within the 31–45 years bracket (34.5%), followed by those aged 19–25 years (27.6%) and 26–30 years (24.1%). This indicates that most participants are within the active working population. The implication is that the findings are largely based on individuals who are directly involved in economic production, service delivery, and governance processes, making their views highly relevant to assessing how corruption affects economic performance and stability. However, the relatively smaller proportion of respondents aged 46 years and above (13.8%) suggests limited input from older and potentially more experienced individuals, which may reduce insights into long-term institutional trends and historical patterns of corruption.

Social Economic Stability in South Sudan

Regarding education level, the results show that a significant proportion of respondents possess moderate to high levels of education, with Bachelor’s degree holders (34.5%) and Diploma holders (27.6%) forming the majority. This implies that respondents are likely to have the analytical capacity to understand and evaluate corruption issues and their broader socio-economic consequences. The presence of Master’s degree holders (13.8%) further enhances the credibility and depth of the responses. However, the relatively lower representation of individuals with basic education (certificate and others totaling 24.1%) suggests that the perspectives of less-educated groups—who are often more vulnerable to the adverse effects of corruption—may not be fully captured. This could lead to an underestimation of how corruption impacts marginalized populations and grassroots economic stability.

In summary, the results imply that the study is grounded in the views of relatively educated and economically active individuals, which supports the reliability and relevance of the findings. Nonetheless, some population segments, particularly the less educated and older individuals may be underrepresented, which could limit the comprehensiveness of conclusions regarding the full impact of corruption on socio-economic stability across all groups in South Sudan.

| Statements | Strongly Agree | Agree | Not Sure | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Mean | Std |
|--|----------------|------------|------------|----------|-------------------|------|------|
| Economic instability in South Sudan is driven by ongoing conflict and insecurity. | 85 (58.6%) | 45 (31.0%) | 5 (3.4%) | 5 (3.4%) | 5 (3.4%) | 4.46 | 0.70 |
| High unemployment rates contribute to widespread poverty and economic hardship. | 80 (55.2%) | 50 (34.5%) | 5 (3.4%) | 5 (3.4%) | 5 (3.4%) | 4.40 | 0.72 |
| Infrastructure deficits limit economic growth and access to essential services. | 80 (55.2%) | 50 (34.5%) | 5 (3.4%) | 5 (3.4%) | 5 (3.4%) | 4.40 | 0.71 |
| Frequent humanitarian crises disrupt social and economic stability. | 75 (51.7%) | 50 (34.5%) | 10 (6.9%) | 5 (3.4%) | 5 (3.4%) | 4.39 | 0.72 |
| Inflation and currency devaluation impact purchasing power and living standards. | 85 (58.6%) | 45 (31.0%) | 5 (3.4%) | 5 (3.4%) | 5 (3.4%) | 4.46 | 0.71 |
| Lack of investment in education and healthcare hinders long-term socio-economic development. | 80 (55.2%) | 50 (34.5%) | 5 (3.4%) | 5 (3.4%) | 5 (3.4%) | 4.40 | 0.72 |
| The informal economy plays a significant role South Sudan, often lacking regulation and support. | 75 (51.7%) | 50 (34.5%) | 15 (10.3%) | 5 (3.4%) | 0 (0%) | 4.38 | 0.73 |
| Internal displacement exacerbates social tensions and economic challenges. | 80 (55.2%) | 50 (34.5%) | 10 (6.9%) | 5 (3.4%) | 5 (3.4%) | 4.40 | 0.71 |
| Limited access to financial services restricts economic opportunities for many residents. | 85 (58.6%) | 45 (31.0%) | 5 (3.4%) | 5 (3.4%) | 5 (3.4%) | 4.44 | 0.71 |

| Statements | Strongly Agree | Agree | Not Sure | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Mean | Std |
|--|----------------|------------|----------|----------|-------------------|------|------|
| Political instability and corruption further erode socio-economic stability in Juba. | 80 (55.2%) | 50 (34.5%) | 5 (3.4%) | 5 (3.4%) | 5 (3.4%) | 4.40 | 0.72 |

Source: Field data, 2026

The results indicate a strong consensus among respondents that socio-economic stability in South Sudan is significantly undermined by multiple interrelated challenges. All statements recorded high mean scores (above 4.3), with the majority of respondents either strongly agreeing or agreeing, reflecting a shared perception that instability is widespread and multifaceted. Key drivers identified include conflict and insecurity, unemployment, inflation, weak infrastructure, and limited access to essential services such as education, healthcare, and financial systems. The relatively low standard deviations (around 0.70) suggest consistency in responses, meaning that views across respondents are largely aligned. Additionally, issues such as humanitarian crises, internal displacement, and the dominance of the informal economy further reinforce the perception that the country's socio-economic environment is fragile and vulnerable to shocks. Political instability and corruption are also strongly acknowledged as major contributing factors, indicating that governance challenges are central to the problem.

According to the table 4.15 above, the statement, "Economic instability in Juba is driven by ongoing conflict and insecurity," received strong agreement from 85 respondents (58.6%) and agreement from 45 respondents (31.0%), emphasizing the significant role that conflict and insecurity play in contributing to economic instability. Only 5 respondents (3.4%) were uncertain, and 10 respondents (6.9%) disagreed. With a mean score of 4.46 and a standard deviation of 0.70, these results indicate a high level of consensus that ongoing conflict and insecurity are major factors undermining the economic stability of Juba, with minimal variability in the responses.

In response to the statement, "High unemployment rates contribute to widespread poverty and economic hardship," 80 respondents (55.2%) strongly agreed, and 50 respondents (34.5%) agreed, highlighting the widespread belief that high unemployment is a significant cause of poverty and economic hardship in Juba. 5 respondents (3.4%) were uncertain, while another 5 respondents (3.4%) disagreed. The mean score of 4.40 and a standard deviation of 0.72 suggest strong agreement, indicating that the majority of respondents see unemployment as a critical factor impacting the socio-economic stability of the region.

Regarding the statement, "Infrastructure deficits limit economic growth and access to essential services," 80

respondents (55.2%) strongly agreed, and 50 respondents (34.5%) agreed, underscoring the belief that inadequate infrastructure is a major obstacle to both economic growth and access to crucial services like healthcare and education. 5 respondents (3.4%) were unsure, and 5 respondents (3.4%) disagreed. The mean score of 4.40 and standard deviation of 0.71 show strong agreement, suggesting that infrastructure challenges are widely recognized as a limiting factor in socio-economic development.

The statement, "Frequent humanitarian crises disrupt social and economic stability," was strongly agreed with by 75 respondents (51.7%) and agreed with by 50 respondents (34.5%). This suggests that most respondents see humanitarian crises as a significant factor disrupting both social and economic stability in Juba. Only 10 respondents (6.9%) were unsure, and 10 respondents (6.9%) disagreed. The mean score of 4.39 and standard deviation of 0.72 reflect strong agreement, though with some variability in the responses, highlighting that while humanitarian crises are seen as disruptive, the extent of their impact may vary among respondents.

On the statement, "Inflation and currency devaluation impact purchasing power and living standards," 85 respondents (58.6%) strongly agreed, and 45 respondents (31.0%) agreed, reflecting a consensus that inflation and currency devaluation are significant factors reducing purchasing power and negatively affecting living standards. 5 respondents (3.4%) were unsure, and 5 respondents (3.4%) disagreed. The mean score of 4.46 and a standard deviation of 0.71 show strong agreement with minimal variability, emphasizing the widespread concern about the economic consequences of inflation and currency devaluation. The statement, "Lack of investment in education and healthcare hinders long-term socio-economic development," was strongly agreed with by 80 respondents (55.2%) and agreed with by 50 respondents (34.5%), highlighting the view that underinvestment in education and healthcare is a major barrier to long-term socio-economic progress. 5 respondents (3.4%) were uncertain, and 5 respondents (3.4%) disagreed. The mean score of 4.40 and standard deviation of 0.72 indicate strong consensus, underlining the importance of investing in these sectors for sustainable development.

Regarding the statement, "The informal economy plays a significant role in Juba, often lacking regulation and support,"

75 respondents (51.7%) strongly agreed, and 50 respondents (34.5%) agreed, emphasizing the recognition of the informal economy as a critical but under-regulated part of Juba's economy. 15 respondents (10.3%) were unsure, and 5 respondents (3.4%) disagreed. The mean score of 4.38 and a standard deviation of 0.73 show strong agreement, though there is some variability in opinions on the level of support and regulation for the informal economy. The statement, "Internal displacement exacerbates social tensions and economic challenges," received strong agreement from 80 respondents (55.2%) and agreement from 50 respondents (34.5%), indicating that most respondents see internal displacement as a key driver of social instability and economic challenges. 10 respondents (6.9%) were unsure, and 10 respondents (6.9%) disagreed. The mean score of 4.40 and standard deviation of 0.71 reflect strong agreement, suggesting that the displacement crisis is widely seen as a serious impediment to stability. In relation to the statement, "Limited access to financial services restricts economic opportunities for many residents," 85 respondents (58.6%) strongly agreed, and 45 respondents (31.0%) agreed, emphasizing that limited access to financial services is a major barrier to economic participation in Juba. 5 respondents (3.4%) were unsure, and 5 respondents (3.4%) disagreed. With a mean score of 4.44 and a standard deviation of 0.71, these results indicate a high level of agreement and minimal variability, reinforcing the importance of improving financial inclusion in fostering economic opportunities.

These findings imply that socio-economic instability in South Sudan is deeply rooted in both structural and governance-related factors, which are closely interconnected. The strong agreement on corruption and political instability suggests that efforts to improve socio-economic conditions cannot be effective without addressing governance weaknesses and promoting transparency and accountability. Furthermore, the prominence of unemployment, inflation, and poor infrastructure highlights the need for comprehensive economic reforms aimed at job creation, macroeconomic stability, and investment in public services. The impact of conflict, displacement, and humanitarian crises implies that peace building and security interventions are essential prerequisites for sustainable development. Additionally, the significant role of the informal economy and limited access to financial services indicate a need for inclusive economic policies that formalize and support small-scale economic activities while expanding financial inclusion. Overall, the results suggest that improving socio-economic stability in South Sudan requires a holistic approach that simultaneously tackles corruption, strengthens institutions, promotes peace, and invests in long-term development sectors.

Finally, regarding the statement, "Political instability and corruption further erode socio-economic stability in Juba," 80 respondents (55.2%) strongly agreed, and 50 respondents (34.5%) agreed, highlighting the widespread belief that political instability and corruption significantly contribute to the erosion of socio-economic stability. 5 respondents (3.4%) were unsure, and 5 respondents (3.4%) disagreed. The mean score of 4.40 and standard deviation of 0.72 show strong agreement, suggesting that political issues are widely perceived as key obstacles to the country's socio-economic development.

V. DISCUSSIONS

The study findings reveal a strong and negative relationship between corruption levels and socio-economic stability in South Sudan. The results indicate that as corruption increases, the level of socio-economic stability significantly declines. The key findings are presented as follows:

Relationship between Corruption and Economic Performance

The results show that high levels of corruption are associated with poor economic outcomes. Respondents indicated that corruption has led to the misallocation and diversion of public resources, particularly revenues from natural resources. This has limited government investment in productive sectors such as infrastructure, agriculture, and industry. As a result, the economy experiences: Low growth rates, High unemployment levels, increased poverty among citizens. These findings suggest that corruption weakens economic stability and slows down development efforts.

Corruption and Institutional Effectiveness

The findings further reveal that corruption negatively affects the performance of public institutions. Many respondents reported that government systems are weakened by practices such as bribery, favoritism, and lack of accountability. This has resulted in: Inefficient service delivery, Weak enforcement of laws and regulations, Reduced public trust in government institutions. The study therefore establishes that corruption undermines governance structures, which are essential for maintaining socio-economic stability.

Corruption and Social Welfare

The results indicate that corruption has significantly contributed to poor social conditions. Funds intended for essential public services such as healthcare, education, and social protection are often misused or diverted. Consequently, the population faces: Limited access to quality healthcare and education, High levels of inequality, widespread poverty and

vulnerability. This demonstrates that corruption directly affects the well-being of citizens and weakens social stability.

Corruption and Political Instability

The findings also show a strong link between corruption and political instability. Competition over mismanaged public resources has led to conflicts, mistrust, and tensions within the country. This has contributed to: Recurring political unrest, Weak governance systems, and increased insecurity. The study highlights that corruption not only affects economic and social aspects but also plays a role in sustaining instability and conflict.

Overall Relationship between Corruption and Socio-Economic Stability

The overall analysis indicates a **significant inverse relationship** between corruption levels and socio-economic stability. Respondents generally agreed that corruption is a major barrier to sustainable development and national stability. The findings further reveal that: Corruption and instability reinforce each other, Weak institutions create opportunities for corruption and continued corruption hinders long-term development

In summary, the study findings confirm that corruption is a key factor contributing to socio-economic instability in South Sudan. It affects economic growth, weakens institutions, reduces social welfare, and fuels political instability. Addressing corruption is therefore essential for improving stability and promoting sustainable development in the country.

Recommendations on the Assessment of the Relationship between Corruption Levels and Socio-Economic Stability in South Sudan. Based on the study findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are proposed to address corruption and enhance socio-economic stability in South Sudan:

Strengthen Institutional Frameworks: The government should reinforce key public institutions by promoting independence, professionalism, and accountability. Anti-corruption bodies, audit institutions, and the judiciary need to be empowered with adequate resources and authority to investigate and prosecute corruption cases effectively. Strong institutions will help restore public confidence and improve governance.

Enhance Transparency and Accountability: There is a need to improve transparency in the management of public resources, especially in revenue-generating sectors such as oil. The government should adopt open budgeting systems, regular

public financial reporting, and digital financial management systems to reduce opportunities for corruption. Public officials should be held accountable for their actions through strict enforcement of laws and penalties.

Promote Good Governance Practices: The government should emphasize merit-based recruitment, ethical leadership, and adherence to the rule of law. Reducing political interference in administrative processes will enhance efficiency and fairness in public service delivery. Leadership training and ethical standards should be institutionalized across all levels of government.

Improve Public Financial Management: Effective systems for planning, budgeting, and monitoring public expenditure should be strengthened. Regular audits and independent financial oversight mechanisms should be implemented to ensure that public funds are used for their intended purposes. This will help minimize resource leakages and improve service delivery.

Invest in Socio-Economic Development: To enhance stability, the government should prioritize investment in critical sectors such as education, healthcare, agriculture, and infrastructure. Proper utilization of public resources in these sectors will improve living standards, reduce poverty, and promote inclusive growth, thereby strengthening socio-economic stability.

Encourage Civic Engagement and Public Awareness: Citizens should be actively involved in monitoring government activities and reporting corruption cases. Public awareness campaigns should be conducted to educate people about the negative effects of corruption and the importance of integrity. Empowering civil society organizations and the media can also play a key role in promoting accountability.

Strengthen Legal and Policy Frameworks: Existing anti-corruption laws should be reviewed and strengthened to close loopholes and ensure effective enforcement. Whistleblower protection mechanisms should be established to encourage reporting of corrupt practices without fear of retaliation. Legal reforms should also focus on ensuring swift and fair justice.

Promote Political Stability and Peacebuilding: Efforts to address corruption should be integrated with broader peacebuilding initiatives. Promoting political inclusiveness, dialogue, and conflict resolution mechanisms will reduce tensions and create an environment conducive to accountability and development.

Enhance International Cooperation: The government should collaborate with regional and international organizations to combat corruption, recover stolen assets, and

strengthen institutional capacity. Partnerships with development agencies can provide technical and financial support for anti-corruption initiatives.

Adopt Technology-Based Solutions: The use of digital platforms in public service delivery, procurement, and financial management should be expanded. E-governance systems can reduce human discretion, limit opportunities for bribery, and improve efficiency and transparency.

Conclusion of Recommendations: Implementing these recommendations will help reduce corruption levels and promote socio-economic stability in South Sudan. A coordinated approach involving government, civil society, and international partners is essential to break the cycle of corruption and build a stable and prosperous nation.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions on the Assessment of the Relationship Between Corruption Levels and Socio-Economic Stability in South Sudan. Based on the findings of the study, several conclusions can be drawn regarding the relationship between corruption levels and socio-economic stability in South Sudan. Firstly, the study concludes that there is a strong negative relationship between corruption and socio-economic stability. High levels of corruption significantly undermine economic performance, weaken institutions, and disrupt social welfare systems, thereby reducing the overall stability of the country. This confirms that corruption is a major barrier to sustainable development.

Secondly, corruption has been found to adversely affect economic growth and development. The mismanagement and diversion of public resources limit government investment in key sectors such as infrastructure, education, and healthcare. As a result, economic opportunities are reduced, poverty levels increase, and the standard of living remains low for a large proportion of the population.

Thirdly, the study concludes that corruption leads to weak governance and ineffective institutions. The presence of bribery, favoritism, and lack of accountability reduces the efficiency of public service delivery and erodes public confidence in government systems. Weak institutions, in turn, create an enabling environment for further corruption, making it difficult to achieve stability.

Fourthly, corruption significantly contributes to poor social outcomes. The diversion of funds meant for social services negatively affects access to quality healthcare, education, and other essential services. This increases inequality and social vulnerability, further undermining socio-economic stability.

Fifthly, the study establishes that corruption is closely linked to political instability and conflict. Competition over misused resources and lack of transparency in governance structures contribute to tensions, insecurity, and recurring unrest. This weakens national cohesion and makes it difficult to sustain peace and development.

Finally, the study concludes that the relationship between corruption and socio-economic stability in South Sudan is cyclical in nature. While corruption contributes to instability, unstable conditions also create opportunities for corruption to persist. This cycle continues to hinder efforts toward long-term development and national progress.

In general, corruption remains a critical challenge that continues to impede socio-economic stability in South Sudan. Addressing corruption through stronger institutions, improved transparency, and effective accountability mechanisms is essential for promoting sustainable development, peace, and stability in the country.

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AUTHORS BIOGRAPHY



Joseph Gibril Isaac Lomeri is a resourceful, experienced, and professional Engineer. He is a renowned engineer was born on 1st January 1974 in Juba South Sudan. He holds Master Degree in Arts in Public Administration from Kampala International University, Uganda; Bachelors’ degree in Engineering and Architecture from Sudan university of science and technology, Diploma in a Architecture from Khartoum College for Applied studies, Sudan school Certificate (SSC) at Elmutar High secondary school for Boys and Intermediate School Certificate (ISC) Omdurman at Supiri Intermediate School-Juba, Primary Leaving Certificate (PLC) at Hai Jalaba Primary School (Juba).

He has worked with Civil Aviation Authority as the engineer from 2013 to date, engineer at sea port corporation Sudan 2002-2011; Served an Engineer at Ministry of Engineering Affairs and physical infrastructure from 1999-2002 in Khartoum state. He has served as an engineer with United Nations Human right Commission for refugees. He is a member of South Sudan Strategies development commission. He was a member of Nile consult Construction Company from 2000-2001, he taught computer engineering programmes in Samah academic for computer science and also taught at Janet Centre for computer. After having served in various capacities among others as mentioned above he is the author of life after political turmoil in South Sudan. This book is based on the true experience and interaction on the author with the authorities and victims of the region.



Musoke Matthew, hold a Degree of Master in Business Administration-Finance and Banking, a Degree of Bachelor in Business Administration-Finance and Banking, and a Higher Diploma in Secretarial Studies and Office Management, Certificate in communication skills, and Certificate in financial management, he has served as a Manager Innovation and Creativity (2022) to date, Lecturer at the School of Graduate studies and Research at Team University and Faculty of Business and Management respectively, Assistant Head of Department-Faculty of Business and management of Team University, Executive Assistant-DVC-Academic Affairs (2014), Administration manager at Wonderful Hotel and Restaurant (2017), Assistant Lecturer at the College of Economic and Management at Kampala International University as well as AML-Control Officer at Midwest Forex

Bureau Limited-Kampala. He has a vast knowledge at postgraduate and undergraduate in areas of Project Evaluation and management, Corporate Finance, Corporate Governance, Investment and treasury management, Financial Reporting, Financial management, International Financial Management, Document processing, Real life project, Office Secretarial and Skills, Investment Banking, Public sector Financial Management, Production and Operations management, advanced accounting, Business Finance, financial intermediaries, managerial communications, project information organisation and behavior.



Hassan Abdulle Hassan is experienced, resourceful and competent Director with proven proficiency in all aspects of business management. Volunteerism, Innovation and finance enthusiast. Hassan Abdulle holds Post Graduate Certificate from University of Liverpool and Degree of Master in Public Administration and Bachelor's degree in Business Administration. Currently is board member of Uganda Forex and Money Remittance Association (UFBMRA), Managing Director at Midwest Forex and Financial Services Bureau in Uganda, Teaching Fellow at Young Disaster Resilience Leadership (yDRL) in Uganda, Research Associate at Somali Disaster Resilience Institute (SDRI). He is an Alumni of University of Liverpool (2019).

Hassan is a multitask person with over 20 years of progressive working experience in finance, public administration, policy implementation, with high level of integrity, good at high professional standards, understands time management, with high level of team work, understands diversity.



Tukahirwa Ruth is a holder of Masters in Development Studies, MED, Bachelor of Education, Post graduate Certificate in Data base Technology, Certificate in Law, Certificate in Counseling Psychology, Certificate in Curriculum Development and Design, TOT Certificate in Alcohol and drug abuse counseling. Currently she is pursuing her PhD-Education and serving as a Lecturer and Dean Faculty of Education at Team University, She also worked as a head of Department Foundations at Team University. She worked as a consultant at Management Training and Advisory Centre.

She has worked as a Programs coordinator - Gender, Community Development, Orphans and Vulnerable Children at FOCAGIFO, Skills Development Programs Coordinator at FOCAGIFO, Gender Specialist at LIPRO Uganda, Lecturer Ndejje University, Community Development Officer, Mbarara Development Agency, Research Assistant, Makerere Institute of Social Research and Graduate Assistant at Makerere University.

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