

Effectiveness of Institutional Anti-Corruption Strategies on Prosecution of Corruption Cases in Public Sector in Kenya

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ABSTRACT

The effectiveness of institutional anti-corruption strategies in enhancing the prosecution of corruption cases in Kenya. It focused on how these strategies influence the capacity of relevant agencies—such as the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC), the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP), and the Judiciary—to investigate, charge, and convict offenders. The research explored existing mechanisms, institutional challenges, and the perceived outcomes of anti-corruption initiatives, providing insights into their impact on governance, public trust, and social justice. The study employed a descriptive research design targeting institutional actors directly involved in anti-corruption activities. A total of 600 stakeholders formed the target population, with a sample size of 234 respondents selected using Krejcie and Morgan's formula, along with 30 purposively selected key informants. A mixed-methods approach was utilized, involving structured questionnaires for quantitative data and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) for qualitative data. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, while qualitative data underwent thematic analysis and were presented narratively to complement the quantitative results. The study revealed that corruption remains a deeply rooted challenge in Kenya, significantly affecting governance, public service delivery, and economic development. Despite the presence of institutional frameworks, prosecution of corruption is hampered by political interference, poor coordination among agencies, inadequate protection for whistleblowers, and weak enforcement of laws. Public perception highlights corruption as a structural and moral crisis linked to poverty, inequality, and impunity. The study recommends the establishment of a special anti-corruption court and an autonomous investigative police unit under the EACC, free from political interference and adequately resourced. Parliament should introduce legislative reforms to include asset recovery provisions, reverse the burden of proof in serious corruption cases, and bar convicted individuals from public office. Additionally, nationwide civic education campaigns are necessary to shift societal attitudes and promote a culture of integrity. Lastly, a continuous monitoring and evaluation framework should be adopted to assess the implementation and effectiveness of anti-corruption strategies and to enable timely improvements.

Keywords: Anti-corruption strategies, Capacity building, Governance, Institutional frameworks, Inter-agency collaboration, Prosecution of corruption, Prosecutorial agencies, public awareness.

Background of the study

Corruption in Kenya has deep historical roots tracing back to the colonial era, where land alienation, favoritism, and authoritarian governance created a legacy of impunity and exclusion (Khasoane, 2019). After independence in 1963, corruption became institutionalized as political elites captured state resources through patronage networks, particularly during the regimes of Presidents Jomo Kenyatta and Daniel arap Moi (Adelabu, 2019). Despite reforms and the creation of anti-corruption bodies like the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC), successive governments have struggled to dismantle entrenched corrupt systems, making corruption a persistent challenge that undermines governance, development, and public trust (Ishikawa, 2019).

Corruption remains one of the most pervasive challenges affecting governance, economic development, and public trust worldwide. It undermines institutions, distorts markets, and hampers social progress by diverting resources meant for public welfare into private hands (Koeswayo et al., 2024). Governments and organizations have adopted various institutional anti-corruption strategies aimed at prevention, detection, and prosecution to curb this menace. The effectiveness of these strategies, particularly in prosecuting corruption cases, is critical to ensuring accountability and restoring public confidence in legal systems (Salihu & Jafari, 2020). Globally, countries have witnessed varied success in combating corruption through institutional frameworks. While some nations have established robust legal and institutional mechanisms that have led to significant convictions and deterrence, others continue to struggle with weak enforcement and impunity (Vian, 2020).

International bodies such as the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) and Transparency International have highlighted the need for stronger prosecution efforts as a key pillar in the fight against corruption (Inocencio, 2023). However, despite these efforts, corruption prosecutions often face delays, political interference, and lack of resources, weakening the overall impact of anti-corruption strategies (Owusu et al., 2020). The study by Hossan et al (2024) revealed that corruption in Bangladesh operates through a deeply rooted and interconnected chain involving government officials, politicians, law enforcement, and business entities. It found that systemic weaknesses, lack of accountability, and political interference significantly contribute to the persistence of corrupt practices, making anti-corruption efforts largely ineffective. The study by Bak (2022) reveals that corruption in Myanmar is widespread and systemic, affecting all levels of government and public service delivery. Government agencies like law enforcement, judiciary, and public procurement are particularly vulnerable, with limited transparency and accountability mechanisms in place. Even with the existing anti-corruption laws and institutions, enforcement remains weak due to political interference, lack of independence, and inadequate resources, undermining public trust and hindering sustainable development efforts.

The study by Fagbadebo (2019) found that corruption remains a persistent challenge to accountability in post-colonial African states, rooted in weak institutional frameworks, inherited colonial governance structures, and the politicization of public offices. Agu et al. (2024) found that weak institutional frameworks, limited enforcement of anti-corruption laws, and political interference undermine governance and anti-corruption efforts in Nigeria. Tiitmamer and Awolich (2022) established that South Sudan's persistent poor performance in global corruption indices is largely due to weak anti-corruption institutions, lack of political will, limited transparency, and systemic impunity. The study by Mudey and Arshad (2025) indicated that widespread corruption in Somalia's public sector significantly undermines good governance by eroding public trust, weakening institutional effectiveness, and enabling the misuse of public resources. The study by Waweru et al. (2025) found that corruption in Kenya is sustained by complex, informal networks involving politicians, public officials, and business elites who manipulate formal systems for personal gain. These networks undermine anti-corruption mechanisms by exploiting institutional weaknesses, limiting the effectiveness of regulatory bodies. The study highlights that despite the presence of formal anti-corruption frameworks, their implementation is often obstructed by political interference, lack of accountability, and entrenched patronage systems. The study by Onyango (2021) found that whistleblowing remains a critical yet underutilized tool in combating corruption within Kenya's public administration. The research revealed that while legal frameworks and anti-corruption institutions exist, weak protection mechanisms for whistleblowers, fear of retaliation, and lack of institutional support significantly hinder reporting. Existing studies often emphasize prevention and detection, with insufficient attention to prosecution outcomes and the challenges therein. This research sought to fill that gap by critically examining the effectiveness of institutional anti-corruption strategies on the prosecution of corruption cases, with a focus on practical outcomes, institutional constraints, and recommendations for improving the prosecutorial process in Kenya.

Statement of the Problem:

Corruption remains a major impediment to good governance, economic development, and public trust in many institutions. Ideally, institutional anti-corruption strategies—such as the establishment of oversight bodies, enactment of anti-corruption laws, creation of special courts, and implementation of prosecution guidelines—should lead to effective investigation, prosecution, and conviction of corruption offenders. These mechanisms are expected to deter corruption, ensure accountability, and promote transparency in public service. However,

in practice, the prosecution of corruption cases remains slow, selective, and often unsuccessful. Despite the existence of institutional frameworks such as anti-corruption commissions, special prosecution units, and judicial reforms, the conviction rates remain low, high-profile cases often stall or are withdrawn, and public confidence in the justice system continues to decline. Political interference, weak enforcement, lack of resources, and inadequate coordination among institutions have undermined the intended effectiveness of these strategies. Several reforms and interventions have been introduced to strengthen anti-corruption efforts, but the persistent gap between policy and practice indicates a critical failure in translating strategies into results. This calls for a fresh empirical investigation into the effectiveness of current institutional anti-corruption strategies, specifically their impact on the prosecution process in Kenya.

Objective of the study

The objective of the study is to evaluate the effectiveness of institutional anti-corruption strategies on the prosecution of corruption cases in Kenya.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Review

The study is anchored on the principal-Agent Theory, which is rooted in economic and organizational studies. This theory explains the relationship between a principal (such as the government or institution) and an agent (such as public officials or prosecutors) who is delegated to act on behalf of the principal. According to Eisenhardt (1989), the principal-agent relationship is characterized by information asymmetry and differing interests, which may lead to challenges in ensuring that the agent acts in the best interest of the principal. In the context of anti-corruption strategies, Principal-Agent Theory highlights how institutional frameworks aim to reduce the risk of agents engaging in corrupt practices or shirking responsibilities. The theory suggests that proper monitoring, incentives, and accountability mechanisms are crucial to align the agent's behavior with the principal's goals of prosecuting corruption cases effectively. However, the presence of corruption can be viewed as a failure in this relationship, where agents exploit information gaps or weak oversight to act opportunistically. The understanding of the dynamics of the principal-agent relationship is essential in evaluating how institutional anti-corruption strategies influence the success of prosecuting corruption cases in Kenya. These strategies are expected to strengthen control mechanisms and reduce information asymmetry, thereby improving the effectiveness of prosecution efforts.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework shown in Figure 1 hypothesizes the interaction between institutional anti-corruption strategies and the prosecution outcomes of corruption cases in Kenya. The framework identifies specific institutional mechanisms (such as enforcement capacity, inter-agency collaboration, legal reforms, and public reporting mechanisms) as independent variables that influence the effectiveness of prosecuting corruption cases (measured through indicators such as conviction rates, case clearance time, and case backlog reduction).

Independent Variable

Dependent Variable

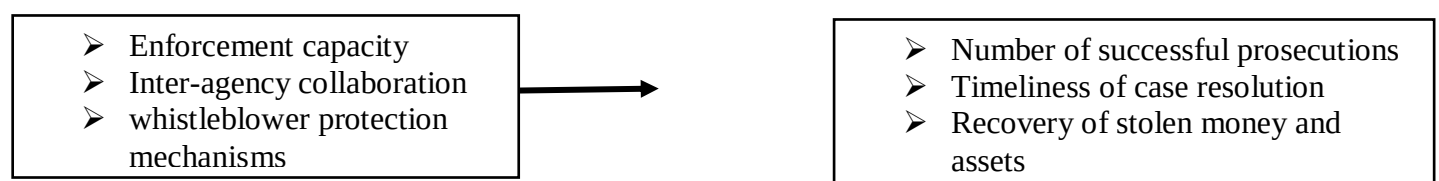


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Empirical Review.

Corruption remains a systemic challenge across the globe, undermining governance, development, and public trust. Johnston (2017) argues that anti-corruption efforts often fail because they do not account for the political

and institutional contexts within which corruption is embedded. Similarly, Kuipers (2022) emphasizes that international anti-corruption strategies frequently fall short in developing countries due to poor localization and weak implementation mechanisms. Suarez (2022) assesses Mexico's National Anti-Corruption System and concludes that while institutional frameworks exist, lack of coordination and entrenched political interests limit prosecutorial effectiveness. In Asia, Quah (2021) notes that anti-corruption commissions, like in Bangladesh, are often constrained by political control, reducing their autonomy and efficacy. Baker et al. (2019) report similar patterns in Cambodia, where anti-corruption institutions serve more as political tools than independent bodies for justice.

Focusing on Africa, Senu (2020) highlights that anti-corruption strategies in sub-Saharan Africa often lack sustainability and political will, resulting in minimal impact on actual prosecutions. Hope (2024) presents a compelling case of an anti-corruption project in Africa that failed due to internal corruption and inadequate oversight. Gray (2021) illustrates how procurement corruption in South Africa continues despite anti-corruption mechanisms, due to systemic loopholes and weak enforcement. Likewise, Amadi (2021) links Nigeria's anti-corruption campaign failures to insufficient legal reforms and poor judicial follow-through.

Kenya presents a complex case. Ishikawa (2019) finds that reforms in Kenya are frequently undermined by entrenched corruption networks and elite capture. Waweru et al. (2025) reinforce this, showing how corruption networks adapt to bypass institutional controls. Daud (2024) further critiques the effectiveness of Kenyan anti-corruption strategies, noting inconsistencies in prosecution outcomes and frequent withdrawal of high-profile cases. While the reviewed literature confirms that institutional strategies often fall short due to systemic and contextual barriers, there remains a critical gap in understanding how specific prosecutorial outcomes in Kenya are influenced by the interplay between institutional design, political dynamics, and operational independence. A deeper examination is therefore warranted to assess not just the existence, but the functional effectiveness of institutional strategies in securing successful prosecutions of corruption cases in Kenya.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive research design to investigate the effectiveness of institutional anti-corruption strategies on the prosecution of corruption cases in Kenya. The focus was on key institutional actors involved in anti-corruption efforts, including officials from the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC), the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP), the Judiciary, and civil society organizations that monitor anti-corruption initiatives. The target population consisted of 600 stakeholders drawn from these institutions across Kenya. Using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample size determination formula, a sample size of 234 respondents was selected and 30 key informants were also identified.

Purposive sampling was employed to ensure that only individuals with direct roles in anti-corruption strategy design, implementation, or prosecution were included. The study adopted a mixed-methods approach, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. Structured questionnaires were used to gather quantitative data, while Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were conducted to collect in-depth qualitative insights from senior officials and policy experts. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (means, frequencies, and percentages), as well as inferential statistics including correlation and regression analysis. Qualitative data were subjected to thematic analysis and presented in a narrative format to complement quantitative findings.

To assess the relationship between institutional strategies and prosecution outcomes, a univariate linear regression model was applied in the form:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X + \varepsilon$$

Where:

- **Y** represents the effectiveness of prosecution of corruption cases,
- **X** represents institutional anti-corruption strategies, and

- ϵ is the error term assumed to be normally distributed with a mean of zero.

In this model, Y denotes the effectiveness of prosecution of corruption cases, while X represents the institutional anti-corruption strategies employed to combat corruption. The model was instrumental in determining the degree to which these institutional strategies influence or contribute to the successful prosecution of corruption cases in Kenya. By examining the relationship between these two variables, the model provided insights into whether existing anti-corruption frameworks, policies, and institutional mechanisms are effectively supporting legal action against corrupt individuals, thereby shedding light on gaps, strengths, and areas for policy enhancement in Kenya's anti-corruption efforts.

DISCUSSION OF STUDY FINDINGS

Response Rate

The study targeted a total of 234 respondents drawn from key institutions involved in the prosecution of corruption cases in Kenya. These included officers from the Judiciary, the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC), the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP), and civil society organizations engaged in anti-corruption work. Out of the 234 questionnaires administered, 198 were successfully filled and returned, resulting in a response rate of 76%. In addition, 25 participants out of 30 invited took part in the key informant interviews and Focus Group Discussions, translating to a response rate of approximately 84.6%.

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), a response rate of 50% and above is considered adequate for analysis and reporting. Therefore, the response rates achieved in this study were deemed satisfactory and provided a reliable basis for the interpretation of findings. The objective of the study was to assess the effectiveness of anti-corruption institutional strategies in enhancing the prosecution of corruption cases. This section presents the findings related to institutional anti-corruption strategies, supported by descriptive statistics, confirmatory factor analysis, and regression analysis used to determine their impact on successful prosecution outcomes.

Descriptive Statistics of Shared Impact on Anti-Corruption Strategies

This section presents descriptive statistics comprising measures of central tendency (mean and standard deviation), frequency, and percentage distribution of responses to items assessing the shared impact of institutional anti-corruption strategies on the prosecution of corruption cases in Kenya. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with a set of statements using a five-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree." The findings on respondents' perceptions are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: perceptions of the respondents on Institutional Anti-Corruption Strategies.

Statement	SD (%)	D (%)	NS (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	Mean	Std. Dev
Corruption cases in Kenya courts are often delayed due to evidence interference and whistleblower threats.	11.6	17.2	5.6	32.8	32.8	3.58	1.40
Corruption Prosecution efforts are mostly selective, politically motivated, targeting low-level officials, ignoring major perpetrators.	13.1	19.2	4.5	28.8	34.3	3.52	1.46
Anti-corruption institutions (EACC, DCI, ODPP and Courts) lack proper coordination and will to prosecute cases effectively.	12.6	18.2	7.6	29.3	32.3	3.51	1.42
The EACC should have a special anti-corruption	11.1	15.2	4.0	32.8	36.9	3.69	1.39

police unit for investigation, arrest and prosecution.							
Change in law is needed to shift the burden of proof from accuser to accused to avoid evidence manipulation.	12.6	18.2	5.1	30.3	33.8	3.55	1.43
There is need to have a distinct court to deal with corruption cases only.	12.1	15.7	3.5	31.8	36.9	3.66	1.42
Convicted individuals should be denied the right to hold public office.	13.6	18.2	4.5	29.8	33.8	3.52	1.46
A “recoup back” policy should guide recovery to ensure timely achievement of objectives.	10.1	16.2	4.0	32.8	36.9	3.70	1.37
Presumption of innocence allows room for manipulation and distortion in corruption cases.	12.6	18.2	4.5	30.8	33.8	3.55	1.43

Key: SD = Strongly Disagree; D = Disagree; N = Neutral; A = Agree; SA = Strongly Agree

The findings on respondents’ perceptions of institutional anti-corruption strategies reveal a predominantly critical view of the effectiveness, coordination, and fairness of anti-corruption efforts in Kenya. A significant proportion (65.6%) of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that corruption cases in Kenyan courts are often delayed due to interference with evidence and threats to whistleblowers. This is reflected in the relatively high mean score of 3.58 and a standard deviation of 1.40. Such perceptions highlight the risk and vulnerability involved in reporting corruption. A key informant stated that “*whistleblowers are threatened into silence, and sometimes the evidence just disappears mysteriously*” (KII-01, 2025). During an FGD, a participant commented, “*We see cases drag on for years, and nothing is resolved. It’s discouraging*” (FGD-01, 2025), indicating low public confidence in the judiciary’s independence and efficiency.

Another major concern among respondents was the perceived political selectivity in corruption prosecutions. About 63.1% agreed or strongly agreed that efforts to prosecute corruption are mostly directed at low-level officials while major perpetrators are often ignored. This sentiment is reflected in a mean of 3.52 and a relatively high standard deviation of 1.46, indicating varied but strong opinions. One FGD participant lamented, “*The poor suffer while the big fish go untouched. It’s not justice—it’s a show*” (FGD-03, 2025). A civil society actor echoed this view, saying, “*Prosecutions are often used for political settling of scores*” (KII-03, 2025). Additionally, 61.6% agreed or strongly agreed that anti-corruption institutions such as the EACC, DCI, ODPP, and courts lack proper coordination and the will to prosecute effectively, with a mean score of 3.51. This inefficiency in coordination may explain the lack of successful prosecutions and public disillusionment. An interviewee noted, “*Each institution shifts blame when a case collapse—there’s no synergy*” (KII-02, 2025).

In terms of proposed reforms, respondents expressed strong support for institutional restructuring and legal amendments. Notably, 69.7% agreed or strongly agreed that the EACC should have a special anti-corruption police unit, reflected in a high mean of 3.69. A similarly high percentage supported the establishment of a distinct anti-corruption court (68.7%, mean = 3.66), and a “recoup back” policy for asset recovery (69.7%, mean = 3.70), the highest recorded mean with the lowest standard deviation (1.37), suggesting consensus. A youth leader observed, “*Specialization is key. Let corruption cases be handled by a dedicated court and unit with no interference*” (KII-04, 2025). There was also significant backing for a legal shift where the burden of proof would lie with the accused in corruption cases (64.1%, mean = 3.55), and for barring convicted individuals from holding public office (63.6%, mean = 3.52). Respondents felt this would deter corruption and restore faith in public institutions. As one FGD participant stated, “*Once you’re caught, that should be the end of your public service—no second chances*” (FGD-04, 2025).

Lastly, a majority of respondents (64.6%) agreed or strongly agreed that the presumption of innocence is being manipulated to delay or distort justice in corruption cases, a perception reflected in the relatively high mean score of 3.55. This sentiment was echoed in a focus group discussion, where one participant remarked, “*The presumption of innocence is important, but in corruption, it’s being abused to create endless delays*” (FGD-05,

2025), underscoring the growing frustration among citizens regarding the misuse of legal safeguards to protect corrupt individuals from timely prosecution. These findings collectively highlight a pressing public demand for comprehensive anti-corruption reforms that address both legal loopholes and institutional weaknesses. The prevailing consensus among respondents is that unless the current anti-corruption strategies are significantly restructured to promote swift justice, credible enforcement mechanisms, and heightened public accountability, the broader fight against corruption will continue to be perceived as ineffective, compromised, and untrustworthy. The abuse of the presumption of innocence not only undermines public confidence in the justice system but also perpetuates a culture of impunity, further eroding the credibility of institutions tasked with combating corruption and weakening the moral fabric of governance in the country.

Table 2: Perceptions on Prosecution of Corruption Cases

Statement	SD (%)	D (%)	NS (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	Mean	Std. Dev
Corruption in the management of borrowed funds has contributed to the rising national debt.	14.1	20.2	6.1	28.3	31.3	3.42	1.46
Corruption has significantly increased the poverty levels in society.	11.1	17.2	6.1	32.3	33.3	3.60	1.39
Corruption contributes to widening inequality between the rich and the poor.	10.6	17.2	4.0	32.8	35.4	3.65	1.39
Failure to address corruption encourages a culture of impunity in the country.	11.1	17.2	5.6	31.3	34.8	3.62	1.40
Corruption is a major reason for delays in the delivery of essential public services.	13.1	18.2	5.6	30.3	32.8	3.52	1.44
Corruption has eroded public trust in anti-corruption institutions and agencies.	10.6	17.2	5.6	31.8	34.8	3.63	1.39
Corruption results in the denial of basic human rights such as healthcare, education, and clean water.	13.1	17.2	3.5	29.8	36.4	3.59	1.45
Corruption has led to the erosion of moral and cultural values in society.	11.1	14.6	5.1	31.3	37.9	3.70	1.39
Many government failures in development and service delivery are linked to corruption.	10.1	16.2	4.0	32.8	36.9	3.70	1.37
Corruption enables unqualified or unethical individuals to attain leadership positions.	12.6	18.2	4.5	30.8	33.8	3.55	1.43

Key: SD = Strongly Disagree; D = Disagree; N = Neutral; A = Agree; SA = Strongly Agree

The findings from the survey reveal deep public concern over the adverse impact of corruption on Kenya's socio-economic development. A substantial majority of respondents (59.6%) agreed or strongly agreed that "Corruption in the management of borrowed funds has contributed to the rising national debt," while 34.3% disagreed or strongly disagreed. This suggests that Kenyans associate poor fiscal discipline and misuse of public loans with the ballooning debt burden. As one civil society actor noted during an interview (KII-07, 2025), *"We are borrowing in the name of development, but the money is stolen before it reaches the projects."* This highlights public frustration over corruption that not only wastes borrowed funds but also places future generations in financial jeopardy.

Similarly, a large portion of respondents (65.6%) believed that "Corruption has significantly increased the poverty levels in society." With a mean score of 3.60, this indicates that the link between corruption and poverty is well recognized. One youth respondent during a focus group discussion (FGD-04, 2025) argued that

“the resources meant to lift the poor are looted, so poverty becomes permanent.” Closely related is the belief that “Corruption contributes to widening inequality between the rich and the poor,” with 68.2% agreeing or strongly agreeing and only 27.8% expressing disagreement. This reflects a widely held view that corruption benefits the elite and entrenches inequality. The standard deviation of 1.39 for both items underscore the consistency of this perception across the sample.

Another major theme emerging from the data is the normalization of impunity due to unchecked corruption. For the item “Failure to address corruption encourages a culture of impunity in the country,” 66.1% of respondents expressed agreement, compared to 28.3% who disagreed. A local chief interviewed (KII-09, 2025) lamented that *“even our children are beginning to believe that stealing is part of success.”* This concern was echoed in the belief that “Corruption is a major reason for delays in the delivery of essential public services,” with a majority (63.1%) acknowledging the link. Delayed infrastructure, understaffed hospitals, and unfulfilled development promises were cited in multiple FGDs as visible consequences of corruption.

Trust in institutions also emerged as a significant casualty of corruption. For the statement “Corruption has eroded public trust in anti-corruption institutions and agencies,” 66.6% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed. According to a retired public servant (KII-11, 2025), *“When EACC is seen dining with suspects, how can people believe in justice?”* Similarly, the denial of fundamental human rights due to corruption was highlighted, with 66.2% agreeing that it deprives citizens of access to healthcare, education, and clean water. The impact of corruption extends to social norms, as 69.2% of respondents agreed that *“Corruption has led to the erosion of moral and cultural values in society.”* This suggests a deep societal impact where corruption not only distorts the economy but also undermines ethics and values. Finally, the findings show that corruption is viewed as a major driver of underdevelopment and poor leadership. A notable 69.7% of respondents agreed that “Many government failures in development and service delivery are linked to corruption,” with a mean of 3.70. Similarly, 64.6% felt that “Corruption enables unqualified or unethical individuals to attain leadership positions.” These sentiments reflect a common narrative that corruption derails progress and rewards mediocrity. A university student (FGD-06, 2025) summed it up: *“In Kenya, you don’t need merit to succeed in politics—just money and connections.”*

Application of the findings to principal-agent theory.

The findings of this study resonate strongly with the principal-agent theory, which posits that public officials (agents), entrusted with authority by citizens (principals), may pursue self-serving interests when oversight is weak or incentives are misaligned. Respondents’ widespread perception of delayed corruption cases, political selectivity, and weak coordination among anti-corruption institutions suggests a systemic breakdown in accountability mechanisms, allowing agents to act with impunity. The manipulation of legal principles like the presumption of innocence to stall justice, and the shielding of high-level perpetrators, indicate that agents are exploiting institutional loopholes to avoid sanction. Public frustration over misuse of borrowed funds, rising inequality, and eroded trust reflects the principals’ loss of control over their agents, who are expected to manage public resources responsibly. The overwhelming support for specialized courts, asset recovery mechanisms, and barring corrupt individuals from office demonstrates a collective demand for stronger institutional checks and realignment of incentives to compel agents to act in the public interest. Hence, the principal-agent theory provides a critical lens to analyze how institutional weaknesses and lack of deterrence perpetuate corruption, betray citizen trust, and fuel calls for structural reform.

Regression Analysis

The assumptions of using the least square estimator are that the predictor variables should not be highly correlated, the error term should be normally distributed (normality) with a constant variance (homoscedasticity) and a mean zero and that it should not be highly correlated across the predictor variables (serial correlation). These assumptions are tested under this section before running the regression model to determine the influence of Institutional Anti-Corruption Strategies on Prosecution of Corruption Cases. One of the assumptions of least square regression is that the error term should be normally distributed. This study tested for this assumption graphically using P-P plots for regression standardized residual as well as the normality plot as shown in figure 2.

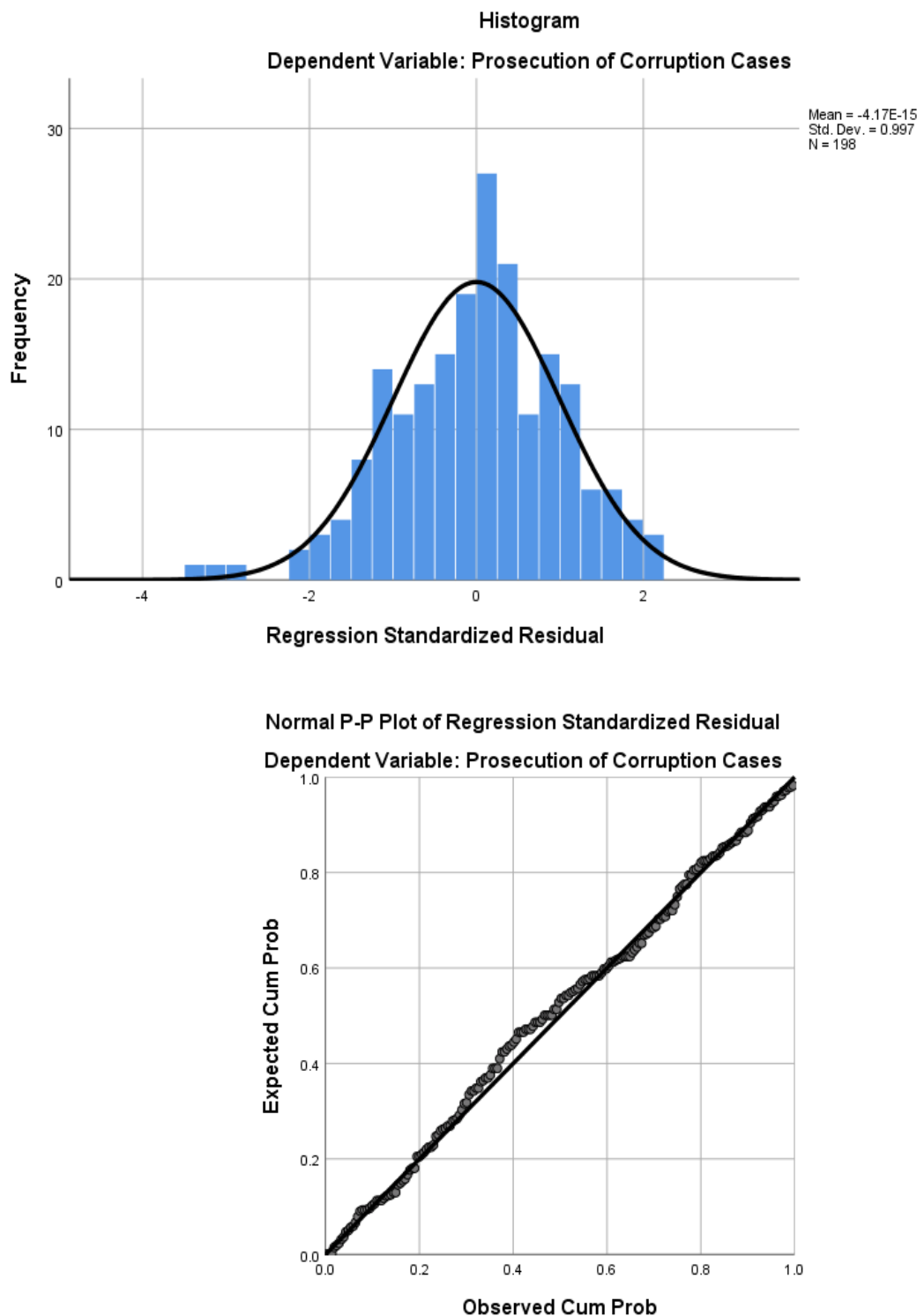


Figure 2: Normality test of the regression residual

Figure 2 presents the results of the normality test of the regression residuals using both the Probability-Probability (P-P) plot and the normality plot, which visually depicted a bell-shaped curve, suggesting that the residuals were approximately normally distributed and thus satisfying the assumption of normality crucial for linear regression analysis. The bell-shaped pattern indicated that the residuals were symmetrically distributed around the mean, reinforcing the appropriateness of the regression model. In addition to testing for normality, the presence of autocorrelation was examined using the Durbin-Watson (DW) statistic, with the findings displayed in Table 3. The DW value obtained fell within the acceptable threshold of 1.5 to 2.0, which is generally considered an indication of the absence of serial correlation in the residuals.

Table 3: Durbin Watson test of autocorrelation.

Model Summary ^b										
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	.268 ^a	.072	.067	.51650	.072	15.113	1	196	.000	1.672
a. Predictors: (Constant), Institutional Anti-Corruption Strategies										
b. Dependent Variable: Prosecution of Corruption Cases										

Source: Survey Data (2025).

As shown in Table 3, the Durbin-Watson (DW) value of 1.672 falls between 1.5 and 2.0, indicating no presence of serial correlation and confirming the suitability of using the least squares estimator regression model. Additionally, the assumption of heteroscedasticity was tested using the Breusch-Pagan method, which requires a non-significant p-value to uphold the null hypothesis of homoscedasticity, with the results presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Breusch Pagan test of heteroscedasticity.

Breusch-Pagan Test for Heteroskedasticity ^{a, b, c}		
Chi-Square	df	Sig.
1.617	1	.203
a. Dependent variable: OBJ2		
b. Tests the null hypothesis that the variance of the errors does not depend on the values of the independent variables.		
c. Predicted values from design: Intercept + OBJ1		

Source: Survey Data (2025).

As shown in Table 4, the p-value of 0.203 is greater than 0.05, indicating that the null hypothesis of homoscedasticity is upheld, meaning the error term had constant variance as required for regression analysis. This justified the use of the Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression model. Having met all assumptions for OLS, the study employed a bivariate regression method to examine the nature and strength of the relationship between Institutional Anti-Corruption Strategies and the Prosecution of Corruption Cases. The univariate regression analysis included the model summary, ANOVA, and regression coefficients. Table 5 presents the R-square value, showing the extent to which the independent variable, Ethnic Balance in Public Political Appointments, explains the variation in the dependent variable, Prosecution of Corruption Cases.

Table 5: Model summary

Model Summary ^b										
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	.268 ^a	.072	.067	.51650	.072	15.113	1	196	.000	1.672

a. Predictors: (Constant), Institutional Anti-Corruption Strategies
b. Dependent Variable: Prosecution of Corruption Cases

Source: Survey Data (2025).

The results presented in Table 5 indicate that Institutional Anti-Corruption Strategies have a positive association with the Prosecution of Corruption Cases, as evidenced by a correlation coefficient of $R = 0.268$, suggesting that enhancements in institutional strategies are moderately linked to improvements in the outcomes of prosecuting corruption. This positive relationship implies that as these strategies are strengthened—whether through better coordination among institutions, improved investigative capacity, or stronger legal frameworks—there is a corresponding increase in the effectiveness of prosecutorial actions. Moreover, the R-Square value of 0.072 reveals that Institutional Anti-Corruption Strategies explain approximately 7.2% of the variation in the prosecution of corruption cases, indicating that while these strategies contribute to better prosecution, a large portion of the variance is influenced by other external or systemic factors such as political interference, judicial independence, or resource constraints. To determine the statistical significance and appropriateness of the regression model used to examine the relationship between these two variables, an Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test was carried out, with the results summarized in Table 6, providing further insight into whether the observed association is statistically meaningful and not due to chance.

Table 6: ANOVA (Institutional Anti-Corruption Strategies and Prosecution of Corruption Cases).

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4.032	1	4.032	15.113	.000 ^b
	Residual	52.287	196	.267		
	Total	56.319	197			
a. Dependent Variable: Prosecution of Corruption Cases						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Institutional Anti-Corruption Strategies						

Source: Survey Data (2025).

As shown in Table 6, the ANOVA F-test yielded an F-statistic of 15.113 with a p-value of 0.000, indicating that the regression model linking Institutional Anti-Corruption Strategies to the Prosecution of Corruption Cases was highly significant and a good fit. The significance level ($p < 0.05$) confirms the model's validity, making any conclusions drawn from it relevant. The corresponding regression model coefficients are presented in Table 7.

Table 7: Model coefficients

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.727	.227		12.003	.000
	Institutional Anti-Corruption Strategies	.243	.063	.268	3.888	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Prosecution of Corruption Cases						

Source: Survey Data (2025).

The regression model coefficient results in Table 7 indicate that, holding other factors constant, Institutional Anti-Corruption Strategies have a positive and significant effect on the Prosecution of Corruption Cases ($\beta = 0.243$), suggesting that a one-unit improvement in these strategies would lead to a 0.243-unit enhancement in Institutional Anti-Corruption Strategies through better handling of corruption prosecutions. The findings from this study align with existing literature that critiques the structural inefficiencies and political interferences undermining anti-corruption efforts in Kenya and beyond. Scholars such as Johnston (2017) and Kuipers (2022) have emphasized that anti-corruption frameworks often fail due to a lack of contextualization, institutional fragmentation, and political entrenchment. These concerns are echoed in the perceptions of Kenyan respondents, who overwhelmingly viewed prosecutorial outcomes as selective and politicized, with 63.1% agreeing that low-level officials are often targeted while powerful individuals go free. This supports Suarez's (2022) analysis of Mexico, where formal anti-corruption systems exist but are hamstrung by elite capture and poor coordination—issues mirrored in Kenya's own institutional landscape. Furthermore, the lack of coordination among Kenyan agencies like the EACC, DCI, ODPP, and judiciary resonates with Gray's (2021) and Amadi's (2021) observations that systemic loopholes and weak enforcement mechanisms enable corruption to thrive in South Africa and Nigeria, respectively. The strong support among respondents for reforms such as specialized courts and units, a reversal of the burden of proof, and barring convicted individuals from public office points to a public demand for institutional redesign grounded in legal accountability and operational independence. These reform preferences are consistent with Hope's (2024) argument that anti-corruption strategies in Africa must move beyond rhetoric to structural transformation, lest they fall into the cycle of institutional decay and public distrust.

CONCLUSION

Corruption in Kenya remains a deeply entrenched challenge, with profound implications for governance, economic development, social justice, and public trust. The literature and empirical findings demonstrate that despite the existence of legal frameworks and institutional mechanisms, the prosecution of corruption cases continues to be undermined by systemic weaknesses. These include political interference, lack of coordination among anti-corruption agencies, weak protection for whistleblowers, and ineffective enforcement of existing laws. The public perceives corruption not only as a moral failing but as a structural problem that contributes to poverty, inequality, impunity, and deteriorating public services. These perceptions point to a crisis of confidence in state institutions, fueled by selective prosecutions, delayed justice, and a lack of transparency and accountability.

The study also revealed strong public support for a set of legal and institutional reforms aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of anti-corruption strategies. Respondents advocated for the creation of a specialized anti-corruption court and police unit, reversal of the burden of proof in corruption cases, a "recoup back" policy for asset recovery, and permanent disqualification of convicted individuals from public office. These proposals reflect a desire for swift and credible justice mechanisms that can overcome the current inefficiencies. Furthermore, the public strongly associates corruption with increased national debt, persistent poverty, social inequality, and erosion of cultural and moral values. These findings suggest that tackling corruption is not only a legal imperative but a societal one, critical to restoring public trust, enhancing development outcomes, and safeguarding democratic governance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The government should create a special anti-corruption court and an autonomous investigative police unit under the EACC, dedicated exclusively to handling corruption cases. These bodies must be insulated from political influence and resourced adequately to carry out independent and efficient investigations and prosecutions. Parliament should consider legislative amendments that include a "recoup back" policy for recovering assets acquired through corruption, a legal shift in the burden of proof to the accused in serious corruption cases, and the disqualification of convicted individuals from holding public office. These changes would act as strong deterrents to corrupt practices. Comprehensive public awareness campaigns should be undertaken to change societal attitudes toward corruption. Civic education in schools and communities should emphasize integrity, accountability, and the rule of law to help rebuild moral and cultural values. A continuous

monitoring and evaluation framework should be implemented to assess the effectiveness of anti-corruption strategies, identify gaps, and recommend timely improvements. This would ensure adaptability and responsiveness to evolving corruption dynamics.

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