Lived Experiences of Nigerian Citizens on Corrupt Behaviour

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by

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Photo Credit: Punch Nigeria (July 31, 2019), https://punchng.com/photos-policeman-caught-on-camera-collecting-bribe/

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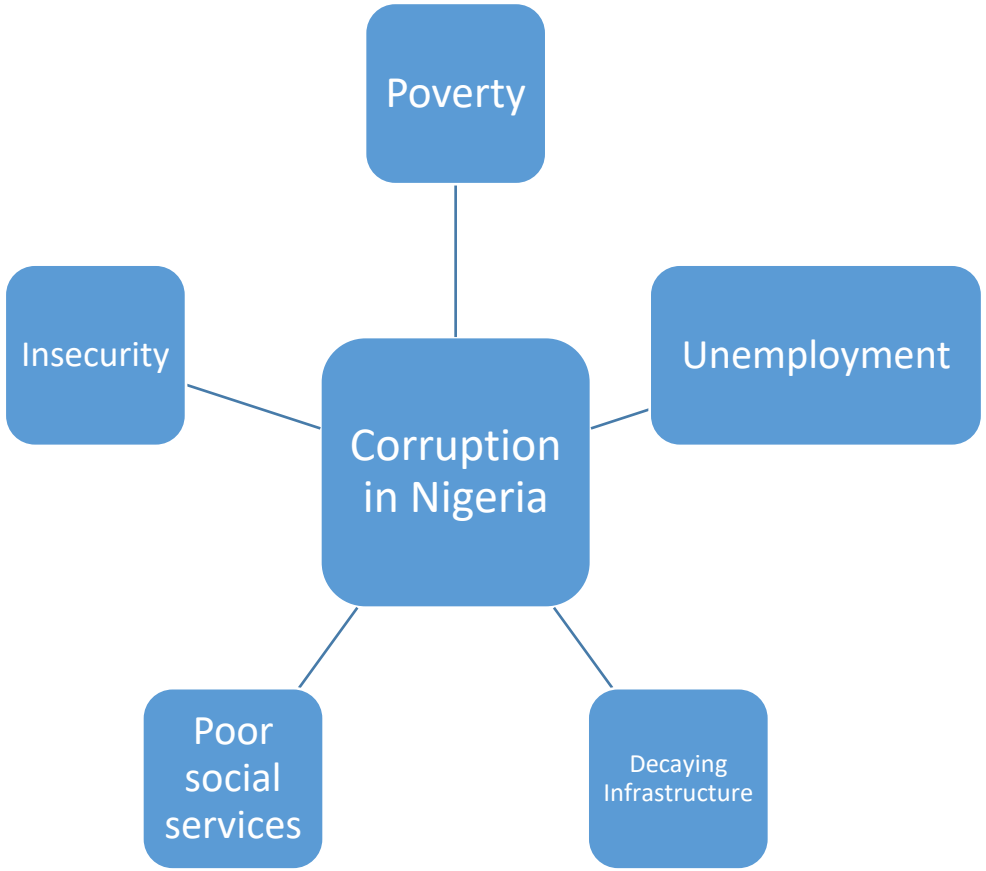
Introduction

*Source: Transparency International**



*Transparency International. (January 2022). 2021 Corruption Perceptions Index. https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2021

Introduction

- A research team from the Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research (NISER) at the behest of MacArthur Foundation, proposed a ***Behaviour Change*** approach to the corruption challenge
- A major objective of the research is to:
  - understand corrupt behaviour in Nigeria
  - understand why people act the way they do, and
  - what effects such behaviour has on the society.
- The understanding that emerges from these efforts is to enable us design effective behavioral change solutions with a focus on the public sector.

Conceptual Framework

Corruption in Nigeria*

Petty Corruption

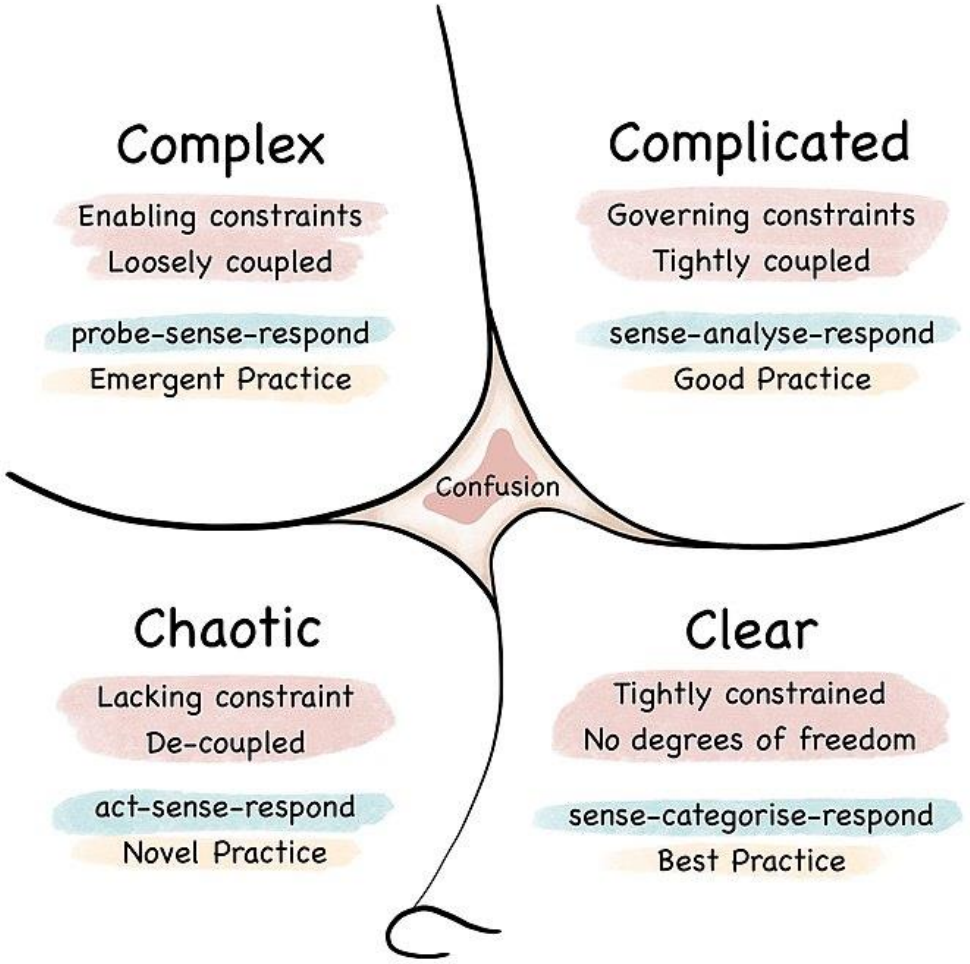
- Exhibited by regular people, lower- and middle-ranking public officials
- Entails dishonest acts, e.g. paying bribes to law enforcement, etc.
- Fuelled by survival and basic needs, e.g. need to pay rent

Grand Corruption

- Prevalent among top government officials, using position to amass fortune
- Involves illegal activities aimed at influencing public policies and laws (state capture)
- Results from political elite activities, supported by bureaucrats. Motivated by avarice. Involves spending government funds.

**The Phenomenon of Corruption, Working Paper.* https://www.niser.gov.ng/behaviour-change-knowledge-centre

Theoretical Framework

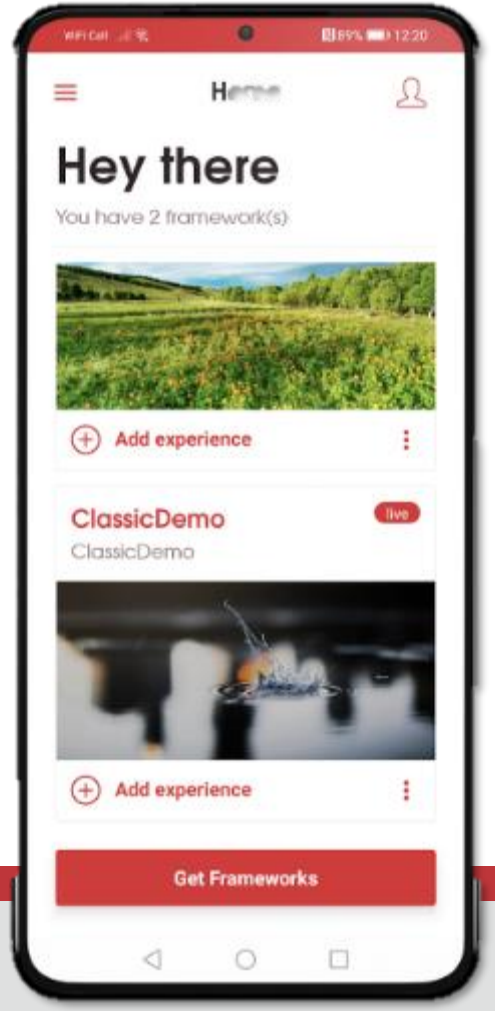


- The Cynefin Framework, designed by David Snowden*, to aid decision-making.
- It aids in capturing the prevailing operative context so that appropriate decisions can be made.
- A useful tool for such capture is the SenseMaker® application

*https://hbr.org/2007/11/a-leaders-framework-for-decision-making

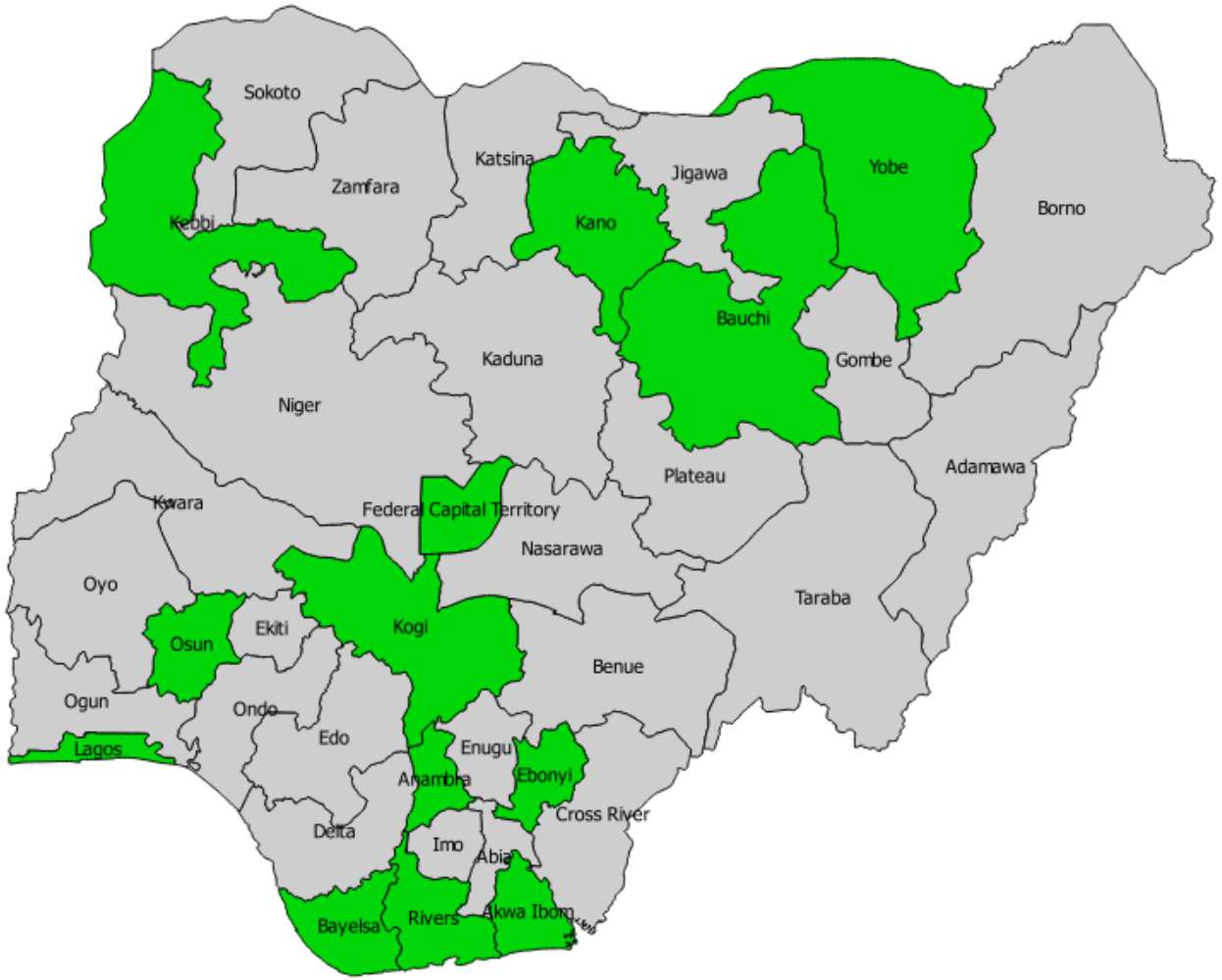
The SenseMaker® tool

- SenseMaker® was created by Cognitive Edge Pte Ltd., and is useful:
  - To gain a better understanding of data
  - Gathering micro-narratives of day-to-day conversations, to foster understanding
  - Provide decision support from data obtained



- Respondents on our survey were queried on:
  - Their experiences of corrupt behaviour
  - Its effects on them
  - Their perceptions on its morality
  - Their opinions on where responsibility lies

Study Design



2560 citizens

Empirical survey

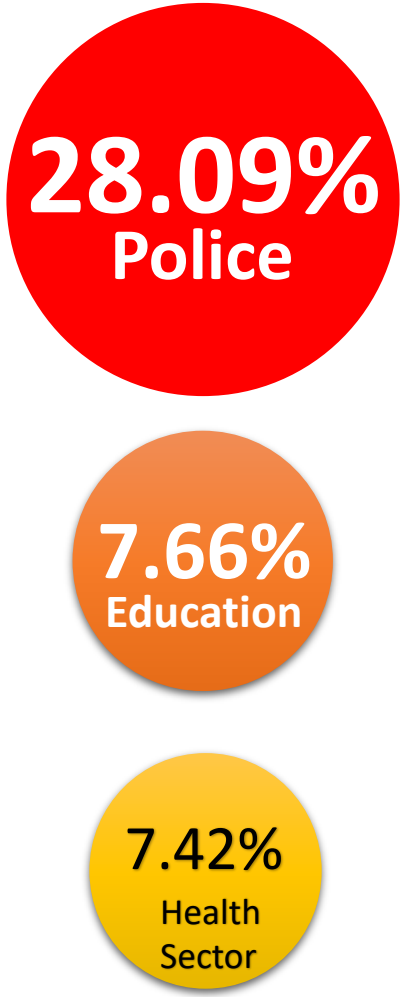
14 states including the Federal Capital Territory

Scope

Survey Tool

SenseMaker®

Government Agency	Frequency	%
Police	719	28.09
Education	196	7.66
Healthcare	190	7.42
Power Holding Company (NEPA)	189	7.38
Federal Ministries	164	6.41
Revenue collector	130	5.08
National Identity Management Commission	94	3.67
Business services	85	3.32
Legal	81	3.16
Immigration	79	3.09
Federal Road Safety Commission	54	2.11
Family / social support	40	1.56
Community organisations	30	1.17
Vehicle Inspection Office	21	0.82
Military	20	0.78
Citizen services	9	0.35
National Drug Law Enforcement Agency	6	0.23
National Assembly	3	0.12
Other	450	17.58



Shared Experiences of Corruption

Some shared experiences

NIMC*

*My sister when she [went to get her National Identity Number], she paid about 3,000 naira. My other sister paid 4,000 naira. She was asked to pay to enter… The slip they gave her is like fake. The paper small. It is not like the original wey** I do. I think say dem scam her. She said them dey queue for long and if you [no] pay, them no go attend to you. If you pay, they will attend to you…*

EDUCATION

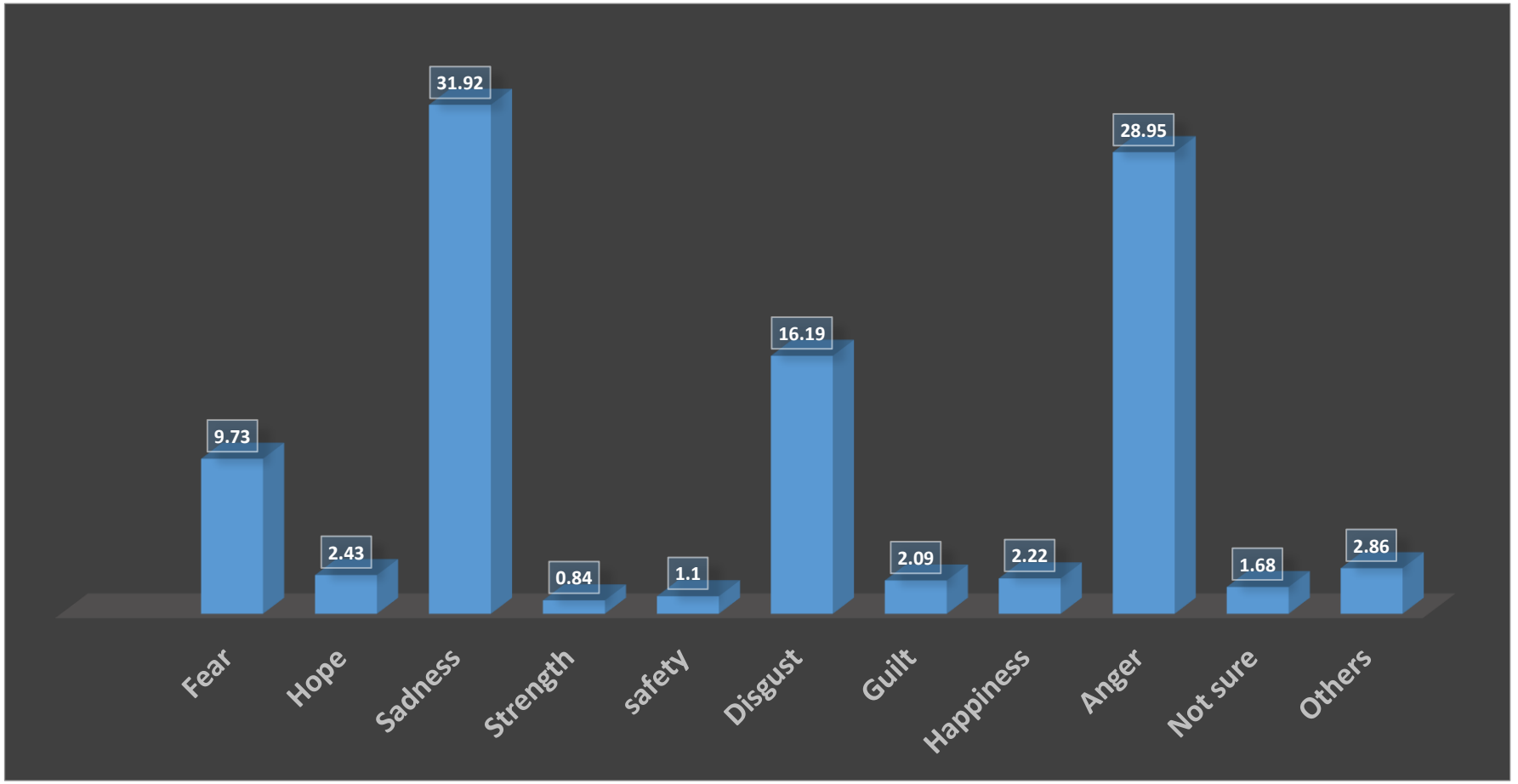
...Normally, a student can apply for their transcript online, but they will not get it until after a long time, making it delay and forcing them to pay us [academic staff] to fast track the processing, as against the normal procedures.

POLICE

My child was driving along the hospital road in Ibadan precisely UCH [University College Hospital], he was [stopped] by a police officer [who] demanded for his particulars. He gave him everything he demanded for … The police asked for bribe and my boy refused to give . He then took him to the police station and forced him to pay 5000 naira. He forced him to use his ATM card to transfer the money to him . When I got the information I took [it] up by reporting him to the higher authority and he was made to return the money back to my boy the following day and apologised for the behaviour he has exhibited. I used the opportunity to educate the corrupt officer and the damage it has done to the institution of police

** NIMC: National Identity Management Commission*

*** This is in Nigerian pidgin English*



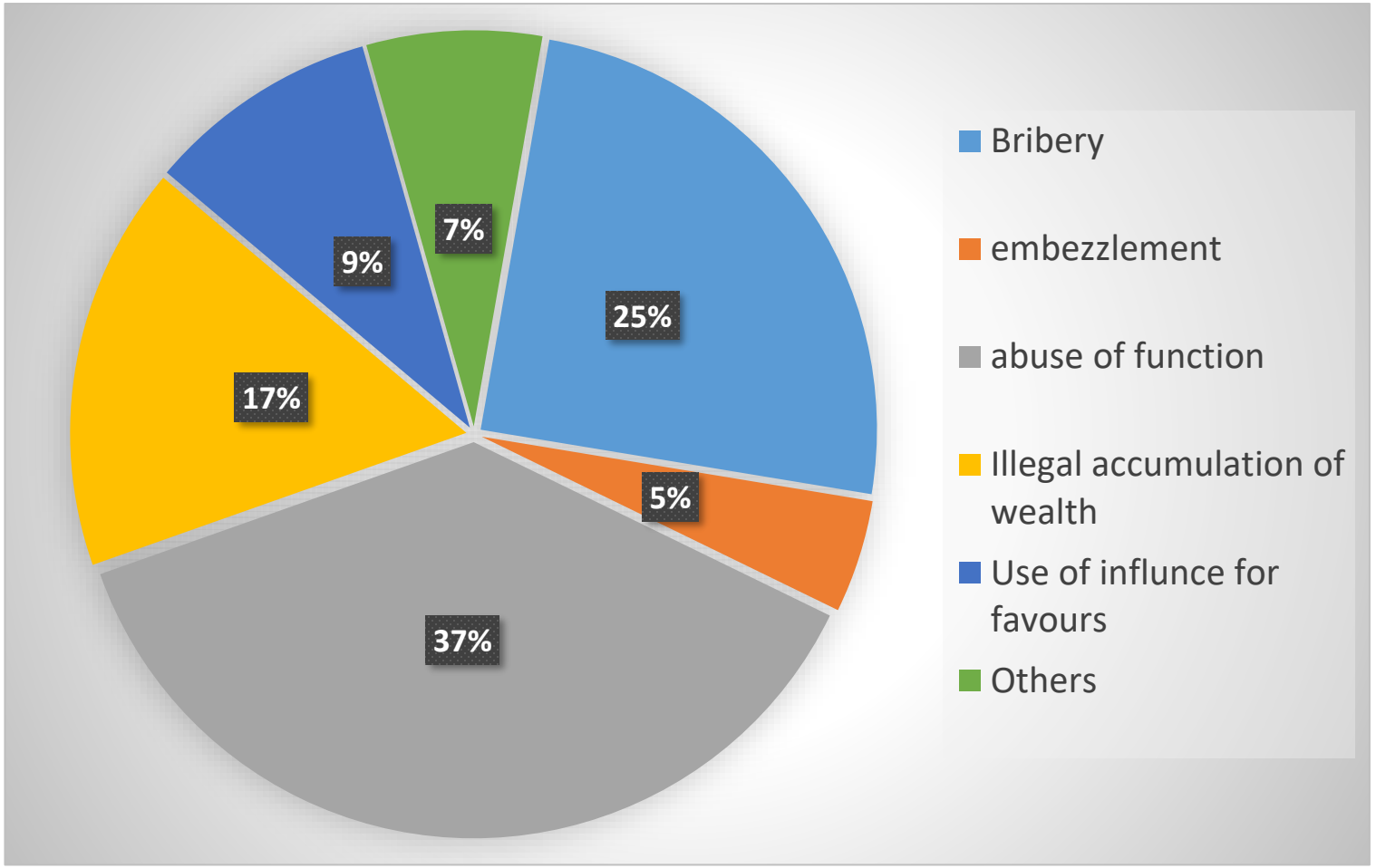
Psychological Feelings from Shared Experience

31.92%
Sadness

28.95%
Anger

16.19%
Disgust

9.73%
Fear

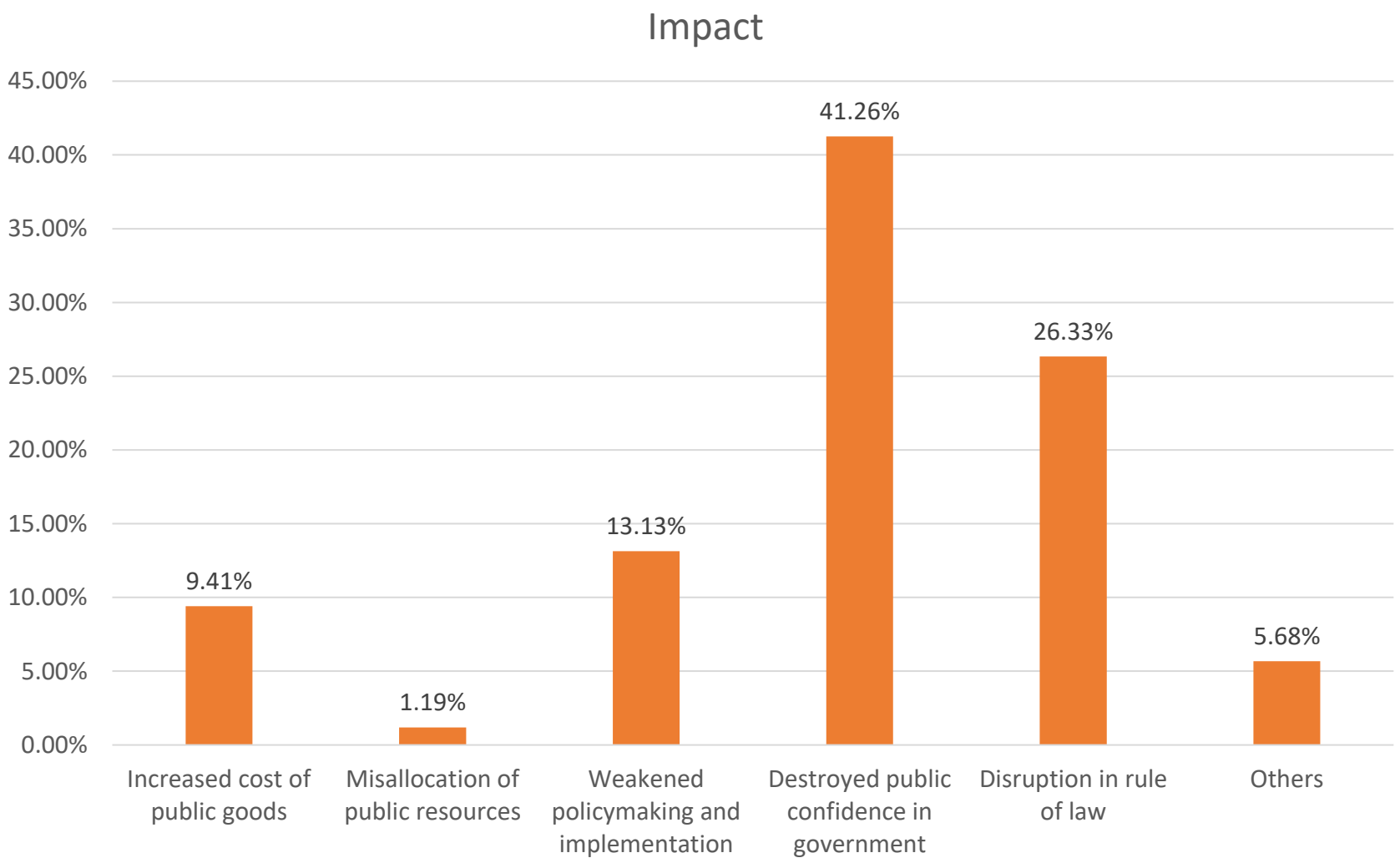


37%
Abuse of function

25%
Bribery

17%
Illegal Wealth

Dimensions of Corrupt Behaviour



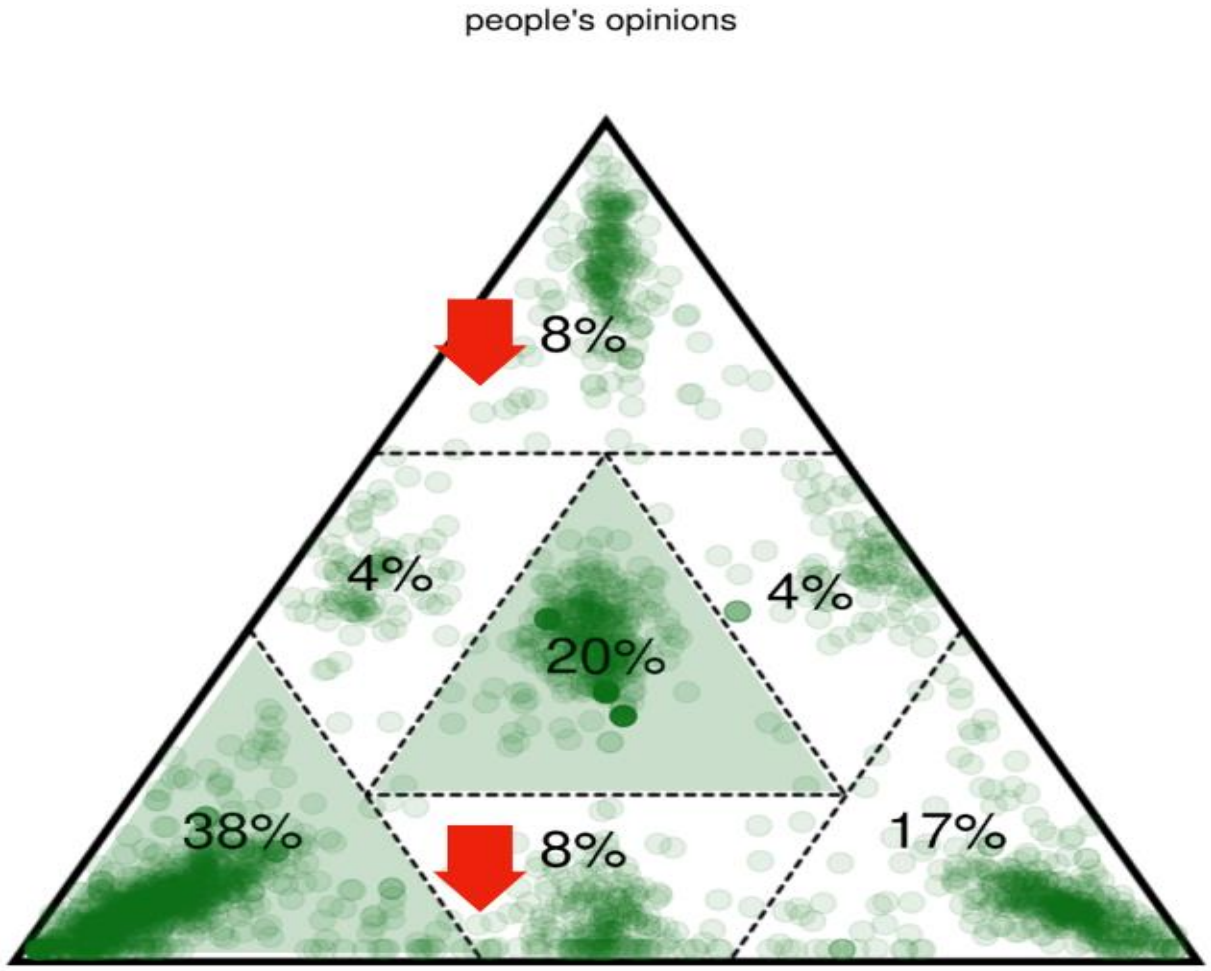
41.26%
Destroys public trust in the government

26.33%
Disruption In rule of law

7.42%
Weakens Policymaking and implementation

Distributional Impacts of Corruption

Corruption as a function of … *Morality*

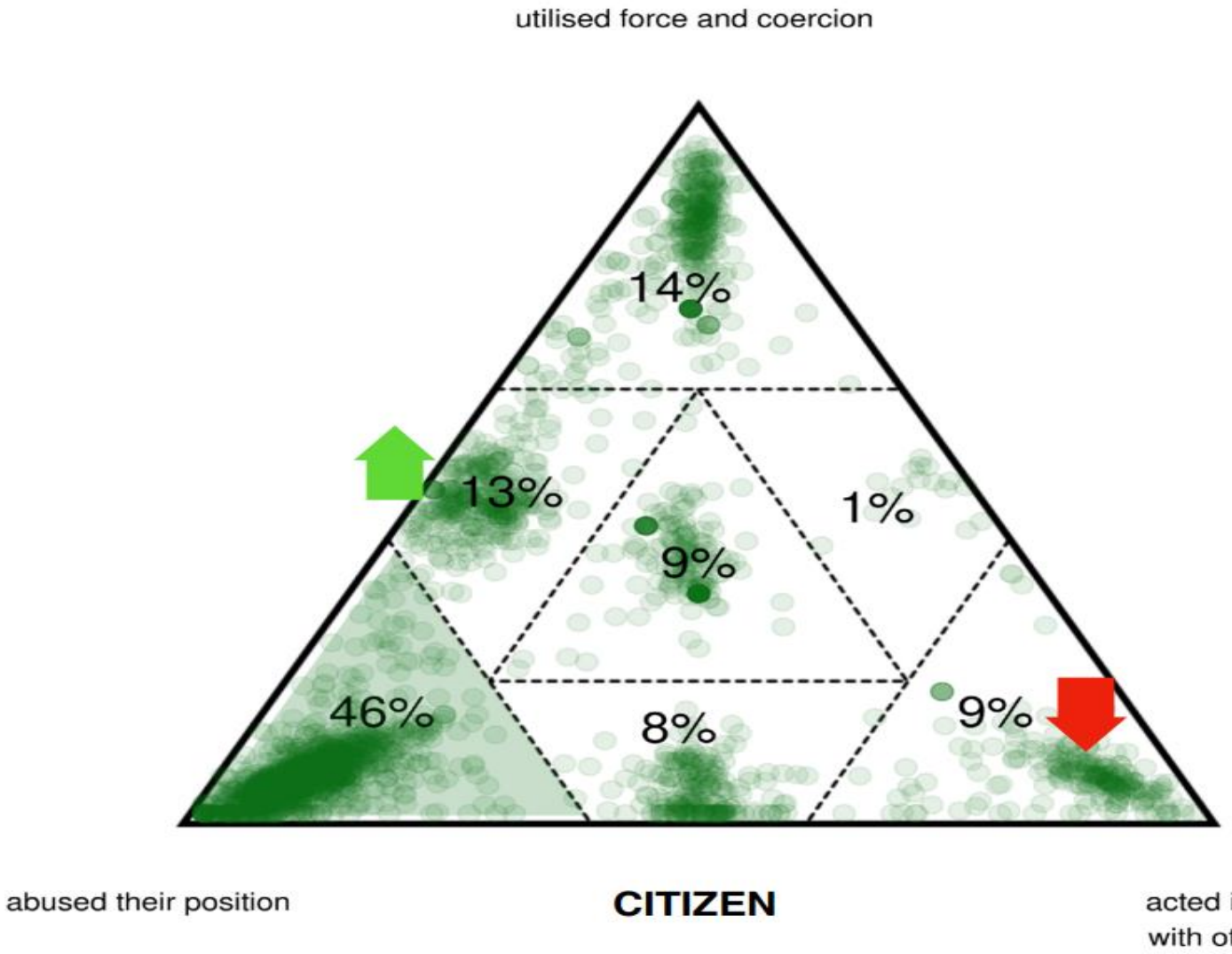


38% *Believe it is subject to a legal standpoint*

20% *Believe it is determined by laws, personal opinions, and the judgment of the majority*

17% *Believe it is determined by what is good for most people*

Corruption as a function of … *Power dynamics*

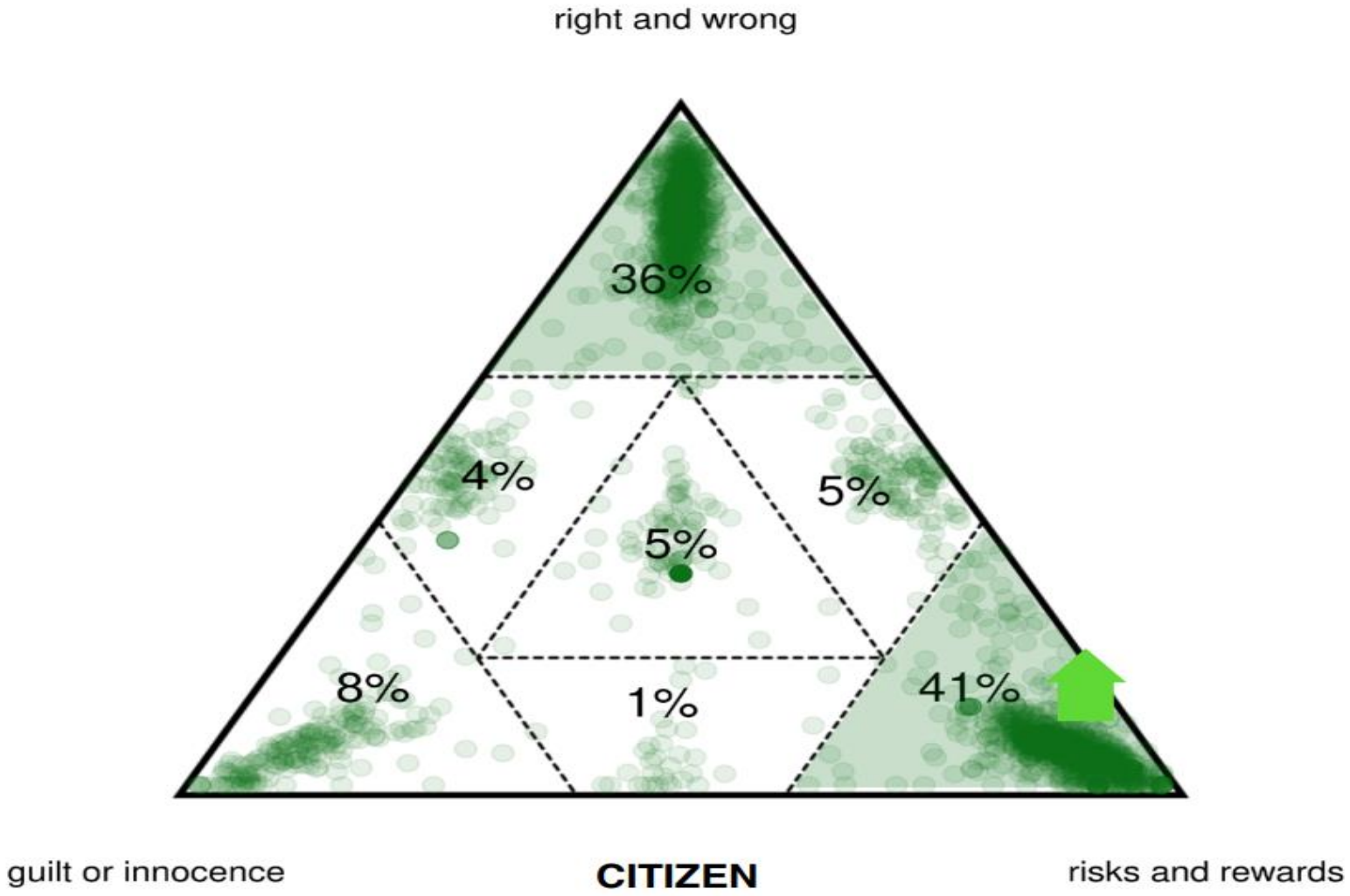


46% *See corruption as the abuse of authority*

14% *see corruption as a use of force or coercion*

13% *experienced corrupt behaviou in a combination of abuse of function and use of force*

Corruption as a function of … *Motivating Factors*



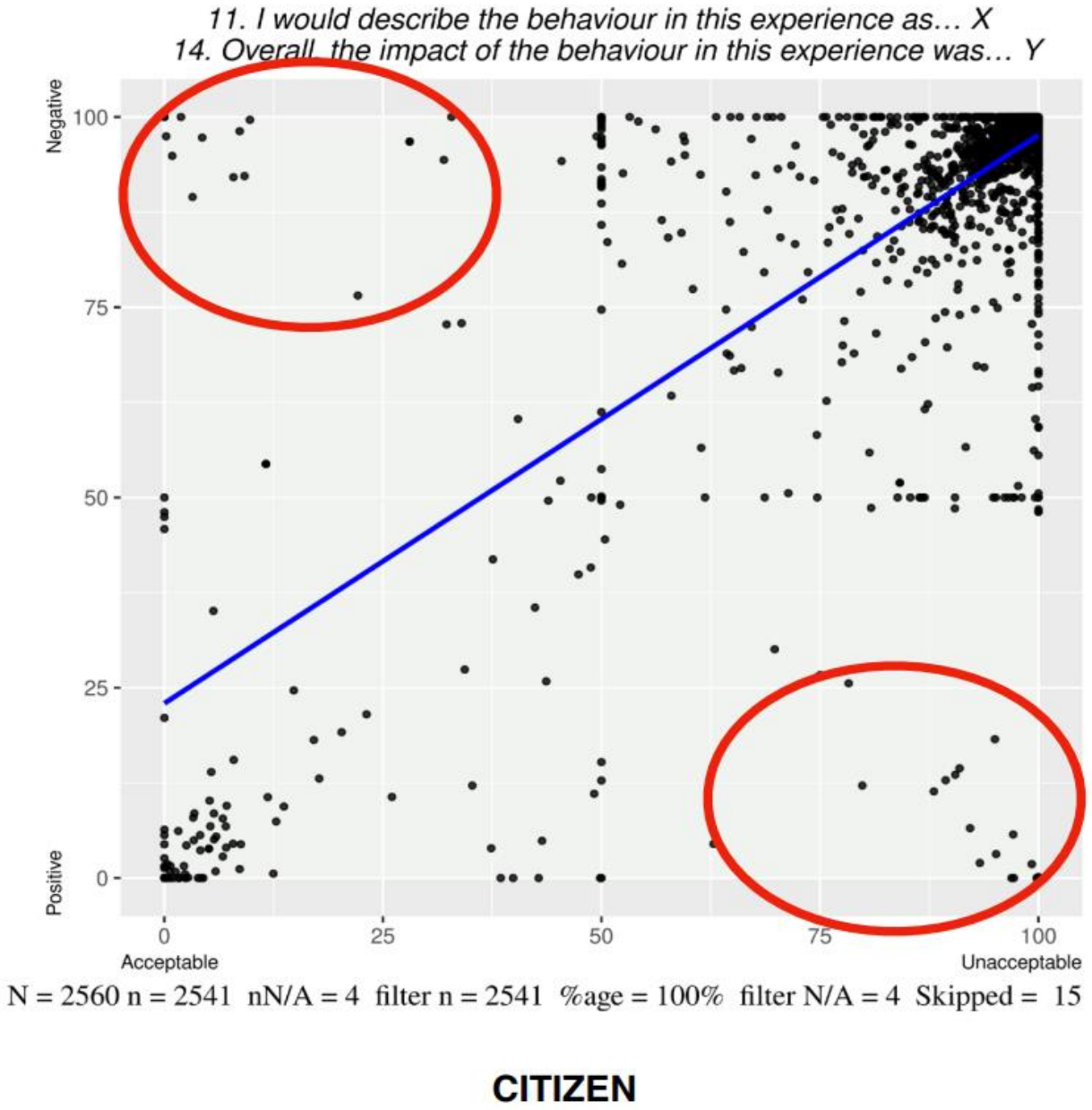
41% *consider or avoid corrupt behaviour based on risks and rewards*

36% *consider or avoid corrupt behaviour based on ethics*

8% *consider or avoid corrupt behaviour based on guilt*

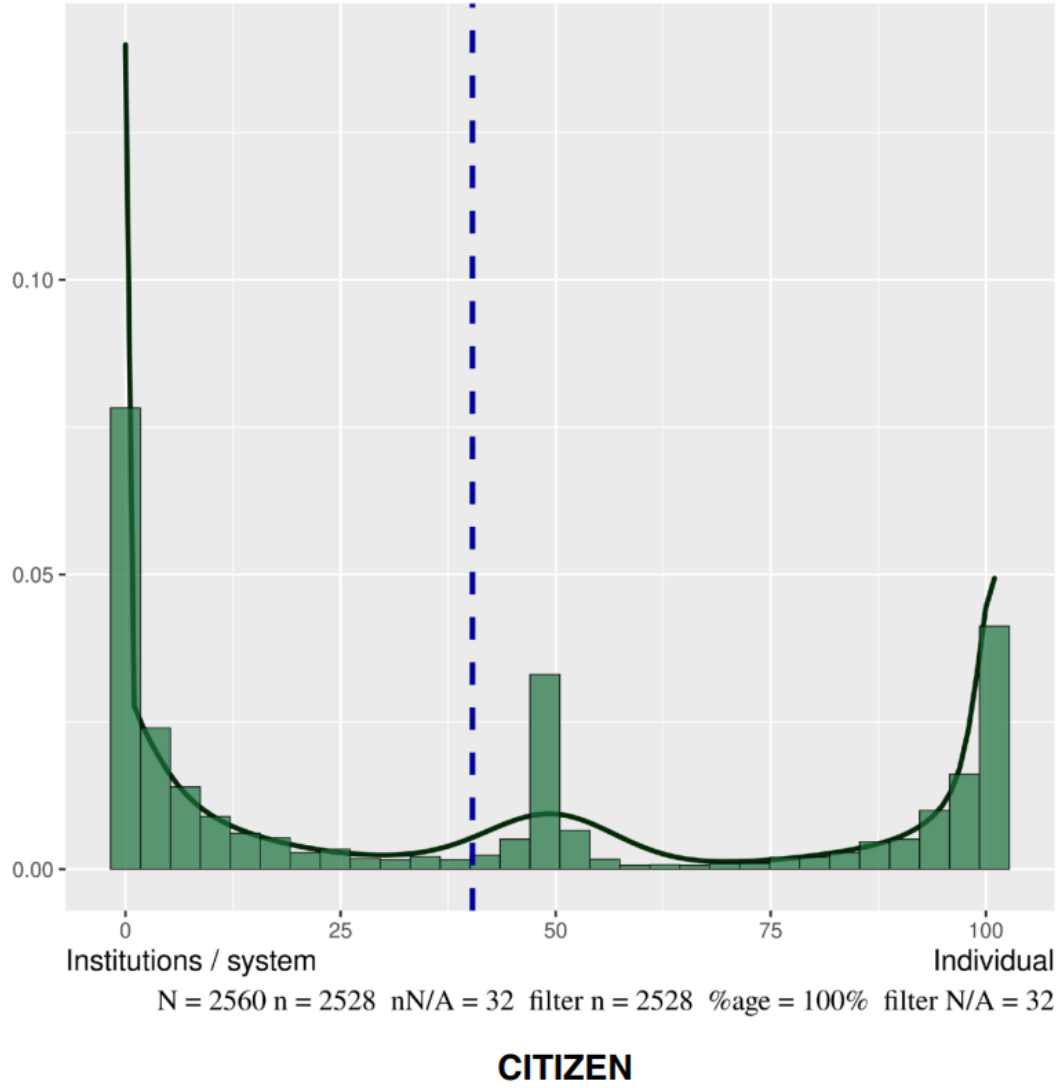
Perceptions on Corrupt Behaviour

- There is a strong and positive association between cases where corrupt acts are perceived as negative and unacceptable.
- A small cluster of respondents consider corrupt acts described in their stories as acceptable and positive (as seen at the bottom left).
- Some understand that corruption may serve a functional purpose, but consider it morally and legally wrong. This dissonance is characteristic of the psycho-social dimensions of corruption; and could be a point of targets for a behavioral change process in corruption control in Nigeria



Situating Corrupt Behaviour

- ***Systemic enablers*** refer to the institutions and structures that may allow corrupt behaviour to exist and thrive.
- In the stories collected, majority assert that corrupt behaviour enablers lie at the **systemic level** rather than at the individual level.
- However, some respondents' position is that corrupt behaviour occurs due to a combination of systemic enablers and individual motivations.
- The citizens' situation of the problem has implications for providing solutions that would have the greater impact on the society.



Conclusion

- Corrupt behaviour was prevalent among public officials in the stories reported by citizens.
- The **decision** to act corruptly sits mostly at the level of the **individual** and is motivated by a **sense of competition**.
- Systemic and institutional factors are however enabling elements within the Nigerian context.
- Solutions for behaviour change will therfore target these myriads of factors which appear to be interacting and leading to a mutual reinforcement of the phenomenon of corruption in the Nigerian context.

Acknowledgement

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- S. Apampa
- T. Osasona

Thank You
Mercé
ありがとう
Gracias
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Misaotra
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Tak
Obrigado
Merci
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Kiitos
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Mauruuru