

Rational Cooperation and Nigerian Politics: A Gauthierian Analysis

Ogelenya Grace¹, Onos G. Idjakpo²

Abstract— *This paper identifies the persistence and increasing complexity of cooperation failures in Nigerian political systems despite numerous attempts at institutional reforms and democratic consolidation. These problems include endemic corruption, ethnic competition for resources, a breakdown of trust between citizens and government, and the failure of formal democratic institutions to generate sustainable political cooperation. As a result of these political dysfunctions, democratic relationships are strained, and political legitimacy is undermined because orientations of rational cooperation are not given sufficient attention in political actions, governance failures, and proposed solutions. The objective of this paper is to demonstrate the relevance of David Gauthier's rational choice contractualism, through its emphasis on constrained maximisation and morals by agreement, in understanding and potentially resolving certain cooperation problems confronting Nigerian politics and comparable postcolonial contexts worldwide. The methods adopted are philosophical analysis and phenomenological investigation to examine Gauthier's theoretical framework and interpret its applications, showing both its particular relevance to Nigerian contexts and its universal insights for understanding rational cooperation in diverse political systems. The paper concludes that a critically modified approach integrating Gauthierian rational choice principles with African communitarian cooperation traditions would address the limitations of purely individualistic rational choice models, which constitute a major source of cooperation failures. This approach must be thoughtfully grounded in indigenous collective decision-making traditions while incorporating Gauthierian insights about rational cooperation for more effective outcomes in addressing governance challenges.*

Keywords: Rational choice theory; Political cooperation; Nigerian politics; Gauthierian analysis; Postcolonial governance; Constrained maximization.

¹ Department of Religious Studies & Philosophy Delta State University Abraka, Nigeria. ogelenyagrace@delsu.edu.ng

² Department of Religious Studies & Philosophy Delta State University Abraka, Nigeria. idjakpoog@delsu.edu.ng

© 2025 the Authors. This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0).

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria, the most populous country in Africa, has struggled to establish a stable and equitable political order since gaining independence from British colonial authorities in 1960. Although it transitioned from military to civilian rule in 1999 and implemented various constitutional reforms, the country continues to struggle with key challenges, including ethnic conflicts, corruption, conflicts over resource allocation, and occasional outbursts of political violence (Adebanwi & Obadare, 2013). These perennial issues raise fundamental questions about the core foundations of Nigeria's political dispensation and the form of social contract that binds together its plural citizens.

This paper explores Nigeria's political issues through the lens of David Gauthier's (1986) *Morals by Agreement* theory. Gauthier's contractarianism, which derives moral norms from the rational agreement of self-interested agents, is well-suited to observe and potentially resolve Nigeria's political issues. By applying Gauthier's concepts of constrained maximization, the Lockean proviso, and rational bargaining to Nigeria, this essay presents a different perspective on the country's internal conflicts and identifies pathways toward a stable and equitable political dispensation. The primary hypothesis advanced is that political instability in Nigeria stems primarily from the failure to establish genuine social cooperation founded on mutually advantageous agreements among its different constituent parts. In accordance with Gauthier's model, we hold that Nigeria's political arrangements tend not to uphold the conventions of rational bargaining and minimax relative concession, thereby undermining the basis for secure cooperation. Furthermore, we contend that solving these issues requires a radical reorganization of Nigeria's political institutions to align them more closely with Gauthier's principles of constrained maximization and impartial constraints on conduct.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: GAUTHIER'S CONTRACTARIAN APPROACH

Gauthier's (1986) contractarian theory, as developed in *Morals by Agreement*, attempts to derive moral rules from the rational agreement of self-interested agents without appealing to externally imposed moral constraints. Gauthier's theory is distinct from orthodox social contract theories founded on hypothetical conditions in that it is strictly derived from rational choice theory and attempts to demonstrate that moral constraints can be derived from the rational pursuit of individual self-interest (Vallentyne, 1991). Central to Gauthier's theory is the concept of "constrained maximization," which distinguishes his theory from standard utilitarianism and straightforward maximization strategies. A constrained maximizer is an individual who tends to conform to interpersonally advantageous moral limits, provided others tend to do the same (Gauthier 1986, p. 167). This conditional inclination toward cooperation enables individuals to participate in and benefit from cooperative behavior that would otherwise be unavailable under straightforward maximization. Gauthier argues that it is rational

for self-interested agents to adopt constrained maximization under appropriate conditions.

One crucial component is his minimax relative concession principle, which formulates the conditions for rational bargaining. According to this principle, a rational agreement minimizes the maximum relative concession any party must make from its optimal outcome (Gauthier 1986, p. 145). This distributive justice emerges from rational bargaining rather than pre-existing moral obligation and provides a basis for fairly distributing the cooperative surplus. Gauthier also incorporates a variant of the Lockean proviso, which restricts initial bargaining advantages by forbidding individuals from bettering their own position by worsening that of others (Gauthier 1986, p. 203). This proviso lays the basis for rightful interaction and ensures cooperative institutions are mutually advantageous and not the fruits of exploitation and coercion (Harmon, 2009).

NIGERIA'S POLITICAL CONTEXT

Since its return to civilian rule in 1999 after a succession of military regimes, Nigeria has been governed under a federal constitution dividing power between the central government and 36 states. The constitution enshrines revenue sharing, federal character, and the rotation of key offices among the country's geopolitical zones (Suberu, 2001; Mustapha, 2007). Despite this, Nigeria still faces various governance issues. Nigeria's economy is oil-dependent, with approximately 80% of government revenue and 90% of export earnings coming from oil (Sala-i-Martin & Subramanian, 2013). This concentration of wealth has created a rentier state where political authority is valuable primarily for accessing and distributing resources rather than for policy execution or public service (Omeje, 2013). The intense struggle for oil revenue has distorted political incentives across the federation. State governments depend heavily on monthly allocations from the federal account, lowering incentives for internal revenue mobilization and economic diversification (Adedipe, 2004). This dependence has weakened the federal bargain by creating a context in which states interact with the center primarily as supplicants rather than as self-sustaining political actors in a cooperative compact.

From a Gauthierian perspective, such an environment is contrary to the basis of rational cooperation because it fosters zero-sum competition rather than positive-sum collaboration. Political leaders perceive capturing federal control as the most crucial avenue to economic advancement, creating a winner-takes-all situation that increases political tensions (Anugwom, 2005). Nigeria's over 250 ethnic groups and the religious fault line between a predominantly Muslim north and a predominantly Christian south create intricate identity politics that often become entangled in resource conflicts (Jega, 2000). These conflicts range from communal violence over land ownership and political recognition to discriminatory trends in employment and service delivery (Ukiwo, 2003). Most alarming has been the escalation of identity-based violence in Nigeria's Middle Belt,

where farmer-herder competitions have been transformed into ethno-religious conflicts, resulting in thousands of deaths in recent years (International Crisis Group, 2018). These clashes symptomatically indicate underlying issues of citizenship, belonging, and access to resources that the existing political setup has failed to confront adequately. The theoretical problem, from a Gauthierian view, is that ethnic and religious identities complicate rational calculations of advantage by introducing non-instrumental values that can override cooperative strategies that would otherwise be in everyone's best interest (Gutmann, 2003). The problem necessitates not only institutional reform but also the construction of cross-cutting identities that can facilitate cooperation across religious and ethnic lines (Nussbaum, 2013).

Corruption in Nigeria has evolved from simple malfeasance to a structural part of governance, where patron-client networks are the primary vehicle for political mobilization and resource distribution (Smith, 2007). Nigeria is consistently ranked as one of the most corrupt countries globally, with billions of dollars lost annually to corruption (Transparency International, 2020). The institutionalization of what Richard Joseph (1987) termed "prebendalism"—the use of state offices for personal and group benefit—has bred an expectation that public officials will utilize their offices to benefit their immediate constituencies over the general public. This undermines the possibility of neutral government and deepens ethnic, religious, and regional cleavages. In Gauthier's model, widespread corruption is a paradigm example of a breakdown in constrained maximization. When enough agents engage in straightforward maximization, the basis for cooperation dissolves, and defection becomes the rational strategy even for agents otherwise inclined toward cooperation. Breaking this equilibrium requires institutional innovations that change incentives and restore rationality to cooperative strategies (Rothstein, 2011).

Nigeria has constantly faced threats to its territorial cohesion, most notably the Biafran attempt at secession (1967-1970), which led to a traumatic civil war claiming an estimated 1-3 million lives (Heerten & Moses, 2014). Recently, Biafran mobilization has resurfaced under groups like the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), while new secessionist movements have emerged in the Southwest under the banner of the Yoruba Nation movement (Onuoha, 2018). These movements represent the ultimate repudiation of the Nigerian political contract, occurring when groups perceive that the costs of remaining in the federation outweigh the rewards. From Gauthier's contractarian model, such secessionist movements signify the state's failure to establish and maintain a cooperative agreement that all major groups perceive as preferable to independence or other arrangements.

Nigeria also faces severe security concerns in different regions. In the Northeast, Boko Haram and its breakaway faction, ISWAP, have waged an insurgency since 2009, resulting in many fatalities and displacements. In the Niger Delta, militant groups like

the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) have periodically disrupted oil production through attacks on infrastructure, kidnappings, and armed confrontations with security forces (Obi & Rustad, 2011). In Gauthier's framework, providing security is one of the most basic functions that make social cooperation rational for self-interested individuals. When the state fails to accomplish this fundamental responsibility, alternative organizations become attractive, and the state's power and legitimacy are further eroded.

The allocation of revenue, particularly from petroleum, has also been a point of political tension for many years. The principle of derivation—the constitutional provision that remits a percentage of revenue to the source state—has fluctuated wildly, from 50% at independence to 1% during military rule, before settling at the present 13% (Ikeji, 2011). The struggle over revenue sharing demonstrates Gauthier's concern regarding the minimax relative concession principle—the idea that a fair agreement minimizes the largest relative concession required of any party. The feeling in oil-producing states that they are pressured to grant disproportionate concessions works against their incentive to adhere to the current setup, resulting in constant calls for restructuring.

RATIONAL COOPERATION AND NIGERIAN POLITICS: A GAUTHIERIAN ANALYSIS

Nigeria's political instability can be understood as a consequence of the failure to establish a genuine social contract beneficial to its constituent units. For Gauthier (1986), a secure social order requires that actors judge cooperation to be better than non-cooperation. In Nigeria, groups have repeatedly found the political arrangement to be inferior or exploitative and have subjected the established order to relentless challenges (Agbibo, 2013; Ukiwo, 2003). The repeated secessionist impulses represent the ultimate rejection of the Nigerian political contract, occurring when groups believe that the benefits of membership no longer outweigh the costs. Such rejections, from a Gauthierian perspective, are rational responses to arrangements that fail the condition of mutual benefit.

Gauthier's constrained maximization theory argues that social stability requires that actors voluntarily restrict their maximizing behavior on the condition that others will follow suit. In the Nigerian political process, unconstrained maximization has become the dominant strategy, as exemplified by the "winner-takes-all" pattern of political competition and the use of state resources for personal or sectional gain (Joseph, 1987). The rampant corruption in Nigeria represents a paradigm case of the failure of constrained maximization. Political agents, perceiving that others will not constrain their maximizing activity, rationally choose unrestrained maximization to maximize personal wealth regardless of the collective cost (Omotola, 2010; Onapajo, 2012). This breeds a self-sustaining vicious cycle of non-cooperation that tears down public institutions and trust.

Gauthier's interpretation of the Lockean proviso—that one may not better one's position by worsening the position of others—is particularly applicable to Nigeria's resource control conflicts. The concentration of oil reserves in the Niger Delta has created a situation where the federal government's share of oil revenues disproportionately benefits some states while potentially worsening the lot of oil-producing communities, which suffer environmental degradation without corresponding benefits (Watts, 2007; Higgins, 2009). This structure appears to violate Gauthier's proviso, as it allows some to benefit by imposing costs on others without adequate compensation. The Niger Delta militant groups can be explained as responses to this violation of a basic condition of legitimate cooperation.

Nigeria's contentious revenue-sharing formula can be analyzed through Gauthier's principle of minimax relative concession. The formula, which places immense consideration on population and parity of state status over derivation (origin of revenue), compels oil-producing states to make much higher relative concessions compared to non-producing states. This differential in relative concession contravenes Gauthier's principle that a reasonable agreement would minimize the maximum relative concession made by any party. The constant disputes over revenue allocation reflect the failure to achieve what Gauthier would consider a rational bargain. A more enduring allocation would balance concessions more equitably between the regions so that no constituent group is asked to bear a disproportionate share of the cooperative burden.

Implementing Gauthier's model would require political reform of Nigeria's institutional setups to make constrained maximization the strategy of choice for political agents. Gauthier's (1986) insight is that moral constraints can emerge from rational self-interest when institutions promote cooperative action over defection. Nigeria's anti-corruption commissions, including the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC), have been hamstrung by political interference and selective enforcement (Enweremadu, 2012). These institutions need not only independence but also the credible capacity to enforce rules, thereby altering the expected utility calculations of potential defectors, as Gauthier's theory stipulates. Substantive reform would involve the constitutional entrenchment of anti-corruption agencies with protected funding streams beyond executive control, merit-based appointment procedures for leadership positions involving multi-stakeholder approval, and alignment with international anti-corruption standards. From a Gauthierian perspective, such institutions must demonstrate equal application regardless of political affiliation, as selective application reinforces the perception that defection is rational when one has political cover (Persson et al., 2013).

Transparency serves as a key coordination device in Gauthier's framework by facilitating rational agents' ability to identify probable cooperative partners and ensure compliance. When actions are observable and traceable, the reputational penalties for

deviating from cooperation increase, altering the rational calculus toward constrained maximization (Mungiu-Pippidi, 2015). Accountability mechanisms would shift the incentive pattern by increasing the certainty and severity of punishments for defection from cooperative arrangements (Schedler et al., 1999). From a Gauthierian perspective, rational actors adjust their strategy to constrained maximization when accountability is credible and persistent. Nigeria's presidential system contains a formal separation of powers but lacks *de facto* independence, with other branches of government often controlled by the executive through finances and appointment power. Gauthier's strategy suggests the need for actual countervailing powers capable of curtailing executive authority, for example, by decentralizing power to reduce the stakes in dominating central institutions.

These reforms align with Gauthier's insight that maximization can be restricted through institutional structures that render conformity the rational course of action even for self-seeking agents. As long as institutions can credibly punish defection, the expected utility of limited maximization will increase (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2019). Gauthier's contractarianism, particularly his principle of minimax relative concession, provides a good structure for rethinking Nigeria's federal architecture. The current structure has failed to achieve a stable equilibrium that all major constituent groups see as being in their mutual interest. From a Gauthierian perspective, concentrating control of resources is undesirable because it violates the principle that cooperation should be advantageous to all over non-cooperation. The current structure places excessive concessions on resource-producing areas by concentrating resource control while outsourcing social and environmental costs.

A Gauthierian reconstruction would involve shifting the derivation principle from the current 13% to an optimal, negotiated percentage that balances regional development needs and production incentives, a clear constitutional separation of resource ownership rights between federal, state, and community levels, and community-level benefit agreements ensuring that local communities derive direct benefits from resource exploitation. Such reforms would redesign the distribution of the cooperative surplus in a manner more conducive to Gauthier's minimax relative concession principle, ensuring that no participating group endures a disproportionate burden relative to its reward (Suberu, 2009).

Nigeria's current federal framework grants states only limited autonomy, with extensive concurrent and exclusive federal powers that constrain sub-national policy creativity. Gauthier's emphasis on the rational agreement of free agents suggests a greater appreciation of state autonomy under the principle of subsidiarity—the idea that problems should be addressed by the smallest, lowest, or least centralized competent authority. This harmonizes with Gauthier's observation that rational agents would only agree to constraints they perceive as being in their interest compared to failing to agree.

Constitutional autonomy allows complex collectivities to shape governance arrangements responsive to their particular conditions while still enjoying the benefits of federation (Kymlicka, 2007). Nigeria's "federal character" policy, which aims to achieve ethnic balance in appointments, has been criticized for prioritizing ethnic representation over merit and failing to remedy underlying structural imbalances. Gauthier's theory necessitates representation arrangements that all parties would regard as legitimate limits on the pursuit of maximalism. Political representation reform would involve changing electoral systems to translate votes more efficiently into representation, potentially incorporating an element of proportional representation, and strengthening local government to provide substantial representation closer to citizens.

Reconstructing the Nigerian federal compact must address past injustices that continue to influence determinations of fairness and reciprocal advantage. Gauthier's Lockean proviso principle entails the need for remedial action for prior violations, such as through truth and reconciliation commissions, environmental redress, and development projects in historically disadvantaged regions. These measures recognize that rational cooperation will not emerge where underlying grievances remain unaddressed, as players will continue to view the agreement as inherently unfair.

Gauthier's contractarianism accepts that cooperation can only be grounded on rational agents' ability to discern other individuals bent on constrained maximization. This is a severe issue in Nigeria's deeply polarized society, where shared memory has ruptured trust along ethnic, religious, and regional lines. Trust in Gauthier's framework is not a cultural or psychological attribute but one derived from rational deliberation concerning others' likely behavior. When institutions consistently apply cooperative norms and sanction defection, they provide the foundation for what Hardin (2002) described as "encapsulated interest," where one can trust others rationally because their interests encapsulate one's own. Institutional pillars of trust in Nigeria would involve autonomous judicial institutions that resolve conflicts impartially, regardless of the parties involved, and transparent monitoring systems that allow all parties to monitor compliance with commitments.

Gauthier's approach emphasizes rational agreement through bargaining processes where all agents can advance their interests. For Nigeria, creating third-party neutral spaces for deliberation and negotiation is a step toward enabling various groups to identify areas of potential consensus that would otherwise be obscured by stereotyping and distrust. These forums serve the essential function of revealing preferences and boundaries, allowing participants to identify cooperative agreements acceptable to all involved (Dryzek, 2005). Nigeria's experience with communal violence has spawned cycles of grievance and retaliation that undermine the possibility of rational cooperation. Gauthier's emphasis on mutual benefit suggests the need for conflict resolution mechanisms that all parties perceive as fair and capable of protecting their fundamental

interests. By providing sound insurance against worst-case outcomes, conflict resolution institutions make cooperation the rational choice even in environments with limited trust (Lederach, 1997).

CONCLUSION

This analysis of Nigeria's political structure through Gauthier's contractarian framework reveals both the sources of the country's persistent challenges and the important potential for systematic reform. The pervasive instability, corruption, and violence that characterize Nigerian politics can be understood as rational responses to institutional arrangements that fail to make constrained maximization the payoff-dominant strategy. More importantly, this framework provides a constructive pathway for addressing these issues by focusing on the creation of mutually beneficial agreements that serve the rational self-interest of all parties.

Gauthier's approach offers several distinct advantages for understanding and reforming Nigerian politics. First, its emphasis on mutual advantage provides a non-partisan foundation for reform that transcends ethnic, religious, and regional divisions. Rather than requiring groups to abandon their particular interests, the framework seeks arrangements where pursuing individual advantage simultaneously serves collective benefit. This is particularly valuable in Nigeria's fractured political landscape, where zero-sum thinking has dominated inter-group relations. Second, the principle of minimax relative concession offers a practical mechanism for addressing Nigeria's complex distributional challenges. By ensuring that no group bears disproportionate costs in political arrangements, this principle could help resolve longstanding grievances over resource allocation, political representation, and federal structure. The framework's mathematical precision in determining fair distributions provides an objective alternative to the patronage-based bargaining that currently dominates Nigerian politics. Third, Gauthier's focus on rational self-interest, rather than moral transformation, makes his approach particularly realistic for Nigeria's context. Instead of requiring fundamental changes in human nature or cultural values, the framework works with existing motivations while channeling them through institutions that produce cooperative outcomes. This pragmatic foundation could prove more durable than reform efforts based on appeals to national unity or moral renewal.

The contractarian emphasis on voluntary agreement also aligns well with Nigeria's federal structure and diverse composition. Rather than imposing uniform solutions, the framework permits differentiated arrangements that reflect regional preferences while maintaining overall coherence. This flexibility could address persistent tensions between centralisation and decentralisation by allowing various levels of autonomy within a mutually agreed framework. Most importantly, Gauthier's theory provides tools for breaking Nigeria's cycles of political instability by creating institutions where

cooperation becomes the rational choice. When political actors can achieve better outcomes through rule-following than through defection, the incentive structure itself promotes stability without requiring external enforcement. This self-reinforcing quality offers hope for sustainable reform in a context where external oversight has often proved ineffective.

Though this framework faces limitations in addressing historical injustices and the role of ethnic identifications that may complicate purely rational calculations. Deep cultural attachments and grievances from past conflicts cannot be entirely reduced to rational bargaining positions (Sen, 2006). Nevertheless, these limitations do not negate the framework's value but rather define its proper scope and application. Rethinking Nigeria's political order through Gauthier's lens suggests that many seemingly intractable problems are actually institutional design challenges with workable solutions. The persistent nature of Nigeria's political difficulties reflects not the impossibility of reform but the absence of arrangements that properly align individual incentives with collective benefit. By focusing on the creation of mutually advantageous institutions that satisfy rational bargaining principles, Nigeria could move from a system characterised by predation and instability to one grounded in cooperative self-interest.

The path forward involves designing institutions that make constrained maximisation the dominant strategy while ensuring that all major groups can achieve better outcomes through participation than through defection. Such arrangements, constructed on the foundation of mutual advantage and fair distribution of concessions, offer Nigeria a rational basis for political stability that has long proved elusive.

REFERENCES

- Acemoglu, D., & Robinson, J. A. (2019). *The narrow corridor: States, societies, and the fate of liberty*. Penguin Press.
- Adebanwi, W., & Obadare, E. (2013). *Democracy and prebendalism in Nigeria: Critical interpretations*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Adedipe, B. (2004, June 16-17). *The impact of oil on Nigeria's economic policy formulation* [Conference presentation]. Conference on Nigeria: Maximizing Pro-poor Growth: Regenerating the Socio-economic Database, London, United Kingdom.
- Agbiboa, D. E. (2013). Ethno-religious conflicts and the elusive quest for national identity in Nigeria. *Journal of Black Studies*, 44(1), 3-30.
- Anugwom, E. E. (2005). Oil minorities and the politics of resource control in Nigeria. *Africa Development*, 30(4), 87-120.
- Dryzek, J. S. (2005). Deliberative democracy in divided societies: Alternatives to agonism and analgesia. *Political Theory*, 33(2), 218-242.

- Enweremadu, D. U. (2012). *Anti-corruption campaign in Nigeria (1999-2007): The politics of a failed reform*. African Studies Centre.
- Gauthier, D. (1986). *Morals by agreement*. Oxford University Press.
- Gutmann, A. (2003). *Identity in democracy*. Princeton University Press.
- Hardin, R. (2002). *Trust and trustworthiness*. Russell Sage Foundation.
- Harmon, K. (2009). *The Lockean proviso and the ethics of resource control*. *Journal of Political Philosophy*, 17(3), 312-332.
- Heerten, L., & Moses, A. D. (2014). The Nigeria-Biafra War: Postcolonial conflict and the question of genocide. *Journal of Genocide Research*, 16(2-3), 169-203.
- Higgins, K. (2009). *Regional inequality and the Niger Delta* (Policy Brief No. 5). Overseas Development Institute.
- Ikeji, C. C. (2011). Politics of revenue allocation in Nigeria: A reconsideration of some contending issues. *Sacha Journal of Policy and Strategic Studies*, 1(1), 121-136.
- International Crisis Group. (2018). *Stopping Nigeria's spiralling farmer-herder violence* (Africa Report No. 262). <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/west-africa/nigeria/262-stopping-nigerias-spiralling-farmer-herder-violence>
- Jega, A. (2000). *Identity transformation and identity politics under structural adjustment in Nigeria*. Nordic Africa Institute.
- Joseph, R. A. (1987). *Democracy and prebendal politics in Nigeria: The rise and fall of the Second Republic*. Cambridge University Press.
- Kymlicka, W. (2007). *Multicultural odysseys: Navigating the new international politics of diversity*. Oxford University Press.
- Lederach, J. P. (1997). *Building peace: Sustainable reconciliation in divided societies*. United States Institute of Peace Press.
- Mungiu-Pippidi, A. (2015). *The quest for good governance: How societies develop control of corruption*. Cambridge University Press.
- Mustapha, A. R. (2007). *Institutionalising ethnic representation: How effective is the Federal Character Commission in Nigeria?* (CRISE Working Paper No. 43). Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity.
- Nussbaum, M. C. (2013). *Political emotions: Why love matters for justice*. Harvard University Press.
- Obi, C., & Rustad, S. A. (2011). *Oil and insurgency in the Niger Delta: Managing the complex politics of petro-violence*. Zed Books.
- Omeje, K. (2013). *Extractive economies and conflicts in the Global South: Multi-regional perspectives on rentier politics*. Ashgate Publishing.
- Omotola, J. S. (2010). Elections and democratic transition in Nigeria under the Fourth Republic. *African Affairs*, 109(437), 535-553.
- Onapajo, H. (2012). Politics for God: Religion, politics and conflict in democratic Nigeria. *The Journal of Pan African Studies*, 4(9), 42-66.

- Onuoha, G. (2018). Bringing 'Biafra' back in: Narrative, identity, and the politics of non-reconciliation in Nigeria. *National Identities*, 20(4), 379-399.
- Persson, A., Rothstein, B., & Teorell, J. (2013). Why anticorruption reforms fail—Systemic corruption as a collective action problem. *Governance*, 26(3), 449-471.
- Rothstein, B. (2011). *The quality of government: Corruption, social trust, and inequality in international perspective*. University of Chicago Press.
- Sala-i-Martin, X., & Subramanian, A. (2013). Addressing the natural resource curse: An illustration from Nigeria. *Journal of African Economies*, 22(4), 570-615.
- Schedler, A., Diamond, L. J., & Plattner, M. F. (1999). *The self-restraining state: Power and accountability in new democracies*. Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Sen, A. (2006). *Identity and violence: The illusion of destiny*. W.W. Norton & Company.
- Smith, D. J. (2007). *A culture of corruption: Everyday deception and popular discontent in Nigeria*. Princeton University Press.
- Suberu, R. T. (2001). *Federalism and ethnic conflict in Nigeria*. United States Institute of Peace Press.
- Suberu, R. T. (2009). Federalism in Africa: The Nigerian experience in comparative perspective. *Ethnopolitics*, 8(1), 67-86.
- Transparency International. (2020). *Corruption Perceptions Index 2020*.
- Ukiwo, U. (2003). Politics, ethno-religious conflicts and democratic consolidation in Nigeria. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 41(1), 115-138.
- Vallentyne, P. (1991). *Contractarianism and rational choice: Essays on David Gauthier's Morals by Agreement*. Cambridge University Press.
- Watts, M. (2007). Petro-insurgency or criminal syndicate? Conflict & violence in the Niger Delta. *Review of African Political Economy*, 34(114), 637-660.