



## Media in the Fight against Corruption: Examining the Responsibilities of the Media in Building Strong Institutions in Nigeria

Kelvin Inobemhe<sup>1</sup>, Suleiman Garba<sup>2</sup> and Tsegyu Santas<sup>3</sup>

### Abstract

The study is on the media fight against corruption with a focus on their responsibilities in building strong institutions in Nigeria. Media are critical stakeholders as they remain strategically positioned to lead efforts aimed at bringing sanctity to the society through public institutions. Media also invest in the building of strong institutions for the purpose of eradicating corruption. This study leveraged on existing literature to examine the responsibility of the media in the fight against corruption through building strong anti-corruption institutions. Findings showed that media are deliberate in the fight. That the main challenge is that of the weakened institutions; anti-corruption agencies as well as critical arms of government such as the legislature is also part of the findings. The media in Nigeria have the capacity to inform and educate the people about the negative impact of corruption on nation building. Its negative impact on the economic development and growth of the country can also be emphasized. With their position as gatekeepers and agenda setters, the media can frame discussions around the promotion of anti-corruption campaigns of agencies of government. Other avenues for this may be news analysis, advocacy, and commentary at news time to sensitize the people on the dangers posed by corruption to the collective progress of the people. The researchers concluded that through their influence on public opinion, the media draw attention to corruption and, therefore, trigger a good fight. Among others, it is recommended that the media should fight corruption through reorientation of the public.

**Keywords:** *Corruption, Democracy, Institutions, Media, Nigeria*

### Introduction

Corruption is a scourge that can only be likened to a viral disease because once it eats deep into the very fabrics of any society; the worst can only be imagined. In Nigeria, discourses on corruption and the need to put an end to it have taken the centre stage across public spaces including the media. The media not only provide platforms for discourse on the entire corruption gamut but also streamline its focus on coverage and reportage of corruption-related stories in a bid to nip the menace in the bud. Additionally, they also collaborate with

---

<sup>1</sup> Mass Communication Department, Glorious Vision University, Ogwa, Edo State, Nigeria.

<sup>2,3</sup> Faculty of Communication and Media Studies, Nasarawa State University, Keffi, Nigeria.

different frontline stakeholders in the fight to curb corruption in the country's public service and national life. In essence, the fight requires a reasonable degree of commitment from all stakeholders; the media, civil societies, organised labour, and all institutions and agencies of government saddled with the responsibility to fight the scourge.

The commitment of the Nigerian media to the fight against corruption is seen in the output of the various media outlets in the country especially the private ones. To effectively take up the fight against corruption, the media must be seen to be proactive, and in such regard, media practitioners must be dedicated and step up their performance looking at the bright side of the positives of investigative journalism (Nzeaka, Ehondor & Edosonwan, 2022). Arguably, the period between 2015 and 2019 (herein used to refer to the first tenure of the Muhammadu Buhari's administration as a democratically elected president) happened to be the most reported in respect of concerted efforts by the media and other stakeholders against corruption in public space in Nigeria. Studies such as the ones conducted by (Edmond & Wilson, 2018; Eke, Amadi & Nsereka, 2023) have found that there was adequate coverage of corruption stories within the period.

The fight against the scourge by the media usually takes place in the systematic onslaught by appropriate institutions. Therefore, the place of agencies and institutions both of government at the national level and those internationally-backed in the fight to end corruption and related crimes cannot simply be ignored. The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC), the Nigerian Police Force (NPF), and many others are specifically tasked to ensure sanity in the country and reduce crime to its barest minimum if not completely eradicated. Starting with the institutionalisation of the Code of Conduct Bureau and Tribunal Act of 1991, to the establishment of ICPC in 2000, the EFCC in 2003, and then the Advance Fee Fraud and Other Related Offences Act in 2005, it has been a steady improvement of legal and institutional framework in order to stem the tide and nip corruption in the bud in Nigeria.

Notably, the EFCC has reportedly pursued corruption cases, investigated and prosecuted suspects and secure convictions. In addition to the assets recovered from corrupt individuals and groups, the financial recoveries from the various cases run into billions of dollars. In fact, the commission since its inception has reportedly recovered monies running

into tens of billions of dollars (Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, 2023; Onuh, 2024; Sanni, 2022a). Accordingly, Jamo (2021) averred that the EFCC has recorded various levels of success in relations to arrest, prosecution, and conviction of corrupt individuals in the Nigeria's public sector; all leading to the recovery of huge sums of money by way of conclusion to the cases. This also validates the point earlier made on the successes recorded so far by the anti-corruption institutions in the country; the EFCC, ICPC and others – having recovered assets and monies.

Despite the giant strides and successes achieved, these agencies saddled with the responsibility to fight corruption and related crimes are often the centre of attacks from all corners including people in the world of organised crimes. Specifically, Jamo (2021) noted that the EFCC as an institution is faced with the challenge of excessive political interference, structure of the organisation that places it under control of the presidency, lack of autonomy, lack of judicial support and cooperation, organisational deficiency leading to lack of training for officials, and inadequate funding. These challenges inhibit the personnel and the agency itself in the discharge of its constitutionally charged duties and responsibilities. Of significance is that which results in slow prosecution of cases arising from the stiff opposition from different quarters coupled with the series of political interference from persons in government as well as institutions.

This is where the media comes into the equation; either from the perspective of the media, communication, and advocacy units of the agencies/institutions or from that of the traditional media partners in the fight against corruption. Part of the core mandates and responsibility of any organisation's PR or public communication or media unit is to stand in the gap and provide the necessary avenues for communication and messages to inform, educate, and keep the people engaged on the activities and happenings within and outside of the organisation. Additionally, the unit also ensures that the organisation's image and reputation is maintained; and this is done to have a favourable public image. This can also take on the dimension of the advocacy roles played by the media to ensure that public support is sought, obtained, and sustained for agencies/institutions championing the anti-corruption cause. Put in another way, the traditional mass media in society partner anti-corruption agencies by playing the advocacy role to create and maintain a favourable image at national and international levels.

The question, therefore, should be what would the state of the anticorruption campaigns of the relevant institutions without the support of the media? The place of media in combating corruption stems from the home-grown approach because without the input of the media, it is difficult for such programmes of government to achieve success (Adaja, 2014). This position points to a possibility of plans and actions of government going wrong without the media being in place to provide support. Different studies have established the importance of media within the context of the survival of society (Nzeaka et al., 2022; Santas, Inobemhe & Nnaane, 2022). Corruption has been identified as a major challenge within the Nigerian society because it an inhibiting factor to national development (Mohammed, Habib & Jibrin, 2023). The media, therefore, is considered as a critical stakeholder in the fight to rid the society corruption in all its form and ramifications.

It suffices to state, therefore, that the media and the institutions are in a form of symbiotic relationship to fight corruption and all social vices of whatever colour or dimension. They not just serve as partners that project the image and reputation through coverage and positive reportage, but also deliberately create programmes and avenues to build, nurture, and strengthen the institutions saddled with the onerous task of ridding Nigeria of all forms of corruption; in public and the private sectors of the nation. This study, therefore, dissects the place of the media in building and strengthening anti-corruption institutions in Nigeria. It is premised on the knowledge that the media play the role as part of the concerted and coordinated efforts to eradicate corrupt-practices from both the private and public sector in the country.

### **Objectives of the Study**

This study specifically sought to:

1. Determine the responsibilities of the Nigerian media in building strong anti-corruption institutions
2. Ascertain how institutions in Nigeria fight corruption in conjunction with the media

### **Conceptual Review**

#### **The Concept of Corruption**

The concept of corruption has received a lot of attention by researchers, scholars, government and international organisations in recent past. This is because corruption has been identified

as one clog in the wheel of development especially among African states. It has been one of the banes of African development and the monster seems not to have been defeated after decades of independence for most countries in the continent. To corrupt simply is to make bad or to make impure. When we say that we should not corrupt children, we assume that the children are innocent, pure and not debased in any way. To corrupt a child is to negatively change him from that position of purity and innocence, to defile or debase the mind of the child (Chuta, 2004).

In the same vein, to corrupt is to contaminate or introduce impurities into a substance that is once pure or good. Furthermore, Chuta (2004) explained that the word corruption presupposes that in a given system, there is a standard or blueprint of behaviour expected of persons who operate in it to ensure honesty, transparency and accountability. However, when these principles are violated with impunity or without recourse to the laws of the land then, we can say that corruption is being perpetrated by those who administer governance. It is on same footing that Olugbekan (2001) defined corruption as putrefaction, tainting, pervasion or venality, spoiling, destruction of purity or falling away from standard of integrity or rectitude by law, upheld by social norms or conscience or recognised by the general conscience of mankind.

If anything has been constant in the leadership of Nigeria since the attainment of independence in 1960 till this current dispensation is the monster of corruption. The term has almost become synonymous with the name of the country thereby giving a bad image to the citizens anywhere in the world. Unfortunately, despite several governments' efforts at setting up anti-corruption agencies to deal with corruption in the country, the issues have continued unabated. Government officials and politicians have continued to steal millions of dollars from the government thereby impoverishing the generality of the citizens of the country. The media which are supposed to be the conscience of the nation in investigating and setting agenda on corruption cases have not been left out from the decadence that corruption has unleashed on the very fabric of the nation. How can the media fight corruption in the country if they are also part of the problem? What are the roles and responsibilities if put in another way? These are the issues that this paper interrogated.

### **The Media**

Media of mass communication refer to the channels, institutions or the means by which

information or messages are conveyed from the source to the receiver. By their very nature, they are classified broadly as print or electronic (Daramola, 2001). By print media we mean books, magazines, journals, newspapers, direct mail and sky writing. On the other hand, electronic media refer to radio, television, audio, video records, film and more recently the social media. The mass media is broadly categorised into print and electronic according to the mechanism involved in the process of conveying messages. Thus, the print media have a mechanism that depends on the printing items of information.

On the other hand, the electronic media use devices that can transform or change sound or light waves into electrical signals, which are reconverted, to things that can be heard or seen on radio or television. Electronic media can also be seen as the form of media with the capacity to create and distribute information among people with the use of electronic medium. Specifically, the media form has a broad range of audience and, therefore, comes with the advantage of a greater reach when compared to the static media. This media type is primarily powered by electrical energy (Santas, Inobemhe, & Garba, 2023).

It is imperative to state here that both media forms are strategic in the quest to fight against corruption in the country. This is because by their constitutional and conventional assigned mandate, they are in place to monitor the actions and inactions of government. They are a powerful tool in entrenching and promoting accountability in any democratic system. They ensure that government is up to its task of administering governance in a transparent and objective manner. Hence, they are considered to be critical stakeholders in ensuring that corruption does not thrive in the polity to the extent that dividends of democracy are denied to the populace.

### **Literature Review**

The literature on the role of the media in building and strengthening public institutions comes from the perspective of their actions aimed at ensuring that agencies of government are held accountable to the people they are called to serve. In order to appreciate the rich literature in this sub-area of media studies, let us give it a wholistic approach; the roles of media in fight against corruption, and the responsibilities in building strong institutions in the fight against the vice.

To start with, it is imperative to establish that the media have some roles to play in the fight against corruption. The media is said to be involved in making great efforts at ending

corruption through exposing corruption activities, conducting investigative activities, and be in the vanguard to demand accountability from public institutions (Astolfi, 2023; Bruce, 2022; Färdigh, Anderson & Oscarsson, 2011; Khavanov, 2024). From the foregoing, it is obvious that media efforts to curb corruption in any society go beyond mere rhetoric to include concrete steps. One of such is made manifest in its watchdog role (Coronel, 2010; Karadimitriou, von Krogh, Ruggiero, Biancalana, Bomba & Lo, 2022). The media play this role in our society in a number of ways that are glaring to all. This can be compared to the media roles shaping public opinion attitude and behaviour toward social change (Happer & Philo, 2013).

According to Mendes (2013), the media actively play the watchdog role in society in diverse ways including its fight to curb corruption by exposing, unearthing, providing information and education to the public on the negative impact of corruption for the larger society. The main idea behind the watchdog role of the press is that journalists act against organised groups in society considered as powerful for the interest of the people (Kalogeropoulos et al., 2022). It is same act against corrupt and powerful individuals and groups in society known to perpetuate corruption in both the public and private sectors of any country. Journalists dig deep in investigations to unravel anything that may seem mysterious; reporting to the people unbiased information and by extension educating them on corruption and related vices. In reality, with their skeptical, intrusive, and critical mindset, the investigative journalist is able to play the watchdog role in society (Grayson, 2018; Lanosga, Willnat, Weaver & Houston, 2017; Shapiro, 2021; Sommer, 2023).

The media play diverse roles in the fight against corruption. The sub-area of research is new as a number of scholars and researchers have delved into studies that sought to investigate corruption and the role of the media in the fight. In addition, an interesting thing about the research area is that there is a concrete need to protect and strengthen public institutions. According to (Idumange, 2019), nations that have no strong institutions are likely to be vulnerable to forces explore the fault lines to promote disunity and fragmentation. This validates the need for stronger institutions in a nation. Nigeria is a nation with diverse cultural orientation and social make-up more than any other which makes actions aimed at ensuring short, medium and long term peace and unity necessary

In any society, the media are also known to strive to ensure good governance

(Dyikuk, 2017). Relatedly, the media are also reputed act as institutions that promote democratic ethos in any society (Mufune, 2015). While at that, the institutions conversely and inversely strive to ensure accountability in governance, they do so to build institution towards ensuring that the people benefit from the government (Nweze, 2019). In reality, this makes the media some powerful tools that make concerted efforts to ensure that public institutions and officers show utmost accountability to the people. As the media cover public agencies, they do so to make them accountable (Jacobs, Boon, Wonnebarger & Salomonsen, 2022). Put in another way, the coverage of public institutions as subjects of news tends to make them become accountable to the people (public). Against this backdrop, Goda (2020) referred to the mass media as instrument of public accountability.

Since it has been established that the media help build strong institutions by promotion of accountability, it is expedient to also establish the relationship between the former and the latter. Okafor (2022) asserted that accountability is considered as a strong determinant for strong institutions. This implies that such institutions considered as strong are those that operate on the toga or apparel of accountability. An idea of the institutions referred to in the foregoing has also been provided to include those considered as the educational sector, family, religious organisations, civic society, and the government among others. It is, therefore, instructive to understand that accountability starts from the family unit (Goda, 2020) considered as the most basic institution that every human must be part of before others (Barnard, 2024). It is meaningless to by-pass the family in the development of the human from the cradle because the consequences may not be favourable to the society.

The accountability being referred to in this context also extends to the mass media because they are considered as public institutions. The mass media are social institutions (Silverblatt, 2004), institutions (Nauman, 2018), and political institutions on the basis of mediatised politics (Schudson, 2002). Therefore, as efforts are made to build strong institutions in pursuit of the need to ensure accountability in other public institutions and agencies, they are also self-focused. The media in have the capacity to assess and make public their own accountability when they publish corrections and retractions couple with the publishing of letters of reply while also maintaining their online relationships through comments sections with the public (Thomass, Marrazzo, Meier, Ramsay & Blach-Ørsten, 2022). This also extends to the need to sanitise the media space by ensuring balance and



objectivity in the media output; be it news, opinion articles, investigative reports and several other media content types meant for the audiences who are members of the public.

The confidence reposed on the social institutions by the public is considered as a critical element in building democracies (Yuran, 2011) which is why the mass media is seen as instruments necessary to build that confidence (Floss, 2008). Specifically, research findings have shown that the official use of media to push official narratives also aid in building system confidence (Chen, Li & Ye, 2022). The implication of the foregoing is that institutions that leverage on the role of the media in helping shape public opinion through deliberate dissemination of official information and narratives are likely to gain public trust and confidence. It is more so for organisations/institutions at the forefront in the fight against all forms of corruption in public space.

Empirical evidence in connection to the media fight against corruption also touched on the impact as well as the roles played to ensure corruption is rendered non-effective in the public sphere. Rolex (2023) studied the uncertain media fight against corruption and found that the media set agenda for the community they serve, publish reports on corruption, investigate corruption allegations and also advocate against the vice. From the foregoing perspective, the media is seen as a viable tool for the war against corruption in society. A strong role of the media in the fight against corruption is that of advocacy (African Union, 2022; Schauseil, 2019; Wasswa & Kakooza, as cited in Rolex, 2023). Accordingly, the mass media through their advocacy roles attempt to galvanise support for the corruption agencies in the fight to end the social vice. In addition, Schauseil (2019) asserted that a specific style of advocacy by the media in respect of the fight against corruption is to cause the commencement of judicial proceedings against crooked public officials.

The roles played by the media in fights against corruption transverse other areas. Four of such roles have been identified to include that of watchdog, exposing flaws in anti-corruption agencies of government, build public opinion and in the process mobilise mass movements to pressure corrupt individuals out of government, and providing information and adequate access about corruption to members of the society (Starke, Naab & Scherer, 2016). As watchdog, the media holds accountable decisions makers in the corridors of power (Amodu, Yartey, Ekanem, Oresanya & Afolabi, 2016) for actions taken and inactions (Ahmed, Abdulbaqi, & Adisa, 2019). In addition, the media also expose flaws seen in anti-

corruption agencies such as the EFCC and ICPC in Nigeria by raising public awareness about corruption-related activities perpetrated by people in government (Ahmed et al., 2019). This evidenced the role of media in fighting corruption in the country.

Furthermore, the media mobilise mass pressure to force out corrupt public officials from the corridors of power by identifying all forms of maladministration, judicial corruption, indignities seen in business venture, and providing platforms for articulating concerns to build public opinion (Ahmed et al., 2019). The researchers further noted that the other role of the media is to grant access to corruption information and consequently aid in the generation of a climate of transparency in government circle and across the larger society. This, the researchers revealed may reduce all forms of extortive corruption at both the individual and system levels of occurrences. Information is power, and those with access can rely on useful information to take collective actions; including areas related to corruption in both private and public spheres of society.

Studies also touched on the need for confidence on public institutions. A study conducted by Yuran (2011) demonstrated a connection between the coverage of public institutions by the media and the confidence of the public on the agencies in the coverage. In essence, the researcher found that media by virtue of its coverage of issues shape public opinion. Public opinion, on the other hand, affects public support for any institution. This implies that as the media positively shape public opinion about a social institution, so is the good will and support from the people seen in its full force. This boosts the morale of the public officials who are expected to discharge assigned duties effectively and efficiently. A number of studies also showed the connection between public support and morale of the officials to do more (Park & Lee, 2021; Zubair, Khan & Mukaram, 2021).

An important note on the role of the media is that there may be no clearly outlined and effective way that journalists who cover corruption can be protected in Nigeria. Journalists are kidnapped and even tortured in the line of duty in Nigeria and elsewhere in Africa (Anas, 2023; Habib, 2024). According to a Human Rights Watch (2018), there are reports of arrest of journalists and allege torture in a manner suggestive of a repression of freedom of expression in Nigeria. Legislations have also been passed that suggest overregulation of media activities, and these may adversely affect investigative journalism in the country. In fact, it is feared that a piece of legislation that borders on cybercrime is

consistently being relied upon to victimise journalists going about their lawful duties of reporting corruption in government as can be seen in numerous detentions order by law enforcements (Reuters, 2024). Though aspects of the Nigerian constitution guarantee press freedom and freedom of expression, it is merely on paper and not in practice.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study rests on the agenda setting theory and social responsibility theory. Agenda setting theory is credited to the works of McCombs and Shaw in 1979 following their Chapel Hill study of 1968 American presidential election. Accordingly, the agenda setting was described as a process of media influencing public opinion through public agenda based on the frequency of coverage accorded certain issues in society (McQuail, 2005). It works in form of issue selection, framing, salience and transfer of salience. The theory's key principles are media agenda, public agenda and policy agenda. It provides the theoretical framework for this study to explain how media focus can help project certain issues as seen in the coverage and reportage of corruption in Nigeria.

The social responsibility theory of the press created to resolve the problems created by the libertarian theory of the press which gave so much freedom to the media leading to journalists publishing what they liked with disregard to public good. Formally designed by Fred Siebert, Theodore Peterson, and Wilbur Schramm and published in their 1956 book "Four Theories of the Media" the social responsibility emphasised professionalism in the media. The basic premise of the theory is that the media like any critical sector must strive to promote a society and not harm that within which it operates (Adnan, 2023). It is based on the notion that the press act responsibly since it enjoys a privileged position under the government (Asemah, Nwammuo & Nkwa-Uwaoma, 2022). The theory provides the foundation for this study to help systematise the idea of the media in Nigeria acting as a critical stakeholder in collaboration with agencies of government to end corruption in the country.

### **Methodology**

The review of existing literature was adopted for this study. Guimaraes (2022) described it one that explores data from existing documents and research earlier conducted, that is using secondary data to either support an argument or elaborate a specific line of thought.

Accordingly, this study relied on carefully searched and sifted existing secondary data in form articles in book chapters, journals, and online platforms. The inclusion criteria for the selection include focus, argument, strength and relevance. Studies that border on other broader context of corruption and media without specific reference to media responsibility and ways institutions in conjunction with the media fight corruption were excluded.

Following the application of inclusion and exclusion criteria, the researchers took a final selection of 20 articles (n = 23) from the over 103,000 initial hit obtained from a combination of platforms such as ResearchGate, Web of Science and Scopus. The analysis was done with the use the critical review and analysis. In addition, important data were carefully extracted from the works and used for this study's discourse.

### **Responsibilities of the Media in Building Strong Anti-Corruption Institutions**

In any society, the mass media is considered as an important institution of institutions that bear the hallmark of the builder and this is typified in the establishment of vibrant and effective anti-corruption institutions in our world. Findings from different studies have shown that media play multi-dimensional roles with focus on their responsibility in instilling some level of accountability and transparency whilst also fostering societal and public trust (Busari & Amedu, 2022; Nyongesa, 2021). According to the UNODC (2020), the media is a critical stakeholder that perform its duties in respect of unraveling corrupt activities in public domain by serving as the eagle eye that provide critical information to the public on corruption and its devastating impact on society. Akin to this is the all-important investigative journalism practice that is known to be the gateway to exposing corruption-related activities and providing the grounds for the authorities to act where necessary (Stapenhurst & Kaufmann, 2000). The capacity and ability of media to scrutinise actions of government and leverage on their position to ensure that public officials are accountable is one aspect of the many responsibilities played in encouraging a culture of ethical standards and integrity in public life.

There is a close relationship between anti-corruption campaigns and media freedom and many organisations and researchers have emphasised these areas showing clearly the link. The media is a critical stakeholder in the war against corruption and usually leverage on their reach and power to expose corruption through their multiplicity of platforms and

channels demonstrating strength in holding accountable players in both public and private sectors (Schauseil, 2019). According to the OECD (2018), the media can perform its function once there is independence and press freedom. Put in another way, media independence and freedom of the press are significant for a purposeful and diligent reportage on corruption without fear of negative consequences. However, despite the possibilities and opportunities available for the media in the quest to rid the society of corruption, there are some challenges. According to Lange and Hughes (2007), the ability and capacity of the media to fight corruption can be negatively impacted by virtue of undue ownership influence. This constitutes a serious impediment to the fight against the scourge and also posed as serious danger to the psychological welfare of a journalist.

In a study conducted by Adeyemi (2013), a lucid picture was painted of the Nigerian media scene revealing the different forms of corrupt-related activities in media organisations in the country. Accordingly, the author noted a need for a strategic approach to tackle the menace by suggesting a change in strategy including professionalism and adherence to the ethical standards of journalism practice. Relatedly, Sorice and Astolfi (2013) conducted a study where they provided further understanding of the importance of an independent media in modern society. The researchers emphasised that ethical reporting as seen in an independent medium is considered as critical ingredient in the fight against corruption in society. Their emphasis was on media diversity and transparency which they described as important factors that shape anti-corruption campaigns. Investigative journalism and reporting are important activities needed for exposing corruption in governance. The concepts reflect a deeper search beyond the understanding of objective journalism to unravel corruption in different places and are significant in media efforts to fight corruption in society (Musa & Antwi-Boateng, 2023). In essence, investigative journalism and reporting at hallmarks of journalism practice aimed at exposing political corruption.

According to findings from a research conducted by Bandyopadhyay (2021), there is a need for public trust on institutions for effective functioning. The researcher focused on the role of the media in establishing anti-corruption agencies in respect of sustainable development. The study showed a correlation between public trust on public institutions and media efforts aimed at accountability and transparency. Therefore, emphasis was laid on the importance of members of the public to rally round and trust public institutions toward

overall effectiveness in their quest to fight corruption. The media, by virtue of the study, are also critical stakeholders that must work to ensure accountability and transparency in public institutions. Furthermore, the researcher showed challenges encountered by institutions leading the fight against corruption and proffered solutions to the identified problems. The main ideas points to ways to strengthen framework of governance and the creation of institutions to deal decisively with corruption in society. The implication of this study is that regardless of the challenges and issues that militate against a corruption-free society, the media in conjunction with the public can wage a strong war against the menace.

Stapenhurst and Kaufman (2000) explained that media activities and efforts may have significant bearing on corruption in society. This is from the perspective of the agenda setting and social responsibility of the media. In essence, it is about how media shape people's thoughts processes and the eventful impact such acts have on the general fight against corruption in our world. The researchers revealed that the coverage provided by media can significantly impact activities related to corruption in society. It was also further demonstrated that there are notable cases of corruption and investigations brought to limelight by media that have led to a wide range of consequences including legal actions against the suspected corrupt individuals in government and resignations in some other scenarios.

Musa and Antwi-Boateng's (2023) also drew up on the significant break of the Watergate scandal and its impact on the perception of investigative journalism in our world. This pointed to the place of media in revealing corruption in high places using the platforms available. In fact, the media are seen to be pivotal in evoking some form of emotions from the public as they are urged to become interested parties in the war. Additionally, Womunmi et al (2010) demonstrated that sensitisation programmes by media can help raise awareness about corruption and also bring about the desired change in society. The emphasis here is that media have the capacity to encourage members of the public to unite and speak with one voice against corruption. The space to amplify such views is usually provided by the media ensuring that people at the grassroots participate and lead the movement against corruption. It is a possibility that this action can result in awareness and stronger calls for strengthening of anti-corruption institutions.

There are also issues related to the constantly evolving media landscape. These

changes seen in the industry brought hurdles as well as chances in respect of concerted efforts against corruption in society. For example, the social media factor is one that is relevant in this scenario as citizens are further empowered to take actions against corruption. By virtue of social media, citizens are able to leverage on access and reach to take on corruption at their different levels of participation across virtual platforms. According to Ochola (2022), citizens leverage on online community to protest corruption through social media-enabled engagements. This implies that social media provide the necessary tools for citizens to take actions. This in addition to the growing adoption of citizen journalism provide members of the public with the necessary and relevant arsenals to highlight corrupt practices whenever and wherever such are identified – be it in the private or public life.

Schauseil (2019) conducted a study which focused on how social media have become game-changers in efforts at eradicating corruption from our society. The researcher emphasised that the platforms can be used as spaces through which information can be shared to rally public support in effective ways. However, there are challenges associated with the use of social media for this purpose and more. Kossow (2018) lends credence to the foregoing with the assertion that the spread of fake news and misinformation is considered as a major challenge to the fight because it has increasingly become difficult to trust social media reports on corruption. These can be addressed through collaboration of different stakeholders including the media, regulatory authorities and technology companies to fight the spread of fake news.

The media can also be effective in ensuring strong institution through collaboration with international organisations interested in the fight against corruption. This can be achieved through mainstreaming and knowledge-sharing on best possible ways to tackle the corruption menace in society. The likely result from such efforts includes the improvement in strategies aimed at defeating corruption. In like manner, the UNODC (2020) released the Panama Papers which formed a bulk of cases that pointed to various levels of corruption by persons in public sphere in different countries. This is a case that practically drew on the effectiveness of collaboration and team efforts in investigative journalism. The papers exposed the dearth of global network of corruption and its devastating impact (Kejriwal & Dang, 2020). The release also sparked debates on the need to end corruption at all cost across various countries.

Anywhere in the world, where media freedom and expression are encouraged, the media that operate within that society can also be empowered to leverage on abundant international networks and resources to hold influential persons to account. These include individuals in both public and private sectors. This can also include the exploration of financial schemes shrouded in secrecy as seen in the case of the Panama papers. The OECD has developed programmes such as Anti-Corruption Network for Eastern Europe and Central Asia to promote discussions and collaborations between countries especially in the area of skill development in efforts to help collaborative efforts at fighting and defeating corruption in the society.

### **How Nigerian Institutions Collaborate with the Media to Combat Corruption**

Concerted efforts have been made by appropriate institutions in Nigeria to tackle corruption in public and private spheres. Developing clear strategy is one of the actions usually taken by such institutions. The media are recognised as important stakeholders in exposing corruption and helping to fight the scourge (Schauseil, 2019; Stapenhurst & Kaufmann, 2000; UNODC, 2020). These researchers and institutions have also shown that the media are important in creating public awareness and also ensuring that individuals involved are held accountable for their actions. According to the UNODC (2020), the media take on more responsibilities other than just publishing reports on corruption such as the promotion of transparency and accountability in the public and private domain. This implies that as media provide the space and platform for public discourse while efforts are also made to ensure that ideals are also inculcated in pursuit of a great society. The strength of the media is, however, dependent on certain factors which Stapenhurst and Kaufmann (2000) identified as ethical and skilled investigative journalists, access to authentic information, power to freely express opinions are factors that determine media influence in the fights against corruption.

To fight corruption effectively, it is important to pay close attention to how institutions share information with the Nigerian media. In pursuit of a strong support base for the anti-corruption war in the country, institutions like the EFCC, ICPC, and the Nigerian Police usually organise crime-specific press briefings and conferences. This is in addition to the different avenues for press releases and news releases often issued on case-by-case basis to intimate Nigerians of progress made in each case. These agencies have media and publicity units through which they engage the media as critical stakeholders in the fight to rid the



nation of corruption. Though the institutions engage the media once there is a need, they tend to show a favourable disposition to the media as they are considered as critical stakeholders and channels through which accurate information can get to the Nigerian public (Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, 2024). Most significantly, the media through special reports usually play the role of a reminder in the event of cases abandoned by the authorities (Sanni, 2022b).

Nigerian institutions have recognised the necessity of collaboration with the media in their anti-corruption efforts. In the context of Nigeria, corruption poses a significant threat to socio-economic development and political stability (Adeyemi, 2013; Bandyopadhyay, 2021). Thus, the government and anti-corruption agencies have adopted strategies to combat corruption, often involving partnerships with media organisations. A concrete example of such partnership was the one between the EFCC and the Nigeria Television Authority (NTA) as they work-out modalities to leverage on NTA's capacity for specialisation to tackle corruption in the country (Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, 2024). This also means that the organisation agreed to take on corruption by airing anti-corruption messages with the use of indigenous approaches such as languages and many more to reach their large audience base. The NTA is known to be actively involved in these efforts with a programme known as "Corruption Must Go" airing weekly on its network service. This is line with the social responsibility theory of the press that advocates being responsive to the society by promoting the general good. It also aligns with the agenda setting as media creates issues around corruption to make it a public agenda for discourse.

Nevertheless, the dynamics of the fight and media approach continue to evolve owing to the fight-back from individuals accused of corruption in the country. This calls for new approaches to media efforts aimed at collaboration with the agencies to fight the scourge in Nigeria. Accordingly, Adeyemi (2013) emphasised the need for a paradigm shift in the Nigerian media to effectively address corrupt practices. It is especially so with numerous calls from the main anti-corruption agency in Nigeria, the EFCC asking for collaborations with other agencies, the international community including the media (Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, 2021, 2023; Shehu, 2023). Despite efforts by various stakeholders in the media industry, challenges persist, with a significant portion of journalists engaging in corrupt practices themselves (Adeyemi, 2013). This is considered as a serious challenge to the coordinated efforts to fight the menace.

From a policy point of view, there are also efforts at boosting the fight against corruption. The Nigerian government has implemented policies and initiatives aimed at strengthening anti-corruption institutions and promoting good governance (Bandyopadhyay, 2021). These efforts align with Sustainable Development Goal 16, which emphasises the importance of reducing corruption, promoting the rule of law, and building accountable and strong institutions (Bandyopadhyay, 2021). However, challenges remain in the efficient and effective functioning of anti-corruption institutions. The researcher further underscored the need for anti-corruption agencies to address obstacles such as bureaucratic inefficiencies, inadequate enforcement mechanisms, and limited public trust. In Nigeria, this is not the case as there are bureaucratic issues in the organisation and functionalities of the anti-corruption institutions/agencies of government.

Institutional reinvigoration is also required in concerted efforts to exterminate corruption from Nigeria. Existing literature emphasised the significance of media independence, ethical reporting, and investigative journalism in combating corruption (OECD, 2018; Sorice & Astolfi, 2013). From a critical angle to understanding the dynamics, there is the investigative journalism factor. Accordingly, it plays a crucial role in exposing political corruption and holding those in power accountable (OECD, 2018). However, challenges such as declining usage of investigative journalism and media ownership effects on reporting quality persist in the industry (Sorice & Astolfi, 2013). Nonetheless, initiatives aimed at strengthening media independence, transparency and accountability are crucial in fostering effective anti-corruption measures (OECD, 2018).

In addition to collaborative efforts between Nigerian institutions and the media, there is a growing recognition of the need for grassroots involvement in the fight against corruption (Bandyopadhyay, 2021; Stapenhurst & Kaufmann, 2000). Civil society organisations, advocacy groups, and community leaders play vital roles in raising awareness, mobilising public support, and holding authorities accountable for corrupt practices (Bandyopadhyay, 2021). This bottom-up approach complements top-down initiatives and ensures a more holistic and inclusive approach to combating the menace posed corruption. The media serve as critical platforms that ensure mobilisation at the grassroots as they serve as channels for mobilisation by NGOs, CSO, and even community-level organisers.

Advancements in technology have opened new avenues for transparency and

accountability in Nigeria's anti-corruption efforts (Schauseil, 2019). The utilisation of digital platforms, social media, and online reporting systems has facilitated the dissemination of information, enabled whistleblowing, and enhanced citizen engagement in anti-corruption campaigns (Schauseil, 2019). Leveraging technology not only amplifies the reach and impact of anti-corruption initiatives but also strengthens the resilience of institutions against corrupt practices. For example, the Nigeria Financial Intelligence Units in collaboration with the Financial Intelligence units of other countries coordinates all financial activities in Nigeria and adopts technology to identify fraud through reports; distribute same to the agencies in their network of intelligence to further investigate and take action whenever red flags are identified. These red flags may be in form of suspicion transactions as reported by the reporting entities which are the deposit money banks (DMBs) and designated non-financial businesses and professionals in the country.

Nigerian institutions, such as the ICPC and the EFCC have been entrusted with the critical task of combating corruption within the nation for decades (Asemah, Ekhareafu, & Santas, 2022). Despite their establishment over two decades ago, doubts persist regarding their efficacy, with criticisms pointing to perceived shortcomings. However, efforts by these institutions are complemented by the pivotal roles played by the media and civil society organisations. The media, known as the "fourth estate," play a key role in safeguarding the public interest. The media also expose corruption and provide the grounds for people to be held accountable for their actions. This is especially the case in the public sector. Additionally, the government is usually encouraged to protect the rights of citizens of a country – a role that civil society organisations (CSOs) have played from time immemorial. They do so by admonishing transparency in society because such will lead to some degree of decorum and sanity in the system and a reduction to minimum corruption-related activities. The collaboration between media and CSOs is a force that has served as important check on power, encouraging transparency and integrity in the government of Nigeria and the larger society (Santas et al., 2023).

According to Santas et al (2023), it is imperative to note that certain challenges need to be addressed with an emphasis on the importance of collaboration between the media and other institutions. The researchers also harped on the need for concerted efforts aimed at anti-corruption campaigns and ensuring accountability. This is made possible through the synergy

between institutions considered as stakeholders in the fight against corruption. Interestingly, these partnerships are required towards the creation of a path that encourages the crafting of effective anti-corruption strategies and an environment that holds a greater future for integrity and ethical governance. Transparency is required for stronger anti-corruption efforts, and so a forward-looking strategy is required to ensure that measures put in place to fight corruption can be effective in addressing the issues for which they were developed. Current problems can be addressed and public trust gained if these are considered actions of the concerned institutions. The implication is that when institutions and individuals collaborate to share their aims, goals and objectives, the necessary tools and strategies required to advance anti-corruption war in the public and private sectors will be made available and activated.

Effectively combating issues such as inequality, poor governance, and poverty may have significant impact on the fight against corruption (Adeyemi, 2013; Bandyopadhyay, 2021). Furthermore, Adeyemi (2013) noted that support for socio-economic reforms can help tackle the root causes of corruption and encourage development with the overall goal being to address corruption in the country. The foregoing implies that institutions in Nigeria have the capacity to become stronger with less cases of corruption when these underlying issues are addressed. Davison (2024) also emphasised the role of the mass media in advancing social and economic issues in a country. In essence, the media are pivotal in ensuring that the attention of the public is drawn to socio-economic issues while making a case for sound reforms across sectors. In Nigeria, this nature of support provided by the media can form the basis upon which critical anti-corruption institutions of government like the EFCC and ICPC become stronger and resilient leading to a strong network and community of anti-corruption agencies in the country.

Nigeria's fight against corruption can also see a boost in strengthening of the framework through international partnerships (Schauseil, 2019; UNODC, 2020). The foregoing is an emphasis on the importance of collaboration across borders extending to the willingness to receive support from international agencies with same vision and focus. Accordingly, collaboration with donor agencies, neighbouring and friendly nations, and international organisations can assist Nigeria to gain valuable knowledge, insights and resources as well as the foresight to develop effective strategies in order to enhance its war against corrupt practices (UNODC, 2020). With such partnerships, parties are able to develop

necessary skills, share information, and embark on joint operations across borders to quell all form of sharp practices. Transborder crimes that take the form of corruption can also be dismantled by virtue of the partnerships established between nations, international organisations and donor agencies in the fight against corruption.

From the perspective of collaboration between the media and anti-corruption institutions, a comprehensive approach is required for effective solution to the problem of corruption in Nigeria. This comprehensive approach includes collaboration at various levels. Such collaborations involved the use of technology, engagement with various communities, collaboration with international partners, implementation of socio-economic changes through reforms and more. Lasting progress can be actualised when inequality and poverty are addressed in Nigeria, and in the long run, efforts in respect of the quest to end corruption in the country may yield significant results. Put in another way, such efforts bolster anti-corruption efforts of Nigeria. In essence, when the root causes of corruption are tackled through concerted efforts, anti-corruption war in Nigeria can be propelled and a just and equitable society attained.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

It is part of the conclusion of the researchers based on the findings of this study that anti-corruption institutions in Nigeria such as the EFCC and the ICPC and even the code of conduct tribunal seem weak in the discharge of their assigned duties. In reference here are the duties assigned by the various laws and acts of parliament that established each one of the institutions of government. This is the case despite media efforts and collaboration towards fighting the menace. The problem is believed to have been caused by lack of political will to take corruption head-on towards ensuring that it is curbed and entirely eradicated from the Nigerian society. It is instructive to note that in spite of the rot in the system, the media in Nigeria have the capacity to remain an active voice and purveyor of the message against corruption in the country. The foregoing conclusion is drawn based on the history of the media and its survival of the harshest operational landscape; through the colonial era, the civil war, the military dictatorships and regimes.

The Nigerian media through its coverage of corruption cases are able to influence public opinion which can in turn spur collective response of the people. They may by virtue of the media communication in form of news and editorial react by calling on government to

investigate alleged case of impropriety or corruption (as the case may be). In addition, the people might take on the dimension of public response or action through mass action. Such could be peaceful protest to call attention to ugly situation and make calls for investigation. Against this backdrop, the study concludes that the media are critical stakeholders in the fight against corruption in Nigeria and elsewhere where they play their role as watchdog of society.

Based on the discourse above and conclusion, these recommendations become inevitable:

1. That the media must institutionalised the fight against corruption in Nigeria. This can be achieved through re-orientation of practitioners together with media outlets. This can be championed by the various media professional bodies at both national and international levels.
2. There is a need for multiple collaborative efforts in the fight against corruption. This is an implication that civil society organisations (CSOs) must rise up to the occasion through collaboration with the media in efforts to curb corruption in Nigeria. Corruption is widespread in Nigeria's public and private sectors and must now be confronted with the strongest of coalitions; and this can only be made possible when the media get the needed help from CSOs operating in Nigeria.
3. Issues related to the growing distrust on media content on account of the exposure to falsehood, fake news, and misinformation that circulate across platforms can be addressed. This can be achieved when regulatory bodies, the technology companies, and media organisations decide to work together. To this end, collaboration is recommended to wards synergy and promotion of high journalism standards to encourage the fights against deliberate spread of misleading information.

## **References**

- Adaja, T. A. (2014). Nigerian media and the anti-corruption campaign: A discourse of contemporary issues and challenges delimiting media potency. *Covenant Journal of Communication*, 2(2), 22-45.
- Adeyemi, A. (2013). Nigerian media and corrupt practices: the need for paradigm shift. *European Scientific Journal*, 9(1), 119.

## Journal of Media Studies 39(1)

- Adnan, M. (2020). Social responsibility theory of mass communication. *Agext Class Presentation, Mymensingh, Bangladesh Agricultural University*. <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.25301.40164>.
- African Union. (2022). The role of the media in advancing anti-corruption practices remains critical: AUABC. Retrieved from <https://au.int/en/pressreleases/20221017/role-media-advancing-anti-corruption-practices-remains-critical-auabc>.
- Ahmed, K. A., Abdulbaqi, S. S., & Adisa, R. M. (2019). Anti-corruption campaigns and Nigeria development: an appraisal of media roles. *Communicatio, 13*(2). Retrieved from <https://dj.uni-danubius.ro/index.php/AUDC/article/view/35>.
- Amodu, L., Yartey, D., Ekanem, T., Oresanya, T., & Afolabi, O. (2016). Assessing the media's watchdog role in ensuring the accountability of the Nigerian government. *International Conference on African Development Issues (CU-ICAD 2016)*, 451-454. <https://eprints.covenantuniversity.edu.ng/8214/1/icardi16pp451-454.pdf>.
- Anas, A. A. (2023). African journalists are dying. They need the world's help. *Corruption Watch*. Retrieved from <https://www.corruptionwatch.org.za/african-journalists-are-dying-they-need-the-worlds-help>.
- Asemah, E. S., Ekharefo, D. O., & Santas, T. (eds.). (2022). *Mass media, civil society organisations and the fight against corruption in a pandemic era*. Jos University Press. Retrieved from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/358913563>.
- Asemah, E. S., Nwammuo, A. N., & Nkwam-Uwaoma, A. O. A. (2022). *Theories and models of communication (2nd ed.)*. Jos University Press.
- Astolfi, M. (2023). The role of media in exposing political corruption and its impact on democratic governance and societal development. Thesis. Retrieved from [https://tesi.luiss.it/36795/1/098582\\_ASTOLFI\\_MARIA.pdf](https://tesi.luiss.it/36795/1/098582_ASTOLFI_MARIA.pdf).
- Bandyopadhyay, B. (2021). Building strong anti-corruption institutions for sustainable development: enhancing peace, justice, and public trust in public policy process. *Why It Matters Journals*. Retrieved from <https://www.uvu.edu/global/docs/wim22/sdg16/sdg16-bandyopadhyay.pdf>.
- Barnard, A. J. (2024, Feb. 21). Family. *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Retrieved from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/family-kinship>.

- Bruce, D. (2022). The role of media in exposing corruption: are we losing the battle? *Transparency International UK*. Retrieved from <https://www.transparency.org.uk/anti-corruption-media-putins-people-uk-libel-law-SLAPP>.
- Busari, W. B., & Amedu, A. A. (2022). Revisiting the accountability role of the media in contemporary Nigeria. *IMPACT: International Journal of Research in Humanities, Arts and Literature*, 10(2), 13-22.
- Chen, C., Li, L., & Ye, J. (2022). Unofficial media, government trust, and system confidence evidence from China: an empirical exploration of the attitudes of netizens based on the dual moderating effect. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, 763658. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.763658>.
- Chuta, S. C. (2004). *Corruption in Nigeria*. Nsukka. Afro-Obis Publishing Co.
- Coronel, S. (2010). Corruption and the watchdog role of the news media. In P. Norris (ed.), *Public sentinel: news media and governance reform* (pp. 111-136). Washington, DC: World Bank Publications. Retrieved from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/313168583>.
- Daramola, I. (2001). *Introduction to mass communication*. Lagos. Rothan press Ltd.
- Davison, W. P. (2024). Mass media and social media. *Britannica*. Retrieved from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/public-opinion/Mass-media-and-social-media>.
- Dyikuk, J. J. (2017). Towards improving governance in Nigeria through the media. *International Journal of Journalism and Mass Communication*, 3(1), 29-42. Retrieved from <https://dspace.unijos.edu.ng/jspui/bistream>.
- Economic and Financial Crimes Commission. (2021). The media is a key stakeholder in fight against corruption – EFCC. Retrieved from <https://www.efcc.gov.ng/efcc/news-and-information/news-release/6751-the-media-is-a-key-stakeholder-in-fight-against-corruption-efcc>.
- Economic and Financial Crimes Commission. (2023a). Again, EFCC recovers N900 million for NHI. Retrieved from <https://www.efcc.gov.ng/efcc/news-and-information/news-release/8912-again-efcc-recovers-n900-million-for-nhi>.



- Economic and Financial Crimes Commission. (2023b). EFCC seeks improved collaboration in fight against economic and financial crimes. Retrieved from <https://www.efcc.gov.ng/efcc/news-and-information/news-release/9658-efcc-seeks-improved-collaboration-in-fight-against-economic-and-financial-crimes>.
- Economic and Financial Crimes Commission. (2024). NTA, EFCC collaborate on corruption fight. Retrieved from <https://www.efcc.gov.ng/efcc/news-and-information/news-releases/9810-nta-efcc-collaborate-on-corruption-fight>.
- Edmond, L., & Wilson, F. (2018). An assessment of media coverage of anti-corruption campaigns by the Buhari administration in 2016: a study of the Nation and Daily Trust newspaper. *Journal of Mass Communication and Journalism*, 8(4). <https://doi.org/10.4172/2165-7912.1000376>.
- Eke, C., Amadi, F. A., & Nsereka, B. G. (2023). Newspaper coverage of corruption and insecurity during Buhari's administration: a comparative analysis of *The Nation* and *The Punch* editorials. *The International Journal of African Language and Media Studies*, 3(1), 142-154. Retrieved from <https://rhycekerex.org/upload/142>.
- Färdigh, M. A., Anderson, E., & Oscarsson, H. (2011). Reexamining the relationship between press freedom and corruption. Working Paper. The Quality of Government Institute, University of Gothenburg. Retrieved from [https://gupea.ub.gu.se/bitstream/handle/2077/39012/gupea\\_2077\\_39012\\_1.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://gupea.ub.gu.se/bitstream/handle/2077/39012/gupea_2077_39012_1.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y).
- Floss, D. (2008). Mass media's impact on confidence in political institutions: the moderating role of political preferences. A preferences-perceptions model of media effects. National Centre of Competence in Research (NCCR) Challenges to Democracy in the 21st Century 26, University of Zurich. <https://doi.org/10.5167/uzh-94934>.
- Goda, R. (2020). Media as an instrument of public accountability. *Prime Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.primepost.in/media-as-an-instrument-of-public-accountability>.
- Grayson, R. (2018). The necessity of skepticism. *Medium*. Retrieved from <https://russgrayson-au.medium.com/21-the-necessity-of-skepticism-27eaa01ddab0>.
- Guimaraes, F. (2022). Desk research: how to conduct secondary research efficiently. *Aela*. Retrieved from <https://aelaschool.com/en/research-en/desk-research-conduct-secondary-research-efficiently>.

- Habib, G. (2024, Mar. 29). How soldiers blindfolded, tortured me in Abuja cell – abducted editor. *Punch*. Retrieved from <https://punchng.com/how-soldiers-blindfolded-tortured-me-in-abuja-cell-abducted-editor>.
- Happer, C., & Philo, G. (2013). The role of the media in the construction of public belief and social change. *Journal of Social and Political Psychology, 1*(1), 321-336. <https://doi.org/10.5964/jspp.v1i1.96>.
- Human Rights Watch. (2018). Nigeria: journalists, activists detained, allege torture. Retrieved from <https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/08/21/nigeria-journalists-activists-detained-alleg-torture>.
- Idumange, J. (2019). The role of social media in strengthening public institutions in Nigeria: a binary option. *Modern Ghana*. Retrieved from <https://www.modernghana.com/amp/news/933002/the-role-of-social-media-in-strengthening-public-institution.html>.
- Jacobs, S., Boon, J., Wonneberger, A., & Salomonsen, H. H. (2022). Exploring media-covered accountability of public agencies. *Administration and Society, 54*(4), 575-604. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00953997211036353>.
- Jamo, I. A. (2021). Economic and financial crimes commission (EFCC) and anti-corruption crusade in Nigeria: success and challenges. *Gusau International Journal of Management and Social Sciences, 4*(2), 187-199.
- Kalogeropoulos, A., Toff, B., & Fletcher, R. (2022). The watchdog press in the doghouse: a comparative study of attitudes about accountability journalism, trust in news, and news avoidance. *The International Journal of Press/Politics*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/19401612221112572>.
- Karadimitriou, A., von Krogh, T., Ruggiero, C., Biancalana, C., Bomba, M., & Lo, W. H. (2022). Investigative journalism and the watchdog role of news media: between acute challenges and exceptional counterbalances. In J. Trappel, & T. Tomaz (eds.), *Success and failure in news media performance: comparative analysis in the media for democracy monitor 2021* (pp. 101-125). Nordicom, University of Gothenburg. <https://doi.org/10.48335/9789188855589-5>.

- Khavanov, A. (2024). The vital role of media anti-corruption reporting: a beacon of accountability and transparency. *LinkedIn*. [https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/vital-role-media-anti-corruption-reporting-beacon-artem-khavanov-phd-q75xc?trk=article-ssr-frontend-pulse\\_more-articles\\_related\\_content-card](https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/vital-role-media-anti-corruption-reporting-beacon-artem-khavanov-phd-q75xc?trk=article-ssr-frontend-pulse_more-articles_related_content-card).
- Krjriwal, M., & Dang, A. (2020). Structural studies of the global networks exposed in the Panama papers. *Applied Network Science*, 5(63). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s1109-020-00313-y>.
- Lange, Y., & Hughes, T. (2007). *Building sustainability for media centres: a handbook on best practices*. International Media Support.
- Lanosga, G., Willnat, L., Weaver, H. D., & Houston, B. (2017). A breed apart? A comparative study of investigative journalists and US journalists. *Journalism Practice*, 18(3), 265-287. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2015.1051570>
- McQuail, D. (2005). *McQuail's mass communication theory (5th ed.)*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Mendes, C. H. (2013). *Constitutional courts and deliberate democracy*. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199670451.001.0001>.
- Mohammed, Y., Habib, M. A., & Jibrin, U. I. (2023). Corruption and sustainable development: An appraisal of Nigerian fourth republic. *Zamfara Journal of Politics and Development*, 4(3), 132-145.
- Mufune, P. (2015). To what extent do media promote democracy in Southern Africa? *Journal of Political & Military Sociology*, 43, 107-148. Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/48599026>.
- Musa, M., & Antwi-Boateng, O. (2023). Investigative journalism in the era of promotional politics: the case of Nigeria. *Cogent Social Sciences*, 9(2). <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2023.2244153>.
- Nauman, A. (2018). Mass media as institution. *Slideshare*. Retrieved from <https://www.slideshare.net/AtifNauman3/mass-media-as-institution>.
- Nweze, S. O. (2019). The role of mass media in the democratic dispensation of Nigeria. *IDORS Journal of Arts and Humanities*, 4(1), 137-155. Retrieved from <https://www.idosr.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/IDOSR-JAH-41137-155-2019-NWEZE.pdf>.

- Nyongesa, W. (2021). Role of media in promoting accountability and transparency in Kakamega county government – Kenya. *International Journal of Media, Journalism and Mass Communication*, 7(1), 4-8.
- Nzeaka, E. E., Ehondor, B., & Edosonwan, A. (2022). Media and endemic corruption in Nigeria: a scrutiny of the role of the print media in the war against corruption. *International Journal of Development and Management Review*, 17(1), 174-192. Retrieved from <https://ajol.info/index.php/ijdmr/index>.
- Ochola, E. (2022). Protesting corruption through online community engagement on social media in Kenya: a qualitative content analysis. *International Journal of Research and Scholarly Communication*, 5(2). Retrieved from <https://royalliteglobal.com/ijora/article/view>.
- OECD. (2018). The role of the media and investigative journalism in combating corruption. Retrieved from [www.oecd.org/corruption/The-role-of-media-and-investigative-journalism-in-combatingcorruption.htm](http://www.oecd.org/corruption/The-role-of-media-and-investigative-journalism-in-combatingcorruption.htm).
- Okafor, E. (2022, Aug. 9). Accountability: a determinant for strong institutions. *BusinessDay*. Retrieved from <https://businessday.ng/opinion/article/accountability-a-determinant-for-strong-institutions>.
- Olugbefan, O. (2001). Corruption in engineering projects and how to check it. *In campaign against corruption in engineering projects*. Lagos.
- Onuh, C. (2024). EFCC recovers N39.8bn from ex-NSIPA coordinator. *Business Day*. Retrieved from <https://businessday.ng/news/article/efcc-recovers-n39.8bn-from-ex-Nsipa-coordinator>.
- Park, N., & Lee, J. S. (2021). Public service motivation and morale: Exploratory study of former agents of the national security intelligence of Korea. *International Journal of Public Administration*, 45(3), 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01900692.2021.1910836>.
- Reuters. (2024, May 9). Nigerian journalist detained over a week under cybercrime law, employer says. Retrieved from <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/nigerian-journalist-detained-over-week-under-cybercrime-law-employer-says-2024-05-09>.
- Rolex, A. P. (2023). Media and the uncertain fight against corruption. In J. Fahed-Sreih (ed.), *Corruption – new insights*. <https://doi.org/10.5772/intechopen.107827>.

- Sanni, K. (2022a). EFCC recovers N152 billion, \$386 million in 2021 – official. *Premium Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/more-news/505123-efcc-recovers-n152-billion-386-million-in-2021-official.html?tztc=1>.
- Sanni, K. (2022b). Special report: 11 forgotten cases of alleged corruption by former Nigerian state governors. *Premium Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/politics/549627-special-report-11-forgotten-cases-of-alleged-corruption-by-former-nigerian-state-governors-2.html?tztc=1>.
- Santas, T., Inobemhe, K., & Garba, S. (2023). *Aspects of media & communication studies*. Jos University Press.
- Santas, T., Inobemhe, K., & Nnaane, B. (2022). Curbing corruption in the midst of a pandemic: the role of the media in Nigeria during COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Communication Education*, 2(1), 39-57.
- Schauseil, W. (2019). Media and anti-corruption. Retrieved from [https://knowledgehub.transparency.org/assets/uploads/helpdesk/media-and-corruption\\_2019.pdf](https://knowledgehub.transparency.org/assets/uploads/helpdesk/media-and-corruption_2019.pdf).
- Schudson, M. (2002). The news media as political institutions. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 5(1), 249-269. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.polisci.5.111201.115816>
- Shapiro, I. (2021). Skepticism, not objectivity, is what makes journalism matter. *African Centre for Media Excellence*. Retrieved from <https://acme-ug.org/2021/04/19/skepticism-not-objectivity-is-what-makes-journalism-matter>.
- Shehu, S. (2023, Jul 7). EFCC seeks collaboration in fight against corruption. *Business Day*. Retrieved from <https://businessday.ng/news/article/efcc-seeks-collaboration-in-fight-against-corruption>.
- Silverblatt, A. (2004). Media as a social institution. *American Behavioural Scientist*, 48(1), 35-41. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764204267249>
- Sommer, S. (2023). The journalistic mindset. *The Fieldston News*. Retrieved from <https://fieldstonnews.com/home/2023/09/the-journalistic-mindset>.
- Sorice, M., & Astolfi, M. (2013). The role of media in exposing political corruption and its impact on democratic governance and societal development. *Corso di laurea in Political Philosophy and Economics, Cattedra di Political Sociology*.

- Sowunmi, F. A., Raufu, A. A., Oketokun, F. O., Salako, M. A., & Usifoh, O. O. (2010). The role of media in curbing corruption in Nigeria. *Research Journal of Information Technology*, 2(1), 7-23. Retrieved from <http://www.maxwellsci.com/print/rjit/v2-7-23.pdf>.
- Stapenhurst, R., & Kaufmann, D. (2000). The media's role in curbing corruption. *World Bank Institute*. Retrieved from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/26523253>.
- Starke, C., Naab, T. K., & Scherer, H. (2016). Free to expose corruption: the impact of media freedom, internet access and governmental online service delivery on corruption. *International Journal of Communication*, 10, 4702-4722. Retrieved from <https://ijoc.org/index.php/ijoc/article/view/5712/1793>.
- Thomass, B., Marrazzo, F., Meier, W. A., Ramsay, G., & Blach-Ørsten, M. (2022). Media accountability: a cross-country comparison of content monitoring instruments and institutionalised mechanisms to control news media performance. In J. Trappel, & T. Tomaz (eds.), *Success and failure in news media performance: comparative analysis in the media for democracy monitor 2021* (pp. 231-252). Nordicom, University of Gothenburg. <https://doi.org/10.48335/9789188855589-11>
- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2004). *The global programme against corruption: UN anti-corruption toolkit (3rd ed.)*. Vienna.
- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2020). The role of the media in fighting corruption. *Module 10: Citizen Participation in Anti-Corruption Efforts. UNODC Module Series on Anti-Corruption* Retrieved from <https://grace.unodc.org/grace/uploads/documents/academics/Anti-Corruption-Module-10-Citizen-Participation-in-Anti-Corruption.pdf>.
- Wasswa, J. B., & Kakooza, M. (2011). *Uganda media review: media and corruption*. Kampala: Uganda Media Development Foundation.
- Yuran, D. (2011). Public confidence in social institutions and media coverage: a case of Belarus. Master's Thesis, University of Tennessee.. Retrieved from [https://trace.tennessee.edu/utk\\_gradthes/928](https://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_gradthes/928).
- Zubair, S. S., Khan, M. A., & Mukaram, A. T. (2021). Public service motivation and organizational performance: Catalysing effects of altruism, perceived social impact and political support. *PLoS One*, 16(12); e0260559. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0260559>