

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The global anti-corruption watchdog, Transparency International (TI) in its Corruption Perception Index (2017) ranked Nigeria as the 148<sup>th</sup> corrupt country globally. This is against Nigeria's 136<sup>th</sup> position in 2016, illustrating the persistent increasing incidences of corruption in Nigeria. This is despite the present administration's anti-corruption campaigns and efforts. President Muhammadu Buhari, in consideration of the high incidences of corruption in the country on assumption of office in 2015, announced the anti-corruption crusade as one of the major pillars of his administration and has to this end, made the fight against corruption the core mantra of his administration. Apparently, the campaign against corruption seems not to be achieving the expected goals as TI (2017) statistics above indicate.

However, the mass media have been constitutionally empowered in Section 22 of the 1999 Constitution as amended, to perform its social responsibility functions of helping government achieve its development objectives; monitoring government; exposing its excesses and ensuring that governments are accountable to the people through its regular news reports and coverage of issues. For as Eigen (1999) pointed out, media can play an important public accountability role by monitoring and investigating the actions of those who are granted public trust and who may be tempted to abuse their office for private gain. Rose-Ackerman (1999) and Bello (2015) suggested two distinct and significant ways the media can do this. According to Rose-Ackerman (1999), qualitative and independent media reporting on corruption can play an important role in

pressuring the government to act in the public interest: By drawing the attention to behaviour that is generally perceived as acceptable and exposing such behaviour as corrupt, media can raise public awareness, activate anti-corruption values, and generate outside pressure from the public against corruption. Bello (2015) on the other hand argued that the media play pivotal roles in the campaign against corruption; they act as the eyes, ears and voices of the public. The media not only raise public awareness about corruption, its causes, consequences and possible remedies but also investigate and report incidences of corruption (Stapenhurst, 2000).

Consequently, it becomes pertinent to examine how the media have been performing this oversight function of adequately keeping the public informed of this government's anti-corruption crusade. The question is, what is the nature of coverage given to the anti-corruption crusade by the Nigerian print media and how are they framed? In essence, what is the prominence, depth, and frequency of coverage? Are the corruption stories reported issue-based or personality-based? It is in attempt to find answers to these questions that this research examined how the Nigerian print media have kept the Nigerian audience informed about developments in the Buhari's fight against corruption as it unfolds. This is because media coverage of cases such as corruption is no doubt, an important part of media function, and the salience given to such issues could help in reducing the practices of corruption by exposing those responsible in such a way as to serve as a deterrent to others.

## **1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

Historical records show that while corruption – an abuse of entrusted power for private gain is deep rooted in Nigeria, successive governments have made concerted efforts to eradicate the

scourge in the country. Corruption has been recognised as a major cause of political instability in Nigeria as the first military coup in the country which took place on January 15, 1966 was attributed to the corrupt nature of the then government. Subsequent administrations have hinged their change of government or administration on the ground of fight against corruption as evident in coup and inaugural speeches of past heads of governments. Even the country's second republic (1979-1983) was truncated by the military for reasons of corruption. Since then, it has been a blame game between the military and the civilians until the birth of the fourth republic in 1999 when Chief Olusegun Obasanjo was elected as President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. This period witnessed the establishment of anti-corruption agencies such as the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC). Subsequent administrations have strengthened these agencies until the coming of the present administration, which promised to tackle corruption head on, and this was largely perceived by Nigerians as the high point in the fight against corruption. In all these efforts the media have been identified as a major component in this fight

### **An Overview of Nigerian Media Landscape**

The emergence and development of mass media in Nigeria and Africa at large is widely described by many scholars as a product of colonialism as well as a reflection of the continent's political development (Oso, 2012; Barratt & Berger, 2007; Bello, 2015). This justifies Barrat & Berger's (2007) assertion that the ownership systems of African media, 'Their character, strengths and weaknesses, their political and social outlooks and their outputs and impacts, are all products of the societies that have formed and shaped them.' For instance, Nigerian media emerged as a colonial product that turned into an ideological and political apparatus for the

Nigerian nationalists in the fight against slavery, colonialism and the struggle for the nation's political independence. The Nigerian post-independent civil rule experience, military regimes experience and the current democratic governance as well as the plurality of the media in the country have impacted on the development of mass media in Nigeria so much so that it became one of the most vibrant and robust media landscape on the Africa scene (Nwagbara, 2010; Oso, Odunlami & Adaja, 2011; African Media Barometer, 2011).

A review of the historical development of Nigerian mass media shows that the print media was first introduced in 1859, followed by the establishment of the first radio and television in 1932 and 1959 respectively (Nwagbara, 2010; Oloruntola, 2008; Oso 2012; Nigeria Community Radio Coalition, 2012; Bello, 2010). While the newspaper industry started and is still dominated by the private individuals, broadcast media were pioneered and are still dominated by the state and federal government (Oso, 2012). For instance, while the over 150 newspapers (regional and community-based including over 20 national daily newspapers) (Dragomir & Thompson, 2012), are mostly owned and controlled by private individuals, available evidence suggests a reverse experience with the broadcast media. Out of about 82 television stations in the country, the Federal Government own and control 41, the State Government own and control 29 while only 12 are owned and controlled by private individuals. In the same vein, out of about 121 radio stations operating in Nigeria currently, the Federal Government own and control 43, the State Government own and control 54 and only 24 of them are owned and controlled by private individuals (Oso, 2012). The recent advancement in the Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) which necessitated the emergence of the internet has equally widened the Nigerians' access to the media and media landscape (African Practice, 2014; Dragomir &

Thompson, 2012; Anyira, 2011). Nevertheless, research evidence suggests that almost all of the media are relatively popular among the citizenry with radio topping the chart followed by the television, the internet and lastly the newspaper (Oso, 2003; British Broadcasting Corporation World Service Trust, 2006; Dragomir & Thompson, 2012; mediaReach OMD Nigeria, 2005; Broadcasting Board of Governors, 2012; Broadcasting Board of Governors, 2014; Bello, 2015).

Looking at such data as seen above, one can rightly infer that Nigerians are relatively active in their media consumption habit as they are largely connected with different forms of media which may further imply that mass media in Nigeria may likely have some degree of effects on media audiences in general (Bello, 2015). Although, newspaper is not the medium with the highest patronage among Nigerians, its archival quality, comprehensive nature of its contents and its enduring nature, makes it the focus of this dissertation with the view to examining the degree to which Nigerian newspapers report and frame corruption related issues under President Muhammadu Buhari's administration. With the recent improvement in printing technology including other gamut information and communication Technologies (ICTs), newspaper production in Nigeria is becoming a lot easier and faster and as well, easily accessible. These days, it is no longer uncommon to see Nigerian newspapers' titles like *The Guardian*, *The Punch*, *The Sun*, *The Vanguard* and *TheThisday* and so on circulating online and competing favourably in international standard (Nwodu, 2009).

The choice of newspaper for this study is also premised on the fact that available research evidence has attested to the enduring watchdog role of newspaper in Nigeria socio-political history. Right from the time of the *Iwe Irohin*, to the present day Nigeria, newspapers have been deployed at different degrees and magnitude as a tool for social change ranging from the

propagation of the Christian faith to nationalization and the fight for Nigerian independence, mobilization against the military rule, promotion of economic recovery, national integration and unity, health related behavioural change as well as the anti-corruption war under the different regimes. For instance, the *Iwe Irohin* was used for the successful propagation of Christianity and fight against slavery and the Portuguese-led slave trade (Ugboajah, 1980). In the same vein, the emergence of other early Nigerian newspapers like the Nnamdi Azikiwe's *West African Pilot* added greater impetus to the fight against colonialism and the push for self-rule.

Following the military intrusion into the nation's politics, newspaper again became handy in the fight for the Nigerian's return to democracy. It is a widely shared view among politicians and actively promoted by the press itself that the Nigerian press has played a significant role in advancing Nigeria's political transition from military dictatorship to democratic governance. As Thompson (1997) points out, the Nigeria press challenged the military rulers through various methods, especially through producing and publishing investigative news stories exposing corruption and other brazen acts of recklessness and abuse of power among the ruling military elite (also see Adejare, 2004; Adeniyi, 2010). The fight against the military dictatorship continued until May 1999 when General Abdulsalami Abubakar relinquished power to a democratically elected President Olusegun Obasanjo to mark the end of the military rule in the country.

Many years into the democratic rule however, the nation continued to face other challenges that had kept the newspaper houses busy all the same. Prominent among them is the unending war against corruption that has been threatening the very foundation of the nation's existence. As part

of the watchdog function of the nation's newspapers and other mass media, the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, provided a clear and unambiguous role for the media to hold public office holders accountable to the citizens of the country and this aptly justifies the media's crusade against corruption. Specifically, Section 22 of the Constitution, under the "Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy," has a provision on the "obligations of the mass media". This section provides that: "the press, radio, television and other agencies of the mass media shall at all times be free to uphold the fundamental objectives contained in this Chapter and uphold the responsibility and accountability of the Government to the people" (The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999, as amended). How the newspapers in Nigeria had fared in the coverage and framing of corruption related issues in relation to their mandate to hold government and private officials accountable therefore forms the crux of this dissertation.

### **The Media and the Fight against Corruption**

Fundamentally, the media as the fourth estate of the realm are saddled with the responsibility of serving as the watch dog of the society. By this, it is expected to mount surveillance on both public and private figures in their daily activities thereby bringing to the public domain any breach of public trust or a deviation from the social contract guiding the leaders and the led. Interestingly, the media have been reported to be active in performing this duty in relation to the exposition of corrupt practices in the country over the years. While they have been praised for their positive contribution to the fight against corruption in some instances, they have also fallen under intense criticism for being complicit in the fight over the years.

In writing on the media fight against corruption in Nigeria, Afolayan (2012) commended the media for exposing and pursuing corrupt politicians and bureaucrats, many of whom have been forced to resign or have been impeached and prosecuted. For instance, the media followed up the forgery and perjury cases against former Speaker of the House of Representatives, Alhaji Salishu Buhari and investigated the questionable past of the old senate President, Evan Enwerem. Other cases have been brought against former Senate President Chuba Okadigbo (for financial recklessness) and against former national vice-chairman of the Peoples' Democratic Party, Bode George (for contract splitting). More recently, the media brought to the public domain the falsification of assets declaration involving the sitting Senate President Bukola Saraki, the ongoing trial of the former National Security Adviser to President Jonathan, Col Dasuki for the \$2.1 billion arms deal, the contract inflation saga of the former Secretary to the Federal Government (SGF), Babachir Lawal to mention but a few. These personalities were either convicted, removed from offices, or are still under trial or discharged, as a result of the relentless interest and follow-up generated by the stories and pressure mounted by the media on the executive and the judiciary to bring them to justice (Oyebode, n.d).

The above examples suggest that the Nigerian media seem to be reporting corruption stories efficiently especially in terms of the volume of attention given to the menace. However, a review of the actual contents of the stories left much to be desired as available literature suggests that most of the stories only relay or repeat news releases of allegations by anti-corruption agencies and contained incomplete investigative activities of these organizations with sensational headlines. The stories also contained court proceedings and public vituperation on the crimes (Oyebode, n.d).



To this end, existing scholarship suggests that the Nigerian media practitioners rarely follow up corruption related stories for a long time thereby giving room for the public accusing the media of complicity with the political class in sweeping issues that require aggressive and sustained media attention and prominence under the carpet (Isola, 2010; Oso & Pate, 2010; Akinfeleye, 2003). This assertion according to Oyeboade, n.d) suggests that agenda-setting role of the press has often been used to create a sort of cultural hegemony with basic principles of capitalism, which emphasize exploitation by the economic and political ruling classes. In some instances, media go silent immediately after the publication of serious corruption allegation without necessary follow-up. This tendency denies the audience critical information that may otherwise have prompted judicial action and set positive deterrence in the country.

In some instances, the media's disposition toward some issues of corruption has equally called to question their commitment to the fight as they often abandon such stories shortly after it is brought to the public attention (Oyeboade, n.d). Meanwhile, when viewpoints about an issue are ignored, marginalized, or trivialized by media reportage, people become reluctant to talk about it again and in time, those views cease to be heard in the public domain (Baran & Davies, 2003). In this instance, the media play a vital role in Down's issue-attention cycle theory on corruption related stories. The Down's issue-attention cycle explains the media's role in making issues rise into prominence through emphasis, priming, and repetition of stories. They likewise inadvertently or deliberately contribute to the fading of issues from public attention by redirecting attention to new problems that will make the previous ones less attractive. It is inadvertent when media attention shifts to a more important issue but deliberate when the story is

given less prominence as a result of the intervention of the political and economic class. Motives for news judgment vary from one media establishment to another, and these are largely determined by ownership philosophy, social imperatives and practitioners' perspectives (Oyebode, n.d).

Ojo (2006) opines that the mass media often mislead the public by engaging in deliberate distortion of the information they disseminate to their audience; knowingly excluding some vital information, or simply remaining quiet over some important issues where the people deserve further clarification, or; seeking to divert the people's attention from very important issues by crowding the people's mind with trivialities. In the recent past, some of the corruption cases that have been swept under the carpet for different reasons best known to practitioners of the Nigerian media include the country's pension fund scam; the "eight all" African Games Scam (COJA); the Farouk Lawan bribery scandal; the Patricia Etegate; the petroleum subsidy scam of 2012; the scandal involving Allison Madueke, Minister of Aviation and the hiring of a 10 billion naira private jet; the scam involving the purchase of two "bullet proof cars" for N\$225 million by the former Minister of Aviation, Stella Odua; the seizure of 96.1 million dollars in South Africa in a cash for arms deal; and the Halliburton bribery scam (even though the foreigners who paid bribes to Nigerian officials have since been punished and penalized by the United States of America and German authorities). The preceding list of scams and scandals validates Down's issue attention cycle, in which issues rise and fall on the public agenda, leaping to prominence when they first arise and remaining there for a short while before gradually fading from public attention despite remaining largely unresolved.

Available scholarship also tends to point accusing finger at the media for their lack of sincerity in their reportage of corruption in the country. To this end, issues have been raised of the media publishing sponsored “advertorials” and stories without concern for the ethical standards to which they should adhere to (i.e. that they should report only objective stories and refrain from presenting their own perspective or bias). Reporting his findings on *Weak-kneed Media and Festering Corruption in Nigeria*, Oyeboade opines that:

‘The Nigerian media celebrate hierarchy, wealth, fashion, and social standing. They rarely depict elites in critical light that might draw attention to or question the source of the elites’ money or investigate the road to their assumption of prominence. The media fail to promote a meritocratic society, in which the emphasis would be on intelligence, talent, and hard-work. On the contrary, the media support celebrity, money, and popular cultures and ignore the corrupt practices that contribute to the wealth and popularity of celebrities and public figures’.

Cohen (2009) earlier observed the same trend in the United Kingdom mass media by stating that they engage in “trumpeting the good fortune of British capitalism and pay less attention to its casualties.” The victimized members of the society who are cheated by the capitalist class do not get enough attention. The poor are painted as being the architects of their own misfortune, while the rich are eulogized. These criticisms and allegations against mass media’s handling of corruption-related issues form the basis of the current study’s investigations especially with the current President Buhari APC-led administration’s ‘change agenda’ mantra with the fight against corruption topping in the change agenda priorities. This study sought to determine to what extent the Nigerian newspapers have keyed into this government’s policies in the fight against corruption in the country.

## **1.2. STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM**

From May 2015, the new government's mantra for change was hinged on fighting corruption in Nigeria. Since then the crusade against corruption has been on. The media, as the fourth estate of the realm, in their Agenda-setting function and framing are expected to concomitantly key into government agenda in their coverage. The question however is to what extent have the Nigerian media complemented government's efforts in the fight against corruption through reporting? In spite of the great role the media are expected to play in the fight against corruption in the society, it seems however, that there is still a marginally disproportionate coverage and reportage of corruption in developing countries like Nigeria.

The World Anti-Corruption Watchdog, the Transparency International, reported in its recent anti-corruption handbook that a free and independent media is one of the principal vehicles for informing the public about corrupt activities (AFRICAW, 2012). AFRICAW group equally stated that the Transparency International noted that by investigating and reporting on corruption, the media provide an important counterpoint to the abuse of entrusted power for private gain by beaming light on the wrongdoings of public office holders and corporate executives alike. Previous literature has raised doubts on media's efficient and effective coverage of corruption in Nigeria as a whole due to some factors such as partisanship, media corruption, ethnicity, commercialisation of media, ownership factors and religious affiliations. Corruption, especially as it relates to Nigeria, is laden with ethnic, religious and sacred cow biases. Lustgarten and Debix (2005) corroborating the views expressed above, observed that the media's preference for flashy audience grabbing and ratings-soaring image or story makes them to be nonchalant in matters which are of interest to the public owing to their inability to peruse events in detail (Bello, 2014).

Therefore, looking at these possible biases, this work examined, how such biases reflected in media framing of corruption issues. The persistence of Transparency International (2002) in setting Nigeria among the bottom five nations in its annual Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) since 1995 is an indication that the media may not have performed this role effectively (Sowumi, et al 2012). It is against this backdrop that this study investigated the real situation on ground as regards Nigerian newspapers' coverage and framing of President Buhari's anti-corruption crusade. The study examined the quantity and quality of newspaper coverage and framing of the anti-corruption crusade since the period under study signifies the highest point in Nigeria's history in the fight against corruption, this work was further interested in finding out whether there is a correspondent coverage of anti-corruption issues compared with the realities on ground in Nigeria in the current administration.

### **1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

Considering the reported prevalence of corruption and corrupt practices in Nigeria and the President Buhari APC-led administration's agenda to fight corruption, the main objective of the study was to examine Nigerian newspaper coverage and framing of the anti-corruption agenda of the present administration. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Ascertain the extent/frequency of coverage of anti-corruption stories in National Newspapers from June 2015 to May 2017.
2. Find out the level of prominence given to anti-corruption stories in National Daily Newspapers in Nigeria during the period under study.
3. Find out how these anti-corruption stories are framed in selected Nigerian National Daily Newspapers.

4. Ascertain the nature of the anti-corruption stories or news contained in selected National Dailies/Newspapers in Nigeria.

#### **1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the extent/frequency of coverage of anti-corruption stories in National Newspapers from June 2015 to May 2017?
2. What is the level of prominence given to anti-corruption stories in National Daily Newspapers in Nigeria?
3. How did Nigerian Newspapers frame anti-corruption stories?
4. What is the nature of the anti-corruption stories/news contained in Nigerian National Dailies/Newspapers?

#### **1.5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

The study is delimited to contents of selected national daily newspapers on the anti-corruption crusade in Nigeria. The choice of newspapers for the analysis of the coverage of anti-corruption crusade is as a result of the place of newspapers in a democratic set-up like ours. Newspapers are elitist sources of information with highly educative materials with high level of credibility rating among the audience. Hence newspaper coverage of issues is regarded as the vintage point of reference for the society. This study is limited to analysis of the major newspapers in Nigeria regarded as national dailies due to their circulation rate and national outlook. And so, this study analysed the contents (straight news, features and editorials) of five national newspapers, namely, The Punch, Daily Trust, The Vanguard, The Sun and The Nation. These newspapers

were selected based on their circulation rate, national coverage and outlook. The study is limited to June 2015-May, 2017. This period signifies the peak of the administration's campaign against corruption and as such should attract concomitant media coverage. The study also examined the nature of the messages by way of Critical Incident Analysis (CIA). This is by perusing, marking up, classifying and categorizing contents to achieve parsimonious groupings or dimensions. Simply put, it is isolating a few cases for detailed attention.

## **1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The agenda setting role of the media which is considered as one of the key functions of the media is often reflected in news media framing and coverage of issues. This relate to the notion that the media by selecting what content to publish and how and what language to use and even the quantity of informed coverage succeed in telling people what to think and in raising awareness, knowledge or at times, controversies and misconception about national issues (Dunu & Okafor, 2017). It is against this background that this study was conducted to ascertain the role of the media in the fight against corruption which is a key component of the Buhari's administration.

Literature is replete with corruption studies but not on the crusade of this present administration. This gap in literature is what this work attempted to fill. In this way, this study adds to existing literature not only on media coverage of corruption but also on media framing and priming of issues and how it affects people's perception and reactions.

The current study differ from previous literature in these critical areas and therefore significant asoutlined:

1. In the area of content,most studies were based only on straight news analysis while the current study went beyond straight news and did a holistic analysis by incorporating all the other major contents of the newspapers (news, editorials and features).
2. The methodological approach of most of the studies in this area were limited to content analysis and survey. This work broadens this area of methodologicalpursuit by including the use of critical incident analysis to further interrogate the issue.
3. Most literature on corruption were centered on individual corruption cases while this current study took a look at general corruption issues within the country from June 2015 to May 2017.
4. Although the media agenda setting function and priming has been established in literature,this study,however demonstrates that Nigerian media seem to have a challenge in adequately promoting accountability in public offices and by public holders and that political structures of particular government and country mayinfluence and challenge media role as an instrument of public accountability. This isthe new perspective this study is adding to literature on media coverage of corruption.
5. This study is alsorelevant in that it could be used by the media to understand how prevailingpolitical powerstructures can affect and redefine the boundaries of media's performance as they exercise their role as watchdog on corruption and other related issues. In this regard the study profferedprospectsfor a more institutionalized role of the media in the future.



## 1.7 OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

- **Corruption:** Corruption means the abuse of entrusted power by Nigerian politicians in government for private gain.
- **Crusade or Campaign:** Crusade means a consistent and determined effort by President Buhari to achieve something that one believes to be right or to stop something that one believes to be wrong, in this case, like corruption.
- **Coverage:** Coverage means the day to day reporting of activities of the anti-corruption crusade.
- **Civil Servants:** Civil servants are Government employees in Nigeria that carry out the day to day activities in government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs).
- **Framing:** Framing means the way and manner the Nigerian newspapers constructed stories of corruption and the anti-corruption campaign.
- **Frequency:** Frequency means the number of times the Nigerian newspapers report issues of corruption and the anti-corruption crusade.
- **Impunity:** It means any wrong doing without an appropriate punishment by the Nigerian regulatory bodies
- **Mass Media:** The mass media stand for Nigerian newspapers which are channels of communication through which messages are carried to the general public.
- **Nepotism:** Giving unfair advantage to family members and friends by someone who is in power, especially by way of appointments into positions and awarding of contracts in Nigeria.
- **Public Servants:** Public servants are Government appointees who run, supervise and implement government programmes and policies in Nigeria.

- **Prominence:** It means the placement of stories of corruption and the anti-corruption crusade on the pages of the Nigerian newspapers, length of stories and photo illustrations.
- **Quantity:** It means the number of times issues of corruption and the anti-corruption crusade are reported by the Nigerian newspapers in this study.
- **Quality:** It means the standard of the messages of the anti-corruption crusade contained in the Nigerian newspapers.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter discusses and analyses studies and literature relevant to the issue of corruption and Nigerian newspapers coverage of the anti-corruption crusade in Nigeria. The study also explored the theories of agenda setting and framing of the mass media. These theories were used to construct suitable theoretical framework appropriate for analysing research questions. The study also reviewed empirical studies.

#### **2.1.0. CONCEPTUAL REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

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

The word ‘corruption’ means different thing to different people and has received varying definitions as it has received different usages in different contexts and climes. Uji (2015) shares similar view when he says: ‘Corruption is an ethical and moral problem not subject to a consistent theoretical construct, because it varies from place to place, time to time, culture to culture and with the level of development in given country’. The ubiquitous nature of corruption

has made some observers to argue that there is no society free from corruption as long as it is being habited by human beings. The complex nature of corruption therefore, is increasingly making it difficult for scholars to agree on a single definition (Park, 2012). However, the most prominent definitions share a common emphasis on the abuse of public power or position for personal advantage (Ogbeidi, 2012). Available scholarships on the concept of corruption points to at least, two dominant schools of thought which have consistently shaped the various definitions of corruption that exist today. These are the revisionists and the moralist.

The underlining factor in the definition of corruption from the revisionist perspective is the fact that corruption is viewed as beneficial to the society. To them, for a definition of corruption to be valid, it must be value-free. That is the negative effects of corruption should be kept out of the definition. For instance, Leff (1964) sees corruption as ‘an extra-legal institution used by individuals or groups to gain influence over the actions of the bureaucracy. As such, the existence of corruption per se indicates only that these groups participate in the decision-making process to a greater extent than would otherwise be the case’. In other words, Leff sees corruption as being functional, in that it allows a section of the society, who ordinarily do not have access through normal channels, to take part in the decision-making process. When such view as espoused by Leff is properly dissected, it could mean corruption is capable of having beneficial outcomes for the society, a direct allusion to the term, ‘efficient corruption’ which was further developed by scholars like Huntington (1968) and Svensson (2005).

As seen in the definition of corruption advanced by Leff above, the major argument inherent in revisionist school of thought on corruption is that it could lead to economic growth in societies characterised by ‘transplanted bureaucracies’, for instance where companies can easily cut

through the red tape to expand on production (Nuijten & Anders, 2005). This is in line with one of the criticisms of Weber's legal rational bureaucracy. The administrative processes could become clogged, making it tedious for individuals to deal easily with public institutions. In order to ease the complex process and get things done faster, big companies are able to bribe public officials to fast track or smooth the process for them. The possibility of using inducement to cut through the red tape in order to get things done much faster is what is referred to as efficient corruption (Adetiba, 2016).

However, even though some studies have pointed to the fact that corruption could actually favour a short term rise in the growth indicators, which of course, may not necessarily translate into the wellbeing of the people as seen in Nigeria over the years, there seems to be lack of empirical evidence to support the stand of the revisionist school of thought that corruption could be responsible for development in any country. According to Adetiba (2016), Nigeria presents a clear example, where economic indicators look good on paper amidst systemic corruption and poor infrastructural development. Bearing such instances in mind, Vaal and Ebben (2011) noted that, while corruption could promote growth in the short run, it could be 'detrimental to countries' economic performance in the long term'. To this end, there is a growing consensus among academics and public intellectuals, especially in Sub-Sahara Africa countries that corruption actually perform but negative role in the development of the region (Adebanwi & Obadare, 2011). The emerging evidence and focus on the adverse effects of corruption on the third world nations of the world is one of the determinant factors in the depopularization of the revisionist school of thought and the continued rise in the moralist perspective on corruption (Lambsdorff, 2006).

Writing on his scholarly piece titled: *What is Corruption: a History of Corruption Studies and the Great Definitions Debate*, Farrales (2005) argues that the moralist definition of corruption is value-laden unlike the revisionist's that is value-neutral. In other words, the moralists see corruption as anti-societal interest, inimical and detrimental to the wellbeing of the people, as it hampers development and the delivery of public goods. Prominent among the scholars in this school of thought are Edward Banfield (1958), and Wraith and Simpkin (1963) whose position has come to shape the views of recent scholars and researchers, that essentially see corruption as having a negative effect on the society. Even the layman definition of corruption as abuse of one's office for private gain or using one's position to collect bribe from someone who is in need of assistance such as seeking for admission into a higher institution or seeking for an employment in an establishment (Awojobi, 2014), tends to support the moralist school of thought. According to Transparency International (TI) as cited in Awojobi (2014, p.153):

...Public office is abused for private gain when an official accepts or extorts a bribe. It is also abused when private agents actively offer bribes to circumvent public policies and processes for competitive advantage and profit. Public office can also be abused for the personal benefits even if no bribery occurs through patronage and nepotism, the stealing of state assets or the diversion of state revenue.

Given credence to the definition of corruption of anti-development as espoused in the moralist school of thought, Salisu (2000) encapsulates corruption to mean the mismanagement of public funds for private gain. For instance, funds that are supposed to be used for development purposes in Nigeria are pocketed by politicians at the detriment of the nation's development. Also in the view of Uji (2015), 'Corruption is asking, giving or taking a free gift or favour in exchange for the performance of a legitimate task; the pervasion or obstruction of the performance of such a task or the performance of an illegal and illegitimate task, hoarding, collusion, price fixing,

election rigging, abuse and or misuse of office'. Giving another account of corruption in line with the moralist perspective, Adewale (2011) asserts that 'corruption is an act of diverting the resources that should have been used for the developmental purposes of the society to private or personal use. When one tries to weave all the above definition under the moralist perspective together, there appear to be a running consensus on the fact that corruption has but rather negative effect on the development and the general wellbeing of the people in the given society.

It is worth noting that there seems to be other emerging schools of thought on corruption other than the moralist and the revisionist perspectives that are beginning to influence the definition of the term corruption in recent time. Chief among them are public office centred, public interest centred and market interest centred definitions, popularised by Heidenheimer & Johnston (2002); Philips (2002).

While the main feature of the public office centred definition of corruption according to Farrales (2005, p.16-18) is 'the misuse of public office or authority in exchange for some type of private gain'; the market interest centred definition of corruption, on the other hand, focuses on the incentives or profit that characterise exchanges in the market place to explain the phenomenon of corruption. An example of public office centred definition of corruption is one provided by Van Klaveren (1970 as cited in Farrales, 2005, p.19) which states that:

A corrupt civil servant regards his public office as a business, the income of which he will... seek to maximize. The office then becomes a 'maximizing unit.' The size of his income depends... upon the market situation and his talents for finding the point of maximal gain on the public's demand curve.

In contrast to public office and market interest centred definitions of corruption, the public interest focused definitions of corruption often highlight public interest that is usually

undermined by corrupt practices (Farreles, 2005). For instance, Rogow and Lasswell (1963) opines that ‘...[a] system of public or civic order exalts common interest over special interest; violations of the common interest for special advantage are corrupt’. Friedrich (1972), also using a public interest centred approach, defined corruption as a ‘deviant behaviour associated with a particular motivation, namely that of private gain at public expense’. What one can see from these definitions is that corruption exists when and where there is an inappropriate diversion of collective wealth to individuals, in contravention of rules and regulations.

Whether corruption is viewed from the moralist, or revisionist, or public office centred, or public interest centred or market interest centred, it often occur on a large (grand) or small (petty) scale (Farreles, 2005; Rose-Ackerman, 2006; Kyambalesa, 2006). Writing on the large scale or grand corruption, Kyambalesa (2006) opines that it is the type of corruption usually perpetrated by high-level government officials; often on a large-scale, and involving significant public resources or privilege unduly appropriated to or by public officials and/or their proxies. Because it is ordinarily expected that highly placed government officials are relatively well remunerated all over the world and should not be lacking in the real sense of lack, their involvement in this kind of corruption made some scholars to describe it as ‘corruption of greed.’ According to Olaniyan (2014), corruption of greed ‘occurs when high ranking state officials abuse their entrusted positions to convert public treasuries into private gain’ as often seen with Nigerian leaders and public office holders. Olaniyan (2014) further notes that this form of corruption which often manifests in the form of embezzlement, bribes (usually from private and foreign companies), or money laundering; is usually systemic, where these officials sometimes take advantage of the weaknesses in the institutional frameworks of the state for their personal benefits.

The small scale or petty corruption, on the other hand, is usually associated with low level public officials like the civil servants, who engage in practices such as the collection of bribes in small amounts from ordinary citizens requiring public service (Adetiba, 2016). In the view of Dike (2004) as cited in Kyambalesa (2006), petty corruption can be referred to as ‘bureaucratic corruption or corruption of need’. Olaniyan (2014), who also referred to this as ‘street-level’ or survival corruption, opines that it is common and practiced virtually every day and everywhere. A classic example of this type of corruption would be collection of bribes by police personnel on the road, student sorting of lecturers to pass examination, and so on.

As daunting as the task of conceptualizing corruption might be, it could be drawn from the available literature that corruption is ‘the misuse of public office for private gain’ (Svensson, 2005, Farreles, 2005). Similarly, Transparency International defined the term as ‘the abuse of entrusted power for private gain’ (2014). This definition, which is originally from the work of Nye (1967), *Corruption and Political Development: A Cost-Benefit Analysis*, is classified under the public-interest centred definition. This has also been critiqued for its shortcomings. It is seen as being ‘problematic’ and ‘too restrictive’ by social researchers like Haller & Shore (2005). For instance, Haller and Shore (2005) point out that this definition has simplified the concept and reduced it to dishonest individuals in the public service, thereby ruling out the existence of systemic corruption and corruption in the private sector. They also observed that most policies around the issue of corruption are now based on this simplified definition of the term. This may have informed the varieties in anti-corruption frameworks across different countries. While the



scope of some anti-corruption agencies covers both the private and public sector, others are only focused on the public sector, like South Africa's Public Protector (Adetiba, 2016).

Glaeser and Goldin (2004) as cited by Park (2012) stated that the term corruption originally meant, 'The process by which a well-functioning system of government decays into one that fails to deliver and maltreats its citizens'. That the Greek historian Polybius (c.200-118 BC) stated that monarchy corrupts into tyranny, aristocracy into oligarchy, and democracy into mob rule (McGing, 2010). Park went further to clarify that during the nineteenth century, the definition of corruption focused on systemic failure of a regime changed into a notion specifically related to public officials receiving bribe from private individuals. That bribery was generally an illegal reward in exchange for some government-controlled resources, such as an overpayment for a service or public property or an exemption from government regulation. During the nineteenth century, a considerable number of government officials frequently took bribes as a reward when they made a contract for street cleaning or construction services, etc. Corruption occurred when city governments distributed public-owned property such as public land. As a result, public-owned property was often sold not to the highest bidder but to the most generous briber. Some city governments were involved in bribery in the process of enacting rules such as prohibitions on gambling. Nye (1967) as cited by Park (2012) argued that what is seen as a corrupt act in one society may be accepted as legitimate in another society. Quoting Sandholtz and Koetzle (2000), Park (2012) suggested three approaches in analyzing corruption: public interest, public opinion, and the legal norm. And that the drawback of this argument is that it is not clear who should define the public interest – the elite or the ordinary people -- and how public opinion can be sufficiently representative of the view of the majority.

Unlike Transparency International which classified corruption into grand, petty and political corruption, Jain (2001) as cited by Park (2012) identified three types of corruption: grand corruption, bureaucratic corruption, and legislative corruption. Grand corruption refers to the use of political power by the elites in creating policies that favour their private interest, not public interest. They do this by channelling resources to those sectors where it is easier to make personal gain. Jain said it is difficult to identify this kind of corruption unless a bribe is exchanged. Bureaucratic corruption usually takes place by the civil servants who interact both with political elites and public individuals. In bureaucratic corruption, ordinary individuals could be forced to give bribes in order to speed the process of handling an official function. Or individuals could give bribes to the judiciary members in order to lessen a legal penalty. Legislative corruption involves influencing the voting pattern of legislators to serve the interest of some groups, or the members of the executive.

According to a former Chairman of the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) Justice Emmanuel Olayinka Ayoola, who was cited by a retired Deputy Director of the International Economic Relations Department of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), “the commonest form of corruption in Nigeria used to be bribery but in recent years this has been overtaken in level of prevalence by embezzlement and theft from public funds, extortion, abuse of discretion, abuse of public power for private gain, favouritism and nepotism, conflict of interest, extortion and illegal political party financing”. The ICPC which was established by an Act in the year, 2000, is mandated to receive and investigate reports of corruption and in appropriate cases prosecute the offender[s], to examine, review and enforce the correction of

corruption prone systems and procedures of public bodies, with a view to eliminating corruption in public life, and to educate and enlighten the public on and against corruption and related offences with a view to enlisting and fostering public support for the fight against corruption.

While a sister agency, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), which was also established by an Act in 2004, is mandated to investigate all financial crimes including advance fee fraud, money laundering, counterfeiting, illegal charge transfers, futures market fraud, fraudulent encashment of negotiable instruments, computer credit card fraud, contract scam, etc. Also the coordination and enforcement of all economic and financial crimes laws and enforcement functions conferred on any other person or authority.

Luo (2004) stated that political corruption can occur in an organizational dimension as well as in individual dimensions. He went further to state that, profit-driven organizations are willing to give bribes either to public servants or legislators. Unless the issue of organizational corruption is appropriately addressed, as Luo argued, rooting out corruption would be difficult because, unlike individuals, organizations can only face legal sanction without being arrested.

While the World Bank, who in recent years has become increasingly interested in the subject of corruption, particularly as it impacts on their operations in the various countries they work with, maintains that corruption covers a number of human actions, they settled for a simple definition of the term as ‘abuse of public office for private gain’ and this manifests in bribery, theft of public funds, political and bureaucratic corruption, isolated and systemic corruption, as well as corruption in the private sector (World Bank 2007).

In his conclusion, Park (2012) said that even though the opinions on the definition of corruption vary depending on individual scholars, it seems there is some minimal consensus among scholars. That corruption can be referred to as an illegitimate exchange of resources involving the abuse of public responsibility for private ends (Jain, 2001; Anderson & Tverdova, 2003; Bohara, Mitchell, & Mittendorf, 2004; Golden & Picci, 2005; Wu, 2005; Chang, 2005; Luo, 2004).

### **2.1.2. Historical Evolution of Corruption in Nigeria**

Corruption in Nigeria could be traced to the pre-colonial era, when the forerunners to colonial masters created Afro-European relationships that were premised on deception and exploitation. The colonialists established an empire on the foundation of scam or fraud and their “carrot and stick” approach was itself manipulative and deceptive. It was not different from offering grafts in exchange for favours, which falls within the conceptual framework of corruption. The acquisition and establishment of colonies were fraudulent and questionable (Davidson, 1960; Anene & Brown, 1966; Ikime 1985 in Folarin 2014). In some places, they had offered “protection”, sealed in questionable “protectorate treaties” that turned out to be outright scamming of local chiefs to let off their kingdoms without knowing it (Folarin 2014). Alagoa (1980) cited by Folarin (2014) revealed that King Jaja of Opobo was dethroned and banished by the forerunners to the colonial masters because he had questioned the meaning of “protectorate”.

Folarin (2014) further revealed that, during colonialism, the *divide and rule* and *carrot and stick* systems did not change and that it was this pattern of public corruption that the colonial masters directly bequeathed to the political class. This assertion evidently created the clamour for the

“turn by turn” administrative structure in Nigeria, where the various geo-political zones argue to have their turn at governance. And it is this pattern of governance that has encouraged corruption in Nigeria. It has created a syndrome of primitive acquisition of wealth by those in power at that material time because either it will take much time to come back or will not even get back to the previous occupants.

The choice of President Buhari as president of Nigeria at this time after he had a brief stint as Head of State in 1983-1985, could be linked to his doggedness in fighting indiscipline and corruption, which he termed “War Against Indiscipline”. Even though the programme was criticized in some quarters as too fierce, many people still hailed it as it brought sanity to some public and private establishments. What is significant about the current campaign against corruption is that it is being championed by a democratically elected government, guided by law and order, and with a constitutional role for the media. Again, given the dominant media ownership pattern in Nigeria where most of the media are privately owned, it is expected that they give critical and objective reportage to public affairs and governance, especially the anti-corruption crusade.

According to Rose-Ackerman (1999), qualitative, independent media reporting on corruption can play an important role in pressuring the government to act in the public interest. By drawing the attention to behaviour that is generally perceived as acceptable and exposing such behaviour as corrupt, media can raise public awareness; activate anticorruption values; and generate outside pressure from the public against corruption. The pluralistic nature of newspapers in Nigeria is an advantage for them to report government programmes independently. There are about 20 national daily newspapers in Nigeria. We have the Punch, Vanguard, This Day, Daily Times,

New Telegraph, Leadership, Nation, Daily Sun, Tribune etc.. These newspapers are owned by individuals, and are expected to give objective reportage to government activities and policies. Given the nature of corruption and the ownership status of some of the newspapers in Nigeria, this study investigated how corruption and corruption-related stories were represented and/or framed in the newspapers' reports. Ciboh (2014) citing Kaufmann (2000) affirmed that the media not only raise public awareness about corruption, its causes, consequences, and possible remedies but also investigate and report incidents of corruption, thereby aiding other oversight and prosecution bodies like EFCC and ICPC.

Sobowale, et al (2014) recalls the time when newspaper was a dominant and mediated information channel in Nigeria. That it was the major weapon that the British colonialists used to maintain firm grip and control over her subjects and colonies. It was also the weapon the nationalists employed to break the shackles of colonialism and obtain for their people political independence. In his quest to make Nigerians informed and enlightened, Rev. Henry Townsend established a Yoruba language newspaper in 1859, called *Iwe Irohin Fun Awon Ara Egba Ati Yoruba*, which means 'a newspaper of information for the Egba speaking people and Yorubas' (Oduşanya, 1976; Omu 1978; and Okafor, 2002) as cited by Ekeli (2007). This Yoruba language newspaper which had started as a vehicle for evangelizing the indigenes of areas that Church missionaries had visited, according to history, metamorphosed into a wide network of channels for education, enlightenment, social mobilisation and protestation against unfairness and injustice. With the establishment of such newspapers as the *Zikist conglomerate*, led by the *West African Pilot* (1937), the *Daily Times* (1925) and the *Nigerian Tribune* (1949) the press in Nigeria had attained a relatively high level of sophistication and dynamism, both in terms of

content, packaging and professionalism, going into, and after independence (Sobowale, et al, 2014). Since then, the Nigerian newspaper industry has been growing by leaps and bounds.

The main responsibility of the press is to provide comprehensive, analytical and factual news and opinion to the people on everyday issues and events of popular concern. To fulfil its duty and responsibility, the press must work according to the fundamental principles of professional ethics, as well as norms and values of journalism. Media play the role of watch-dog in reporting corruption, complacency and negligence. In a changing, competitive landscape, compliance to good governance has never been taken so seriously, as people demand more transparency from both the government and private sectors. Responsible practices from government, universal principles on human rights and the fight against corruption have assumed great importance (Laittos Projects, 2013). Policy makers can arrive at plausible solutions only after understanding corruption effects on the efficiency and equity of an economic and democratic system which can be adequately exposed by the media. People's response and reaction to national issues such as corruption are often based on the quantity and quality of information at their disposal and the media have been identified by many as the only institution capable of furnishing the citizens that quantity and quality of information to respond and to react. As Asemah (2009) submits, media are agents of social change that can bring about positive attitudinal change in the audience (readers); they set agenda for the people to follow in any society.

The mass media are crucial to opinion formation and eventual outcomes of events. Media aggressive reporting on corruption might also prompt pre-emptive responses by authorities eager to protect their reputation and the public image of their institution before any allegation is aired

(Nogara, 2009). According to Anderson (2002) media coverage of corruption in sectors of a nation's economy is indicative of the pervasiveness of corrupt practices in such sectors and can go a long way in curbing the spread. For example, the extensive media coverage of corruption scandals in Italy and Germany involving high-ranking politicians (Giglioli, 1996; Heidenheimer 2000; Lashmar, 2001) resulted in the very legitimacy of the political parties and the political system as a whole being shaken and the conviction of several high-level politicians on bribery charges respectively. It is often argued that corruption is not just a Nigerian but a global trend. For instance, Odinkalu (2010) had maintained that it will be difficult to address the problem of corruption and governance in Nigeria in isolation of the rest of Africa and that corruption is not just a Nigerian problem; it is a problem for Africa and for development to which African countries collectively lose an estimated 25% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) or about \$148 Billion annually. The argument here is that pre-colonial activities and eventual partitioning of Africa by the colonialists left corrupt tendencies in Africa, and of course, Nigeria. However, more useful control measures could be discovered if the source of corruption in Nigeria is unveiled.

### **2.1.3. Corruption and Change of Governments in Nigeria**

As stated earlier, corruption in Nigeria can be traced to the colonial regime when the modern public administration was created for the country and grew steadily with the expansion of the foreign religions- Christianity and Islam. It was Kofi Awoonor (also known as George Awoonor Williams) who, in his poem, *The Cathedral*, once decried the imposition of the colonialists' religion on the African traditional belief system as the catalyst for the growth of corruption in the African continent. The religion that came with the colonial masters undermined the African



belief system where any wrong-doing was always and instantly slammed with appropriate punishment that served as a deterrent to others, which also serve as a check and balance to the people. Folarin (2014) also put an argument forward, that Africans once lived together and had their traditional conflict and peace times which further bound them. But with the coming of the Europeans shortly after the Berlin settlement of colonial interest in 1885, the approach the Europeans came with were not far from corrupt practices. For instance, the missionaries had brought the message of sublimity and meekness through the teachings of the scriptural beatitudes but which the colonial masters seemed to have manipulated to make ‘zombies’ of the subjects, apparently preparatory to a fraudulent change of land and state ownership.

Odinkalu (2010) agreed with the view that Africans were organised and disciplined people that have respect for entrusted power before the arrival of the colonial masters. According to him, whatever the model of Nigerian or African social organisation were before the arrival of the colonialists, the fact remains that there were firm prohibitions against stealing, conversion or plunder of public resources for private gain, and any other elements implicit in the modern manifestations of corruption in governance. Besides, he pointed out that there were also quite profound social and political consequences for those involved in such conduct. In essence, civilization eroded the African punitive system where an offender was punished according to the offence committed, which serves as a deterrent to others. To this end, corruption gradually grew throughout the colonial era to the nation’s independence in 1960.

Before independence, there have been reported cases of official corruption like that of the Premier of the defunct Eastern Region, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, who violated the code of conduct for government officials that stipulates that a government officer shall relinquish his holdings in private business when he assumes public office (Storey, 1953; Ogbeyidi, 2012). However, the

Foster-Sutton Tribunal of Inquiry that investigated Dr. Azikiwe in 1956 discovered that Azikiwe did not sever his connections to the defunct African Continental Bank (ACB) when he became a Premier but that the Zik Group of Companies which took the bank loan of over £163,000 at a lower interest rate and over an extended period, remained the principal shareholders of the bank (Report of the Foster-Sutton Tribunal of Inquiry, 1956, Sklar, 2004).

Such act of corruption continued into the nation's independence in 1960 and have survived all forms and systems of governance be it military or democratic government. For instance, Ogbeidi (2012) reports that the First Republic under the leadership of Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, the Prime Minister, and Nnamdi Azikwe, the President, was marked by widespread corruption where government officials looted public funds with impunity and flaunted their wealth with reckless abandon. Little wonder that the administration was brought to an abrupt end by the first military coup d'état on 15<sup>th</sup> January 1966 on the ground of corruption. The coup brought in General Aguiyi Thomas Ironsi as the first military head of Nigerian state who instituted a series of commissions of inquiry to investigate the activities of some government parastatals and to probe the widespread corruption that characterised the public service sector of the deposed regime. The report on the parastatals, especially the Nigeria Railway Corporation, Nigeria Ports Authority, and the defunct Electricity Corporation of Nigeria and Nigeria Airways, revealed that a number of ministers formed companies and used their influence to secure contracts. Moreover, they were found guilty of misappropriation of funds as well as disregarding laid down procedures in the award of contracts by parastatals under their ministries (Okonkwo, 2007, Ogbeidi, 2012).

However, the military administration of General Ironsi could not survive the corruption allegations owing to the way they assumed office. As such, the zeal to punish the wrong doers of

the First Republic died with the Gowon counter coup of July 1966. As the event unfolded however, it became glaring that the military rulers were not better nor different from the ousted civilian leaders in terms of corruption control and management as the menace continue to grow unabated under the watch of the military leadership. It was so pathetic that despite the fact that General Yakubu Gowon ruled the country at one of the most prosperous period (the oil boom of the 1970s), the fortune could not profit the country much because of mismanagement of resources and deep-seated corruption (Ogbeidi, 2012). By 1974, reports of unaccountable wealth of Gowon's military governors and other public office holders had become the crux of discussion in the various Nigerian dailies. Again, corruption became the primary reason for another coup in July 1975 which brought in General Murtala Mohammed to address the situation.

General Murtala Mohammed began the war against corruption by declaring his assets and asking all government officials to follow suit. He instituted a series of probes of past leaders including the Belgore Commission of Inquiry and the Federal Assets Investigation Panel of 1975 among others. The Federal Assets Investigation Panel specifically found ten of the twelve state military governors in the Gowon regime guilty of corruption, dismissed and forced same to give up ill-acquired properties considered to be in excess of their earnings (Maduagwu quoted in Gboyega, 1996). In the same vein, the Belgore Commission of Inquiry which investigated the 'Cement Armada' indicted the Gowon government of inflating contracts for cement from the required N2.9 million at a cost of N52 million to the 16 million metric tons of cement it ordered at a cost of N557 million (Afolabi, 1993) for the ministry of defence. Similar commissions of inquiry were constituted by the new state governments which resulted in the immediate dismissal of

several corrupt officials, many of whom were in turn ordered to refund the money they had stolen (Ogbeidi, 2012).

In October 1979, the civilian government of former President Shehu Shagari was ushered into power. However, the period again saw the surge of corruption in Nigerian political system. This was compounded by the President's indifference posture to the alarming looting of public funds by elected officials. Report has it that over \$16 billion in oil revenues were lost between 1979 and 1983 under President Shehu Shagari's watch. Again, the military, led by General Muhammadu Buhari, was infuriated by the level of corruption in Shagari's government and seized power from the civilian elected President on 31<sup>st</sup> December 1983. The 1983 coup was also carried out with the aim of halting corruption and restoring discipline, integrity and dignity to public life. General Buhari's regime promised to bring corrupt officials and their agents to book. Consequently, state governors and commissioners were arrested and brought before tribunals of inquiry many of whom were convicted and sentenced to many years in prison besides the seizure of public properties and wealth found at their disposal. The new Buhari regime was toppled by the General Ibrahim Babangida in a bloodless in-house coup on 27<sup>th</sup> August 1985.

Babangida's administration made no serious attempt to stop corruption but rather institutionalized it so much so that even those found guilty by tribunals under the Murtala Mohammed and Muhammadu Buhari's regimes found their way back to public life and recovered their seized properties (Maduagwu quoted in Gboyega, 1996). Coupled with the June 12<sup>th</sup> 1993 annulled election, intense public opposition to Babangida's rule forced him to reluctantly step aside and handed over power to a non-elected military-civilian Interim National

Government on 26<sup>th</sup> August 1993 which was later ousted from power by the military under the leadership of General Sani Abacha on 17<sup>th</sup> November 1993 (Ogbeidi, 2012). Abacha's regime only furthered the deep-seated corrupt practices, which already characterised public life since the inception of the Babangida regime. Under General Abacha, corrupt practices became blatant and systematic. According to the International Centre for Asset Recovery (2009), the estimated cost of the embezzlement of public funds and corruption proceeds of General Abacha and his family amounted to USD 4 billion. This estimation amount seemed to have surpassed that of other notorious African rulers, such as Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire (now called the Democratic Republic of Congo) (Ogbeidi, 2012).

Upon his sudden death in June 1998, General Abdulsalami Abubakar took over the reign of governance and subsequently handed it over to a democratically elected civilian government in May 1999 after having spent eleven months in power. It is on record that even though the Abdulsalami Abubakar's government showed dedicated commitment to returning the country to democracy, it did not do much to fight corruption.

Fully aware of the devastating effects of corruption on project Nigeria over the years, President Olusegun Obasanjo swung into action against the menace by strengthening the existing anti-corruption laws and established two important anti-corruption institutions: the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC); to tackle the phenomenon of corruption in public and private life squarely.

The ICPC which was inaugurated on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2000 was established to target corruption in the public sector, especially cases of bribery, gratification, graft, and abuse or misuse of office (The Corrupt practices and other Related Offences Act, 2000). The EFCC, on the other hand, was established in 2003, partially in response to pressure from the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering (FATF), which named Nigeria among twenty-three non-cooperative countries frustrating the efforts of the international community to fight money laundering (EFCC (Establishment) Act, 2002). Unlike ICPC, the EFCC investigates people in all sectors who appear to be living above their means. Although both bodies have helped immensely in the fight against corruption in the country, their efforts have not resulted in the eradication of the phenomenon. However, President Olusegun Obasanjo's fight against corruption was highly questioned and tagged as a witch-hunt against perceived political opponents as there were instances where President Obasanjo was alleged of direct corrupt dealings like the 2003 PDP Special Convention where the presidential flag bearer was chosen, more than N1billion bribe was allegedly shared to delegates by the Obasanjo group on the ninth floor of the Nicon Hilton Hotel, Abuja (Adekeye, 2003).

Throughout the eight years presidency of President Olusegun Obasanjo, he was fully in-charge of the petroleum ministry, where high-level corrupt practices took place with impunity. The over \$400 million invested on the Turn-Around Maintenance (TAM) and repairs of the refineries failed to yield any positive result, and the contractors awarded the contracts were never brought to book (Adekeye, 2003). Records have also shown that the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) was at the centre of major corrupt practices in the industry with regards to the operation of its finances, especially in respect of actual revenue realised from the sale of

crude oil, and other petroleum resources, such as natural gas. Furthermore, the report by the Revenue Mobilisation Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC) indicated that 445,000 barrels of crude oil sold by the NNPC between January and July 2002 was not accounted for in its financial report. The report further indicated that within the seven-month period, there was a shortfall of N302 billion as undeclared revenues. The request by Haman Tukur, Chairman of RMAFC, to the Presidency to compel Jackson Gaius-Obaseki, former Group Managing Director of NNPC, to refund the remaining money into government's coffer was never heeded. More so, the joint panel of the National Assembly set up to probe the matter was also hindered by the Presidency and top hierarchy officials of the People Democratic Party on the ground that the probe would send negative signals abroad about corruption in Nigeria, particularly because the Presidency directly oversees the petroleum ministry (Adekeye, 2003, Shettima, 2009).

Again, during the first four years of the Olusegun Obasanjo administration, federal ministers allegedly stole more than ₦23 billion from the public coffers. An audit report released by Vincent Azie, acting Auditor-General of the Federation, showed that the amount represented financial frauds ranging from embezzlement, payments for jobs not done, over-invoicing, double-debiting, inflation of contract figures to release of money without the consent of the approving authority in ten major ministries (Ogbeidi, 2012). Rather than cautioning the ministers whose ministries were named in the fraud or invite the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) to further investigate the veracity of the alleged fraud, Vincent Azie was hastily retired by the Presidency for procedural offences (Adekeye, 2003, Haruna, 2009).

The National Identity Card scandal is another case of high profile corruption perpetrated by the top echelon of the nation's political leadership class. In 2001, the administration of Olusegun

Obasanjo awarded the \$214 million National Identity Card project to SAGEM S.A., a French company, under controversial circumstances because the Nigerian Security Printing and Minting Company (NSPMC), which bided for the same contract at a lower rate, was not obliged (Asaju, 2003, Ogbeidi, 2012).

Till date, corruption remains one of the major banes of the nation's development and no administration has clearly and successfully wrestled it, not even the late President Umar Musa Yar'Adua talked-about administration. It was on record that upon assumption of office in May, 2007, President Yar'Adua declared his assets and urged his cabinet members and other elected officers to do likewise. He was equally reckoned to have staged a serious battle against corruption and committed to driving the development of the nation through his 7-points agenda before his death in May, 2010. He was also the first and perhaps, the last Nigerian President to return unspent money back into the nation's treasury at the end of the budgetary year.

However, former President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan who assumed office as President after the death of President Yar'Adua and who ruled for an approximated period of five years was generally perceived to have headed one of the most corrupt administration in the history of the nation's democracy despite his effort to tame the rising trend of corruption through the introduction of policies and programmes like the Treasury Single Account [TSA]; Government Integrated Financial Management Information System [GIFMIS]; and the Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System [IPPIS]. President Goodluck Jonathan claimed in his 2015 handover speech that, his introduction of the Treasury Single Account [TSA] was able to unify the structure of government accounts for all MDAs and brought order to cash flow management;



the introduction of Government Integrated Financial Management Information System [GIFMIS] helped in plugging leakages and waste of resources; and that the Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System [IPPIS] also weeded out 60,450 ghost workers in 359 out of 425 MDAs, yielding N185.4 billion in savings to the Federal government, and was able to save the nation from the perennial decay orchestrated by corruption. Such claims notwithstanding, his administration never tried any of his cabinet members or those outside his cabinet who were alleged to have stolen the nation's common wealth. The perception was so strong that a number of Nigerians were believed to have voted against him in the 2015 presidential election with the hope of ending the menace that was already growing out of proportion.

The coming into office of President Muhammadu Buhari in May, 2015 opened another chapter on the narrative on corruption in Nigeria. So far, the administration has tried and still trying many perceived corrupt politicians, both serving and past political office holders including the sitting Senate President Bukola Saraki, the former Security Adviser to the President, Dasuki, and the likes.

#### **2.1.4 Nature of Corruption in Nigeria**

Looking into the nation's history, it appears that corruption has been a part of the nation's evolution and development. Apart from instances of corrupt practices in the pre-independence Nigeria, the political leadership of the country has always been accused of one form of corruption or the others. This accusation was evident in the news broadcast announcing the first military coup in Nigeria in 1966, when Major Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwe referred to Nigerian leaders as 'ten percent who have made Nigeria a laughing stock in the comity of nations'

(Onwumah, 2013), and vowed to bring it to end with the view the setting the nation on the part of rapid development. However, the trend of corruption survived and thrived throughout the over three decades of military rule in Nigeria and has continued to spread since return to civil rule in 1999, manifesting in different ways and forms, making the legislature, the judiciary, and the executive, as well as the general public, active actors in the practice (Oyebode, N.D).

Different forms and shades in which corruption has manifested in Nigeria over the years include but not limited to ‘stealing of public resources, inflation of contract sums, over-invoicing of procurement, disruption of public institutional procedures, setting aside of regulations, insensitive allocation of resources and projects, personalization of state powers, misappropriation and misapplication of voted funds, and uneven distribution of human and material resources. Others include election rigging, political patronage in the sharing of patrimony, and parochial or sectional interests overriding public interests’ (Oyebode, n.d). However, of most public concern is the form of corruption involving highly placed public office holders who misappropriate public funds or abuse public offices for their personal gains. Such corrupt practices have also been in the centre of media attentions, perhaps, owing to their massive devastating effects on the development of the country.

Corruption is so pervasive in Nigeria to the extent that it contributes greatly to the wide spread of poverty, unemployment, militancy, insurgency, and insecurity of all forms in the country. Alliyu, Kalejaiye, and Ogunola (2014) list the beneficiaries of corruption proceeds to include traditional institutions, religious institutions, legal institutions, civil societies, and unions/associations. Others include professional bodies, media, ethnic nationalities, security agencies, political

institutions, international organizations, the electorate, contractors, and people in business, schools, and family systems.

### **2.1.5. Elements of Corruption in Nigeria**

Based on the discussion on the concept of corruption above, the following elements of corruption were deduced:

1. *Bribery*: It is derived from the word, bribe, which means a gift, usually of money, offered to someone to persuade them to do something illegal or improper. Therefore, bribery means the act or practice of offering or taking bribe.
2. *Stealing*: To take away another person's property without permission or legal right. It also means to obtain something by cleverness or trickery.
3. *Nepotism*: The practice of favouring one's relatives or friends, especially in making official appointments.
4. *Impunity*: Freedom or exemption from punishment, injury, loss or other bad consequences.
5. *Embezzlement*: To take or use dishonestly (money or property with which one has been entrusted).
6. *Extortion*: It is derived from the word, extort, which means to obtain (money or information, etc) by threats or violence.
7. *Laundering (Money)*: To transfer (money, etc) that has been obtained illegally through banks or legitimate businesses to cover up its origins.
8. *Fraud*: An act of deliberate deception, with the intention of gaining some benefit.

9. *Misappropriation*: To take something (especially money) dishonestly for oneself. It also means to put some something (e.g. funds) to a wrong use.

From the foregoing, the concept of corruption in Nigeria is truly complex. Zibiri (2018) who had lived and worked in Abuja for about 18 years, said about Nigeria:

Even two million of the likes of Buhari cannot change Nigeria... everything is wrong with Nigeria. The director would not give you a contract except you pay up front. The banks would not give you loan except you concede a certain percentage. The man supervising the contract would not pass the job except you play ball. The clerk would not pass your file for payment except you rob his palm. The account department would not raise your payment voucher or cheque unless you see them. The worst thing is that it has become a norm that nobody sees anything wrong with it. If you think otherwise, they begin to think you are sick and not normal. If you try to stand in their way, you put your life at risk. If you get killed there is no justice system in place to seek redress and bring the perpetrators to book. The police are corrupt; the Judiciary is the same. Even the religious circle is not spared. Everything in Nigeria revolves around corruption. Nobody cares about anything. No law and order. I looked from my left to right, everybody is only desperate about 'money'. They will kill anybody and anything that stand between them and money.

No wonder, former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Mr David Cameron in a recent discussion with the Queen of England, described Nigeria as fantastically corrupt. The level of corruption has permeated all aspect of governance in Nigeria that none of the three tiers of government is actually free from corruption. The executive that is supposed to design policies and programmes for effective implementation is being accused of corruption by the legislature, and the legislature that is saddled with the responsibility of over sighting the activities of the executive is also accused by the executive. The Judiciary is not left out in this game as it is being accused of taking bribe from corrupt government officials and pervert justice. No meaningful

socio-economic development can take place in such environment where the managers of our economic resources are in constant accusation and counter-accusation. In the light of the foregoing, one could only agree with Oyewole (2008), that corruption is a symptom of deep-rooted economic and political weaknesses and shortcomings in the executive, legislative and judicial system of the country.

#### **2.1.6. Causes of Corruption**

Several reasons have been adduced for the growing tide of corruption in Nigeria and elsewhere in the world. According to a World Bank's (1997) report on Corruption and Economic Development, 'the causes of corruption are always contextual; rooted in a country's policies, bureaucratic traditions, political development and social history'. Be that as it may, a number of factors have been identified across different climes and epochs as responsible for the spread of corruption across countries of the world. The generic factors that could account for the growth of corruption according to Adetiba (2016) include weak government policies and size of the public sector. Weak government policies can be seen as a generic cause of corruption, which cuts across different countries (World Bank, 1997). Similarly, Lambsdorff (2006) identified the quality of regulations put in place by authorities to regulate the conduct of both public and private citizens and residents. As noted by the World Bank, every country has regulations against corrupt practices. Aside from the weakness of some of these regulations, most of them are plagued by poor implementation and enforcement.

Another generic factor responsible for the growth of corruption is the size of the public sector (Lambsdorff, 2006). He explains that corruption is more prevalent in countries that have a large

public sector, as this shows how much of the economic structure is controlled by the state. This view is mostly shared by those who support privatisation policies and market economy. The argument is made that the more political economic power is concentrated in an entity, be it an individual or a state, the higher the propensity for corruption. This is aptly expressed in the popular axiom by Lord Upton: 'Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely' (van der Merwe, 2001, p.17).

Also writing on *Corruption: Causes, Effects and Deterrents*, Kyambalesa (2006, p.108), x-rayed the causes of corruption in the African context. According to him, corruption is caused by a multiplicity of factors as highlighted by Adetiba (2016, p.17-30) are as reproduced:

- 1. Poor governance:** Poor governance is used in this context to mean any governance system that lacks 'principles of accountability, transparency, the rule of law, and genuine citizen participation' (Kyambalesa, 2006, p.108). These are core principles of governance, without which the affairs of the state cannot be properly managed. It is interesting to note that poor governance is a common feature of evolving democracies in Africa. The affairs of government in most of these states are shrouded in secrecy, lacking in transparency and accountability. According to Klitgaard (1998, p.6), corruption 'equals monopoly of power plus discretion of officials minus accountability'. Where there is no proper accountability, corruption thrives, as public officials do whatever they like with no consequences.
- 2. Political instability:** Political instability is another common feature of African countries. This factor, according to Kyambalesa (2006, p.108), causes uncertainty and fear in public institutions, where people are concerned about the security of their jobs. This uncertainty pushes public office holders and public servants into corrupt practices with the aim of

providing safety nets for themselves against unforeseen job loss. The other important aspect of political instability in Africa is military intervention in politics, which in itself is usually blamed on high levels of corruption by politicians. A number of African countries have experienced the intervention of the military in domestic politics. These regimes are in turn characterised by high levels of corruption, which further negatively affects governance and development.

- 3. Traditional practices:** The carryover of traditional practices has also been identified as one of the causes of corruption in Africa (Sakyi *et al.*, 2011). This is in line with the theoretical framework of this study, which maintains that corruption results where traditional elements (patrimonialism) influence a modern bureaucracy. For instance, patronage is accepted under traditional rule, which is characterized by loyalty, favouritism, and familial affinity, which are not frowned upon. However, there are laws against these practices under modern democratic governance, and the existence of rules is of the features of modern bureaucracy (Wallis, 1989).
- 4. Weak legislative and judicial system:** The judiciary and legislature are important arms of government meant to act as checks on the executive. They are among the factors meant to check executive excesses by ensuring transparency and accountability in governance. Where these arms of government are weak in terms of providing checks for the executive, corruption thrives (Van der Merwe, 2006, p.38). The reason for separation of power between the executive, judiciary and legislature is so that they can serve as checks and balances to one another. A situation where there is no proper separation of power between them, or where the executive has overwhelming power over the others, is a recipe for corruption (Klitgaard, 1998).

5. **Bureaucratic red tape:** A governance system that is characterized by stringent bureaucracy gives room for public officials to engage in corrupt practices. According to Caiden (2009) stated that when bureaucracy is taken too seriously, it becomes pathological, and one of its manifestations is corruption. Rigid administrative processes that cause delay could make public official demand bribes to hasten the process for members of the public who are in a hurry to procure a particular service (Muniu-Pippidi, 2011). In this case, even if the corrupt act is not supplied, it could be demanded by the members of the public in order to bypass cumbersome administrative procedures. This is the type of corruption that some scholars have termed ‘efficient corruption’.
6. **Inadequate compensation:** Inadequate compensation has been identified as one of the major causes of corruption in the public sector (Luiz, 2000; Brown, 2001). Where public officials are inadequately remunerated, some of them engage in unethical practices in order to compensate. In this instance, corruption is demanded from members of the public seeking to use public services, which occurs more in the form of bribery. Corrupt practices that result from inadequate compensation are regarded as the corruption of need (Dike, 2004). Even though this does not justify corruption in any way, it has been identified as a major cause of corruption, particularly in Africa, where development is still a challenge.

Sowunmi, Raufu, Oketokun, Salako, and Usifoh,. (2010, p. 11) highlighted the following Nigeria-specific causes of corruption in recent times:

1. The sudden disappearance of good moral and ethical values. Nwaobi (2004) posited that Nigeria must be one of the very few countries in the world where a man’s source of



wealth is of no concern to his neighbours, the public or the government. Wealthy people who are known to be corrupt are regularly courted and honoured by communities, religious bodies, social clubs and other private organizations. This implies that people who benefit from the largesse of these corrupt people rarely ask questions.

2. Sociological and/or cultural factors such as customs, family pressures on government officials and ethnicity constitute potential causes of corruption. In Nigeria, although traditional values of gift giving and tributes to leaders often lead to what Brownsberger (1983) describes as 'polite corruption', the extent of such corruption is relatively small. Dandago (2008) revealed that traditional chieftaincy titles and membership of boards of directors of government-owned corporations are only for the 'influential' individuals in the society who have 'made it' economically or politically. Most of those people 'made it' through enriching themselves fraudulently, but enjoy public respect and accolades. The most annoying thing is that honest and dedicated public servants, who have not accumulated dirty wealth, do not command much respect from the society. These attitudes serve to encourage a new-breed of public servants who engage in corrupt practices. A number of authors (Wraith and Simpkins, 1963; Llyod, 1967; McMullan, 1961) have pointed out that Africans know the difference between a polite gratuity and a bribe and that traditional (Nigerian) culture does recognize that the community leader has a duty to his people, and that this bars systematic exploitation of office. Chabal and Daloz (1999) reasoned that in Africa, such factors as the obligations of mutual support, the imperatives of reciprocity, the importance of gift exchange, the payment of tribute, the need to redistribute, even the habits of cattle rustling, or, more generally, of plundering others, all have a bearing on the phenomenon of corruption on the continent today. There

are also those who believe that modern bribery may not be seen as cognate with traditional gift giving since it takes place outside the context of a patron-client relationship. Ethnically, the poor man's bribe to the faceless power he will never meet again is completely distinct from his traditional gift to a patron.

3. A weak enforcement mechanism (e.g. lack of judicial independence; weak prosecutorial institutions) is another major cause of corruption in Nigeria. The forces, which deter corruption, are often weak as some, if not most, of the law enforcement agencies are themselves corrupt. In addition, rulers, politicians and civil servants are highly corrupt, and professional organizations may be incapable of sanctioning their members. According to Maduegbuna (2005) the benefits of corruption are greater than the consequences of being caught and disciplined. High incidence of poverty, which according to National Bureau of Statistics (2005) is put at 54.1% contributed in no small amount to the desperation of Nigerian to acquire wealth through any means. While the few employed received low wages, unemployment is high. The unemployed are mostly youths engaged in antisocial activities, such as cyber-crime, drug peddling, prostitution, political thuggery, paid assassins, oil bunkering, kidnapping, militancy (Niger delta) among others; all in the name of money. Dandago (2008) observed that the poor salary levels of most public servants have not kept pace with inflation, which has eroded their purchasing power. It is also clear that the process of gaining power in Nigeria is either by armed force or the influence of money. Jimo *et al* (2001) attributed corruption within the [African] region's public administrations to over-centralization of power, lack of media freedom to expose scandals, the impunity of well-connected officials, and absence of transparency in public fund management, clientalism and low salaries.

It is important to note that the list of possible causes of corruption in a country like Nigeria is not exhaustive. Whatever be the cause of corruption however, there are corresponding damaging consequences on Nigeria and any other country where the incidence is allowed to fester.

### **2.1.7. Effects of Corruption on Nigeria**

Although, some have argued for the benefits of corruption as seen in the revisionist perspective on corruption, there appear to be more research evidences stating otherwise. Corruption is perhaps the most important factor that is impeding the accelerated socio-economic transformation of developing or less developed countries (LDCs) of the world. In fact, it is recognised by development scholars that the level of reduction in corruption has a very direct link to the level of economic development of nations in the world (Oyewole, 2008). Cameron (2016) pointed out that corruption is the cancer at the heart of so many of our problems in the World today. And that it destroys jobs and holds back growth, costing the World economy billions of pounds every year. Some of the general effects of corruption according to Adetiba (2016, p. 30-31) include:

- 1. Negative Economic Growth:** One of the ways corruption affects economic growth, according to Tooley and Mahoi (2007, p.369), is that it discourages foreign direct investments and local investments. There are instances where local investors prefer to invest in neighbouring countries because of rampant corruption in their home country. This would further exacerbate the problem of development. Generally, investors' confidence is eroded in the face of massive corruption. It also affects economic growth

by raising public expenditure and creating budget deficits, making it difficult for government to deliver on their promises. It has been pointed out that there is an inverse relationship between increased taxes and corruption on the inflow of foreign direct investment (Wei, 1997, p.1). That is, where corruption levels and taxation are high, foreign investment would be low, thereby affecting economic growth.

- 2. Tarnishes National image:** Heymans and Lipietz (1999, p.22) note that highly corrupt countries suffer castigation, particularly from international development partners. They cited instances where countries have had their aid stopped by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as a result of rampant corruption. The negative labelling that result from being known as a highly corrupt country affects bilateral and economic relations; and it discourages the rendering of technical assistance, debt relief, and other forms of collaboration that exist between countries. This is one of the stated reasons why international donor agencies usually impose stringent conditions and policy suggestions on countries aiming to benefit from their facilities. According to Eigen (2004) of Transparency International, corruption negatively affects the integrity of nations and their institutions.
- 3. Hampers Delivery of Public Good:** Corruption hampers the efforts of the state to cater for the well-being of the citizens, as resources meant for that purpose are often diverted into private purses. Necessities such as food, good health care systems, education, and housing remain inadequate, and in some instances unavailable, because resources end up in private accounts (Eigen, 2004). Countries with high rates of corruption are usually inefficient and provide low-quality public services. In such countries, the quality of health care services, transportation systems, education, and other infrastructures are either

poor or non-existent. There are instances where government would have made budgetary provisions for these projects at the beginning of the year, but this would not have been seen by the end of that fiscal year. Reinikka and Svensson (2006), in their study of the Ugandan educational sector, discovered how corruption affects service delivery. Soliman and Cable (2011), in their study *Sinking under corruption*, discovered the role corruption played in the 2006 ferry disaster that killed 1035 people on the Red Sea. Their study revealed some irregularities before the accident that contributed to it, as well as irregularities during and after the investigation into the disaster. Here, we see how corruption can endanger the lives of the citizens.

- 4. Inequality and Poverty:** In addition to poor service delivery, which affects the citizens directly, corruption also promotes poverty and inequality by concentrating wealth in the hands of a few at the expense of the majority (Tooley & Mahoi, 2007). By reducing growth, corruption also reduces the opportunities available to the poor to escape from poverty, thereby widening the income gap between the rich and poor.

However, Nigeria has suffered specifically from the effects of corruption in a number of ways which according to Sowummi et al (2010), ‘...has been and continues to be a destructive element in the governance of Nigeria and the perception of the country in the comity of nations. Dandago (2008) shares similar view when he stated that corruption in Nigeria, just as in most other African countries, has currently become the greatest challenge to leaders and citizens, threatening to undermine effective governmental financial management; a threat to both economic development and the process of establishing an enduring democracy in the country. Oyewole (2008) quoted Editor-in-Chief of the News and PM News, Bayo Onanuga that, in many

studies conducted in Nigeria, corruption has been found to be the greatest problem militating against the Nation's socio-economic progress. The Sunday Vanguard of August 14, 2016, reported that Nigeria has earned about 96 trillion naira from only crude oil sales in the last 58 years, yet, the country continued to parade one of the worst development indicators across the globe (Dunu, Onoja and Agara, 2017). The problem is that this huge amount of money is not reflected in the nation's infrastructural and human capital development in various sectors such as education, health care, defence, etc. Even at this moment, most Nigerians who could afford the bill still seek health care from outside the country.

To Maduegbuna (2005), negative effects of corruption in Nigeria could be loss of government revenue, negative national image, poor governance, brain drain, electoral malpractices, poor investment climate, business failure, unemployment and poverty. Also writing on the effects of corruption on Nigeria, Ribadu (2006b) opined that corruption is worse than terrorism as the perpetual collapse of infrastructure and institutions, the endemic poverty, the general underdevelopment and cyclical failure of democracy to take root could aptly be blamed on the menace. Stople (2008) also explained that the cost of corruption exceeds by far the damage caused by any other single crime as it worsens the investment climate, undermines competitiveness of national economies, and has harmful impacts on foreign investment. This is because besides the fact that corruption could raise the initial costs of investment, it could equally increase the risks and uncertainty associated with doing business and as such serves as disincentive to investment. Corruption makes it difficult for a low-income country to establish and maintain trustworthy and consistent economic conditions (Zero Tolerance Campaign, 2008).

Again, a look at the nation's economic indices over the years shows that corruption has contributed significantly to the retarded economic growth, enhanced inequalities, and reduced the government's capacity to respond to people's needs with the attendant increase rate of poverty in the country. To Langseth *et al.* (1997), corruption distorts economic and social development, by engendering wrong choices and by encouraging competition in bribery rather than in the quality and price of goods and services and, all too often, it means that the world's poorest must pay for the corruption of their own officials and of multinationals' agents. In the same vein, corruption leads to a growing gap between the rich and the poor and deepens poverty by enriching a few at the expense of fellow citizens. Under a corrupt system, there is a concentration of wealth in the hands of a tiny minority of the population. Resultantly, income distribution becomes highly skewed. Closely associated with the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few, a distorted consumption pattern, aimed at meeting the luxurious lifestyle of the urban elite (Zero Tolerance Campaign, 2008).

There also exist overwhelming empirical research evidences to explain the negative effects of corruption on Nigerian society. For instance, Fabayo *et al* (2011) take a critical look at the impact of corruption on investment in Nigeria using the Ordinary Least Square modus operandi and the Transparency International (TI) corruption index between 1996 and 2010. In their analysis, they revealed that Nigeria is always at the bottom of (TI) rankings which indicated that the increased high-level of corruption in Nigeria leads to lower investment drive and slippery economic growth. In a similar study, Akindele (2005) as cited in Awojobi (2014) evaluates the interface between corruption and development. The empirical results of the study after using some economic variables denote that corruption hinder economic development. He concluded

that there is a strong negative relation between corruption and development nexus and corruption remains the core barrier to the development of any society. Further to this, Adewale (2011) examines the crowding-out effect of corruption in the Nigeria fourth republic. Using the simulation approach to evaluate the effects of financial corruption in Nigeria, he pinpoints from his empirical findings that corruption retards economic growth in Nigeria which implies that corruption has a crowding-out impact on economic growth. In addition, new African scholars in the horizon such as (Nageri et al. 2013; Agbiboa, 2012; Maunro, 2007; Obayelu, 2007; Sachs, 2005; Smith 2007; PWC, 2016) are of the view that corruption is the bane to African development.

According to PWC, which is a member firm of PricewaterhouseCoopers International Limited, Nigeria's GDP could have been 22%, 18% and 36% higher in 2014 if it had reduced corruption to Ghana's, Colombia's and Malaysia's levels respectively. In the same way, Nigeria's 2030 GDP can be 22%, 19% and 37% higher if it reduces corruption to Ghana's, Colombia's, and Malaysia's levels (p. 14-16).

As a result of the huge negative impact of corruption on the Nigeria Project, every successful government, whether military or civilian, has repeatedly stressed the need to curb the menace and has genuinely or pretentiously devoted effort to doing same since the nation's independence in 1960.

#### **2.1.8. Military Governments and the Fight against Corruption**



Every successive leader in Nigeria has attempted to contain corruption in the interest of the nation. Of great concern under this section the military regime which lasted for decades. Nigerian military leaders have been very vocal in condemning the growing level of corruption in the country and had offered to help out through their various coups since 1966. This could be seen in their various coup speeches over the years. For instance, while announcing the first military coup on January 15<sup>th</sup>, 1966, Major Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu explained that ‘the aim of the Revolutionary Council is to establish a strong united and prosperous nation, free from corruption and internal strife... Our enemies are... those that have corrupted our society and put the Nigerian political calendar back by their words and deeds’; and therefore promised to decisively deal with corruption. In a similar fashion, during his maiden coup speech on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1984, Major General Mohammadu Buhari, decried the level of corruption among the political elite and declared his resolve to address the situation. According to him, ‘While corruption and indiscipline have been associated with our state of under-development, these two evils in our body politic have attained unprecedented height in the past few years. The corrupt, inept and insensitive leadership in the last four years has been the source of immorality and impropriety in our society’.

Sequel to the above, successive military governments in Nigeria put in place several anticorruption measures and strategies such as War Against Indiscipline (WAI) of the Buhari/Idiagbon regime (1984-1985), Babangida’s Committee on Corruption and other Economic Crimes and War Against Corruption (Diamond, 1991; Bello-Imam 2004); setting up of probe panels, commission of enquiry and tribunal (e.g. Failed Bank Tribunal) to try corrupt individuals. By laws such as Advance Fee Fraud and Fraud Related Offences Act of 1995,

Foreign Exchange Act of 1995, The Money Laundering Act 1995, The Failed Banks (Recovery of Debts) and Financial Malpractices in Banks Act 1994, The Banks and other Financial Institutions Act 1991; and Miscellaneous Offences Act.

However, the events that ensued such military Presidents' rhetoric, policies and programmes against corruption appeared not to have yielded the desired results as many years after the military adventure into Nigerian politics, rather than ameliorating, cases of corruption continued to soar higher and higher throughout the lifespan of the military and the country continued to be ranked among the most corrupt nations of the world. The situation is so daunting that some key players in the fight against corruption said that it was the military that popularised corruption in Nigeria in the first place. Ribadu (2006) as cited by Amorighoye and Musa (2015) asserted that the military took corruption to its highest levels ever. The history of corruption in Nigeria is strongly rooted in the over 29 years of military rule, out of over 50 years of her statehood. Successive military regimes subdued the rule of law, facilitated the wanton looting of the public treasury, decapitated public institutions and free speech and instituted a secret and opaque culture in the dominant guiding principle of running affairs of state. The period witnessed a total reversal and destruction of every good thing in the country.

### **2.1.9. Civilian Administrations and the Fight against Corruption**

Not even the various civilian led administrations were silent on the need to curb corruption for efficient functioning of the country's system. For instance, President Olusegun Obasanjo, who in his May 29, 1999 inaugural speech, described the period between General Babangida and General Sani Abachas's (1985-1998) administration that:

One of the greatest tragedies of military rule in recent times is that corruption was allowed to grow unchallenged and unchecked even when it was glaring for everybody to see. Rules and regulations for doing official business were deliberately ignored, set aside, or by-passed to facilitate corrupt practices. Government officials became progressively indifferent to propriety of conduct and showed little commitment to promoting the general welfare of the people and the public good. Government and all its agencies became thoroughly corrupt and reckless.

The President who acknowledged that ‘corruption is incipient in all human societies and in most human activities’, described it as ‘the greatest single bane of our society today’ and promised to tackle corruption ‘head-on at all levels’. According to him, ‘no society can achieve anything near its full potential if it allows corruption to become the full-blown cancer it has become in Nigeria’.

True to his promise of stamping out corruption in Nigeria, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, through executive bills to the National Assembly, inaugurated the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) (in full the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission) on the 29th of September 2000. The mandate is to receive and investigate reports of corruption and in appropriate cases prosecute the offender(s), to examine, review and enforce the correction of corruption prone systems and procedures of public bodies, with a view to eliminating corruption in public life, and to educate and enlighten the public on and against corruption and related offences with a view to enlisting and fostering public support for the fight against corruption.

Also, in 2004, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) was established with the mandate to investigate all financial crimes including advance fee fraud, money laundering, counterfeiting, illegal charge transfers, futures market fraud, fraudulent encashment of negotiable

instruments, computer credit card fraud, contract scam, etc. Also the coordination and enforcement of all economic and financial crimes laws and enforcement functions conferred on any other person or authority. Since then, these anti-corruption agencies have been discharging their duties by way of investigation of petitions, arrest and trial of suspects in the courts of law.

When he took over power from Chief Obasanjo in 2007, Late President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua promised to consolidate on the achievements of the previous government in the fight against corruption when he said in his inaugural speech (May 29, 2007) that among other things, the government will 'display zero tolerance for corruption in all its forms'. His successor, Dr Goodluck Jonathan (2011-2015) also promised to make the anti-corruption agencies viable for the onerous task, and recounted in his handover speech that: 'My administration has emphasized giving a free hand to our Anti-corruption agencies such as the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC). We preferred that they mature into strong institutions instead of being the images, the hammer and the anvil of a strong man... Beyond the very impressive records of enhanced convictions by statutory anti-corruption agencies like the EFCC and ICPC, our other strategy has been to fashion economic policies that deliver higher deterrence and frustrate concealment. In this regard, the Bureau of Public Procurement has played a central role and impacted strongly on the fight against corruption'.

The emergence of President Buhari in 2015 however opened a new vista on the war against corruption as that happened to be one of his major election campaign promises. Since inception of the administration, the EFCC and the ICPC has tried and still trying many perceived corrupt

politicians, persons and organizations and has forfeited and recovered both cash and properties worth billions of naira.

#### **2.1.10 Conflicting Approaches to War against Corruption**

Available scholarship suggests that approaches to the fight against corruption is as conflicting as the view on what constitute corruption. For instance, Kalin (2007, p.28) opines that the ‘differences in global perspective on corruption and the local understanding of corruption leads to a misunderstanding of what to fight as corruption’. To this end, ‘different actors from various transnational companies and local grassroots Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) have different goals in the fight against corruption’ (Ivan, 2004, p. 35). The conflicting approaches to the fight against corruption is fuelled by the ambiguous nature of the term and differing goals for fighting corruption among different leaders across different climes (Malte, 2012). According to Malte (2012), corruption is not an obvious phenomenon and unambiguous meaning. Rather, there are different interpretations of what constitutes corruption and therefore, of what might constitute a successful anti-corruption campaign within a given social, cultural, historical or regional context. Secondly, available literature suggests that there exist instances when different actors with different interest and motives may coincidentally unite for the fight against corruption (Ugwoke, 2018).

Another source of conflict in the approaches in the fight against corruption across the globe is the fact that in some societies, ‘politicians are entitled, and expected to accumulate wealth personally, and use it to benefit their social networks, including all their family’(Lazar, 2005, p. 223). The corruption charge in this case therefore signifies a general evaluation of how well or how badly money is being distributed through personal networks. That is, a politician might not be called corrupt if he or she does not deviate from legal norms to fulfil clientele’s demands.

Simply put, Leigh (2006) agrees that people will not consider governments to be corrupt if they can bring about economic growth, create jobs, provide access to education and deliver services in an easy and transparent manner. Meanwhile, Blind (2007) holds that trust is a pre-requisite for good governance since a certain degree of suspicion that a leader is corrupt erodes legitimacy against the leader whether or not government is providing the needed democratic leadership.

#### **2.1.11. The Anti-Corruption Crusade in Nigeria**

Even though Nigeria is yet to get to where it is going in the crusade against corruption, there has been concerted efforts by successive governments to eradicate corruption in Nigeria, and therefore the role of the media in actualising this programme lies in objective and effective coverage of the anti-corruption crusade. The 1999 Nigerian constitution as amended in Chapter 2, section 22, clearly empowered the media to at all times be free to uphold the fundamental objectives contained in the chapter under reference and uphold the responsibility and accountability of the Government to the people. And so, the role of the media in information dissemination in the society like ours, cannot be over emphasized.

One disturbing issue in the investigations and trials of corrupt government officers in the last 16 years is the insinuation by some Nigerians that among the many on-going trials, it is only a few that has been successful, such as, the case of a former inspector general of police Mr. Tafa Balogun and two former governors, Chief D.S.P Alamieyeseigha and Chief Lucky Igbenedion who even went into plea bargain with the government. This has made many Nigerians lack faith in the anti-corruption crusade and the agencies. Mr Tafa Balogun was accused of embezzling funds made for the administration of the Nigerian Police Force (NPF). Chiefs D.S.P Alamieyeseigha and Lucky Igbenedion were accused of looting Bayelsa and Edo States

Government funds respectively while they were governors of the states. Some of the unsuccessful trails were the ones of a former governor of Delta State, Chief James Onanefe Ibori who was charged with about 170 count charges, and a former chairman of the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Chief Olabode George who was charged with contract splitting by the EFCC. However, Chief Ibori was let off the hook as his 170 count charges were stroke out by a Federal High in Asaba for lack of merit. Chief George was not lucky as Chief Ibori as he was convicted of the charges in the trial court and was jailed for two years. However, he became a free man when the case went up to the Supreme Court level, while Chief Ibori was later convicted in similar offences in a London Court. He was accused of converting funds running to billions of naira belonging to the Delta State.

It was in the mist of this controversy that President Muhammadu Buhari became president on the mantra of change which cardinal objective is the crusade against corruption. The fight against corruption is one among the three-point agenda of the administration. The others are security and economic development. And it is the expectation of Nigerians that this Administration will end corruption in this country.

However, recent activities in the country show that the present administration has so much to do in the campaign against corruption. The controversy that greeted the first budget of this government, that is, the 2016 appropriation document which was presented by President Buhari to the National Assembly (the Senate and the House of Representatives) is stillvery fresh in the minds of many Nigerians. At first, the budget was reported to be missing or stolen. Later when it was found, there was allegation that the budget was padded by those that prepared it (Civil

Servants and other top government functionaries). As soon as the budget went through the scrutiny of the National Assembly and was passed into law, and transmitted to the President, he discovered that some crucial projects were missing, among which was the Calabar - Lagos multi-billion-naira railway line project. No sooner the issue of missing items in the budget was settled and signed into law by President Buhari, then another issue of padding of the budget by the House of Representatives emerged. This time around, the former chairman of the house committee on appropriation is accusing the Speaker and other principal officers of the House of padding the budget of several billions of naira. Similar fate greeted the 2017 and 2018 appropriation bills in the country. All these are issues of corruption awaiting the government to be resolved. There has also been the cry of the major opposition party, the Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP), and other eminent Nigerians, that the present anti-corruption fight is one-sided, and that it is geared towards the opposition party and out-spoken Nigerians who differ with the policies and programmes of the current administration.

There is this believe by some APC members that, there are also corrupt people among them. Ego Agbenke, an APC chieftain in a recent publication in the Vanguard newspaper stated among other things that, there are truly corrupt people in the party who are walking around free. Another chieftain of the APC who is a current member of the House of Representative, also said that corruption thrives everywhere in government. And that it is in the Executive, the Legislative and the Judiciary.

At some point, it appears the work load for the EFCC is too much as the agency do not have the requisite manpower to handle investigation and trials, which jeopardise the prosecution of



suspects. Some senior lawyers have argued that the agency do not have the right people to prosecute suspects, and that most of the EFCC lawyers are not trained prosecutors as most of them are defence lawyers. One of such senior lawyers in this school of thought is Chief Robert Clarke, who said this in a recent television interview in Channelstv.com, that one of the reasons why there is so much delay in the prosecution of suspects by the EFCC is because the agency does not engage trained prosecutors, who would have been equipped with the rudiments of prosecution. This view was in respond to the opinion of President Muhammadu Buhari in a judicial conference held in Abuja. The president blamed the judiciary for the delay and other obstacles in the process of prosecuting suspects who are charged with financial crimes.

Equally relevant in the crusade against corruption is the media, and not just the judiciary, especially the print media, which is the focus of this study. The Executive arm of government is at the driver's seat of the crusade against corruption. The Legislature oversees and makes laws for the agencies of the executive arm of government who are saddled with the responsibility of the crusade against corruption, while the Judiciary tries suspects or those that are accused of corrupt practices. And the media, which is often described as the fourth estate of the realm, is constitutionally empowered to inform and educate as well as mandated to hold the government accountable to the people.

#### **2.1.12. The Media as Key Actors in the Anti-Corruption Campaigns**

Chapter 2, section 22 of the 1999 Nigerian Constitution as amended clearly empowered the media with the freedom to uphold the fundamental objectives contained in the chapter under reference and to hold the government responsible and accountable to the people. And so, the role

of the media in information dissemination in the society like ours cannot be over emphasized. It is the responsibility of the media to set agenda, which are to be framed in line with the primary function of communication – to inform, educate, persuade and entertain among others. The extent the Nigerian mass media have lived up to this responsibility remains a subject of scholarly investigations and necessitates the current study.

Akinfeleye (2003) stated that the relevance of the Press in any polity is generally drawn from the fact that information is necessary for effective governance and administration. Lack of information or misuse of information or hoarding of information have been generally considered to be counterproductive in governance and/or administration. Akinfeleye further explained that in Great Britain and in the United States of America, the press is referred to as the - "Fourth Estate of the Realm" and "Fourth Branch of Government" respectively. The press being generally referred to as the "Fourth estate of the realm", that is, coming after the other three "Estates" i.e. The Executive – to execute laws for the land; the Legislatures – to make laws for the land; and the Judiciary – to interpret the law and adjudicate, while the "Fourth Estate" i.e. the press is to watch-dog, check-on-to uncover and never to cover-up corruptions and/or wrong doings by the other three arms of the government. They (the Press) are also to monitor governance and make the other three Estates accountable to the people at all times. In performing these functions, the press can remain as the real Fourth Estate of the Realm if it adheres strictly to its professional codes of ethics at all times. But if otherwise, the press will and can do a lot of irredeemable damage to the corporate existence of the society it serves and thereby may transform from being the Fourth Estate of the realm into the Fourth Estate of the Wreck. And may wreck the society it serves.

Kawonise (2012) and Adamu (2016) corroborated Akinfeleye's (2003) view, when they postulated that the media are known to wield a lot of power in a democratic setting where the mass media are constitutionally guaranteed to operate without let nor hindrance. The power of the media as much as it is veritable source for good, is potentially also a force for evil. It is at once an antidote where it is deployed with a conscience, as it is also venom if applied irresponsibly. Either way, it is a power already unleashed at work. In as much as the power of the media is concerned, where the game is to influence the opinion of the people to vote in elections, the media will undoubtedly exercise a good measure of power. But the concern of the scholars is that, with power, comes the possibility of abuse and the likelihood of self-aggrandisement. And that in an environment of pervasive corruption within the social order, weak laws and regulatory control, and comprisable judicial processes, it is almost certain that an institution as the media in a social formation like Nigeria, would be corrupt.

### **2.1.13. Newspapers Coverage of Issues in Nigeria**

There is no doubt that Nigerian newspapers have given adequate coverage to issues in the country over the years. Studies show that Nigerian newspapers have always drawn the attention of governments to issues affecting the masses and vice versa. For instance, it was revealed in a study by Abimbola (2015), that newspapers gave significant and quality coverage to political crises in Nigeria. One of the findings of the study revealed that Late President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua's illness and absence in office had the highest newspaper reportage as at that time. Issues that also had significant reportage were Former President Olusegun Obasanjo's alleged third term bid and the 2011 post-election protests. In another study by Mojaye and Unurhoro (2010), "Oil War or Propaganda War: Use of Newspapers by Militants and the Military in the Nigerian Niger Delta Crisis", the findings revealed that both the militants and the military used

the newspapers for propaganda in prosecuting the oil war. And that the newspapers gave great prominence to the oil war with much of its headlines occupying the front pages. Also, the frequency of the newspaper reports gave the crisis greater prominence and recognition.

#### **2.1.14. Media and Framing of News**

According to Park (2012) frames, first conceptualized academically by Goffman (1974), refer to, “persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation, and presentation, of selection, emphasis and exclusion, by which symbol handlers routinely organize discourse, whether verbal or visual” (Gitlin, 1980, p. 7). And that the manner of framing the news has a significant impact on how people come to understand social, cultural, and political realities (Gamson, 1992). The mass media are the pivot between public agendas and individual citizens (Collins et al, 2006; Soroka 2002). Herman and Chomsky (1988) as cited by Park (2012) have pointed out that the, “mass media serve as a system for communicating images to the general populace” (p.16). When the mass media produce news stories about an issue, the news stories circulate certain knowledge, and then the knowledge influences people’s opinions about the issue (Collins et al. 2006; Domfeh, 1999; Tuchman, 1978). This is because the media emphasize issues by bringing them into the domain of the public sphere. Van Dijk (1993) has argued that the media have always demonstrated social power by controlling the minds of individual audiences. Ofori-Birikorang (2009) has also contended that through news production the media provide knowledge to their audiences, and such knowledge, in turn, exerts crucial influence in deciding the direction of citizens’ understanding. In other words, the media are generally viewed as an important driving force in determining how events and conditions of individual group experiences are socially defined (Gamson & Modigliani 1999; Stallings 1990). News stories provide interpretive frames

through which citizens understand or explain events that happen around them. The media function as a newsmaker by defining events, occurrences, actions, causes and consequences. By focusing on a particular news story, the media always select a few salient issues from within the range of issues that are available in the real world (Gans, 1979; Nelkin, 1995).

Media framing according to Cissel (2012), is the way in which information is presented to the audiences. Framing simply means the patterns in which media construct or define a situation, event or reality for the public with the purpose of influencing public interpretation of the events, situation or reality. For scholars within journalism, the most useful definition of framing comes from Entman (1993), who specified that: framing involves selection, and salience. He summarized the main aspect of framing as defining problems, diagnosis of causes, making of moral judgments and suggesting remedies. Entman (1993, p.52) further opined that:

To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and or treatment recommendation for the item described.

This also implies that framing is needed to organize otherwise fragmented experience or information for meaning making. The idea of a frame, in relation to news, has been widely and loosely used interchangeably with frame of reference, context, theme or even news angle. It is ultimately used to confer news value to a rather complicated event so as to isolate the rudiments and make some aspects more salient and visible than the others. Gitlin (1980, p.7) elaborated on this definition, and underscored framing as the persistent pattern of cognition, interpretation and presentation, of selection, emphasis, and exclusion, by which symbol handlers routinely organize discourse. Tankard (1991 in Azeez and Popoola 2015, p.83) conceptualizes framing as “a

centrally organizing idea for news content that supplies a context of what the issue is through the use of selection, emphasis, and elaboration”. Meanwhile, Gamson and Modigliani (1989, p.6) consider media framing as “a central organizing idea or storyline that provides meaning to an unfolding strip of events, weaving a connection among them. The frame suggests what the controversy is about, the essence of the issue”.

In essence, framing emphasizes the ability of the media and journalists to delineate other people’s reality, highlighting one interpretation, while de-emphasizing a less favoured one (Papacharissi and Maria Oliveira, 2008). McQuail (2010, p.380) also sees framing as a way of giving some overall interpretation to isolated fact, arguing however, that it is almost unavoidable for journalists to do this and by so doing, depart from pure objectivity and introduce some (unintended) bias. A frame then becomes the central idea around which attributes of events are organized within individual schemata. In this sense, media frames become different from individual frames. While the former represents the highlighting of certain aspects of the news by journalists, the latter is the application of cognitive schemes or previous experiences to the interpretation of media frames for acceptance or rejection. Nevertheless, the emphasis of this study is not on individual frames since the research objective is not on framing effect on the receiver, but on media frames in communicative text – Nigerian newspapers’ anti-corruption story frames.

Consequently, frames guide the conceptual union of words and images and thoughts upon which individuals rely to make sense of issues that constitute the realities in their locale (Fairhurst and Sarr, 1996; McCombs and Ghanem, 2001). Frames also create a conceptual context that

facilitates the classification, apprehension, and understanding of messages in accordance with individual ideas previously associated with the frames adopted (Papacharissi and Oliveira, 2008). Frames present a central part of how individuals cognitively comprehend and file events, and as such, are sensitive to how media tell their story, especially in times of conflicting accounts and factual uncertainty. Therefore, framing provide tools through which journalists define and construct corrupt practices for the public, anti-graft agencies, legislative bodies and analysts, who in turn, use the frames to interpret, form opinion, and take decisions or actions bordering on criminality. This is why Iyenger (1991) and Schufefe (1999) observe that framing, defines a dynamic, circumstantially-bound process of opinion formation in which the prevailing modes of presentation in elite rhetoric and news media coverage shape mass opinion (Iyenger, 1991; Scheufele, 1999).

Frames make suggestions to the individuals by rendering certain considerations more important than others, thereby leading these considerations to be applied when forming an opinion. The idea of news frames, according to Norris, Kern and Just (2003, p.12) therefore, refers to “interpretative structures that journalists use to set particular events within their broader context”. News frames bundle key concepts, stock phrases, and iconic images to reinforce certain common ways of interpreting developments (McQuail, 2010). In essence, criminal related acts as corruption may be better understood through news “frames” that simplify, prioritise, and structure the narrative flow of such events.

The news frame is also predicted to shape public policy, including the response to suspected misappropriation of public funds by government, officials and anti-graft agencies, both directly and also indirectly via public opinion.

Frames are sometimes defined by those in power then adopted and used by the news media. According to Noakes and Wilkins (2002, p.651), “journalists reflect the norms and values of the cultural context in which they work and thus draw on the tools provided by the hegemonic ideology when constructing news frames”. Similarly, Norris, et al (2003) posit that journalists usually rely upon familiar news frames and upon the interpretation of events offered by credible sources to convey dominant meanings, make sense of the facts, focus the headlines, and structure the story line.

Framing also undergoes changes that reflect the goals of sources as well as changing realities according to Chong and Druckman (2007, p.107), for instance, the way stories are framed at the initiation of government policy on an issue may change from a patriotic narrative to a more ambivalent or cynical view as the policy perspective evolves. A similar example is also that anti-corrupt practices at different times may invoke different frames such that for instance, frames used during the Obsanjo regime may differ from the one currently used in the Buhari regime.

The diverse effects of news media on public opinion have been extensively documented in numerous previous studies (Iyengar, Peters, & Kinder, 1983; Iyengar & Simon, 1993; McGuire, 1986; Mcombs & Shaw, 1972). The consequential effect of the news media on audiences tends to be determined by the media’s ability to present the stories in a certain style. In performing this function, the media intentionally highlight a specific dimension of an issue and make it more salient. These concepts of ‘selection’ and ‘salience’ constitute an essential part of the framing theory. Park (2012) citing Valeda (2002) and Entman (1993) noted that framing analysis is important because it makes clear that the identification of the particular patterns of the representations within the informative narratives can potentially influence the way the



phenomena are perceived by a large number of audiences by promoting a particular angle of “definition, causal interpretation, and moral evaluation and/ or treatment recommendation”.

According to Park (2012) framing as an analytical research tool was first raised by Goffman in 1974. Gitlin (1980) further elaborated this concept by arguing that, “Frames are principles of selection, emphasis, and presentation composed of little tacit theories about what exists, what happens and what matters” (p. 6). Gitlin (1980) has also attempted to define media frames as, “persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation, and presentation, of selection, emphasis and exclusion, by which symbol-handlers routinely organize discourse, whether verbal or visual” (p.7). Dearing and Rogers (1996) have argued that framing is, “the subtle selection of certain aspects of an issue by the media to make them more important and emphasize a particular cause of some problems” (p. 64). In short, framing determines how issues are constructed or structured in news stories. Communication scholars have used frames as the method of communicating how much and in what manner the mass media report information for audience consumption (Park, 2012). Framing provides an audience with a scheme to interpret news events (Entman, 1993). Pickle et al. (2002) and Entman (1993) assert that the contents of news stories include latent implied questions for which frames provide answers. Frames provide answers to the implied questions by performing four functions: defining and diagnosing a problem; identifying a source or cause; providing a judgment; and justifying a solution for the problem. Through this process, the mass media actively define the frames of reference through which audiences engage in public issues (Tuchman, 1978) as cited by Park (2012).

Framing studies have examined a wide variety of issues such as child maltreatment, political advertising, political campaigns, war and many others, but it has barely gained attention as in the

field of corruption/anti-corruption. Framing anti-corruption, therefore, generally entails examining the abstract ideas on aspects of news items, as corruption and/or anti-corruption to find out how the media overtly or covertly shape the readers' knowledge, understanding, perceptions and/ or interpretations of corrupt practices; understand the realities and interplay among politicians and form opinion on the causes, consequences and treatment provided by policy makers.

#### **2.1.14.1. Patterns of News Media Framing**

Scholars on framing are developing various patterns or paradigm for which news media frame events. Through these patterns, analysts of communication contents can also analyse or examine frames in media messages. Park (2012) noted that Iyengar (1990, 1991, 1996) in several studies, has suggested that news stories can be mainly divided into two types of frames, **thematic and episodic**. Thematic and episodic frames give a different influence on media users' perception of the issue the media report. However, other patterns of news frames have been developed by other researchers. These patterns of media framing include but are not limited to:

##### **1. Episodic Frames:**

This is the most commonly attributed patterns of news media frames, developed by Iyengar (2003) and Norris, Kern and Just (2003). The episodic frames focus on specifics of any particular event. Episodic frames focus on describing single events or occurrences and tend to involve the use of negative stereotypes. In other words, the episodic news frame depicts issues in terms of specific instances- for example, a group suicide, a homeless person, or an illegal immigrant worker. Episodic reports are essentially illustrations of issues. Episodic reports tend to provide

good pictures of an occurrence. Usually, episodic reports include vivid, sensational, or provocative images. They are less likely to require reporters to bother to interpret an issue. In the episodic frame, an issue is approached from the personal experience or viewpoint. Episodic frame stories evoke more individualistic attributions (Iyengar, 1990). In the Nigerian anti-corruption context, an example of episodic news frame is a situation whereby some individuals are accused of corruption because of their political affiliation, whereas some others who are corrupt as those being accused of corruption are in the good book of the government of the day because of their political affiliation to the powers that be.

## **2. Thematic Frames:**

Thematic frames provide a broader and more contextualized understanding of the background factors contributing to the issues. Thematic frames provide more in-depth coverage that emphasizes context and continuity and detract from negative stereotyping (Azeez and Popoola, 2015). The thematic frame depicts political issues more broadly and abstractly by placing them in historical or societal context. A thematic report on corruption might present information about recent trends in the rate of corruption and the main reasons for the increase of corruption. Thematic frame stories evoke more structural attributions in appearance; the thematic frame takes the form of background coverage on a specific issue (Park, 2012). An example of thematic frame in the Nigerian anti-corruption crusade is the report that every arm of government in Nigeria, be it the Executive, the Legislature and the Judiciary as well as the Civil service is corrupt, as seen recently in the country where the three arms of government have been accusing one another of corrupt tendencies. In the thematic frame, the news might consist of information bearing on general trends (e.g., the corruption rate, the number of states experiencing significant increases in corruption, etc.), or matters of public policy (a government's proposals to curtail

political corruption, anti-corruption movements among civil groups, etc.). In the thematic frame, there are background stories in which the object of the coverage is abstract and impersonal.

This classification tends to suggest whether the reader should attribute blame on cause of social problem of society on government or on individuals responsible for social problems. Thus, episodic or thematic frame tend to describe whether stories attribute consequences of corruption on systemic flaws or on government failures.

### **3. Issue specific and Generic Frames**

Issue specific frames are frames relevant only to specific topics or events. An issue specific approach to the study of news frames allows for a profound level of specificity and details relevant to the event or issue under investigation. These frames in other words, pertain to the particular issue in question, and therefore, the researcher is at liberty to raise sensitive labels that reference the issue. This advantage, however, is potentially an inherent disadvantage as well. Since, it is issue-sensitive, specific frames from particular issues are difficult to generalize to other topics, and thus, to compare and use as empirical evidence for theory building (Hertog and McLeod, 2001, pp.150-151). It was from these issue-specific frames that the current study derived its frames relevant for the analyses of newspaper framing of the President Buhari anti-corruption campaign which also formed the core of the APC administration's "change" mantra.

The Generic Frames on the other hand was developed by Neuman, Just and Craige (1992) and Semeko and Valkenburg (2000). They have been adopted in other literature in the works of Okunna and Omenugha (2006) and Ekuma (2007). These frames were found in relation to

different issues which suggest that the frames are more generally applicable than issues-specific news frames.

Another framing process was adopted by D'Angelo in McQuail (2010, p.512) which synthesized existing literature on framing into the following three different paradigms:

- **Cognitivist Model:** this accounts for journalists texts which become embodied in the thoughts and words of those affected.
- **Constructionist Variant:** when journalists provide interpretations of the positions of sponsors (i.e. sources of news) of issues.
- **Critical Approach:** when frames are seen as the outcomes of news gathering routines and the values of elites emphasizing a dominant influence on the content of news.

It was from these collective frames that the researcher anchored both the quantitative content analysis and the qualitative (Critical Incidents Analysis) content analysis.

#### **2.1.15. Nigerian Media, Responsibility and Challenges of Framing Anti-Corruption Issues**

The media are the main sources of information and vital link between the government and the citizens, thus, the bulk of responsibility to explain the issues surrounding corruption and guiding the understanding of the people lies on the mass media.

Following McQuail's (2010, p.80) thoughts that the ideas, images and information disseminated by the media is an aspect of our culture, it is therefore, not wrong to say that the way the media frame the activities of government determines the kind of reactions from the masses, the available assistance for anti-graft agencies and the needed transformation for the fight against

corruption for the overall good of the society. Therefore, the Nigerian media have the responsibility to inform rightly and also guide against deviation from standards of behaviour by the interpretations they give to anti-corruption campaign. Without reliable information, it would not be feasible for citizens and even those in place of authority to use their power effectively, nor would they be aware of the problems and issues that need consideration. This explains Oyewole's (2008) opinion that the media in developing countries have a special task of explaining to the people the link between corruption and their present state of backwardness and underdevelopment.

Meanwhile, reporting on corrupt practices could be an engaging task for the media since it involves criminality, scandals, blackmails and ethical constraints. Ciboh (2014) corroborates this when he said that the nature of corruption as clandestine crime makes it difficult to be reported. World Association of Newspapers observed that "coverage of organized crime and corruption has put journalists in the line of fire" (UNESCO, 2012). Media can only surmount the challenges in reporting corruption by summoning courage to be investigative and professional in approach. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of the media in carrying out their responsibilities of investigative journalism, freedom to express results of investigation, the content of what get published and how it is framed to picture the realities on ground depends on a free press. This accounts for the statement by former World Bank President James D. Wolfensohn on free press:

A free press is not a luxury. A free press is at the absolute core of equitable development because if you cannot enfranchise poor people, if they do not have a right to expression, if there is no searchlight on corruption and inequitable practices, you cannot build the public consensus needed to bring about change (Stapenhurst, 2000, p.5).

Meanwhile, several socio-political and professional limitations constrain journalists in most developing nations from exposing the broader context of corruption, among which are:

1. **Ownership Interference:** the owners of media house establish for journalists lines that cannot be crossed; they set the tone, decide which markets to target, control editorial budgets and hire and fire their editors that appear to go against their own interests (Omotoshan, 2008 and Asemah, 2012). This ownership influence according to Jibo and Simbine (2003) defines the ideology and politics that influences media bias or slant.
  
2. **Media Gate-Keepers:** Gate-keeping is a term that describes the regulation of the flow of information. The gate-keeper is the person who decides what passes through each news gate. Important to realize is that gate-keepers are able to control the public's knowledge of the actual events by letting some stories pass through the system, but keeping others out and also determining the nature of content that gets published through farming patterns (Asemah and Asogwa, 2012).
  
3. **Greed and Corrupt Practices by Journalists:** there is widespread corruption within the media. In most working conditions where the investigative journalists are not well paid, the journalist accepts bribes to cover specific stories or extort money from public officials. Scholars and researchers of media and communication studies have revealed that the media, particularly journalists are equally corrupt as government officials. This is a worrisome development as one ponders on the role of a corrupt media in the crusade against corruption in Nigeria. In other words, what change can a corrupt media bring to a very corrupt society like ours? Adeyemi Aderogba citing (Nwuneli, 1990; Nwosu, 1990) stated that the press serves as an agent of change, and as the watchdog of the society is

expected to play a part in ensuring transparency and accountability in government as well as contribute to the efforts of crime fighting institutions to curb corruption in the country. However, he wonders that a corrupt press cannot fight corrupt individuals.

There are many corrupt practices that journalists have been linked to in Nigeria. The most popular corrupt practice in the Nigerian media is the acceptance of monetary inducement popularly referred to as “brown envelope”. It is perhaps the most popular source of corruption in the media. The brown envelope as a form of financial gratification is viewed by most people as a form of bribe paid by news sources to journalists to enable the former to get favourable news coverage. Most of the corrupt and unethical practices by journalists are however, attributed to personal greed that in turn makes such journalist skew reports to favour benefactors.

4. **Limited Access to Information:** the Nigerian investigative journalist has limited access to official archives and records. Sometimes, official archives are incomplete, poorly-maintained and subject to tough official secrets or privacy laws. Citing Daily Trust (2012), Adepetun and Segun August (2013) noted that the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), signed into law in May, 2011 has so far been implemented only in the breach of its provisions than in compliance by government agencies. This may hinder the journalist abilities to understand situations surrounding cases of corruption so as to give better construction of the realities surrounding particular scenario in his desk.



5. **The Embedded Nature of the Media in the Social Sphere:** the problem of the “embeddedness” of the media within the same structure that they are trying to censure constitutes big challenge in her effort to fight corruption. Oyuvbaire (2001) argues that “the capitalist nature of the mainstream media tend to leave them a mere tool in the hands of the powerful and political interest in the society” (p.45). This view is corroborated by Bagdikian (1983) when he calls the trend “The endless chain” (p.471). Here, Bagdikian was actually trying to paint a picture of a situation where powerful individual media owners control the media contents to favour the government of the day and are the other way round rewarded by the government – a type of symbiosis. Voltmer (2000, p.8) also supports Bagdikian’s view when he argued that:

The media have become big businesses that have fallen into the hands of the few capitalists who also wield them as a tool of manipulating the government and the masses. This situation has frequently brought about criticisms to them for remaining too close to political power to be able to act as effective watchdogs; political reporting thus has become too opinionated to provide balanced gate-keeping, while commercial pressure on news coverage has often encouraged an over-emphasis on trivial and the unpopular, at the expense of the serious and sustained attention to issues that will help in fostering national development (p.8).

The result of this type of journalism does not only frustrate the effort of the media to fight corrupt practices in our society, but also creates the type of media/ politicians pact which might not give the journalists the guts to investigate and frame corrupt practices in a manner that discredits it.

6. **Commoditization and Commercialization of News:** Udeze (2011) posited that when news is seen as a commodity to be bought or sold and when the more bizarre is the more

news worthy, it becomes a very big challenge in carrying out the responsibility the media owes to the society, because the primary objective of media managers is to make profit and remain in business. Similarly, Dwivedi (2010) describes it as market driven journalism that encourages the habit of sensationalizing every bit of news item. This implies that the media is placed between profit making and reporting on sensitive issues like corruption and its consequences to national development. This affects what the media considers and frames as corruption especially when the press could be aligning with politicians that some acts should be classified and reported in the media as corruption. It must be pointed out that news sensationalism is an ethical issue in journalism that could bring about issue of credibility of the media.

### **2.2.1 REVIEW OF EMPIRICAL STUDIES**

Scholars have undertaken studies to essentially examine how both Nigerian and global corruption-related cases were reported in the media and how such reportage facilitated the concerned governments' efforts in tackling corruption. Evidence from such studies suggests that the mass media could be instrumental in raising the consciousness of the masses of the overall negative impact of corruption on a nation's wellbeing, progress and development depending on the nature of framing and angle of reportage given to the corruption cases.

Kenshi (2003) used content analysis to discuss how news media framed Clinton-Lewinsky scandal. New York Times and Washington post were studied. The researcher used emphasis framing" to identify frame, that he decoded as "strategy", "issue", or "other". According to the researcher, strategy frames discussed news in terms of who is winning or losing, ahead or

behind, or discuss conflicts among warring groups. Issue frames discuss the background of an issue or a candidate's, politician's, party's, or interest group's position on an issue while other frame" means the frame of a unit could be categorized as neither "strategy frame" nor "issue frame. The result found that each media had same tendency; this also proves that media with same ideology have the slightest disparity in the adoption of frames. Following this finding, the researcher postulated that all research subjects framed the Clinton-Lewinsky scandal stories more as issue-based as strategy-based.

This study was about a single case of how the media framed the Clinton-Lewinsky scandal, whereas the current study was about the coverage and framing of the anti-corruption crusade in Nigeria which covers straight news, features and editorials as units of analysis in determination of the role of newspapers in the fight against corruption in Nigeria.

Nwonu (2005) studied the coverage of the certificate forgery allegations which led to the impeachment of the former Senate President, Evan Enwerem. The researcher studied four national dailies, *Daily Champion*, *New Nigerian*, *The Guardian* and *The Punch* and chose news as the unit of analysis. Issue specific frames were used by the researcher which categorized frame into sensational and non-sensational frames. Findings of this study showed that new stories on the allegation were found in almost all the newspaper editions (89.7%) studied, while only (11%) of the newspaper played down or paid little attention to the certificate forgery scandal. Furthermore the study also revealed that photographs accompanied much of the news reports. Again, he found out that the newspapers were found to have accommodated some sensational approach in framing the issue relating to the scandal. He however, recommended that

such issue of great importance should not be trivialized through sensational framing and publications, but given the importance which it deserves.

The difference between this study and the current study is that the unit of analysis was only straight news, whereas the current study analysed news, features and editorials which is a more holistic approach to media framing because only straight news analysis will not be enough to draw conclusion.

Agudosi (2006), in his study of newspaper coverage of corruption in the Nigeria police examines *The Guardian and Vanguard* coverage of corruption over a period of six months. He sought to ascertain the level of prominence and frequency given to these issues. He found out that the media had given a considerable coverage to the issue of corruption in Nigeria, (76.4%), although he concluded that this coverage was dependent mostly on the Newspapers judgmental stance (69.4%). In addition, the study also found that the newspapers devoted so much time in sensationalizing the stories rather than giving them more objective reportage. He thus recommended that the newspapers in the country should attach more importance to the question of objectivity while covering these issues.

This study was devoted solely to corruption in the Nigerian Police and it considered only frequency and level of prominence given by the newspapers to corruption in the Nigerian Police, as against the current study that has to do with anti-corruption campaign in Nigeria as a whole where frequency, prominence, nature of the anti-corruption stories and how such stories were framed.

Muazu (2006) investigated the Nigerian press coverage of the allegations of contract fraud levelled against the chairman of the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Chief Bode George. The researcher chose, on the whole, 46 editions of *New Nigerian*, *The Guardian*, *The Punch* and *The Sun* newspapers. The unit of analysis was news and the study discovered that the newspapers did not “pay sufficient attention” to the matter, disclosing that it was only reported regularly in the first one week following the revelation only to become dead pan issue thereafter. The research, on the other hand found that the news reports were “commendably” objective in framing the issues at stake.

This study is similar to Nwonu (2005) as reviewed. The current study is about newspapers’ coverage and framing of the anti-corruption crusade in Nigeria.

In another investigation, Okoye (2008) studied the press coverage of the 600 million naira house renovation scandal involving former Speaker of the House of Representative, Mrs Patricia Etteh. Three national dailies, *Daily Champion*, *The New Nigerian* and *The Nigeria Tribune* were studied. Findings from the study indicated that there was frequent coverage of the issue. In other words, the issue received “prominence” in the newspapers studied. However, the study found out that the newspapers were sensational in reporting the matter and that the accused person was not fairly treated by the press in that the newspaper reports tended to pronounce her guilty even in the absence of any such official indictment, either by a law court or any investigation panel. This type of journalism the researcher argued negates objectivity, which is one of the fundamental issues in press coverage of the matters.

This study was devoted solely to the manner newspapers covered the corruption allegations levelled against a former Speaker of the House of Representatives and it considered only frequency and level of prominence given by the newspapers to corruption allegation as against the current study that has to do with anti-corruption campaign in Nigeria as a whole where frequency, prominence, nature of the anti-corruption stories and how such stories were framed.

Similarly, Chukwu (2010) in his content analysis of newspaper coverage of the alleged misappropriation of \$16 billion power point fund by the administration of President Olusegun Obasanjo, selected all together 100 editions of the following newspapers: *Daily Champion*, *DailyTimes*, *The Guardian*, *The Nigerian Tribune* and *New Nigerian*. The units of analysis were news, features and editorials. The findings of the study indicated that the newspaper covered the incident regularly particularly in the first four weeks after the “revelation” was made. Similarly, the papers gave prominence to the incident in terms of choice of placement. The research adjudged the coverage of the issues as generally balanced in relation to all parties involved.

Ciboh (2010), analysed newspaper reporting of corruption between 2000 and 2006. It investigated the form of reports on corruption, the major events that shaped news of corruption overtime. The study examined the critical choices newspapers made in reporting corruption during the period under review; the salience attached to corruption cases reported in the newspapers, whether newspapers accorded corruption any prominence as an issue of policy, the dominant form in which corruption was reported and events that shaped corruption reports overtime. The study, anchored on the Agenda-Setting Theory, found that reports on corruption were episodic, and came in short straight news accounts and as isolated incidents. It was further

inferred from the study that, although the fight against corruption was an important issue of policy, it never got the attention it deserved, and most news of corruption were buried in the inside pages.

The focus of this study was straight news, whereas the current study examined straight news, features and editorials as well as critically examined some issues beyond the manifest content.

Park (2012) investigated how the media frame political corruption by classifying Illinois newspaper into episodic and thematic frames. The subject of research was the *Chicago Tribune* regarded as the biggest daily newspaper in Chicago and Illinois. Using the *Chicago Tribune's* electronic archival database and the *ProQuest* Service, he conducted a ten-year retrospective search from July 1, 2001, to June 31, 2011, of *Chicago Tribune* articles. About 300 articles were chosen by the researcher by random sampling method from a total population of 5,362 possible articles on political corruption. Then, thematic and episodic frames were coded by the researcher according to several yardsticks. Thematic frame stories include societal or historical explanation about political corruption occurrence, remedial actions, and the extent and scope of influence of corruption. The episodic frames included the following types of news stories: mere description of a specific corruption case, simple delivery of conflict between interested parties, individual public officials who are or were charged with some kinds of corruption; and a narrative based on individual perspective. In addition to episodic/thematic frames, the study used other variables like the tone, content type, and information sources. The researcher assigned a positive, negative, or neutral tone to each story. Topic types include election campaign, anti-corruption actions, court ruling, investigation (by the police or the prosecution), a human interest story. Information sources refer to citations within the story from "prosecution," "police," "court," "politician," "a

journalist's observation," and "anonymous." Findings indicate that episodic framing stories outweigh thematic stories. Eighty-five percent of the articles showed a negative attitude towards corruption scandals, while fifteen percent of the sample articles held a neutral position. The neutral tone articles did not indicate any specific judgmental stance". Anonymous source were very rare which according to the researcher means that journalists seldom consult the experts.

This study is longitudinal and dealt with only an aspect of corruption in an American newspapers. The current study examined the role of Nigerian newspapers in the anti-corruption campaign of President Muhammadu Buhari by way of analysing news, features and editorials of five national newspapers.

Nwabueze, Ugochukwu and Egbra (2014) used content analysis to determine newspaper coverage of police activities in Nigeria from January to March, 2012. The researchers selected three national dailies (the Nation, the Punch and Daily Sun) for their study. Among the specific objectives were to determine the volume of coverage of the activities of Nigeria Police by the selected newspapers, the story types in which police activities are presented in the newspapers and direction of stories by the selected newspapers on the activities of Nigeria Police. The agenda –setting theory of mass communication was used to anchor the study. The population of study was 273, while the sample size was 162 within a period of 36 days. It was found out that the police activities during the period of study were presented mostly as straight news and the direction of stories were mostly negative. The study recommended, among others, that newspapers should give in-depth coverage of police activities in Nigeria and that positive aspect of police activities should also be given attention in the media.



Fadairo, Fadairo and Aminu (2014) in their study, used content analysis to determine the Newspaper coverage of corruption news in the major sectors of the Nigerian economy over a period of 5 years (2006 - 2010). A multi-stage sampling technique was used to select three newspapers namely Tribune, The Nation and Guardian; and a total of nine hundred and thirteen (913) corruption articles generated from the 540 issues were analysed. The units of analysis were articles of stories on corruption/corrupt practices such that non-corrupt practices were isolated from the study, News, features or opinion (editorials) formed the articles of stories used. Data were collected on frequency of coverage, categories of items/stories, prominence, space allotment and depth of treatment of articles on corruption. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages and means was used to summarise the data collected. Findings revealed that though corruption cases featured prominently in the news, they were buried mostly in the inside pages, implying that corruption stories were not given prominence in the news. Another finding was that corruption cases increased in the news progressively from 2006 to 2010 indicating according to the researchers that corruption cases were on the increase despite the efforts of anti-corruption agencies like the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) and the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC).

The difference between this study and the current one is that this study focused on only the newspapers coverage of corrupt issues in only the economic sector of the country, whereas the current study focused on the newspapers coverage and framing of the anti-corruption campaign of the current administration that cut across all sectors in the country.

Halilu, Garba, and Abdulmumin (2014) also examined the coverage of corruption issues by Nigerian Newspapers. Two Nigerian Dailies – Daily Sun and New Nigerian Newspapers were sampled for the period of one year, which is from June 2013 to May 2014. The study sought to determine the frequency of corruption coverage by the press in Nigeria; the prominence given to corruption stories; and the depth of corruption issues by the Nigerian newspapers. The social responsibility theory was used to anchor the study. Content analysis, both quantitative and qualitative content analysis research design was adopted for the study. Findings from the study showed that the newspapers did not fulfil their statutory responsibility of being the watchdog of the Nigerian society. The coverage from their findings was not significant compared to other stories like politics and economy; prominence was also not given to the stories. It was also deduced that the stories are not in-depth as there was little investigation and follow-up enough to set precedence for public discourse. The study therefore suggested that the media should embark on massive sensitization campaigns as well as intensive investigative reporting in order to, not only expose corruption but to follow up the case to its logical prosecution.

The research gap in this study that was covered in the current study is framing of the newspapers' contents.

Ciboh, (2014) investigated how newspapers constructed the reality of corruption from news sources and interpreted the social reality of corruption in response to public policy against it, possibly to foster accountability and transparency in government. The study examined how stories were generated, whether newspapers carefully researched stories to help build support for Olusegun Obasanjo's government policy against corruption or gave preferential access to definitions of those in authority and disseminated a limited and undifferentiated view of

corruption. The study was anchored on Critical cultural theory while Content analysis was used as the research methodology to examine six newspapers for a period of six years. The newspapers were Daily Champion, Daily Trust, The Guardian, The Punch, This Day and Vanguard. From the study, the data analysed illuminated a number of ways in which the use of sources in newspaper coverage of corruption worked to marginalize ordinary people. The analyses of results further showed that newspapers depended heavily on government officials and allowed official sources associated with powerful positions or institutions, such as the president/presidency, state governors/governments, legislators, ministers, commissioners, politicians, including heads of government departments to offer “primary definition” of corruption. The results corroborated earlier studies (Torwel, 2005; Ciboh, 2005; Ende, 2003), that Nigerian newspapers rely heavily on government official sources of information in issues of policy and conflict. Non-elite sources made up a small minority of news sources. The study also revealed that there was hardly any evidence of investigative reporting by the newspapers; and that most newspapers stories especially high profile cases of fraud, embezzlement and looting of public funds involving public officials that passed for reporter enterprise or as investigative journalism were poorly sourced (Ronning, 2009). It was substantiated from the study that the reports were characterised with anonymous sources such as ‘sources close to’, ‘according to our source,’ ‘a top shot,’ *Vanguard* was informed,’ ‘according to presidency sources,’ ‘our correspondent gathered,’ ‘it was gathered,’ ‘sources close to management,’ ‘findings by our correspondent,’ ‘according to *Thisday* checks.

Amorighoye and Musa (2015) in another study, examined newspaper coverage of corruption in Nigeria from the period of January – December 2013. The study sought to determine the factors

that influence corruption coverage in Nigeria; the dominant issues, themes, tones in the coverage of corruption and the prominence given to corruption related news in the selected media. The framing theory of the mass media was used to anchor the study. Content analysis was adopted as the method for obtaining and analysing data in the study. The study revealed that the media have exposed corrupt acts in Nigeria, and that they have played a prominent role in the polity of government as the fourth estate of the realm. The researchers suggested among other things that the media should be made to be autonomous in discharging their duties at all times.

Though this study, is analogous with present study, in that it examined media coverage of corruption of Nigerian governments. The difference however, is that the studies were conducted in different regimes which may account for any variations in the findings, since the rate of corruption in these eras were different.

Igwebuike's (2016) study investigated newspaper coverage of President Buhari's anti-corruption war with specific emphasis on, framing text format, prominence and depth of coverage. Two newspapers-The Punch and Daily Trust - were selected for the study. The study duration was June 1<sup>st</sup> 2015- January 30<sup>th</sup> 2016 leading to seven months and 28 weeks. Content analysis was adopted for the study. This study was anchored on the two theories – framing and agenda setting theories. The Study revealed among others, that most of the newspapers' frames were neutral on Buhari's anti-corruption war. Also, result showed that most of the stories on Buhari's anti-corruption war within the study duration were straight news. Only a few stories were found to be investigative report. Findings further showed that most of the anti- corruption stories occupied quarter pages. This study though similar to the

current study, however differs in the following respect: use of research techniques (present study included the use of Critical Incident Analysis); study time frame; and sample size.

Jamil and Doktoralina (2016) used content analysis to compare the coverage of dispute between the Indonesian Corruption Eradication Commission (Indonesian: Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi referred to as KPK), and the Indonesian national Police Force. The study collected 446 sample articles on the 'Save KPK' movement from two Indonesian daily newspapers: Kompas and Media Indonesia. The study was within the period of July- December 2012. The unit of analysis was the article, which is distinguished into five: straight news, editorials, columns, letters, and opinions. The study adopted and modified the six news frames by Semeko and Valkenburg (2000) into five frames for the study: conflict, human interests, consequences, morality and responsibility. Framing analyses done by the researcher was to find out the extent coverage of 'save KPK movement', news sources by the newspapers, news frame used by the newspapers and the slant of the articles. The study found that the most salient frame in the sampled articles published by the Kompas and the Media Indonesia was conflict frame, the majority of the sampled articles published by the two newspapers were straight news. For news source, the Kompas used the civilians as its most important news sources followed by BGOs as its news sources, police officers, KPK officers, lawyers, and leaders of parties consecutively. The Media Indonesia in contrast turned to police officers as its dominant news source. This was followed by lawyers as its news sources, leaders of parties, KPK officers, NGOs, the civilians successively.

This is a comparative study of two different newspapers to ascertain the use of different types of frames, while the current study was on the role of newspapers in the fight against corruption in Nigeria by the President Muhammadu Buhari administration.

Yan and Liu (2016) in their study, “investigation of competing media frame study in one country of two system: the case study on corruption scandal of Chen Liangyu”, adopted content analysis as methodology and guided by framing theory to study the mainstream newspapers of Mainland (Guang Zhou Daily, and Southern Metropolis Daily) and Hong Kong (Ming Po and apple Daily). The study examined how those different newspapers framed Chen Liangyu corruption scandal in the following four adopted generic frames; nature, responsibility, scope and human interest. Their findings indicated that Hong Kong media more likely covered the scandal with the frames of power struggle. On the contrary, mainland media more likely covered the corruption scandal with the scope frames indicating the consequences of corruption. Other frames like responsibility and human interest were undermined by the studied newspapers.

This was a comparative study of how media in two different countries framed an individual corruption scandal, whereas the current work is a study of Nigerian newspapers’ coverage and framing of the anti-corruption crusade. In other words, the current study has a national outlook, by interrogating the nature of media reportage of corruption cases, within the Buhari’s administration. The issue of media framing is common to the two studies.

Ciboh (2016) used content analysis to examine newspapers’ sources of news of corruption between 2000 and 2006 during Olusegun Obasanjo government’s deliberate public policy against corruption in Nigeria. In the study titled “passive accomplice or active acquiescent to

corruption in Nigeria? Evidence from newspaper's sourcing of information on corruption from 2000-2006", the researcher examined the sources of news on corruption. The idea was to discover whose information is presented and to challenge powerful interests behind corruption that reinforced the status quo. The paper found that government/official sources were the most frequently used sources of information on corruption and that newspapers favoured only the official definition of corruption.

Edmond & Wilson (2018) conducted a study on mass media coverage of anti-corruption in Nigeria: a study of Muhammadu Buhari civilian administration (2015-2019). The objectives of the study were to determine the frequency of reports on corruption in *The Nation* and *The Daily Trust* newspapers, determine the direction in which issues of corruption are reported in the newspapers and to examine the prominence given to issues of corruption in the selected dailies. A total of 48 editions of *The Nation* and *The Daily Trust* newspapers from July 1, 2016 to December 31, 2016 were analyzed using purposive sampling and systematic sampling technique in selecting the two newspapers. The study adopted the agenda-setting theory, the framing theory and the priming theory. Coding sheet was used as research instrument for data collection. The Units of analysis for the study were News, Features, Editorials and Letters to the Editor. Data were presented using tables and simple percentages. Data collected were addressed based on the objectives of the study and research questions. A total of 409 items were reported by the selected newspapers within the study period. Individually, *The Nation* reported 233 items while *Daily Trust* reported 176 items on corruption. The study found that issues on corruption were reported frequently by the selected newspapers; reports on corruption were mainly found in the inside pages; and issues of corruption reported by selected dailies were mostly positive. The study

revealed that the mass media cover issues of corruption in Nigeria adequately but need to give prominence to them. This study reported high frequency and low prominence. Since both studies are related in the nature of investigation, it becomes pertinent to discover whether there will be similarities in the findings. And where differences occur to extrapolate on the reason for them.

Looking at the above studies, it becomes apparent that indeed there is a robust literature on the media and coverage of corruption. It is important to point out the limited perspective adopted in our empirical review, since we looked at media coverage from the lens of print media coverage mostly and not necessarily from a holistic media outlook. From empirical search, we found a preponderance of studies in this area using mostly content analysis research technique. While this is good, it however indicates a gap for a more holistic research technique that will involve a triangulated methodology that could yield a more profound result. That is what this study has done. A combination of different research techniques to adequately and more critically deal with the issue under investigation. The empirical search further, reveals that the press has often tended to frame corruption-related issues using different framing patterns but similar interpretations. From the studies reviewed, the dominant nature and pattern of reportage and/or coverage of corruption and corruption-related matters indicated that the newspapers have adequate attention to corruption related issues although there is variation in the nature of prominence given to the stories. What also stands out from this review is the consistent use of elite sources by the media in their coverage of corruption cases.

### **2.2.2. Research Gap**

The researcher observed a number of gaps in the body of literature reviewed above. In the first instance, the studies focused on particular incidents of corruption with little or no holistic



appraisal of anti-corruption campaigns in a given political administration in Nigeria. This study attempted to cover the gap in the literature in this circumstance and examine the anti-corruption campaign of President Muhammadu Buhari. It was also observed that few of the studies took the angle of framing to determine the nature of frames that newspapers gave to corruption or anti-corruption fights in Nigeria. The studies however, employed a single research investigation approach of mainly quantitative content analysis. The currently study went beyond this limitation to adopt a qualitative content analysis – Critical Incident Analysis – to buttress the findings. It was also observed that few of the studies were examined based on the position of the newspapers on corruption cases reported. Also majority of the studies employed only news stories as unit of analysis, hence leaving out important contents such as features, editorials and column. This approach arguably, could not have been adequate to draw a conclusion on the sources of information on corruption in the newspapers. Editorials and feature articles would have made a difference in the sources of information and depth of corruption issues reported in the newspapers and this is a gap that this study also sought to fill.

### **2.3.0 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Theory, according to Ojobor (2002) cited in Maclean (1972) “can be thought of as our understanding of the way things work”. As part of the objectives of this study, the Framing Theory and the Agenda-Setting Theory were the framework that foreground this study. The precepts of these theories were used in framing the research questions and eliciting data for the study.

#### **2.3.1. Framing Theory**

Framing, according to McQuail (2005) is a term with two main meanings. One of its meanings refers to the way in which news content is typically shaped and contextualised by journalists within some familiar frame of reference and according to some latent structure of meaning. The other meaning concerns the effect of framing on the public. The framing process is related to priming and agenda-setting in which the audience is thought to adopt the frames of reference offered by journalists and to see the world in a similar way. According to Ciboh (2010), Goffman was the first to concentrate on framing as a form of communication and defined “framing” as a “schemata of interpretation” that enables individuals to “locate, perceive, identify and label” occurrences or life experiences (Goffman, 1974). He went further to state that Entman (1993a) modernized the above definition by specifying that “to frame a communicating text or message is to promote certain facets of a ‘perceived reality’ and make them more salient in such a way that endorses a specific problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or a treatment recommendation”. Scheufele (2000) as cited by Wogu (2013) stated that framing involves activation of entire interpretive schemas, not merely prioritization of individual objects or attributes (agenda-setting). Framing is based on the concept of the prospect theory, which is on the assumption that subtle changes in the wording of the description of a situation might affect how audience members interpret this situation. It is invoking interpretive schemas that influence the interpretation of incoming information.

By incorporating media framing with agenda-setting, priming and bias, Entman (1993) believes that readers can better comprehend how and why framing occurs in the media. Here, “agenda setting serves as the first function of framing as it defines the problem worthy of government attention” while Priming is “the goal, the intended effect, of strategic actors’ framing activities”

(Entman, 1993b, p.125). Agenda setting will always occur, even if it is not pervasively biased, as defined by Entman (1993c), is consistent patterns in the framing of mediated communication that promote the influence of one side of conflicts over the use of government power. Hence, frames provide the scales for weighing up the importance of conflicting information.

The relevance of this theory to this study is the fact that in reporting or writing on corrupt cases in newspapers, there is need to shape and contextualise such stories by journalists for the audience to make meaning out of such stories. Entman (1996) stated that understanding of frames helps illuminate many empirical and normative controversies, most importantly because the concept of framing directs our attention to the details of just how a communicated text exerts its power. McQuail (2010) postulated that media play a critical social role by providing information on issues, events and conditions in society; explaining, interpreting and simplifying complex information, prioritizing issues, upholding dominant culture and social values and campaigning for societal objectives in the sphere of politics and economic development. Significantly, these roles are played out in the ways news organizations package and disseminate information.

### **2.3.2. Agenda-Setting Theory**

Walter Lippmann, prominent American journalist and later public relations guru, first muted the idea of agenda setting. Lippmann (1922) put forward the idea that people did not respond directly to events in the real world but lived in a pseudo-environment composed of “the pictures in our heads”. The media helps to create these pictures and also contribute to the shaping of the pseudo-environment

Agenda Setting falls in the realms of public opinion research focus. McCombs and Shaw (1972) stated that the general notion of the agenda-setting theory is the ability of the media to influence the salience of events in the public mind.

Thus, the agenda-setting function or effect of the mass media was first put to empirical verification by McCombs and Shaw during the 1968 United States Presidential election. They stated that among undecided voters in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, there were substantial correlations between the political issues emphasized in the news media and what the voters regarded as the key issues in that election. That the voters' beliefs about what were the major issues facing the country reflected the composite of the press coverage, even though the three presidential contenders in the election placed widely divergent emphasis on the issues. This suggests that voters-at least undecided voters-pay some attention to all the political news in the press regardless of whether it is about or originated with a favoured candidate.

### **Core Assumptions of the Agenda-Setting Theory**

Agenda-setting as a public opinion research focus is the building of public awareness on and around current issues in the news media. The key assumptions that inspire research on agenda setting are:

- The media do not create or reflect reality; they only shape it.
- Media focus on selected or few issues filtered through the gate-keeping process lead the public to identify and perceive those issues as more important than other issues.

The different media, say newspaper, magazine, radio, television, new media (social media), etc, all have different agenda-setting potentials. Weaver et al (1981) noted that there are media

differences in agenda-setting. Television and newspaper both have an agenda-setting impact, but that impact is not identical. A television viewer is given a series of reports in rapid succession. The audience have no control over how long they are exposed to an issue. Newspaper readers, however, control their own time. They can re-read an article about an issue that interests them, search for only articles on a favourite issue, or completely skip an issue of which they have little interest. In the 1972 election in the United States, both media had a significant, but different effect. Thus, agenda-setting theory seems quite appropriate to help us understand the pervasive role of the media for example on political communication systems.

Cohen (1963) amply stated that: "The press may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about." Linsky (1986, p.87), noted that "the press has a huge and identifiable impact". Dearing and Rogers (1996, p.14) drew attention to the fact that agenda-setting research investigates an indirect effect ("what to think about") rather than a direct media effect ("what to think").

According to the agenda-setting theory, mass media set the agenda for public opinion by highlighting certain issues. Studying the way political campaigns were covered in the media, Shaw and McCombs found the main effect of news media to be agenda-setting, telling people not what to think, but what to think about. Agenda setting is usually referred to as a function of framing. The theory explains the correspondence between the rate at which media cover a story and the extent that people think that this story is important.

Agenda-setting occurs as a result of the media attention on few issues. In the news world, information is filtered to the public through the gate-keeping process. In the course of action, choices are made about what to feed the public and what not to give out to the public.

The agenda-setting role of the media has three main dimensions:

1. Media Agenda: Issues raised in the media
2. Public Agenda: Issues raised in the media that are of relevance to the public.
3. Policy Agenda - issues raised in the media that policy makers regard as matters of key concern.

The mass media generally exerts tremendous influence in human affairs. The ability of newspaper and a host of other communication technologies to mould the public mind and significantly influence the flow of history is a widely ascribed power.

White (1972) noted that, the power of the press in America is a primordial one. It sets the agenda of public discussion; and this sweeping political power is unrestrained by any law. It determines what people will talk and think about-an authority that in other nations is reserved by tyrants, priests, parties and mandarins.

With all the positive influence ascribed to the agenda setting theory, scholars in the field have identified factors that strengthen or weaken the influence of the media agenda on the public agenda. According to McCombs (1976), agenda-setting influence does not operate at all time, in all places and in all people. That the potency of agenda-setting influence is found to vary dramatically depending on certain contingent conditions of receivers of that information and the

issues themselves (Roberts, Wanta & Dzwo, 2002). Miller (2005) identified three contingent factors that enhance, modify and mitigate the influence of the agenda setting process. They are audience characteristics, media characteristics and issues characteristics.

The relevance of this theory to this study lies in the fact that journalists in giving out information on the anti-corruption crusade of the Buhari administration will influence the salience of events in the public mind.

## **2.4 SUMMARY OF LITERATURE**

This study reviewed a number of related literatures. Thus the concepts of corruption, evolution of corruption in Nigeria, changes in government associated with corruption, causes of corruption, different dimensions of corruption and the fight against corruption in both the military and civilian regimes in Nigeria were reviewed. The conceptual reviewed also touched the area of media handling and framing of corruption-related issues both in Nigeria and other climes. Further review was carried out on related empirical studies and lastly, the theories upon which the study was anchored were reviewed. From the empirical review, the common trend noticed was that most of the previous studies based their units of enquiries on straight news. The current sought to fill the knowledge gap in terms of framing patterns given to the current administration's anti-corruption campaign using other contents of the newspaper such as the editorials, features in addition to straight news on corruption. This approach is expected to unveil the extent journalists give depth to and frame anti-corruption and/or corruption-related issues both in straight news, editorials and features, considering the fact that editorials and features are supposed to play a complementary role in the agenda setting function of the mass media. The absence of which could possibly suggest the indifference attitude of the media in the anti-

corruption issues they report as already alleged by other scholars(Isola, 2010; Oso & Pate, 2010; Akinfeleye, 2003 and Oyebode, n. d). In other words, without the reflection of anti-corruption issues on the newspapers' editorial pages – which is meant to express and/or show the newspapers' position on the matter – it would invariably imply that the media do not have a firm stance on the crusade against corruption in the country. This thesis formed the key area of investigations in the current study, to determine whether the selected newspapers tended to display some traits of indifference in the anti-corruption crusade of the present administration or otherwise.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHOD**

This chapter focuses on the research methods that were used in the study, and this includes research design, research population, sampling frame, sample size, sampling technique, instrument of data collection, and validity of instrument and method of data analysis.

#### **3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN**

The study adopted both quantitative and qualitative content analysis research approaches. According to Wright (1986) as cited by Berger (2016) both approaches were defined as content analysis and a research technique for the systematic classification and description of communication content according to certain usually predetermined categories. It involved quantitative and qualitative analysis as in the case of this study. The decision to adopt this method of research is based on Okigbo's (2015) observation that "content analysis is a unique communication research method suitable for the qualitative and quantitative study of a wide range of manifest communication media and products such as news or feature stories, advertorials, editorials, lyrics, websites, twitter feeds, etc.". The quantitative content analysis was used to examine or count tangible and observable issues in the selected newspapers, while the qualitative aspect, which has to do with Critical Incident Analysis (CIA), included the isolation of a few cases for detailed attention. The use of content analysis was designed to help the researcher determine how the selected Nigerian national dailies covered the current administration's anti-corruption campaign.

### 3.2 RESEARCH POPULATION

Population refers to the total number of subjects, objects or units studied in a research study. According to Wimmer and Dominick (2003), population is a group or class of subjects, variables, concepts, or phenomena. For the purpose of the study, the population consisted of all the Nigerian national dailies.

### 3.3 SAMPLING FRAME

The sampling frame consisted of all the Nigerian National Daily Newspapers as presented in the table below:

**Table 1: Nigerian National Daily Newspapers**

S/N	Name of Newspaper
1.	Business Day
2.	The New Telegraph
3.	The Daily Champion
4.	Daily Times
5.	Daily Trust
6.	The Blueprint
7.	The Sun
8.	Daily Independent
9.	The Vanguard
10.	Nigerian Tribune
11.	The Punch
12.	The National Mirror
13.	The Nation
14.	The Guardian
15.	This Day
16.	Leadership
17.	Nigerian Pilot
18.	People's Daily
19.	New Nigerian
20.	Authority

### 3.4. SAMPLE AND SAMPLING PROCEDURE

The researcher employed the systematic random sampling technique to select five daily national newspapers from the study population. This is one of the probability sampling methods which involves the selection of every *n*th subject or unit from a population. To add further randomness to the process, the researcher may randomly select the starting point and the sampling interval (Wimmer and Dominick, 2003). In this study, a starting point of three and an interval of two was randomly selected and used to pick the five newspapers from the sampling frame. June, 2015 to May, 2017 editions of the newspapers were selected and coded. To achieve this analysis, a two-year duration was chosen which spans along two continuous weeks and two constructed weeks, which produced 28 editions per year. Then the two-year period of study amounted to 56 editions per newspaper as shown in Table 2 below:

**Table 2: Sample of Selected Nigerian National Daily Newspapers**

S/N	Newspaper	Year	Year	Total
		June 2015 – May 2016	June 2016 – May 2017	
1.	Daily Trust	28	28	56
2.	The Sun	28	28	56
3.	Vanguard	28	28	56
4.	The Punch	28	28	56
5.	The Nation	28	28	56
	<b>Total</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>280</b>

In selecting the newspaper editions, the simple random sampling method was adopted to select the 28 editions for each year. Since there are 52 weeks in a year, the final newspaper editions

were drawn from numbers 1-52 representing the individual weeks in a year. This method produced the 280 editions for the two years.

### **3.5 BRIEF PROFILE OF SELECTED NEWSPAPERS**

#### **3.5.1. The Daily Trust Newspaper**

The Daily Trust Newspaper was founded by Malam Kabiru Yusuf in March 1998 as a weekly paper. It went into daily publication in January 2001. The newspaper ranks among the top seven in Nigeria in advertising revenue, and the largest circulating newspaper in Northern Nigeria.

#### **3.5.2. The Nation Newspaper**

The Nation is a daily newspaper published in Lagos, Nigeria which has printing plants in Abuja and Port-Harcourt, Rivers State, South- South, Nigeria. At a point, it was regarded as the second most read newspaper in Nigeria. It covers politics, the democratic process and institutions of democracy, business, art and culture, sports, etc. It became the first of its kind to gain nationwide circulation across the 36 states and the FCT within the space of two years of operation. The newspaper is believed to be founded by a frontline politician in Nigeria,Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu. However, the managing director and editor-in-chief of the newspaper is Victor Ifijeh.

#### **3.5.3. The Punch Newspaper**

The Punch newspaper was founded in 1971 by two friends, a former columnist and editor of the Daily Times newspaper, Mr Sam Amuka and an accountant, Mr James Aboderin. The current publisher of the newspaper is Ajibola Ogunsola. The newspaper is published in Lagos State, South West Nigeria. It has won several awards as a reputable Nigerian Newspaper.

#### **3.5.4. The Daily Sun Newspaper**

The Sun newspaper began production in January 18, 2003. It was initially a weekly newspaper, but rapidly became a daily publication few months later. The newspaper is similar in format to the popular Sun newspaper of the United Kingdom. It has printing plants in Lagos, Abuja and Aba in South East Nigeria. It covers politics, economy, crime, religion, sports, arts and culture and host of other issues. It is published by the Sun Publishing Limited and the chairman of the publishing house is a former governor of Abia State, Dr Orji Uzor Kalu.

#### **3.5.5. The Vanguard Newspaper**

The newspaper was established by Mr Sam Amuka in 1983, when he left the Punch newspaper. It was initially a Sunday newspaper, but began daily production afterwards. It is one of the leading newspapers in Nigeria. It has printing plants in Lagos and Asaba, South-South, Nigeria. It has gained popularity as a reputable newspaper which is now distributed practically at all state capitals and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

### **3.6. Coding Instrument**

The coding sheet and the coding guide were used in collecting the data. Newspapers generally contain items such as news, advertorials/advertisements, cartoons, editorials, articles, photos, etc. However, it is important to note here that the researcher is not interested in analysing the content of each individual item that appeared on the newspapers under study, but in analysing the manifest content of the news stories, editorials and features which also refers to the units of analysis. The content analysis covered two continuous weeks and two constructed weeks'

editions. This implied that the selection of 14 editions using two continuous weeks and another 14 editions using two constructed weeks amounted to 28 editions for each newspaper per year.

### **3.7. Study Time Frame**

The time frame for the study was June, 2015 to May, 2017. This period represents the most recent experience to existing studies that focused on the war against corruption as covered by the mass media. The period as explained earlier equally represents the assumption of office of the President Buhari led administration under the platform of the All Progressive Congress Party with the sole agenda of eradicating corruption endemic in the Nigerian system.

### **3.8. Unit of Analysis**

The unit of analysis was newspaper stories that appeared in any content of the newspapers such as; new stories, features, editorials, pictorials, opinion articles and cartoons relating to anti-corruption campaign and prosecution covered by the newspapers listed above between June, 2015 and May, 2017. This conforms to the definition given by Poindexter & McCombs (2000, p.192), that the Unit of Analysis is the communication component that is actually coded for analysis. However, the newspaper editions were sourced from the publishers.

#### **3.9.1. Content Category: Measurable Category**

Content categories are groups of words with similar meanings or connotations. This research seeks to establish among others:

- i. The amount of attention given to the coverage (news stories, editorials and features on anti-corruption crusade);

- ii. The nature of frame in the news coverage (i.e. the main subject matter, issues highlighted and representation of the corruption allegations/prosecution).

**News Stories:** Any story that is written in the conventional inverted pyramid style, using the five ‘W’s and ‘H’. It is detached from the reporter and devoid of sentimentality.

**Editorials:** Any article expressing the opinion of the newspaper within the **editorial page** of the newspaper.

**Features:** Any article written by a staff columnist of the newspaper.

### 3.9.2. Content Categories for the Study

The following content categories were considered in the study:

1. **Type of story:** It considers the type of report published by the newspaper. Which are straight news, editorials within the **editorial page** and feature articles written by staff writers.
2. **Extent/Frequency of coverage:** This has to do with the number of times the newspaper under study covered stories of anti-corruption.
3. **Page placement/position:** This has to do with the prominence given to the story in terms of page placement. For instance, is the story placed on the front page, inside page, back page and so on.
4. **Story length:** This is to determine the number of words that make up a story by counting the words and multiply by the number of lines.

5. **Direction:** Is the content of the story positive, negative or neutral?
6. **Illustration:** Is the story illustrated with pictorials?
7. **Substance:** Is the story/content on substance/serious topic or a non-issue?
8. **Gender Focus:** Is the story about men, women, men/women?
9. **Purpose of Story:** This has to do with the main purpose of the story/content
10. **Attacking or Defending:** Is the story mostly attacking or defending the subject?
11. **Author affiliation/source:** What is the affiliation of the author of the story?
12. **Objectivity:** Does the story/content appear mostly objective or mostly subjective? This implies that all sides of the story was told or order wise
13. **Rhetorical strategy:** What is the main rhetorical strategy?
14. **Type of News Frame:** This is whether thematic or episodic frame. Personality base or historic and issue base.
15. **Politically Biased Reportage:** Is the report favourable to any political party?

### **3.10.1. Qualitative Research: Critical Incident Analysis (CIA)**

According to the Institute for Learning as cited in Young (n.d, p. 1), a critical incident is an incident which, while not necessarily dramatic or obvious, is significant. Tripp (1993, p. 8) also noted that "...critical incidents are not 'things' which exist independently of an observer...but, like all data, they are produced by the way we look at a situation. Chell (1998) provided the following description of the CIA method:

The critical incident technique is a qualitative interview procedure which facilitates the investigation of significant occurrences (events, incidents, processes, or issues) identified by the respondent, the way



they are managed, and the outcomes in terms of perceived effects. The objective is to gain understanding of the incident from the perspective of the individual, taking into account cognitive, affective, and behavioral elements. (p. 56)

Bitner, Booms, and Tetreault (1990) further explained that an incident as an observable human activity that is complete enough to allow inferences and predictions to be made about the person performing the act. It is described as one that makes a significant contribution, either positively or negatively, to an activity or phenomenon (Bitner, Booms, &Tetreault 1990; Grove and Fisk 1997).A critical incident analysis is therefore, mostly a straightforward account of very commonplace events that occur in routine professional practice which are critical in the sense that they are indicative of underlying motive and structures. It is equally an interpretation of the significance of such critical incident. That significance can only come about through a process of reflection, which necessarily takes place in retrospect and helps in the understanding of the context in which events take place. This means, CIA helps to get beneath the surface of newspaper coverage of incidents and/or events in order to illuminate embedded or latent meanings therein.

Generally, through Critical Incident Analysis (CIA), researchers could deal with challenges in everyday practice, and reflect on issues for a better understanding of how things operate, thereby becoming more aware of one's own practice. It is a way to explore, explain, consider, justify and learn from incidents which occur in day-to-day coverage of issues in order to develop a better understanding, which should help to find alternative ways of reacting and responding to such coverage or incidence. The CIA method can therefore, be used to generate an accurate and in-depth record of events (Grove & Fisk 1997).It can also provide an empirical starting point for

generating new research evidence about the phenomenon of interest and, given its frequent usage in a content analytic fashion, has the potential to be used as a companion research method in multi method studies (Kolbe & Burnett 1991). In a nutshell, the use of CIA in this study helped the researcher to identify the issue that has provoked strong feelings in the reportage of anti-corruption crusade in Nigeria; reflect upon them in a structured way; and consider possibilities for future action on press coverage of anti-corruption crusade in the country.

The CIA was conducted in this study by perusing, marking up, classifying and categorizing the newspaper contents to achieve parsimonious groupings or dimensions. The CIA data can be used both quantitatively and qualitatively and, indeed, have been used both ways in service research.

Chell and Pittaway (1998) briefly described both uses:

Used quantitatively it can assess the type, nature and frequency of incidents discussed which when linked with other variables . . . can provide important insights into general relationships. Used qualitatively the CIA provides more discursive data which can be subjected to narrative analysis and be coded and categorized according to the principles of grounded theory. (p. 26)

In the current study, a qualitative CIA was adopted as the researcher isolated a few cases for detailed attention as recommended by Okigbo (2015), see chapter four for details.

In adopting this technique, two tasks were tackled: the decision about a general frame of reference to describe the incidents and the inductive development of main and subcategories.

Thus, information contained in the stories on anti-corruption were carefully scrutinized to identify data categories that summarize and describe the incidents (Stauss, 1993; & Grove & Fisk 1997).

The main categories of classification can either be deduced from theoretical models or formed on the basis of inductive interpretation (Stauss 1993). The researcher in this instance adopted the

inductive interpretations in analysing some critical incidents isolated in this study. Generally, the goal of the content analysis is a classification system to provide insights regarding the frequency and patterns of factors that affect the phenomenon of interest. It was adopted for the current study due to its inductive nature (Edvardsson 1992). Consequently, the CIA method is especially useful when:

- i. The topic being researched has been sparingly documented (Grove & Fisk 1997);
- ii. An exploratory method to increase knowledge about a little-known phenomenon is needed; or
- iii. A thorough understanding is needed when describing or explaining a phenomenon (Bitner, et al, 1990).

Consequently, a total of 280 newspaper editions were sampled. It was from this initial sample that some editions were further selected for CIA based on the following criteria:

- i. The story had to be on corruption-related issues. Therefore, it must be within anti-corruption related context.
- ii. The story had to actually treat the anti-corruption related report elaborately and not merely discuss the issue of corruption.

Out of the 265 anti-corruption stories identified, majority predominantly revolved around certain high profile corruption cases and were thus isolated for further analysis. Thus, the corruption cases of “the 2.8b NAMA Fraud”, “2.2bn Arms deal”, “the Dasuki corruption cases”, “2.3bn

Diezani bribe”, “116bn the ONSA contracts”, “1.299bn Fayose case”, “Fanni-Kayode corruption case”, and “Patience Jonathan’s corruption cases” constituted the basis of the CIA.

### **3.10.2. Coding and Analyses of Studies**

To assess the anti-corruption reports on the selected newspaper editions, four (4) variables were identified and they include such issues as story contexts, the focus and direction, the actors involved and depth of report. After the variables were identified, the author analyzed the newspapers reports on corruption separately and coded each of the four (4) variables, when applicable, for every report. It was there that themes were generated on which the analysis was anchored.

### **3.11. Inter-coder Reliability**

Coding reliability addresses the issue of consistency. In view of this, three coders were recruited and trained for the proper coding in line with the defined categories above to ensure decision agreement. This is because according to Poindexter and McCombs, (2000, p.199), “when coders fail to agree in their coding decisions, the reliability of the content analysis study is diminished”. The inter-coder reliability was calculated using a Coefficient of Reliability formula as proposed by Holsti, (1969), cited in Poindexter and McCombs, (2000) thus:

$$C.R = \frac{2M}{N1+N2}$$

Where;

C.R. = Coefficient of Reliability

M= Number of Coding Decisions Agreed On

N= Total Number of Coding Decisions Made by Each Coder.

Since a rule of thumb for an acceptable coefficient of reliability is 80 percent or above; the researcher trained the coders and clarify areas of disagreement until the required acceptable percent is attained.

$$C.R = \frac{34}{39}$$

$$C.R = 0.87$$

Following the rule of thumb for an acceptable coefficient of reliability, the researcher upheld the 87% (0.87) and continued with the coding. This means the instrument was reliable.

### **3.12. Data Collection Instrument**

The instrument of data collection for this study was coding sheet and the coding guide. The researcher used the coding sheet designed in line with the content categories above to obtain the desired data for the content analysis.

### **3.13 Data Collection Phase**

The planned data collection was conducted in one phase. The data collection took place in the months of June 2015 to May 2017. Three trained coders were used for this purpose.

### **3.14 Method of Data Analysis and Presentation**

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 22) was used for analysis. The outcome of the quantitative data was presented in tables. This is in order to obtain frequencies, percentages and statistical measurements of such central tendencies as mean and mode in the initial analysis; while the qualitative data were analysed thematically using the CIA approach.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

This chapter presented, analysed and discussed the data collected on Nigeria Newspapers coverage of the anti-corruption crusade in Nigeria from June 2015 to May 2017. As stated earlier in chapter three, five national daily newspapers were selected for this content analysis. They include: The Nation, The Daily Trust, the Punch, Vanguard and the Sun Newspapers. June, 2015 to May, 2017 editions of the newspapers were analysed. The period as explained earlier represents the assumption of office of the President Buhari led administration under the platform of the All Progressive Congress (APC) Party with the major agenda of eradicating corruption in the Nigerian system. This was the basis of the party's change agenda mantra. The simple random sampling method was adopted to select the 280 editions of the five newspapers that were analysed. Allnews stories, editorials and features on the anti-corruption campaign and prosecution covered by the sampled newspapers constituted the unit of analysis/instrument for eliciting data in this study. It also contained the analysis from the qualitative data, which is the Critical Incident Analysis.

#### **4.1 PRESENTATION OF QUANTITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS DATA**

A total of 280 copies of the newspapers selected from the five sampled newspapers were content analysed and presented using frequency tables. The essence of the quantitative content analysis

was to ascertain the manifest anti-corruption contents and their pattern of coverage within the period under study.

**Table 3: Frequency of Coverage**

<b>Newspapers</b>	<b>Daily Trust</b>	<b>Daily Sun</b>	<b>Vanguard</b>	<b>Punch</b>	<b>Nation</b>	<b>Total And Percentage</b>
Education/Technology	12% (n=62)	25% (n=129)	21% (n=110)	23% (n=119)	19% (n=99)	<b>17%</b> <b>(n=519)</b>
Entertainment/Sports	12% (n=15)	16% (n=20)	21% (n=26)	36% (n=45)	15% (n=19)	<b>4%</b> <b>(n=125)</b>
Politics	18% (n=91)	22% (n=110)	21% (n=105)	20% (n=104)	19% (n=101)	<b>16%</b> <b>(n=511)</b>
Religion	30% (n=101)	12% (n=48)	14% (n=51)	19% (n=70)	25% (n=91)	<b>12%</b> <b>(n=362)</b>
Business/Economy	15% (n=94)	21% (n=131)	22% (n=135)	24% (n=150)	18% (n=115)	<b>20%</b> <b>(n=625)</b>
Health	25% (n=51)	22% (n=46)	18% (n=38)	17% (n=35)	18% (n=37)	<b>7%</b> <b>(n=207)</b>
Conflict/crime	28% (n=127)	20% (n=90)	18% (n=79)	13% (n=58)	21% (n=97)	<b>15%</b> <b>(451)</b>
Anti-Corruption	12% (n=32)	15% (n=40)	21% (n=56)	23% (n=60)	29% (n=77)	<b>9%</b> <b>(265)</b>
Total	<b>19%</b> <b>(n=573)</b>	<b>20%</b> <b>(n=614)</b>	<b>20%</b> <b>(n=601)</b>	<b>20%</b> <b>(n=641)</b>	<b>21%</b> <b>(n=636)</b>	<b>100%</b> <b>(3065)</b>

The table above presents the total number of issues in the form of news stories, features and editorials covered by the newspapers from June, 2015 to May, 2017. Data in the table show that a total of three thousand, sixty-five (3065) stories were reported across the sampled newspapers. A breakdown of the findings shows the preponderance of the news stories in its different genres presented in the sample newspapers focused on Business/Economy representing 20%, followed by education/science/technology related contents (17%). Closely followed is contents focusing on politics (16%). 15% focused on conflict, while 11.8% was on religion matters. 8.6% was anti-corruption related. 6.8% was on health while entertainment/sports had the least at 4%. The findings suggest that anti-corruption reports received very minimal attention in the newspapers within the period covered. This means anti-corruption related stories were not among the top five themes set as agenda by the newspapers within the period under study.

**Frequency of coverage (Refer to the anti-corruption column in table three):** Having established the dominant news, feature and editorial in the selected newspapers, the anti-corruption column in table 3 presents the frequency of coverage of anti-corruption stories in the individual newspapers sampled. Findings from the table showed a sum of 265 stories on anti-corruption for the whole newspapers during the period of study. This further buttresses findings from table three on the low coverage of anti-corruption stories by sampled newspapers. A breakdown of coverage based on individual newspapers shows that the Nation newspaper has the highest number of stories on anti-corruption with 29.1%. The Punch newspaper had 22.6% of the total reports on anti-corruption. This is closely followed by Vanguard newspaper which had 21.1%; The Daily Sun, 15.1%; while the Daily Trust has the least anti-corruption stories, 12.1%. This implies that the Nation newspaper has the highest coverage of anti-corruption stories in



Nigeria during the period of study, while the Daily Trust Newspaper has the least. The varying pattern in nature of coverage of anti-corruption stories could be accounted for based on political affiliation and ownership of these newspapers. The owner of The Nation newspaper is for instance one of APC foremost leaders and therefore a strong supporter of the Government drive of the anti-corruption crusade.

**Table 4: News Genres on anti-corruption stories**

<b>News Genres</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
News	96% (n=255)
Editorials	1% (n=3)
Features	3% (n=7)
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b> <b>(N=265)</b>

Table 4 shows the type of anti-corruption news stories in the sampled Newspapers. Findings show that majority of the anti-corruption stories (96%) were reported as straight news. While very small quantity was reported in editorial and feature articles (1% and 3% respectively). This suggests lack of in- depth analysis of the issue of corruption. It could also mean lack of firm stance of the newspapers on the anti-corruption campaign. Since the editorial indicates newspapers stand on issues and used for Agenda setting, the minimal quantity of editorial on the issue is therefore indicative of sampled newspapers inability to focus or attach importance to the issue.

**Table 5: Prominence given to Anti-Corruption Stories**

<b>Page Placement</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Photo Illustration</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Length of Story</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Front	85% (n=217)	No illustration/photo	85% (n=226)	Short	25% (n=66)
Center	6% (n=16)	Black & White Photo	5 (n=12)	Medium	42% (n=112)
Back	9% (n=32)	Colour Photo	9% (n=25)	Long	33% (n=87)
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b> <b>(n=265)</b>	Graphics	1% (n=2)	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b> <b>(n=265)</b>
		<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b> <b>(n=265)</b>		

The table above presents data on the level of prominence attached to the anti-corruption stories covered by the newspapers. This is measured by the page placement of the anti-corruption stories, the type of illustration given to the stories and the length of the anti-corruption stories. Findings from the table show that 85% of anti-corruption stories were presented in the front pages of the newspaper, 9% appeared on the back pages while 6% of anti-corruption stories were reported in the inside pages of the newspaper. Findings from the table further show that majority

(85.3%) of the anti-corruption stories were not supported with photo illustration. Only 9.4% were accompanied with coloured photos while 4.5% had black and white photo illustrations. A very insignificant number, (0.8%) was illustrated using other graphics. On story length, majority (42.3%) of the anti-corruption stories were of medium length. This is closely followed by long stories given at 32.8% while the least score goes to short stories with 24.9%. These findings suggest a high degree of prominence attached to the reported anti-corruption stories since majority of the stories (85%) appeared on the front pages and were also reported in depth given the length of the stories (75.1% of the stories being of average length) although majority were not further illustrated using photos. However, most stories appearing in the front pages could be arguably attributed to the caliber of persons accused of corrupt practices since media pay a huge attention to personality.

The prominence given to anti-corruption stories in the selected newspapers arguably justifies the agenda-setting theory used in the study.

**Table 6: Type of Headlines**

<b>Headlines</b>	<b>Percentages</b>	<b>Normal versus Sensational</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
Jump stories	83% (n=219)	Normal	80% (n=213)
Labels	12% (n=32)	Sensational	20% (n=52)
Subheads	5% (n=14)	Total	100 (n=265)
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b> <b>(n=265)</b>		

Table 6 presents the various classifications of headlines used in the reportage of anti-corruption crusade in Nigeria within the period under study. Basically, headline helps to draw the reader's

attention to the story, summarize the news, sell the news, grade the news and make the entire newspaper more attractive (Akinfeleye, 1987 as cited by Okoye, 2000). Majority of the headlines (83%) were of jump stories, that is, front page stories that started and continued in inside pages. This was followed by labels (12%) which were stories that came in brief; while subheads (headlines that used different *type* to break the monotony of *types* on the pages of the newspaper) constitute only 5% of the headlines. However, majority of the headlines (80%) were normal headlines that were devoid of any form of sensationalism whereas only 20% of the headlines were sensational in their tone. This implies that most of the stories had jump headlines that were non-sensational in tone. This therefore did not support the allegation leveled against the media and the anti-corruption crusaders for media trial of corruption as a result of the use of sensationalism which blows stories out of proportion under President Mohammadu Buhari's administration.

**Table 7: Gender Focus of the Anti-corruption Stories**

<b>Issues</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
Male	75% (n=198)
Female	3% (n=8)
Both	15% (n=40)
Others	7% (n=19)
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b> <b>(n=265)</b>

Table 7 shows the focus of the Anti-Corruption stories as regards gender of those involved. 75% of anti-corruption stories had males as the subject, while 3% of anti-corruption stories were on females. This implies that most of the anti-corruption were male dominated. This is understood

based on the fact that more male than female occupy government offices and would have more access to public funds than their female counterparts.

**Table 8: Focus of the Anti-corruption stories by Political Party Affiliation**

<b>Party Affiliations</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
The Story of PDP member	12% (n=31)
The story of APC member	0% (n=0)
The story of other party member	0% (n=0%)
No party affiliation	88% (n=234)
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b> <b>(n=265)</b>

Table 8 shows the Anti-corruption stories by political party affiliation. Findings from the data show that majority of the anti-corruption stories (88%) were not presented to reflect any political party affiliation while 12% of Anti-corruption stories were linked with PDP members. This implies that the newspapers were careful enough to separate the accused from political party affiliation in their reportage as there were cries from some quarters that the anti-corruption

crusade was directed towards the major opposition party. It also means that the anti-corruption crusade is not about political parties but about individuals who served under previous administrations.

**Table 9: Framing of the Anti-Corruption stories**

<b>News Frame</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
Thematic-Historic and Issue based	83% (n=219)
Episodic-Personality based	7% (n=19)
Mixed frame (Both Thematic and Episodic)	10% (n=27)
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b> <b>(n=265)</b>

Table 9 shows the types of news frame given to the anti-corruption stories by the sampled newspapers. The data indicate that 83% of Anti-corruption stories were thematic-historic and Issue based, 7% of Anti-corruption stories were Episodic-Personality based and 10% of the anti-corruption stories were mixed frame (partly thematic and partly episodic). This implies that most anti-corruption stories were thematic-historic and Issue based. It also implies that the anti-corruption crusade is not about who is being accused but about an age long problem that needs to

be addressed holistically. In other words, the problem should be addressed by looking into the remote cause of corruption in the country.

**Table 10: Media Position on anti-corruption stories**

<b>Positions</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
Positive	5% (n=14)
Negative	6% (n=17)
Neutral	89% (n=234)
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b> <b>(n=265)</b>

Table 11 shows the Nature of anti-corruption stories in the sampled newspapers. It was found that 89% of Anti-corruption stories were neutral, 6% were negative, while 5% of Anti-corruption stories were positive. This implies that Nigerian newspapers were mostly neutral in their coverage of anti-corruption related issues within the period under study. It also means that majority of the stories were straight news which always appears to be unbiased. It was observed that there were very few editorials (1%) and features (3%) which could account for the neutrality of the newspapers on the anti-corruption crusade.

**Table 11: Purpose of Story**

<b>Purpose of Story</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
Awareness/Education/Information	89% (n=236)
Persuade (positive influence)	5% (n=12)
Propaganda (negative influence)	2% (n=7)
Castigate and bring to disrepute	4% (n=9)
Others	0% (n=0)
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b> <b>(n=265)</b>



Table 11 displays the purpose of anti-corruption stories in the Newspapers studied in terms of effect to audience. Findings from the table show that majority of the anti-corruption stories (89%) were designed to create awareness. 5% geared towards persuasion while 4% were framed to castigate and bring the party/individual involved to disrepute. This finding corroborates the findings in tables 7 and 8 which show that the anti-corruption stories reported were generally issue-based and positive.

**Table 12: Sources of the Stories**

<b>Sources</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
Police	1% (n=3)
EFCC/ Anti-graft Agencies	55% (n=145)
Court Proceedings	32% (84)
Ordinary People/individual	2% (n=6)
Government	5% (n=13)
Opposition party: PDP or any other party	3% (n=9)
NGO's/ Civil Society Groups	2% (n=5)
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b> <b>(n=265)</b>

Table 12 shows the source of the stories. A good number of the stories (55%) emanated from the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) investigation of persons linked to issues of corruption. Stories from court proceedings came second with (32%). Government statements on issues of corruption account for (5%). Others are opposition parties (3%), Civil Society Groups (2%) and the Police (1%). This implies that even though the EFCC and the Courts are mostly

directly involved in the crusade against corruption in Nigeria, the Nigerian newspapers' are over dependent on them as the major sources of information on anti-corruption crusade at the expense of the victims and people standing corruption trials or alleged to have perpetuated corrupt acts. This points to the fact that the newspapers still traditionally relies on government sources at the expense of the victims and those standing either media or court trial. However, given every party fair hearing in the reportage would enhance public support for the crusade and ultimately, the successful prosecution of the anti-corruption crusade in the country.

**Table 13: Story Subjects Occupation**

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
Businessmen	1% (n=3)
Politicians: PDP/APC/any other party	96% (n=255)
Civil Servant	2% (n=4)
Public Servant	1% (n=3)
Ordinary people/individual	0% (n=0)
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b> <b>(n=265)</b>

Table 13 shows the occupation of the subjects that are involved in the corruption stories. Majority of the stories (96%) were centered on politicians particularly members of the Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP) in the previous administration. Other story subjects are business men (3%), Civil servants (4%), Public servants (3%) and Ordinary people (0%). This implies that most of the people linked with issues of corruption are politicians and highly placed individuals in the previous government. That majority of the people linked with corrupt practices in the

stories were politicians is understandable considering the fact that they are the only set of people who easily had access to public fund in the past few years of the nation's democratic experiment. This is not surprising since in Nigeria we have found that majority of people working in government are politicians with political appointments and as such have access to public funds.

## **4.2 QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS: CRITICAL INCIDENT ANALYSIS (CIA)**

Critical Incident Analysis (CIA) was used in this study to give depth to the quantitative data by isolating some issues for a more detailed discourse. This is similar to the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach which Handsen and Machin, (2013) explained as an approach founded in linguistics, that allow users to carry out more systematic analysis of texts and language and can reveal how speakers and authors use language and grammatical features to create meaning and to persuade people to think about events in a particular way. Handsen and Machin, (2013) also viewed the approach as one that seeks to draw out the ideology of a text by pointing at the details of language and grammar, usually carried out either on selected examples of texts or speeches, looking also at some parts and figures of speech as ingredients for analysis and also lexis, quotations and concepts. The following issues were therefore, isolated and analysed thematically: frequency of coverage of anti-corruption stories; Journalists' reliance on secondary data; dearth of Newspapers' stance on the anti-corruption crusade.

### **4.2.1. Newspapers, Corruption Investigation and Sustained Coverage**

As part of the President Muhammad Buhari's anti-corruption campaign, a lot of high profile corruption cases were reported by the anti-corruption agencies and some had remained under investigation. These cases from the outset attracted both media and public attention and by

extension received high media coverage. However, findings from the sampled newspapers indicated that most of these high profile corruption cases never received sustained newspaper coverage. In other words, it was observed that the newspapers studied, flag-off such coverage but fail to follow them up to a logical conclusion. Thus, such cases fizzle out of public attention with time due to lack of sustained coverage. For instance, the cases of the \$2.1bn arms deal, the 23 billion naira Diezani bribe, ₦116B ONSA Contracts, the Dasuki alleged corrupt case and host of others, gained high newspaper coverage when they were earlier announced by the anti-corruption agencies and particularly, at the beginning of the Buhari's administration but declined in frequency with time.

Some of these critical corruption cases were reported in the newspapers as follows:

“~~₦~~2.8b NAMA Fraud: EFCC opposes defendant's trip” (The Nation, Wednesday, July 13, 2015, p.8); “~~₦~~28.9b fraud: EFCC arrest BGL boss, Okumagba”(The Punch, Friday, Sept., 11, 2015, p.2);“EFCC quizzes ex-Benue governor, Suswam, for nine hours” (The Punch, October 13, 2015, p.1); “LOOTED BILLIONS” with the riders “Buhari tightens noose on Jonathan's men”, “Withdrawal of diplomatic passports linked to illegal forex transfer” (Vanguard, Sunday, Oct., 11, 2015, p.1); “\$2.2bn arms probe: EFCC in dilemma over Sanusi, ex-CBN gov.” (Vanguard Dec. 14, 2015, p.1); “\$2BN ARMS DEAL: DSS arrests Dasuki, Bafarawa” (Vanguard Dec. 2, 2015, p.1); “\$2.9BN ARMS DEAL: Why Buhari ordered arrest of Dasuki, others” (Vanguard Nov. 18, 2015, p.1); “\$2bn arms Probe: PDP kicks as EFCC arrest DOKPESI, ex-governor Bafarawa”(The Punch, Wednesday, Dec. 2, 2015, p.1); “\$2.1bn arms probe: EFCC Compile list of military chiefs”(The Punch, January 5, 2016, p.1); “Alleged N23bn Diezani bribe: EFCC grills ex-Jonathan Ministers, state PDP chair (The Punch Friday, May 6, 2016, p.1); “ICPC

recovers ₦80bn loot” (The Punch, Sunday November, 18, 2016); “EFCC to go after property acquired with stolen money” (The Sun July 13, 2016); “₦115m Diezani fund: EFCC quizzes Ahamba, Anyanwu” (The Sun May 6, 2016, p. 7); “₦116B ONSA Contracts: FG to refer 300 indicted persons, firms to EFCC, ICPC, Police” (The Nation Saturday March 26, 2016, p.6); “EFCC Probes ₦6.7bn transfer to Dasuki, ex-DG DSS after POLL” with the rider, “Ex-NSA awarded contracts without tenders’ board – Accountant”, “I collected only \$30,000 from Yuguda, not ₦100m – Bode George” (The Punch, Monday, December 14, 2015, p.6); “₦4bn Campaign Funds: EFCC Freezes Udenwa, Onwuliri’s account” (The Punch, Thursday, June 2, 2016, p.3); “₦1.299bn: EFCC may arraign Fayose’s associate Agbele next week” (The Nation, Saturday July, 23, 2016, p.6); “₦4b Campaign bazaar: EFCC freezes Fani-Kayode’s account” (The Nation, Saturday April, 23, 2016, p.8); “\$2.1bn arms probe: EFCC Compile list of military chiefs”(The Punch, January 5, 2016, p.1). As critical as these cases are, it was observed that there was a rapid decline in the frequencies of these high profile corrupt cases in the newspapers sampled. Most never gained the newspapers’ attention and coverage beyond the immediate periods they were announced, hence, the trends of most are altogether lost to the media and to the members of the public. The implication of this finding is that the newspapers appear not to follow-up these cases, perhaps due to the delay in justice delivery system in Nigeria or a case of irresponsibility on the part of the newspapers.

Similarly, it was observed that there was lack of proper investigations into the corruption cases by the newspapers, resulting in some degree of inconsistencies in the reports made available to the public. A case in point are the reports on “arms deals” where the *Vanguard* newspaper gave the figure at “\$2.9BN” on November 18, 2015, both *Vanguard* and the *Punch* newspapers

reported “\$2BN” on December 2, 2015, and *Vanguard* again, reported “\$2.2bn” on December 14, 2015. The same *Punch* newspaper reported another figure on January 5, 2016 thus “\$2.1bn arms probe: EFCC Compile list of military chiefs” (The Punch, January 5, 2016, p.1). These inconsistencies raise some questions of the newspapers’ accuracy in their reportage and by extension create confusion and problem of comprehension for the members of the public. Again, it was observed that the newspapers studied appear not to make deliberate concerted efforts to unveil hidden information about some of the corruption reports they made available to the public. Considering the existing Freedom of Information Law in Nigeria, it is expected that the newspapers probed further for missing information that will aid the public to make informed decisions and/or hold their leaders accountable especially as it concerns how they spend public funds. An instance is the newspaper report on the arms deal involving some military officers. It was reported in the *Punch* newspaper that “The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission has compiled a list of serving and retired military officers, who will be interrogated in connection with the \$2.1bn arms procurement probe...” (The Punch, January 5, 2016). The report went further to state that “although sources, who confided in one of our correspondents in Abuja on Monday declined to name the affected officers...” (The Punch, January 5, 2016, p.1) and for this decline to divulge the names of the affected officers as claimed by the reporters, they resorted to substituting the names of the officers with such phrases as “a serving Colonel”, “military officers” etc. This pattern of reportage renders the information incomplete and showcases what may be assumed as the inability or the unwillingness of the journalists to utilize the powers vested on them by the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act of 2011 to seek information that are of interest to the public as also by Dunu and Ugbo, (2014).

#### **4.2.2. Frequency of Coverage of Anti-Corruption Stories**

Media role in fighting corruption is reinforced by constitutional responsibility which accords them the power according to section 22 of the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to act as watchdog to the society and to strengthen democratic institutions by consciously and effectively investigating and interpreting social vices like corruption. In spite of this, Findings from the quantitative data revealed a low coverage of anti-corruption stories (see table three above) even though a good number of the stories on anti-corruption were given a prominent placement on the front pages (85%). Deplorably, anti-corruption issues recorded only 6% out of the entire issues covered by the newspapers which contravene the expectations of Nigerians towards the crusade.

The question remains: how important or otherwise do the media regard anti-corruption issues and how has the non-inclusion or poor coverage of the incident affect government efforts, as well as the effects such crusade could have on the people? Since requisite function of the media is the provision of adequate and regular information to the public in such a way that they could be properly informed and also use such information in making informed decisions and respond to issues; low coverage as demonstrated from the quantitative data becomes an issue of concern.

The major obvious implication of this is that in setting agenda for the public, the media did not give adequate attention to the anti-corruption campaign-related issues. The few editorials and features in the selected newspapers also attest to this. For instance, editorial – a special analytical article in newspapers which contains comment and opinion on a topical issue and the voice of the

newspaper (Okwechime, 2006) scored just (1%) of the total coded items from the selected newspapers. It is similar with the result of the feature article – an in-depth analysis/review of events, which seeks to unravel the overt and covert causes and consequences of an event that is of public interest and this represented (3%) from the coded items in the selected newspapers whereas only straight news accounted for 96% of the coded items. Supposedly, if the attention given to straight news was equally given to editorial and feature articles, then the frequency of coverage would have been a bit satisfactory given the uniqueness of such genres at adding colour and giving depth to an issue. This way, the media would have raised more public awareness; activated anticorruption values; and generated outside pressure from the public against corruption (Rose-Ackerman, 1999).

Amidst the confused state of understanding the particulars of corruption and the subtle or manifest positions of political leaders in the fight against corruption, the role of the media remains significant because they can influence the outcome of quite different events in different ways. Pate (2012) in Isoola & Popoola (2015) further submits that the media are rightly or wrongly considered to be part of the forces engaged in the construction and manipulation of realities in Nigeria. This is because corruption and anti-corruption fights have been at the heart of national political discourse in Nigeria since independence in Nigeria (Enwerenmadu, 2012), and more prominently, in the current political dispensation which has the fight against corruption as one of her cardinal campaign promises and policy statement.

However, because newspapers have the power to select and give prominence to any issue in their gate-keeping process, the problem of not recognizing the anti-corruption issues by the media



may somehow render the programme of the government on such menace ineffective. This is because some Nigerians expect a very high coverage of the anti-corruption issues following the Nigerian government's promise of a fierce battle against corruption, but with this dearth of anti-corruption issues one may doubt the seriousness of the Nigerian government towards addressing the series of corruption incidents in the country.

#### **4.2.3. Journalists' Reliance on Single Source**

It could be seen from the stories examined that the newspapers relied majorly on one source (the anti-graft agencies like EFCC, ICPC and the security operatives) for corruption related news with its possible consequences on the objectivity and diversity of perspective. Also worthy of critical attention is the way most of the stories were framed. For instance, the newspapers were dominated with headlines like: '*\$2.1bn arms probe: EFCC Compiles list of military chiefs*', with the lead, '*The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission has compiled a list of serving and retired military officers, who will be interrogated in connection with the \$2.1bn arms procurement probe, The PUNCH has learnt*'; and '*Alleged N23bn Diezani bribe: EFCC grills ex-Jonathan Ministers, state PDP chair*' with the lead '*The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission on Wednesday and Thursday embarked on a mass arrest of individuals believed to have received part of the \$115m (N23bn) disbursed by a former minister of petroleum resources, Mrs. Diezani Alison – Madueke, through Fidelity Bank Plc.*' (both in *The Punch*, January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Front page). Other examples include: '*EFCC to go after property acquired with stolen money*' with the lead: '*The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) yesterday said it would go after properties acquired with stolen money from the public purse and persons who assisted in laundering such funds*'; and '*N115m Diezani fund: EFCC quizzes Ahamba, Anyanwu*'

with the lead: *'The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) has quizzed chief Mike Ahamba (SAN) and former senate chairman of the committee on defence, Chris Anyanwu for allegedly collecting ₦700 million from former minister of petroleum resources, Mrs Diezani Allison-Madueke, days before the 2015 presidential election'* (Both in *The Sun*, July 13<sup>th</sup> and May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2016 respectively).

What this suggests is that there is likelihood for reporters to rely mostly on already existing information from the government agencies instead of seeking the views from other sources to balance anti-corruption stories and help the audience to better internalize anti-corruption issues. This implies that the anti-corruption stories were not given much depth and investigative coverage. Besides, there seems to be obvious similarity in the pattern of the use of meaning-laden adjectives in the representations of the people involved in the cases; and for the fact that such news stories mainly emanated from the body charged with prosecuting corrupt persons with little or no commensurable attention to the alleged and or victims of the purported corrupt acts, the stories tend to portray the alleged corrupt persons guilty as charged. One major defect of such incidence of over reliance on only official sources is the limitations of diversity of opinions and information on the issue and also the limitation of verification of facts. For instance, *The Vanguard* Newspaper has this headline, 'Looted Billions: Buhari tightens noose on Jonathan's men' with the rider: 'Withdrawal of diplomatic passports linked to illegal forex transfer'. The lead of the story as seen below further revealed the pre-emptive nature of most of the anti-corruption stories in the selected newspapers within the period in question:

There were indications over the weekend that President Muhammadu Buhari's anti-corruption war is being revved up as investigations

closed-in on another confidant of former President Goodluck Jonathan. The on-going investigations border on some scandalous deals in the petroleum industry regarding offshore processing Agreements, OPAs, whereby crude oil worth billions of naira, was given to traders in exchange for refined imported products – specifically premium motor spirit, PMS, also known as petrol, as well as the illegal use of diplomatic passports by some individuals to engage in illegal foreign exchange movements. (*The Sunday Vanguard*, October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2015, p. Front page)

However, the observed lack of varied sources of corruption stories and uniform negative framing of perceived corrupt individual and institutions may be partly attributed to the level of media freedom, access to information, ownership, competition, credibility and outreach in Nigeria which according to experts like Vogl (1999); Stapenhurst (2000) are key factors affecting the quality and effectiveness of media performance on corruption.

The presence of such incidents in the reportage and framing of the anti-corruption issues undermined the fight against corruption as it seems to uphold the filler that anti-corruption campaigns have not been motivated by public interest mostly but most often, by personal political interests whereby political leaders instrumentalize the struggle to legitimise their regime, gain access to foreign power, eliminate their political rivals, reconstruct a political hegemony, shield their allies while victimising their foes, exonerate ‘immune’ offenders to further apprehend the opposition, leading to lack of public trust on anti-corruption commitments (Enweremadu, 2012; Ciboh, 2014).

#### **4.2.4. Dearth of Newspapers’ Stance on the Anti-Corruption Campaigns**

The lack of editorials in the sampled newspapers indicates that they did not have a firm stance on the anti-corruption crusade. Editorials are the conscience of newspapers through which the mass

media wield enormous influence in setting public agenda by emphasis and framing. One significant finding from the quantitative content analysis is the scarcity of editorials and feature articles on corruption in the selected newspapers. Thus, it could be inferred that the selected newspapers tend to display some traits of indifference in the anti-corruption campaign of the present administration. Newspaper editorials are generally the standpoint of a given newspapers in matters of public interest, however, these were in short supply in the sampled newspapers. Out of the 265 stories coded, only seven feature stories and three editorials appeared, and even the few ones lacked clear cut stand on the President Buhari's anti-corruption campaigns. This could be a matter of serious concern considering the assumed enormous influence of newspapers' opinionated segments in shaping public opinion and audience behaviours. Presumably, editorials and features articles would have helped to set agenda for both the government and the public and at the same time aid the government to succeed in the anti-corruption crusade.

Most of the critical incidents on corruption we reported as straight news. The few featurized stories include: 'CORRUPTION: Lessons Alhaji thought me...' (The Nation Friday June, 24, 2016, p.15). This exemplar feature story contained some invaluable advice to the presidency on how to tackle corruption headlong in Nigeria. In the feature story, the writer recalled among other things, the anecdote narrated to him by Alhaji Salihu Abubakar Ehimeakhe thus: "Corruption for instance, is like a forty-foot tanker laden with fuel and you have to turn it around a narrow roundabout. A wise driver must do it slowly, patiently and methodically. If he gets impatient and tries to do it hastily; of course the tanker will up over and its combustible cargo would go up in flames and consume the entire neighbourhood including the driver" (The Nation Friday June, 24, 2016, p.15). The import of this anecdote is that the fight against corruption is

not automatic and spontaneous. It is rather a gradual process that must be undertaken systematically and continuously.

The columnist connected the lesson learnt from Alhaji Salihu Abubakar Ehimeakhe to the situation that led President Buhari to embark on the fight against corruption, suggesting also that this country laden with inflammable fuel is at the risk of spinning out of control if the presidency does not manipulate it like a skilful and wise tanker driver and that all patriots and men of good should be part of the fight against corruption. Osuji (2016) further expressed delight that he personally admires the passion of President Buhari as stated below:

“All fraud must stop. This exercise (anti-graft war) will continue as long as this leadership is here. Whoever takes anything that does not belong to him or that he is not entitled to, will be documented (and) taken to court. This is the only way I think we can bail ourselves out. We are determined to bail our country out for the sake of our children and our grandchildren.”

Osuji (2016) further elaborated in-depth on the issue of corruption and realized that the media as most scholars have noted are primary sources of information for the people and in informing the people provide them with the requisite knowledge and ability to make informed decisions concerning issues of national interest which calls the need to examine how the media regard and report anti-corruption issues in Nigeria.

The audience of the article above will be able to understand the need to pay attention and recognize the government efforts when the media represent all shades of opinion and give the anti-corruption issues better placement and positioning. However, insufficient coverage and lack of in-depth information and back grounding as witnessed in this study where majority of the

stories appear as straight news becomes a serious challenge in the implementation of the anti-corruption crusade. Meanwhile, the essence of detailed story could be seen in the content of one of the feature article from Punch Newspaper dated 3rd of June 2017 where Ade Adesomoju and Gbenro Adeoye revealed that The Federal Government may ask the Federal High Court in Abuja to revoke the bail granted to the leader of the Indigenous People of Biafra, Mr. Nnamdi Kanu, on grounds of alleged breach of the conditions of the bail granted him in April. The supposition is that if such features and/or editorials of this nature are contained more in the newspapers, they will go a long way in lending vital opinions and stand of the newspapers on contemporary issues and perhaps enhance support for the war against corruption in Nigeria. But this seeming newspapers' aloofness to the fight against corruption run counter to the primary responsibility of the media to inform and set agenda for the public. This is because of the marginal coverage given to anti-corruption issues by the Nigerian media in the sampled newspapers.

The use of news stories and feature articles could put more emphasis on the issue and increase its importance which can have both tangible and intangible effect on the people and the society in general. This was re-echoed by Stapenhurst (2000) who stated that the impact of media reporting on corruption can be "tangible" and "intangible". It is tangible when some sort of visible outcome can be attributed to a particular news story or series of stories, while it is intangible when checks on corruption arise from the broader social climate of enhanced political pluralism, enlivened public debate and a heightened sense of accountability among politicians, public bodies and institutions that are inevitably the by-product of a hard-hitting, independent news media (Nogara, 2009).

### **4.3 ANSWERING OF RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

The main focus of this study is to ascertain the extent of newspaper coverage and framing of anti-corruption crusade of President Buhari from June, 2015 to May, 2017. The following research questions were formulated from the four key objectives to address the research problem raised in the study:

1. What is the frequency of coverage of anti-corruption stories in National Newspapers from June 2015 to May 2017?
2. What is the level of prominence given to anti-corruption stories in National Daily Newspapers in Nigeria?
3. How did Nigerian Newspapers frame anti-corruption stories in their Dailies?
4. What is the nature of the anti-corruption stories or news contained in selected National Dailies/Newspapers in Nigeria?

#### **4.3.1 Analysis of Research Questions**

The first research question of this work states: What is the frequency of coverage of anti-corruption stories in National Newspapers from June 2015 to May 2017? The essence of this analysis is to understand the extent the newspaper set the anti-corruption crusade as an agenda for the readers to think and act upon within the period under study.

The analysis of the findings in tables 3, 4, 5 and 4.3.1 of the CIA were the relevant data that explained this research question. The data from these tables and the analysis in the CIA section revealed a low coverage of anti-corruption crusade of President Buhari by Nigerian newspapers from 2015 to 2017 as the anti-corruption related stories were underrepresented and recorded only

9% of all the issues reported in the newspapers ( see table 3 above). This implies that anti-corruption stories were not among the top five agenda set by the sampled newspapers within the period under study. The anticorruption stories were predominantly reported in form of news stories (86%) with few Editorial and Feature articles (1% and 3% respectively). However, the Nation newspaper had the highest coverage of anti-corruption stories in Nigeria during the period under study, while the Daily Trust Newspaper had the least.

By implication, the Nigerian Newspapers coverage of corruption related issues within the period under study was marginal. This is surprising when we recall that corruption is one of the major vices that pervade almost every facet of the nation's life and happens to be the cardinal point of reference and attention since the inception of the APC led government in May, 2015. Besides, considering the level of damage corruption has done to the development of the country, one would ordinarily expect greater level of coverage so as to be able to galvanize the needed support for the campaigns. Ordinarily, the media are not only expected to raise public awareness about corruption, its causes, consequences and possible remedies but it also behoves on them to investigate and report incidences of corruption with the view to aiding other oversight and prosecution bodies like EFCC and ICPC (Stapenhurst, 2000, Ciboh, 2014).

The second research question states: What is the level of prominence given to anti-corruption stories in National Daily Newspapers in Nigeria? This question aimed to know the extent to which Nigerian newspapers attached importance to anti-corruption related stories covered in the newspapers. This was measured by examining the page placement of the anti-corruption stories, the type of illustration given to the stories and the length of the anti-corruption stories. The data



in the composite table six (6) succinctly answered the research question. According to the data, the sampled newspapers attached high prominence to anti-corruption stories as majority of the stories (85%) did not only appear on the front pages (the most conspicuous page of every newspaper), but were also reported in depth given the length of the stories (75.1% of the stories being of average length).

This means, even though corruption related stories did not dominate the newspapers in terms of frequency, the level of importance attached to the stories was enough to attract the attention of news readers and make corruption issue a public agenda. No wonder Bello (2014) observed that the media are champions in the crusade against corruption; they act as the eyes, ears and voices of the public.

However, the finding on prominence, that most of the anti-corruption stories were found in the front pages is in variance with the findings of Fadairo, Fadairo and Aminu (2014) and Halilu, Garba and Abdulummin (2014) that most of the anti-corruption stories were buried in the inside pages in their studies thereby not attractive to readers. This implies that the newspapers did not give much attention to the crusade against corruption in the previous administration as they do in the current administration as the fight against corruption truly top the three point agenda of the current administration and that was the major reason most Nigerians were excited about the coming of the administration as the former administration was perceived to have been involved in corrupt practices.

The third research question states: How did Nigerian Newspapers frame anti-corruption stories in their Dailies? Entman (1993) noted that framing analysis is important because it makes clear that the identification of the particular patterns of the representations within the informative narratives can potentially influence the way the phenomena are perceived by a large number of audiences by promoting a particular angle of “definition, causal interpretation, and moral evaluation and/ or treatment recommendation”. Data in table 7, 8, 9 and 13 were used to answer this research question and demonstrate that corruption related stories were framed as male-gender-based (as majority, 75%, of the stories had male as the subject), mostly perpetrated by politicians (96%), but none political party related (88% were not presented to reflect any political party affiliation). This further substantiates the assertion that corruption was endemic in the Nigerian society and cuts across all strata of the nation’s society. But that most of the anti-corruption stories were framed around men and politicians could be an indication of the fact that more male than female as well as politicians occupy government offices and would have more access to public fund than their female counterparts and none politicians alike.

Specifically, the data indicate that thematic frame was the dominant frames used by the Nigerian newspapers in the coverage of President Buhari’s anti-corruption crusade from June 2015 to May, 2017 as majority of the Anti-corruption stories (86%) were framed using thematic-historic and Issue based. This explains the fact that the anti-corruption stories found in the sampled newspapers were broadly and abstractly placed within the historical and or societal context as against presentation of anti-corruption related issues in specific instances and in isolation of the historical and social context. This finding therefore partly negates Ciboh’s (2010) finding that corruption reporting was episodic, and came in short straight news accounts and as isolated

incidents. This difference could be as a result of the differences in the administrations under which the media operated and the prevalence, commitment and approach adopted in the fight against corruption by the two different administrations

The fourth research question states: What is the nature of the anti-corruption stories or news contained in selected National Dailies/Newspapers in Nigeria? The research question was answered by the data in table 10, 11 and 12 as well as the critical incidence analysis in section 4.3.3. The data demonstrate that the sampled Nigerian newspapers were neutral in the reportage of most (89%) of the anti-corruption related stories from 2015 to 2017. The finding on neutrality of reportage by the newspapers is in tandem with the finding of Igwebuikwe (2016), that most of the news stories were neutral.

Findings further show that the purpose of most (89%) of the anti-corruption stories in the sampled Newspapers were to create awareness on anti-corruption and other related issues; while only 5% was persuasive and 4% were aimed to castigate and bring the party/individual involved to disrepute. In the same vein, the data show that majority (63%) of the anti-corruption stories were mostly objective; while only 32.5% of the anti-corruption stories were predominantly subjective, and 4.5% neutral. This is an indication that the newspapers upheld the principle of objectivity in their reportage of President Buhari's anti-corruption crusade from 2015 to 2017.

The data in table 6 revealed that most of the anti-corruption related stories had jump headlines that were non-sensational in tone. This negates the seemingly popular belief that the media and the anti-corruption crusaders employed sensationalism to blow stories out of proportion under

President Muhammadu Buhari's administration. However, the data in section 4.3 revealed that the sampled newspapers over depended on secondary data in their coverage of the anti-corruption crusade of President Buhari from 2015 to 2017 and in the same vein, had no firm stance on the anti-corruption crusade as majority of the reportage were straight news whereas editorials and features were lacking. This is an indication that the media may not have performed their statutory watchdog role effectively (Sowumi, et al 2012). Recall that the 1999 Nigerian constitution as amended in Chapter 2, section 22, clearly empowered the media to at all times be free to uphold the fundamental objectives contained in the chapter under reference and uphold the responsibility and accountability of the Government to the people. And so, the role of the media in the fight against corruption in the Nigerian society cannot be over emphasized.

#### **4.4 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

The data analysed in this study were obtained from the 280 issues of the five sampled newspapers (the Daily Trust, the Sun, the Vanguard, the Punch, and the Nation newspapers) published between June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015 and May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017. This was done with the view to ascertaining the coverage of anti-corruption crusade of President Buhari by the Nigerian newspapers.

The discussion of Newspapers' coverage of President Buhari's anti-corruption crusade was situated within the ambit of Agenda Setting and Framing Theories of the mass media as clearly explained in section 2.11. These theories essentially explain the role of mass media in the coverage of corruption and other related issues of societal concern. Specifically, apostles of Framing and Agenda Setting Theories postulate that media ought to play a critical social role of

providing information on issues, events and conditions in society; explaining, interpreting and simplifying complex information, prioritizing issues, upholding dominant culture and social values; and campaigning for societal objectives in the sphere of politics and economic development. As Asemah (2009) submits, media are agents of social change that can bring about positive attitudinal change in the audience (readers); they set agenda for the people to follow in any society. Ciboh (2014) citing Kaufmann (2000) affirms that the media not only raise public awareness about corruption, its causes, consequences, and possible remedies but also investigate and report incidents of corruption, thereby aiding other oversight and prosecution bodies like EFCC and ICPC. This therefore demonstrates the suitability of the theories to this work. Besides, the pluralistic nature of newspapers in Nigeria is an advantage for them to report government programmes independently.

#### **4.5 FINDINGS**

The study used both quantitative content analysis and critical incident analysis to understand newspaper coverage and framing of President Buhari's anti-corruption crusade from 2015 to 2017 as such, the findings move from one design to the other.

#### **4.6 FINDINGS FROM THE QUANTITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS**

The following are the findings from the quantitative content analysis:

- Anti-corruption crusade of President Buhari received minimal coverage from 2015 to 2017 when compared with other issues like education, business/economy and crime.
- Finding further suggests that the anti-corruption related stories were not among the top five themes set as agenda by the sampled newspapers within the period under study.

- The Nation newspaper has the highest coverage of anti-corruption stories in Nigeria during the period of study, while the Daily Trust Newspaper has the least.
- We found that anti-corruption related stories were predominantly reported as news stories rather than editorials or features.
- Finding revealed that the anti-corruption crusade of President Buhari was given considerable prominence by the sampled newspapers as majority of the anti-corruption related stories were featured on the front pages, and were averagely lengthy in size.
- The study also found out that the sampled newspapers hardly used photo-illustrations to support the anti-corruption stories covered within the period.
- That most of the anti-corruption stories portrayed male gender as the perpetrators of corruption in Nigeria.
- We also found that anti-corruption stories were hardly affiliated to any political party.
- Findings revealed that majority of the anti-corruption related stories found in the sampled newspapers were framed using thematic frames.
- The study also discovered that most of the anti-corruption related stories were geared towards creating awareness or educating the readers or informing them on corruption related activities in the country.
- That Nigerian newspapers were mostly objective in their reportage of anti-corruption crusade of President Buhari from 2015 to 2017.

#### **4.7 FINDINGS FROM CRITICAL INCIDENT ANALYSIS (CIA)**

The following are the findings from the critical incident analysis:

- Lack of sustained investigative reports on corruption-related issues.

- There was low frequency of anti-corruption reports.
- The sampled newspapers over depended on secondary data in their coverage of the anti-corruption crusade of President Buhari from 2015 to 2017.
- The study also found that there was no firm stance by the sampled newspapers on the anti-corruption crusade of President Buhari as majority of the reportage were straight news whereas editorials and features were lacking.

A close examination of the data from both quantitative and qualitative content analysis demonstrates substantial level of correlation between these data. This means the findings from both quantitative and qualitative approach supplemented each other in almost every aspect.

Critical analysis from the findings in this study suggest that Anti-corruption crusade of President Buhari was minimally reported by the sampled newspapers within the period under study and as such, the anti-corruption related stories were not among the top five themes set as agenda by the sampled newspapers within the period. This inability to frequently cover the anti-corruption crusade is a crucial challenge to the fight against corruption that should not be allowed to continue at this stage in the country development. It is worthy of note that as at 2015 when this study commenced, Nigeria was placed on 136<sup>th</sup> position out of 175 countries in the Transparency International corruption perception index and to date, placed 148<sup>th</sup> out of 180 countries. This implies and corroborates the fact that there has not been a very direct link between corruption and the level of economic development of a nation like Nigeria and especially that many studies conducted in Nigeria have consistently pointed to the fact that corruption has been the greatest problem militating against the Nation's socio-economic progress

(Oyewole, 2008). Cameron (2016) further pointed out that corruption is the cancer at the heart of so many of our problems in the World today. And that it destroys jobs and holds back growth, costing the World economy billions of pounds every year.

Meanwhile, the media has the statutory role to uphold the fundamental objectives contained in the 1999 constitution and uphold the responsibility and accountability of the Government to the people through its watchdog and surveillance role. This is because qualitative, independent media reporting on corruption can play an important role in pressuring the government to act in the public interest. By drawing the attention to behaviour that is generally perceived as unacceptable and exposing such behaviour as corrupt, media can raise public awareness; activate anticorruption values; and generate outside pressure from the public against corruption (According to Rose-Ackerman, 1999). Adeyemi Aderogba citing (Nwuneli, 1990; Nwosu, 1990) further buttresses the assertion that the press serves as an agent of change, and as the watchdog of the society is expected to play a part in ensuring transparency and accountability in government as well as contribute to the efforts of crime fighting institutions to curb corruption in the country.

Nevertheless, this current study, just like Halilu, Garba and Abdulmumin (2014), discovered that the newspapers did not fulfil their statutory responsibility of watch dog role as the coverage given to the anti-corruption crusade was not significant compared to other stories like politics and economy. In his 2010 study, Ciboh also reported similar findings that even though the fight against corruption was an important issue of policy, it never got attention it deserved.

This is however, unlike the findings by some of the studies conducted in the early 2000. For instance, Stapenhurst (2000) applauded the Nigerian press for leading the crusade to cleanse the



political process of moral and material corruption at the inception of the fourth republic. Even some recent studies like Bell (2014) and Amorighoye and Musa (2015) reported somewhat conflicting results. Amorighoye and Musa's (2015) revealed that the media have exposed corrupt acts in Nigeria, and that they have played a prominent role in the democratic governance as the fourth estate of the realm. In the same vein, Bello (2014) described the media as champions in the crusade against corruption who act as the eyes, ears and voices of the public. The differences in the findings are not surprising looking at the fact that all these studies were conducted at different times and under different political dispensation that have as well shown different approach to the fight against corruption.

As the findings demonstrate with regard to the question of prominence given to the anti-corruption related issues in the sampled newspapers, the study clearly shows that the media gave anti-corruption crusade of President Buhari considerable level of prominence as majority of the anti-corruption related stories were featured on the front pages (the most important newspaper page), and were averagely lengthy in size. This finding however negates Halilu, Garba and Abdulmumin's (2014) study which reported that prominence was not given to corruption related stories in the newspapers they studied. That things has changed considerably in this regards goes further to buttress the importance of the anti-corruption crusade of President Buhari and underscore how the media perception on anti-corruption has changed over the years.

On the frame used in the reportage of anti-corruption crusade in Nigeria within the period in question, this current study reports that not only were corruption framed to be mostly perpetrated by male and were non-party affiliated, but that the newspapers equally relied mostly on thematic

frames in their reportage of the anti-corruption crusade of President Buhari within the period under study. This is however contrary to Ciboh's (2010) finding that corruption reporting was episodic that came in short straight news and as isolated incidents.

A critical look at the nature of newspapers' coverage of anti-corruption crusade of President Buhari revealed that the stories were predominantly objective in nature and were mostly geared towards creating awareness or educating the readers or informing them on corruption related activities in the country. However, the study reports that the sampled newspapers over-dependence on government officials and allowed official sources such as President/presidency, state governors/governments, legislators, ministers, commissioners, politicians, including heads of government departments, EFCC, ICPC among others to dictate the tune of discourse on anti-corruption thereby denying the 'victims' and the 'alleged', the opportunity to contribute meaningfully to the narratives on corruption within the period under study. This result confirms earlier studies like Torwel (2005); Ciboh (2005); Ende (2003) that Nigerian newspapers rely heavily on government official sources of information in issues of policy and conflict.

Like Ronning's (2009) study, this current study equally revealed that there was hardly any evidence of investigative reporting by the newspapers; as most newspaper stories, especially high profile cases of fraud, embezzlement and looting of public funds involving public officials that passed for reporter enterprise or as investigative journalism; were poorly sourced and did not show considerable firm stance on the anti-corruption crusade. To this end, majority of the reportage were straight news whereas editorials and features were conspicuously lacking. Little wonder why phrases like 'sources close to', 'according to our source,' 'a top shot,' 'according to

presidency sources,' 'our correspondent gathered,' 'it was gathered,' 'sources close to management,' 'findings by our correspondent,' among other were common in some of the anti-corruption stories found in the sampled newspapers. For instance, the *Punch Newspaper* was dominated by headlines like *Alleged fresh Diezani's \$153m loot: Fidelity Bank MD, Okonkwo, reminded in EFCC custody*, the *Vanguard Newspaper* on Monday December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2015, front page under the headline '*EFCC grills Akpabio*'; and the Daily Trust Friday May 6, 2016 which reads '*EFCC quizzes ex-ministers over ₦23bn fraud*'.

These two headlines above appeared the following day when Senator Godswill Akpabio went back to meet with the Operatives of the EFCC. The reports imply that he was grilled for nine and seven hours respectively. There was no indication that the reporters were part of the meeting and no Operative of the EFCC addressed the press. This means that the reports were based on anonymous sources as the two reports contained the times Senator Akpabio spent with the EFCC. The *Punch* report said it was nine hours, while the *Vanguard* report said it was seven hours.



## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This chapter presents the summary, conclusion and recommendations of this study.

#### **5.1 SUMMARY**

This study examined Nigerian Newspapers coverage and framing of the anti-corruption crusade of President Muhammadu Buhari from June 2015 to May 2017. It specifically set out to find out the frequency of coverage, prominence given to anti-corruption stories and issues, the nature of such stories and issues as well as the manner such stories were framed. As it was noticed, the extent and nature of media coverage of this anti-corruption crusade is relatively underexplored hence this empirical inquiry. The result of this study would arguably contribute significantly to the body of existing literature and lay a foundation for further studies on the subject matter. The study used the mixed research methodology, which is quantitative content analysis and its qualitative counterpart (Critical Incident Analysis).

A total of 280 copies of national newspapers were selected by two continuous weeks and two constructed weeks for the period of two years. The newspapers are The Punch, The Sun, The Vanguard, The Nation and The Daily Trust. These newspapers were drawn from 20 national newspapers across the country. The data were collected through coding sheets and a coding guide. A total of 265 anti-corruption items were coded from the selected newspapers which

include straight news, editorials and feature articles (units of analysis). However, straight news formed the bulk of coded items (96%), feature article (3%) and editorials (1%). As regards the critical incident analysis, some issues were noted and isolated as well as arranged thematically and discussed.

The framing and the agenda-setting theories of mass communication were used as the theoretical foundation upon which the study was anchored. These theories have over the years formed the basis for political communication, especially in the area of setting agenda for the political class and also in shaping public opinion. Their relevance to the study is seen in the fundamental underpinnings of these two theories. The basic premise of these theories argue that the media not only ought to play a critical social role of providing information on pertinent issues such as the anti-corruption crusade of the government, but should by the quantity and the “how” they present these issues which will help to hold government accountable to the people.

Findings from the study revealed that newspapers’ coverage of anti-corruption stories was not given much attention as in the areas of politics, business/economy, education/technology, etc (table 3). In other words, the frequency of coverage was low. However, findings suggest a high degree of prominence attached to the reported anti-corruption stories since majority of the stories (85%) appeared on the front pages and were also reported in depth given the length of the stories (75.1% of the stories being of average length). Although majority of the stories were not illustrated using photos. However, the prominence given to the stories could be arguably attributed to the high caliber of persons accused of corrupt practices in the previous administration since prominence is always given to high personalities by the media. In its

oversight function of providing information to the public the media help to set public agenda and frame the scope of public discussion by providing and limiting the range of ideas from which we can choose. The high prominence given to such issues also could arguably be linked to the agenda setting function of the media. Another major finding in the study was the high level of elites as sources of news in the coverage. This corroborates existing literature, which consistently demonstrates heavy reliance of elites sources in media coverage of corruption issues. What this suggests however, is a correlation between the nature of personalities involved with the source of the news, since most personalities involved in this instance are high government officials. Interestingly the study also found that media presentations of stories on anti-corruption crusade were framed as concrete instances or events and the actions of selected political opponents. The implication is that Nigerian news media (newspapers) through their nature of frames, constructs anti-corruption cases in such a manner as to instill in the Nigerian public the binary divisions of “us” versus the “others”, somehow limiting the scope and form of public knowledge on the issue and even influencing public responses and reactions.

The overall findings from the study demonstrates minimal coverage of the anti-corruption crusade and a corresponding lack of firm stance by the newspapers in the anti-corruption crusade of President Muhammadu Buhari, which could arguably attributed to the country's complex power structure which has consistently challenged media role as an instrument of public accountability. A point in case here is the freedom of information act that is still not effectively implemented. As evident from literature, media have been most effective in adequately covering and reporting on corruption when they enjoyed political support from the leadership or could

count on the collaboration of other political actors and also in situations where media independence and pluralism is very high.

## **5.2 CONCLUSION**

The agenda setting role of the mass media which is considered as one of the key functions of the media is often reflected in news media framing and coverage of issues. This implies that the media at all times ought to select and put in perspective what content to publish and how and what language to use and even the quantity of informed coverage in telling people what to think about in raising awareness, knowledge or at times, controversies and misconception about national issues. In other words, substantial or adequate newspapers' coverage of the anti-corruption crusade of President Muhammadu Buhari would have been a major ingredient of the current drive to minimize if not eradicate corrupt practices in Nigeria owing to the resolve of the administration's stance on anti-corruption. The result of this study however, shows that Nigerian newspapers did not adequately provide the needed information to the public in their coverage of the Buhari anti-corruption crusade since the result showed a low frequency of coverage. Even though, the newspapers gave high prominence in their coverage of the issue, the minimum quantity of coverage may affect public cognitive knowledge of the issue and their perception of corruption in Nigeria. A brief review of the theories used in this study will further buttress the findings of this study.

The framing theory which was one of the theoretical frameworks for this study, conceptualized the way and manner in which news content is typically shaped and contextualized by journalists within some familiar frame of reference and according to some latent structure of meaning (McQuail, 2005). What this suggest is that the media not just inform and create awareness about



issues in the society, but also to go further to construct such issues in predetermined manner in order to affect audience predisposition. The findings from this study upholds the power of the media to construct realities and not to report them neutrally and to promote certain facets of reality in a different way. This is evident from the evidence of different frames found in the newspapers coverage of anti-corruption crusade.

Similarly, the agenda setting theory suggest that the media is meant to set goals for the public in line with government objectives. Therefore it serves as the first function of framing as it defines the problem worthy of government attention to guide it (government) in the discharge of its duties in the best possible way (Entman, 1993b). The agenda-setting theory seems quite appropriate to help us understand the pervasive role of the media for example on political communication systems (Weaver et al, 1981).

The findings of the study suggest that in a developing democracy such as Nigeria, the mass media's role in setting agenda by way of promoting government's development objectives such as the anti-corruption crusade of the government in this case, is still a major challenge and possibly a reflection of the country's complex power structure in a constitutional sense.

### **5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the major findings of this study, the following recommendations are therefore put forward:

1. Nigerian Newspapers should give more attention to President Buhari's anti- corruption crusade as it is a major problem in the country today. Moreso as it tops the three point agenda of the current administration.
2. The dearth of investigative journalism in Nigeria is a serious cause for worry today, -- therefore journalists should seriously explore investigative journalism in order to get more facts to report to the public, and it could also assist journalists to write more editorials and feature articles as they are products of investigation.
3. Nigerian Newspapers should follow up issues to a logical conclusion as it was observed in the course of the study that most of the anti-corruption cases were not followed up to a logical conclusion by the newspapers.

#### **5.4 SUGGESTION FOR FUTURE RESEACH**

Research in anti-corruption coverage and framing by Nigerian Newspapers is relatively under-explored. In most of the studies reviewed were based on only straight news and more of content analysis as well as on individuals' corruption cases. Therefore, there is need to bring in the survey method of research and also conduct an in-depth interview on media practitioners on their role in the fight against corruption in Nigeria. Studies should also be carried out to ascertain the reason why the media has not fully keyed into the crusade against corruption.

#### **5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

This study is not without some limitations. This study would have included other research approaches apart from newspapers. However, reducing the current study to only the newspaper

coverage and framing of anti-corruption crusade made the study manageable and gave it greater depth.

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## APPENDIX A

### CODING GUIDE FOR NIGERIAN NEWSPAPERS' COVERAGE AND FRAMING OF THE ANTI-CORRUPTION CRUSADE IN NIGERIA (JUNE 2015 TO MAY 2017).

For each individual unit of analysis (i.e. editorial content in the newspaper), coders will use this list of 15 descriptive variables (content categories) to document information on an Excel spreadsheet.

#### **Category 1 – Newspaper:**

1. Daily Trust (1).
2. The Daily Sun (2).
3. Vanguard (3).
4. The Punch (4).
5. The Nation (5)

#### **Category 2 – Page Placement/Position:**

1. Front Page – 01
2. Back Page – 02
3. Inside Page – 03
4. Editorial Page – 04

#### **Category 3 – Illustration:**

Is the story illustrated or not, and how?

0. No illustration/photo (0)
1. Black & White Photo (1)
2. Colour Photo (2)

3. Graphics e.g. graphs, charts and any non-photographs used to help tell the story (3)
4. Other (4)

**Category 4 – Genre/Type:**

What type of story/content is it?

1. News story – 01
2. Feature – 02
3. Pictorial (stand-alone) – 03
4. Pictorial (with story) – 04
5. Cartoon – 05
6. Editorial – 06
7. Opinion Articles- 07
8. Others- 08

**Category 5 – Direction:**

Is the story/content positive, negative, or neutral?

1. Positive (1)
2. Negative (2)
3. Neutral (3)

**Category 6 – (Substance or Non-issue):**

Is the story/content on substance/serious topic or a non-issue?

1. Substance and issue-based (1)
2. Non-issue ('Horse race' or innuendo) (2)

**Category 7 – Gender Focus:**

Is the story mostly about men, women, men/women, transgender or what?

1. Male (1)
2. Female (2)
3. Both, equally (3)
4. Other (4)

**Category 8 – Story Length:**

How long is the story? This is determined by the number of words in an average line multiplied by the number of lines.

**Category 9 – Purpose of Story:**

What is the main purpose of the story/content?

1. Awareness/Education /Information (1)
2. Persuade (positive influence) (2)
3. Propaganda (negative influence) (3)
4. Castigate and bring to disrepute (4)
5. Other (5)

**Category 10 – Attacking or Defending:**

1. Attacking, on the offensive (1)
2. Defending, on the defensive (2)
3. Neutral/balanced (3)
4. Can't tell (4)

**Category 11 – Author Affiliation:**

What is the affiliation of the author?

1. Byline (1)
2. No identified author (2)
3. Other (e.g. can't tell/no byline) (3)

**Category 12 – Objectivity:**

Does the story/content appear mostly objective or mostly subjective?

1. Mostly objective – use of evidence and verifiable facts (1)
2. Mostly subjective – use of emotions and no evidence or verifiable facts (2)
3. Can't say (appears balanced) (3)

**Category 13 – Rhetorical Strategy:**

What is the main rhetorical strategy?

1. Logic, rational arguments, empirical, and evidence-based (1)
2. Emotional, personal, and primordial appeals lacking logic and empirical evidence (2)
3. Mixed appeals (3)

**Category 14 - Type of news frame**

1. Thematic-Historic and issue base (1)
2. Episodic-Personality base (2)
3. Mixed frame (both Thematic and Episodic) (3)

**Category 15 - Party Affiliation**

1. The story is about a PDP member (1)
2. The story is about an APC member (2)
3. The story is about a member of other parties (3)
4. No party affiliation (4)

**APPENDIX B**

**CODING SHEET**

- Newspaper Title  
 1. Daily Trust (1).  
 2. The Daily Sun (2).  
 3. Vanguard (3).  
 4. The Punch (4).  
 5. The Nation (5)

**Placement**  
 Front Page – 01  
 Back Page – 02  
 Inside Page – 03  
 Editorial Page – 04

**Illustration**  
 No illustration/photo (0)  
 Black & White Photo (1)  
 Colour Photo (2)  
 Graphics (3)  
 Other (4)

**Genre or Type**  
 News story – 01  
 Feature – 02  
 Pictorial (stand alone) – 03  
 Pictorial (with story) – 04  
 Cartoon – 05  
 Editorial – 06  
 Opinion Articles- 07

**Direction**  
 Positive -01  
 Negative-02  
 Neutral -03

**Substance or non issue**  
 Substance and issue based– 01  
 Non-issue – 02

**Gender Focus**  
 Male (1)  
 Female (2)  
 Both, equally (3)  
 Other (4)

**Purpose of Story**  
 Awareness/Education /Information (1)  
 Persuade (positive influence) (2)  
 Propaganda (negative influence) (3)  
 Castigate and bring to .....

**Author Affiliation**  
 Byline (1)  
 No identified author (2)  
 Other (e.g. can't tell/no byline) (3)

**Objectivity**  
 Mostly objective (1)  
 Mostly subjective (2)  
 Can't say (appears balanced) (3)

**Attacking or Defe**  
 Attacking, on the o  
 Defending, on the defensive (2)  
 Neutral/balanced (3)  
 Can't tell (4)

**Rhetorical Strategy**  
 Logic, rational arguments, empirical, and evidence-based (1)  
 Emotional, personal, and primordial appeals lacking logic and empirical evidence (2)  
 Mixed appeals (3)

**Type of News Frame**  
 Thematic-Historic and issue base (1)  
 Episodic-Personality base (2)  
 Mixed frame (both Thematic

**Party Affiliation**  
 The story is about a PDP member (1)  
 The story is about an APC member (2)  
 The story is about a member of other parties (3)  
 No party affiliation (4)





