

**Social Media****Anti-Corruption Campaigns and Nigeria Development: An Appraisal of Media Roles****Kamaldeen Arikewuyo Ahmed<sup>1</sup>, Saudat Sallah Abdulbaqi<sup>2</sup>, Rasaan Muhammad Adisa<sup>3</sup>**

**Abstract:** Nigerian development problem is partly linked to corruption which begets malnutrition, illiteracy, poverty, unemployment, hunger and infrastructure decay. Due to the failures of numerous development strategies in Nigeria, this paper provides an overview of mass media efforts in fighting corruption. Similarly, the paper applies social responsibility and development media theory in campaigning against the said corruption. Using secondary data of Transparency International from (2000-2018) on the World Corruption Perception Index and Ranking, the study revealed that the media have been very relevant in curbing corruption and entrenching development through its watchdog role and mass enlightening in the provision of information that facilitates job creation, economy improvement, enhanced security and re-orientation of the masses. The study equally revealed that the level of bribery, looting of treasury, abuse of power and secret dealings are perceived to be rapidly reducing in Nigeria. Further, the study equally showed that Nigeria moved from 148<sup>th</sup> to 144<sup>th</sup> position out of 180 countries in the 2018 (CPI) report of corrupt countries. Hence, this paper proposes critical media independence, vibrant and active judicial system coupled with exemplary leadership for a more feasible development schemes in Nigeria.

**Keywords:** Nigeria; Anti-Corruption Campaigns; Development; Development Media; Socially Responsible Media

**1. Introduction**

Nigeria is Africa's most populous country with over 180 million people (Pate & Dauda, 2013). It is a country located in the western part of the African continent occupying an area of 923,768 sq. km and bordering Niger in the north, Chad in the northeast, Cameroon in the east and Benin in the West with over 200 languages and

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<sup>1</sup> Summit University, Department of Mass Communication, Offa, Nigeria, Address: P.M.B 4412, Irra Road, Offa, Kwara State, Nigeria, Corresponding author: kamalahmed383@gmail.com.

<sup>2</sup> PhD, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria, Department of Mass Communication, Nigeria, Address: P.M.B. 1515, Ilorin, Nigeria, E-mail: sau\_baqi@yahoo.com.

<sup>3</sup> PhD, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria, Department of Mass Communication, Address: P.M.B. 1515, Ilorin, Nigeria, E-mail: rasaan1967@gmail.com.

ethnic groups, with Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba being the dominant languages. It is a country in Africa that harvest largest economic resources (i.e. crude oil and mineral resources). But it is not surprising at the same time that these resources could not transform the nation to be really portrayed as the so called giant of Africa. This is evident on why Pate and Dauda (2013) concluded that Nigeria is faced with the basic challenges of social needs such as healthcare services, better education, nutrition, shelter and infrastructure which consequently beget high unemployment, rising poverty, thuggery and youth restlessness) resulting from the perpetual corruptive tendencies of those who hold and control governmental affairs. This is equally patent because resources that are meant to be used for the provision of employment opportunities, infrastructural facilities in the likes of hospitals, potable pipe born water, stable and steady electricity and many others are being diverted to the personal bank account of the obsessive Nigerian politicians.

No wonder her African countries (i.e. South Africa, Rewanda, Ghana and the host of others) are at the bastion of economy development. However, the diversion of public resources into personal use is what many of economic and political communication scholars (Idowu, 2018; Adaja, 2016; Park, 2012, Moyosore, 2015 & Nageri, Gunu & Abdul, 2013) at the local, national and international level called corruption. Corruption has been an endemic bane of Nigerian development since independence. Despite the presence of priced natural resources in the land that if properly harnessed could uplift the living standard of Nigerians, yet, Nigeria suffers from the problem of corruption which begets malnutrition, illiteracy, poverty, unemployment and hunger. Corruption in the words of Idowu (2018) is the appropriation of commonwealth to self. Nageri, Gunu and Abdul (2013) citing Ngouo (2000) contend that “corruption is the exploitation of public positions for private benefits” (p.48). Similar to this, Park (2012) contend that corruption is the abuse of public responsibility for private ends. Commenting on the indispensability of corruption, Idowu (2018) concluded that it “is a malaise that afflicts all societies where no nation is immune to” (p. 106).

Writing on the effects of corruption, Ahmed and Adisa (2018) citing Adaja (2016), Adeyemi (2013), Nageri, Gunu and Abdul (2013), and Rek (2015) observed that corruption “wanes civic hope, impedes justice and fairness, affects communal understanding and undesirably weaken economic buoyancy” (p.171). Similarly, Sowunmi, Raufu and Usifoh (2010) citing Maduegbuna (2005) observed that corruption begets loss of government revenue, negative national image, poor governance, underdevelopment, unemployment and poverty. In the comity of

nations, corruption is a destructive element in the governance of Nigeria and the perception of the country at large. This is why Dandago (2008) re-echoed in the work of Sowunmi, Raufu and Usifoh (2010) stated that corruption is a threat to enduring democracy and economic development in Africa.

Meanwhile, Nigeria has, since independence; do not only suffer from corruption but military dictatorships, civil unrest and war, security threat, underdevelopment and acute poverty. But what is even more troubling is the issue of corruption that has eaten deep into the Nigerian souls. This is because needed result does not yield from the previous development strategies used to tackle the menace. However, economy servitude and continuous poverty are what some believed that the nation would remain of, if the leaders do not desist from corruptive tendencies. But the fact is Nigeria has immense potential (Word Bank, 2014). In this continuum, Akindele (2005) and Moyosore (2015) assert that the truism that corruption is a surest route that hinders development in any society does not need contention because it has direct relationship with poverty and development. Apparently this is why President Muhammadu Buhari during his presidential manifesto in 2015 opined: “If we do not kill corruption in this country, corruption will kill Nigerians” (The Nation: 2015, March 13). Idowu (2018) further observed that Nigeria is contending with the “developmental challenges of corruption to good governance, transparency and accountability” (p.93). And to contain this, effective communication media has to be entrenched.

Mass media on their part are relevant in the development of a nation. They provide information and knowledge to enable people make informed decisions that affect their lives. In this process, the media mobilized development efforts by bringing to public issues that requires their attention for nation building (Nwabueze, Ugochukwu & Egbra, 2014). In view of the popular belief that the professional calling of the mass media is that of watchdog role, then their ability to function as watchdog over the government; by probing the movements of leaders and informing citizens against abuse of power specifically through reporting of their corruptive tendencies, has since, been recognized as catalyst for development. In the words of Semiu, Adejola and Folarin (2012), mass media are entrenched with constitutional responsibility embedded in section 22 of the 1999 to institute responsibilities in government and make them accountable to the people. In performing this function, Udomisor and Kenneth (2013) noted that the media act as the society’s watchdog, mounting surveillance over the environment to analyze, report the corruptive behaviours to the world so as to create opportunity to punish, sanction and deter the

perpetrators just as to open room for development. No wonder that Okoro and Chinweobo-Onuoha (2013) see mass media as a mirror in the society that mobilize and control, educate and sensitize, and acting as agent of development affecting the lives of the people.

With the above submission, mass media assist Nigeria to transpose itself as a true democratic society that safeguards transparency and accountability in governance. This is evident when many of the Nigerian media swiftly carried the statement of the new president that reads: "I Think My Second Tenure will be Tougher" shortly after his announcement by INEC Chairman as the winner of the 2019 presidential poll. This shows the new regime' resolve (President Muhammadu Buhari) to continue to fight corruption while upholding a true democracy in Nigeria. In this new dispensation however, it is expected that corrupt politicians are to be fully exposed, punished and eliminated. Therefore, this study is of relevance not only because it brings to the fore the role of the media anti-corruption crusade in Nigeria but showcase how the media facilitates the development of Nigeria through its anti-corruption crusade.

### **1.1. Problem Statement**

There is much corruption in Nigeria (Moyosore, 2015). And its persistent is threatening the growth and scenic development of the nation. No wonder that Ribadu (2006b) opined that corruption is responsible for perpetual collapse of infrastructure and institutions; the cause of the endemic poverty in Nigeria; the shadow behind the underdevelopment and cyclical failure of democracy to take root in Nigeria. This has eventually made Sowunmi, et al (2010) to conclude that corruption is worse than terrorism.

Therefore, it is quite disheartening to note that the mere mention of Nigeria to foreigners, prompt the foreigners to think about corruption. Does it mean that corruption remains them of Nigeria? To whichever angle one perceived the concept, the point is Nigeria has become almost interchangeable with the vicious word "corruption". However, due to the fact that successive governments have initiated various anti-corruption agencies like EFCC, ICPC to write off the scourge, there is a need to point from theoretical perspective, the power of media in handling such issues. This will serve as background for the objective of this paper. This paper therefore, examined the mass media roles in the scenic development of the Nigerian society through its anti-corruption campaigns drawing form the reports of

Transparency International on the World Corruption Perception Index and more importantly with special attention to empirical responses from economic and political communication scholars on media, corruption and development in Nigeria.

## **2. Secondary Research Method**

This research use secondary data as a means of enriching the study, however, secondary research according to Anaeto (2010), Keyton (2015) and Wimmwer and Dominick (2011) entails reviewing information or empirical works from already conducted researches similar or relating to the topic at hand. This research apparently searched and obtained data from books, journals, popular media and more importantly focused on the reports of Transparency International on Nigeria's Corruption Perception Index and Ranking to contextualize the role of the media in the aspect of fighting corruption for the acceleration of the needed change in the country.

## **3. Literature Review**

### **3.1. Corruption and Development in Nigeria**

Corruption in Nigeria knows no bounds (Olushola, Fadairo & Aminu, 2014). It cut across all sectors of the economy and is evident in every sphere of the nation (Adisa, Mahamood, Ahmed, Shuhairimi, Udende, Nor'izah, Abubakar, Bajuri & Rezuan, 2018). It is seen in public sectors, unions and corporate or non-governmental organizations. Corruption could be political, electoral, bureaucratic, institutional or cultural. Corruption take different forms which include accepting and giving bribery, theft, fraud, embezzlement, extortion, blackmailing, favoritism, nepotism, abuse of power, documents forgery, exploiting conflicting interests, misappropriation of funds even if they were legally obtained (Olushola, Fadairo & Aminu, 2014).

According to Olushola, et al (2014) the word corruption simply means the deviation from what is right, ideal or correct. Ngouo (2000) cited in Nageri, Gunu and Abdul (2013) stated that corruption leads to lack of any civil spirit among all categories of civil servants. In the views of Akindele (2005), the deviation from formal rules of governing in a position of authority is corruption. Similarly, corruption is a misuse of public power for private benefit or efforts to secure wealth or power through illegal means at the public expense (Lipset & Lenz, 2000 cited in Dike, 2014).

In a similar submission, Olusheye (2013) in re-echoed in Olushola, et al (2014) contend that the inordinate ambition, increasing wave of covetousness and greed among members of the hungry politicians is traceable to widespread corruption in Nigeria. Meanwhile, an important obstacle in the way of sustainable development is corruption as it results in loss of quality education, health and poverty prevention in the developed and developing nations of the world (Floristeanu, 2010).

Consequences of corruption that are acknowledged according to Floristeanu (2010) are increase in the degree of population poverty and suffering, high social costs, abuse spreading, property impairment and low quality services. Poor reward system and greed also contributed to the scourge of corruption. Dike (2008) stated that Nigeria's reward system is perhaps the poorest in the world as Nigeria is a society where national priorities are turned upside down; hard work not rewarded in the face of glorified rogues.

Therefore, we can safely argue that corruption is a symptom of numerous difficulties like poverty, hunger, malnutrition, unemployment infrastructural decay among others within contemporary African societies. As long as perpetrators of corruption do not fear any consequences corruption will continue. In the words of Oyinola (2011), public positions, award of contracts, promotion of staff, valuable security and accounts, dispensation of justice, publications, documents, are area where corruption are found in Nigeria. This shows that corruption is a bane to Nigeria development.

Egharevba and Chiazor (2012) contend that global economy is characterized by a development issue-corruption. Its existence is visible in the political economy administration of developing and the developed world. The delivery of public goods and services and the protection of vulnerable groups are undermined by corruption as it promotes uneven distribution of economic resources and illegitimate government. As such, corruption in Nigeria, as in many African states, is a malaise that weakens societal stability.

Samura (2012) noted that barrages of corrupt practices are a product of unyielding developing economies which are deeply rooted in the political administrations of African countries. This is particularly so in Nigeria where majority of the populations especially in the rural areas suffer untold hardship as a result of what can be termed as organized or systematized corruption. In this regard, Bamidele (2013) submitted that the effect of corruption is abundance in rural areas of the nations. He noted that "over 70% of the nation's poor are rural dwellers, and that 95% of the extremely

poor are in the rural areas” (p.11), and to be able to improve the living conditions of the majority of Nigerians, according to Bamidele (2013), “the rural areas must receive special attention” (p.11). It is on this note that AFRICAW (2012) reinstated that reduction in the level of corruption has a direct link to the level of economic development of country. And to control the negative effects of corruption on economic and national development requires conscious efforts and media attention. However, the table below captures Nigeria’s ranking of Corruption Perception Index released by Transparency International from 2000 to 2018.

| <b>Corruption Perception Ranking In Nigeria From 2000 to 2018</b> |                |
|---|----------------|
| Year  | Ranking        |
| 2000  | 90 out of 90   |
| 2001  | 90 out of 91   |
| 2002  | 101 out of 102 |
| 2003  | 132 out of 133 |
| 2004  | 144 out of 146 |
| 2005  | 152 out of 158 |
| 2006  | 150 out of 163 |
| 2007  | 132 out of 147 |
| 2008  | 121 out of 150 |
| 2009  | 130 out of 150 |
| 2010  | 134 out of 178 |
| 2011  | 143 out of 183 |
| 2012  | 139 out of 176 |
| 2013  | 144 out of 177 |
| 2014  | 136 out of 175 |
| 2015  | 136 out of 176 |
| 2016  | 136 out of 176 |
| 2017  | 148 out of 180 |
| 2018  | 144 out of 180 |

*Source: Eme, (2010, p. 404), Omenka, (2013) & Transparency international, (2018).*

In the above table, it can be deduced that Nigeria is the most corrupt country in Africa for the year 2000. The implication is that her people suffer most on the problem of pipe born water, electricity, good roads, health care facilities and quality education and many others. The media here have been surviving under the payroll of Nigerian politicians and would become almost impossible for the media to criticize any

corrupt dealings. The media in this year have lost its social responsibility role by being silent on corrupt practices. However, from 2001 to 2004, this was the time media began to see corruption as detriment to socioeconomic stability and political development; but there was still no significant changes in their role to anti-corruption. In the year 2005 to 2010, Nigeria government began to see report on corruption in the ways that showcase dangers posed by corruption to Nigerians. In this scenario, a lot of government criticisms went viral both on the mainstream media and online communication platforms. But there was still no significant changes about how top government officers/political actors siphoned economic resources meant for the provision of pipe born water, electricity, good roads, health care facilities and other infrastructures possibly because anticorruption agencies were not being effective or were powerless. However, from 2011 to 2018; anticorruption agencies began to see the inimical of top official corruption to a nation called the giant of African. With the role of media in their investigative reporting and empowerment of anticorruption agencies, arrest, detention and trials of some corrupt leaders began to surface in the communicative space. This arrests and trials give other potential corrupt leaders to be afraid of the administration that takes anticorruption as one of the helixes of national development.

Development on the other hand, is about man and man is both the subject and recipient of development (Anaeto, 2010). The key to development of any polity is the provision of information and knowledge. This is due to the recognition of the fact that knowledge and information are essentials for people to respond to the opportunities and challenges in their environment. People need information and knowledge to make decisions and improve their situation. As Udoakah (1998) in Anaeto (2010) rightly put; “a passive poorly informed community is a barrier to development” (p. 2). So, without mediated information people will remain in the same state as without development and this is where the role of media is critical to the development of a nation.

Development in the words of Anaeto (2010) is a process of freeing people from the evil of wants, ignorance, social injustices and economic exploitations. Smith (2011) contends that it is the maximum freedom enjoyed by people and their ability to create responsibility. Seer (1977) cited in Egharevba and Chiazor (2012) defined development as a situation where inequality in a society is greatly reduced and the condition where a country adequately provide food and jobs for its people, (Chiegwe, 2000), where people have the capacity and opportunity to develop and demonstrate their potentialities. It embraces such aspects of the quality of life as social justice,



equitable distribution of income, equality for all citizens, growth, and the democratization of the development process (Lawal, 2007; Egharevba, 2007 cited in Egharevba & Chiazor, 2012).

Thus, for 58 years after independence, the economic, political and social spheres that condition development are still far from its realization in Nigeria. The absence of development is the presence of social frustration and unrest, unemployment, high mortality rate, political instability and insecurity of lives and property, high poverty rate and infrastructural decay in all sectors of Nigerian economy (Suberu, 2007 re-echoed in Egharevba & Chiazor, 2012).

### **3.2. Theoretical Foundation**

The social responsibility theory of the press and the development media theory readily provide anchorage for this study. First, the social responsibility theory posits that the mass media have the responsibility of society servicing. From the writings of McQuails (2010) however, the media need freedom to report issues of corruption considered critical to the government and political cabinet, thus social responsibility theory originates to accrue the press with certain obligations considered prominent to any responsible media. The theory, according to Folarin (2002), Anaeto (2010), and McQuails (2010) posits that the media must act responsibly by realizing that they have certain obligations to the public. This is to say, the media should reflect, analyze, interpret and report issues of corruptions that are consider critical to the development of a nation in such a way as to create enabling environment for development.

Applying this theory, the media has a sense of responsibility in curbing corruption in Nigeria; the theory accrues the media the responsibility to protect the rights of individuals by acting as watchdog over the government. This is similar to the role the mass media in Nigeria play in curbing corrupt practices among government officers through their analysis of news report that tends to expose misdemeanor and misconduct in the area of embezzlement capable of slowing down the development of the polity thereby piloting the reportage in such a way that demand punishment and sanctioning of perpetrators just as to serve as deterrent to potentials perpetrators of the corruptive tendencies thereby accelerating meaningful development in the country.

Stated differently, the above theory calls the media to remain keen to corruption reporting, analysis and interpretation and implications on the polity to help in pruning down misdeeds in government and public offices. And with the aid of the mass media of communication, the proceedings of anti-corruption bodies like EFCC, ICPC are being carried wide for the participation of the entire citizenry. Apparently, this amounts to social responsibility role of the press.

The second theoretical construct advocates the overall development of a given polity. Development media theory according to Folarin (2002), Anaeto (2010) and McQuails (2010) hinges on the assumption that mass media have a role to play in facilitating the process of development in a developing country like Nigeria. The theory assumes that the media need freedom in the reportage of corruptive acts that serves as deterrent to the development of a country. It is also posited that media, in the process of fighting against any government malfeasance like corruption specifically through their reportage, analysis, interpretation and assessment; they must ensure that such reportage is open to promote the country's developmental goals in the area of social and economic development, political stability and national integration to a direct sense of national purpose.

In its application, the mass media play a significant role in the development of the polity. Appraising the versatility of the mass media as a means through which information about corruptions and other government misdemeanors are disseminated and communicated to large numbers of audience at a given time; the media help promote, in their reportage, national unity and serve the economic system, social, political and educational spheres by exposing and recollecting looted capitals allocated to the provision of pipe born water, electricity, roads, education, and housings that were being diverted by members of the corrupt officers for them to be rechanneled to development needs of the people. This goes to show that mass media have been employed in propagating programmes that are geared towards righting the wrong in Nigeria in such a way that give room for true democracy, transparency and accountability in governance for an enhanced national development.

### **3.3. Corruption, Media and Development: An Empirical Exploration**

Nageri, Gunu and Abdul (2013), studied corruption and economic development: Evidence from Nigeria and submitted that corruption hampers development and thus raises the level of poverty in any economy that finds it entrenched in corrupt practices. Corruption creates uncertainty and risk in the growth and development

potential of any country. They further stated that the inhibition of human and social development in Nigeria is as a result of corruption and thus remained a serious obstacle to economic development.

In another study, Ogbeidi (2012), examined political leadership and corruption in Nigeria since 1960; his submissions were that the bane of Nigeria's development problem is unequivocally attributed to the dangers corruption posed in our society. Furthering his submission, the phenomenon has ravaged the country and destroyed most of what is held as cherished national values, shrunken and ruined by the phenomenon called corruption. Unfortunately, part of his findings were that the major culprits perpetrating this act of corruption who are supposed to manage and pilot the affairs of Nigerians in the ways that will ensure peaceful co-existence, access to basic socio amenities and infrastructure like pipe born water, stable electricity, quality education, better health care services and employment opportunities are the real culprits undermining the development of our dear nation.

Jibo (2003), studied the role of the media in achieving transparency and accountability in governance generally to accelerate development in the fourth republic. He submitted that the media helps ensures socio-economic transformation by causing attitude change. This attitude change he noted is possible in the role media play by providing information and knowledge that ultimately make members of the masses think and appreciate the leaders capable of touching and affecting their lives.

In another related study which focuses on the relationship between corruption and development Akindele (2005), undertook an empirical investigation of the relationship between a numbers of key variables in Nigeria. Estimating a modified production function including labour, capital and political instability, he submitted that corruption index is negative implying that corruption retards the growth of nation. He found that there exist a strong significant negative relationship between corruption and development. He concluded that, corruption in whatever form is inimical to the development of any society.

#### **4. Media Anti-Corruption Campaigns in Nigeria**

Accountability of government depends largely on the extent of media scrutiny of the political system. This is possible with the aid of an independent media that ensures open communication and plurality of ideas in the communicative space. This, therefore, suggest that the degree to which a media is independent is the degree to

which it can perform an effective public watchdog function over the conduct of public affairs (Pope Jerry cited in Nwagbara, 2010). Stated differently, the independent of the media will allow it to perform the fourth estate of the realm in serving as watchdog of the society against abuse of power, righter of wrong, a humbler of hubris and arrogance, an agent of positive social change that comfort the afflicted and afflict the comforted (Hackett & Carroll, 2006).

The immersion of media in anti – corruption crusade cut across the public and private sectors of the economy. Staphenurst, (2000) observed that a critical element of a country's anticorruption program is an effective media. The media in its dual role in corruption eradication not only advances public awareness about corruption, its causes, consequences and possible remedies but also probes and reports frequencies of corruption to the action of anti-corruption agencies like EFCC, ICPC among others.

Buttressing further, Starke, Naab and Scherer (2016) identified four critical roles mass media perform in curbing corruption. First, the media serves as watchdogs by holding political decision makers accountable for their actions and inactions. In this direction, Camaj (2012) emphasized that the media can help prosecute the actions of government by investigating and frequently reporting the rates of corruption. Staphenurst (2000) attested to this, by observing that critical independent media executes their roles as regulatory body even more proficiently than the judiciary, executive and legislative groups by exposing corrupt public officials, enforcing penalties and making them more answerable to their corrupt leanings.

Second, by raising public awareness about the scourge of corruption in governance, the media expose flaws in the anticorruption bodies (ICPC, EFCC etc.), called the ultimate determinant of corruption and as such, reinforce orders and steadiness between and among equally powerful political actors about restructuring Nigeria's anti-corruption institutions to ensuring the legitimacy of the country's anticorruption bodies and therefore growing the success of the Nigeria media in corruption fighting.

Third, the media, by identifying maladministration among public officials, policy failures, judicial corruption and indignities in business sector ensure civic forum for articulating concerns in government and contributing to building public opinion and in the process, mobilize mass pressure to force corrupt officials out of government. This process, in relation to media roles, influences the status of corrupt politicians and increases the level of law acquiescence in the country. Fourth, the media contribute to generating climate of transparency within the government circle and

the society at large by reducing extortive corruption in both the system and at the individual level through the provision of needed information about corruption by ensuring widespread access to information about corruption in the society.

As a result of the above, the persistence of Transparency International from (2011), (2012), (2013), (2014), (2015), (2016), (2017) and (2018) in the ranking of African corruption perception index reveal a significant effect of the role of Nigeria media in the fight against corruption. Nigeria moved from 148<sup>th</sup> back to 144<sup>th</sup> position out of 180 countries and this amounted to 36<sup>th</sup> position to the most corrupt country in the last December, 2018 report. This made a significant different from what used to be obtained in the past in corruption ranking where Nigeria is known to take 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> position to the most corrupt country in Africa. Thus, this development can be appreciated to what (Starke, Naab & Scherer, 2016), termed as watchdog, raising public awareness about corruption in governance, ensuring civic forum for articulating concerns in government corruption and building public opinion and generating transparency in government as the role of the media in fighting corruption in Nigeria.

This is apparently why Olushola, et al (2014) concluded that the media has been identified as an important weapon in fighting the scourge of corruption worldwide. Similarly, AFRICAW (2012) and WSCIJ (2013) buttressed that the shaping of public opinion on issues (i.e. corruption) affecting the lives of people is credited to the role played by the media. Therefore, one of the principal vehicles for informing the public about corrupt activities as given by the World Anti-corruption Watchdog (Transparency International) is a free and independent media system (AFRICAW, 2012). By investigating and reporting corruption, the media provides a searchlight on the abuse of entrusted power for private gain by exposing the wrongdoings of public office holders (Transparency International, 2018). This suggests that the media whistle-blowing function influence government policies and actions to bring about the much-needed development and good governance in the country (WSCIJ, 2013).

Similarly, Stapenhurst (2000) critically contend that the effectiveness of the media in controlling corruption depends on access to information and freedom of expression, as well as professional and ethical callings of investigative reporting. Ayoola (2008) cited in Sowumi, et al (2010) buttressed that the role of the media in anti-corruption crusade cannot be overemphasized if the nation practice true democracy. They further stated that proper understanding of the concept of democracy by all, and the nature of the media practice that can nurture democracy

and create favourable environment for it to thrive must be placed at the forefront if corruption must be eradicated. He further noted that for the media to thrive more in anti-corruption crusade by ensuring government accountability and thereby accelerating needed development in the country there is need for enabling environment of liberal democracy through the enthronement of a culture of freedom of expression and that of the press (Ayoola, 2008 cited in Sowumi, et al 2010).

## 5. Conclusion

A critical appraisal on the roles of media in anti-corruption campaigns revealed a seemingly appreciative effect in development. The Nigerian media which are constitutionally enshrined to perform the watchdog role on government regarding abuse of power and misconduct among the power that be have been very effective. Stated differently, this paper has examined the role of media in reducing corruption and accelerating needed development in Nigeria. It submits that Nigerian media has discharged their roles fairly creditably well in reporting corruption and in the fight against corruption generally. It proposes that a critical element of a country's anti-corruption program is an independent media.

The media in its dual role in corruption eradication not only advances public awareness about corruption, its causes, consequences and possible remedies but also probes and reports frequencies of corruption to the action of anti-corruption agencies like EFCC, ICPC among others. The study has reflected the roles of the media in the anti-corruption crusade. It concluded that the media have been found relevant by resisting political pressures and interferences and consequently reflecting the true feelings and needs of the people, exposing corruption and mismanagement of public resources through monitoring, criticizing, analyzing and interpreting public budget, expenditure, policy and implementation of global, national and local development initiatives. Similarly, the persistence of Transparency International from (2011), (2012), (2013), (2014), (2015), (2016), (2017) and (2018) in the ranking of African corruption perception index reveal a significant effect on the role of Nigeria media in the fight against corruption. Nigeria moved from 148<sup>th</sup> back to 144<sup>th</sup> position out of 180 countries and this amounted to 36<sup>th</sup> position to the most corrupt country in the last December, 2018 (CPI) report. This made a significant different from what used to be obtained in the past in corruption ranking where Nigeria is known to take 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> position to the most corrupt country in Africa. The implication of this is that Nigeria is creating access for the development needs of the people by

gradually freeing herself from the evils of corruption among other African nations through the reports of Transparency International World Corruption Perception Index (CPI) from 2011 to 2018. This development can be attributed to the role of the media in anti-corruption campaigns in Nigeria.

## 6. Recommendations

The crucial role of mass media to serve as catalyst for corruption eradication among government officials in reversing the present socio economic challenges in Nigeria could be anchor under critical independence of the media, vibrant and active judicial system coupled with exemplary leadership.

This paper therefore contends that the eradication of corruption could be possible when plurality of ideas and initiatives about development programmes are integrated with the needs and expectations of the common in the society. To achieve this, the paper proposes transparency in governance, true democracy, good governance, accountability and increased political will.

The paper further recommend that the media in Nigeria should strengthen their internal competence and ethical capacity for professionalism and adopt investigative journalism in the reporting of, and campaign against corruptive act and tendencies to illuminate the cherished values in people thereby guiding and directing social conduct and behaviour to achieving sustainable development.

The paper equally recommends however, given the magnitude of corruption in the nation, the little successes recorded; especially the improvement in the Transparency International on Corruption Perception Index (CPI) occasioned by the keenness of the present administration in Nigeria to fight corruption should not be celebrated. Rather, more efforts need to be enshrined in the fight against the scourge if Nigeria must join the league of developed economies in the year 2030.

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