

## **AN ASSESSMENT OF PRESIDENT BUHARI ANTI-GRAFT CRUSADE 2015-2021**

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**Abstract:** The study examined President Muhammadu Buhari's anti-corruption initiative. The historical method was chosen because it entails a methodical analysis of secondary sources. Data analysis showed, among other things, that the administration of President Buhari's lacks a fundamental understanding of what drives corruption in Nigeria. The study finds that the fight against corruption seems to be more concentrated on punishing offenders than on addressing the socioeconomic factors that contribute to corruption. It is argued that the anti-corruption campaign was biased toward the prosecution of individuals from the Peoples Democratic Party, the former ruling party, who were viewed as opposition (PDP). The following recommendations are listed for this study based on the nature and character of President Buhari's Anti-Graft War and the conclusions drawn from. To combat corruption, social justice, equity, a reenergized socialization process, and a consistent rise in the standard of living of Nigerians particularly of civil servants and other public employees are required. The anti-graft organizations should also see to it that those who engage in corrupt behavior are swiftly prosecuted. There shouldn't be any holy cows, and there shouldn't be two sets of laws with different penalties for different groups of people. Audits of government organizations should be performed as needed. Almost no government agency conducts audits when they are required. Audit reports are routine and unimportant because they are not made public until three to four years after the incident. In addition, regardless of a person's ethnic background or political ties, there should be fairness and equity in the distribution of national resources, incomes, and the implementation of development projects and employment opportunities for all Nigerians. Nigeria needs leaders with a track record of moral rectitude, discipline, and dependability.

**Keywords:** agencies, efcc, icpc, Buhari, and corruption

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Corruption is the biggest threat to all nations, especially those in the developing or third world. Akpan and Eyo emphasized that "corruption is as old as human existence on planet Earth" (2018). The term "corruption" describes unethical or dishonest behavior displayed by those in positions of authority, such as the giving or receiving of bribes, favoritism, nepotism, bulk passing, or the process of changing a word from its original state to one that is deemed incorrect or debased. He later added the following classifications to his list: grand and petty corruption, representational corruption, extortionary corruption, traditional and modern corruption, supporting corruption, transactional corruption, and extortion. No matter the category, corruption impedes societal advancement and economic growth.

According to Adegoke (2017), corruption by Nigerian leaders has caused the nation to suffer significant losses in the economy, politics, and society. As a result, the nation's infrastructure has deteriorated and its indicators of national progress have decreased. Folarin (2009) asserts that corruption has become so entrenched that it has stifled development across all industries and has been the primary cause of Nigeria's socioeconomic backwardness.

Nigeria was one of the ten most corrupt countries in the world in 2000, according to Transparency International's Perception Ranking Index (Folarin, 2009). The public corporations that have partially or completely collapsed as a result of corruption include Ajaokuta Steel Company, Nigeria Textile Company, Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation, National Electricity and Power Authority, Nigerian Post Office, Nigerian Railway Corporation, and others. Since the return of democracy to Nigeria in 1999, the country's leaders have been looking for ways to slay the corruption monster.

Okpala and Enwefa (2017) assert that a number of national and international organizations promoted the establishment of institutional authorities to fight corruption in response to the escalating rage in society. As a result, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) were established in 2000 and 2003, respectively. Authorities found numerous cases in a short period of time, many of which resulted in accusations, convictions, and the recovery of stolen property. Mutiullah and Adekunle (2017) contend that strong collective efforts from various societal sectors acting in concert are necessary to stop corruption in public (and private) institutions from persisting.

Fighting and eliminating corruption from the public life of the nation was at the center of President Muhammadu Buhari's political platforms during his campaigns in 2003, 2007, 2011, and the eventual emergency presidency of Nigeria in 2015 and 2019. Following his inauguration on May 29, 2015, President Muhammadu Buhari assured the larger international community of his readiness to collaborate and assist in the fight against financial crime and other challenges of the 21st century. (Page 9 of President Buhari's 2015 Inaugural Speech) The sole subjects of the four-page address were fighting corruption and restoring the country's integrity in the eyes of its citizens, Africa, and the rest of the world. President Buhari, who is well aware of the danger that corruption poses to progress and economic development, stated during the 2016 celebration of Independent Day that "corruption will kill us if we did not destroy corruption" (Vanguard 2016 cited by Makinde 2018). President Buhari constantly points the finger at corruption for the underdevelopment of the country and the lack of socioeconomic development in both the

public and private sectors of Nigeria. The disease that has eaten deeply into the Nigerian polity's fabric is corruption. Global perceptions of corruption in Nigeria give the impression that both the country's governmental and commercial sectors are rife with corrupt practices (Makinde, 2018).

The Buhari Presidency proposed ending fuel subsidies in 2016 and decentralizing the importation of petroleum, gas, and diesel, relieving the burden on the government by enabling unaffiliated or private organizations to raise the money necessary to import these goods. The Whistleblowers Act, the Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS), the Bank Verification Number (BVN), the Treasury Single Account (TSA) for federal government revenues, and all of these initiatives were fully implemented under President Buhari's administration. Col. Sambo Dasuki, Chief Olisah Metuh, Air Vice Marshal Alex Badeh, and Mr. Walter Onnoghen, a former Chief Justice of Nigeria, are among the former corrupt government figures that the government has detained. The Buhari administration also found Senator Joshua Dariye and Mr. Jolly Nyame, the previous governors of the states of Taraba and Plateau, guilty. Others, on the other hand, contend that President Muhammadu Buhari's campaign against corruption has been biased, particularly in its targeting of opposition party members who have previously served in elected office. Others contend that the entire anti-graft campaign is poorly coordinated, lacking in process, and lacking effective due diligence in case filing, investigation, and prosecution. Some also assert that the administration intimidated the judiciary in order to imprison allegedly corrupt individuals. Given this context, this essay examines President Buhari's anti-graft campaign from 2015 to 2021.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The primary goal of this study is to examine the anti-corruption initiative of the President Buhari-led administration, but it also has the following more focused goals:

- i. Analyze the President Buhari-led administration's anti-corruption strategies.
- ii. Think about the personality and goals of President Muhammadu Buhari's anti-corruption campaign.

### **Literature Review**

#### ***Corruption and Anti-Corruption***

Transparency International (TI) defines corruption as the abuse of power for one's own gain. According to Nye (2017), corruption is a departure from the official duties of a public function caused by the financial exercise of particular types of private influence (personal, close family, private clique). This includes practices like theft, nepotism (appointing someone based on personal connections rather than qualifications), and bribery (using money to influence the judgment of someone in a position of trust) (illegal appropriation of public resources for private regarding uses). There has been some debate over what constitutes corruption. Bribery, embezzlement, abuse of public procurement, function abuse, influence trading, nepotism, money laundering, conflicts of interest, judicial corruption, and private sector corruption are the ten types of corruption defined by the United Nations Convention Against Corruption. Three more typologies have been added by other researchers (Page, 2018a). Nepotism, cronyism, and fraud in the legal system, accounting system, electoral process, public sector, embezzlement, kleptocracy, influence peddling, and conflicts of interest are a few examples. Extortion, favor-trading, and bribery are also examples of illegal behavior (RoseAckerman & Palifka, 2016).

### ***Theoretical Framework***

A system theory and a theory of corruption with a focus on policies were used to support the study. The policy-oriented theory was developed by Teveick, Albert, and Charles in 1986 to explain how the government operates in the fight against corruption. The theory contends that rising levels of corruption will stifle economic growth in both developed and developing nations (Adedeji, Soyinka & Sunday 2018). Government corruption has a detrimental effect on the growth of the economy despite efforts to combat it. However, if political, financial, or administrative corruption is to be completely eradicated or significantly reduced, the various governmental branches must tighten their roles. Additionally, David Easton developed the system theory or method in 1999, which was greatly influenced by biological research (Adedeji et al., 2018). This theory improved our understanding of politics. The subsystems or component parts of the system are crucial to its proper operation, according to system theory. Each system's unit performs a number of crucial tasks that are typically connected to specialized units in any large and complex institution.

The fundamental tenet of this theory is that every organization, institution, country, and governmental or political setting is made up of a variety of parts, sub-systems, or units. These divisions work together to maintain the effectiveness and efficiency of the entire (organizational) system (Adedeji et al., 2018). A part or unit of the entire system cannot function separately from the other parts. The operation of a system's component has an effect on the system as a whole. Nigeria's political system cannot function well without the assistance or contributions of its sub-systems as supra-systems in order to maintain a stable political system or society. Political, administrative, financial, or any

other type of corruption has an effect on the In order to combat cases of fraud and corruption in this system, accounting and auditing, a division of the government or a component of the supra-system, has been given this responsibility. If it fails to accomplish this task, there will be a rise in corrupt activities, which will reduce the effectiveness of the system as a whole.

### **ANALYSIS OF PRESIDENT BUHARI'S ANTI-CORRUPTION POLICY**

President Buhari uses the fight against corruption as a campaigning theme. President Buhari developed and put into effect a number of anti-corruption initiatives after winning the 2015 election. Just a few of the significant initiatives made by the Buhari administration include the following:

#### **The Establishment of Presidential Advisory Committee against Corruption**

The The Presidential Advisory Committee against Corruption (PACAC), which was established in August 2015, was created with the aim of assisting the current administration in carrying out its anti-corruption campaign and making the necessary adjustments to Nigeria's criminal justice system. One of PACAC's most notable successes was starting the federal government's whistleblower policy. The 2015 Administration of Criminal Justice Act has given judges and prosecutors the power to effectively carry out their duties through workshops on the Act. Before suspects are brought to justice, the committee has helped anti-corruption organizations create more lucid plans for seizing assets that are thought to have been fraudulently obtained, primarily from State Coffers. This involved painstakingly scouring existing statutes (such as the Money Laundering Act of 2004, the EFCC Act of 2004, and the ICPC Act of 2000) for provisions that specifically gave Nigeria's anticorruption agency forfeiture powers,

and underlining those passages. As a result of this campaign, anti-corruption organizations are using non-conviction based asset forfeiture mechanisms much more frequently. In order to aid ACAs in their work, it also produced manuals, protocols, and Standard Operating Procedures. These include the Framework for the Management of Recovered Stolen Assets, the Asset Recovery Strategy Document, the Corruption Case Management Manual, the Plea Bargaining Manual, the Sentencing Guidelines in High Profile Cases, and the Plea Bargaining Manual.

Second, the Buhari administration launched the Presidential Initiative on Continuous Audit (PICA). In order to tighten controls over government funds, the Buhari Administration established PICA to enhance internal audit procedures throughout all Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs), with a focus on payroll. Through PICA's efforts, more than 54,000 fraudulent payroll entries were found and eliminated, resulting in annual payroll savings of N200 billion. Another important step in President Buhari's fight against corruption is the 2019 Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters Bill, which he signed into law. The Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters Bill was approved by the National Assembly, and President Muhammadu Buhari signed it into law in 2019. The Act simplifies the process of prosecuting criminals in criminal cases, regardless of where they may be found, as well as the identification, tracking, freezing, restraining, recovering, forfeiting, and confiscating of money, property, and other criminally useful items. Nigeria has signed MOUs and agreements with a number of countries to increase international cooperation for the investigation, tracking, freezing, and return of stolen assets.

In order to step up the fight against corruption, the Buhari administration

appointed Ibrahim Magu to succeed Ibrahim Lamorde as head of the EFCC in November 2015. Despite the Senate's refusal to approve him due to a security report from the SSS, Magu is still in office in an acting capacity. Buhari also used partnerships with other nations to ensure that the EFCC changed its strategy. The term "preventative but unregulated policies" and "preventive-prosecutorial but regulated strategies" were used by some academics to describe additional techniques (Akpan & Eyo 2018). The Whistle Blowing Policy and the Treasury Single Account (TSA) were the preventative but not legally required policies (Akpan & Eyo 2018: 35). The Independent and Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC), Public Procurement Bureau, Nigerian Extractive Industries Transparency Initiatives (NEITI), Code of Conduct Bureau and Tribunal, Legislative Oversight at the Federal and State Levels, and the Governance Code, which is allegedly suspended due to its complexity, are additional preventive-punitive but legal measures (Akpan & Eyo 2018:36).

The administration's efforts also resulted in the passage of bills giving the Nigerian Financial Intelligence Agency autonomy, as well as the Proceeds of Crime Agency Bill, the Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Bill, and the Money Laundering (Prohibition) Bill. Along with the already-existing systems, President Muhammadu Buhari's anti-corruption campaign went a step further by signing bilateral and multilateral agreements with some foreign partners on the repatriation of stolen funds hidden abroad with people identified as Politically Exposed Persons (PEPs) and corrupt figures evading prosecution abroad. Six ratification documents for judicial agreements were signed on January 19, 2016, by Nigeria and the UAE. (Premium Times, 2016). Reporters were briefed by Mr. Robert Goodwill, the British Minister of State for Immigration,

on the Memorandum of Understanding between the two nations that was signed on August 30 and 31, 2016, in Abuja. In order to identify those responsible for the ownership of stolen assets, the agreement will reportedly provide ownership information about corporations, trusts, and foundations to 40 jurisdictions, including British Oversea Territories (Home Office, UK Visas and Immigration 2016). The ICPC and EFCC sought legislation to give them the ability to keep some of the funds received for their extensive operations across the country. By November, the Senate had decided that 2% of any funds seized should go to the EFCC.

The National Anti-Corruption Strategy was approved by the Federal Government on July 5, 2017. (NACS). Its objective was to identify and close any holes in the existing anti-corruption programs. It has five pillars that are connected and have three tiers each. The three levels are: enhancing the institutional and legal framework designed to prevent and combat corruption; integrating anti-corruption principles into the governance and service delivery of national MDAs; and integrating anti-corruption principles into sub-national public administration and society as a whole. The four pillars are the Campaign for Ethical Reorientation, public involvement, enforcing sanctions through prompt judicial resolution and the introduction of appropriate sanctions, and recovering proceeds of corruption. Later, the late Diepreye Alamieyeseigha, a former governor of Bayelsa, and the late Gen. Sanni Abacha signed an agreement with the government of the United States of America (USA) outlining the procedure for returning more than \$300 million that had been stolen. Mr. Abubakar Malami, the Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, also signed the agreement. The agreements regarding the return of previously stolen funds that were negotiated with

Switzerland and, separately, the United States, made this possible (Adesomoju 2017).

To swiftly address and prosecute instances of corruption, the government also developed the Code of Conduct Tribunal Practice Handbook (FRN, 2017). The "Effective Communication and Public Relations for Nigeria Law Enforcement Agencies" initiative was introduced in June, and 16 EFCC employees were also given training in this subject by the US Mission Office in Abuja. (EFCC, 2017) The agency was granted permission in November 2017 to hire an additional 750 people on an annual basis for three years in order to fill its staffing gaps. Eventually, in May 2018, a deal on the return of assets and funds that Nigerians had stashed in the United Arab Emirate (UAE) was finalized, and it went into effect in June 2018. The agreement covered cooperating legally and judicially in civil and business matters as well as extraditing criminals, apprehending criminals, providing mutual legal assistance in criminal cases, and apprehending criminals (The Nation, 2018). In order to discuss the specifics of returning Nigeria's stolen assets, the Federal Government and the British Government once more entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in October 2018. It was crucial to prevent the theft of reclaimed property in the future this time.

### **Causes of Corruption in Buhari's Administration**

Some asserted that prosecutions primarily targeted PDP members (Abosede, 2018; Mossman, 2019). The US administration, which previously praised the anti-corruption initiative, expressed concern over allegations of corruption against APC elites and President Buhari's aides that have not been addressed (Sahara Reporters, 2019). Numerous hints point to the fact that cases of corruption against people who are ardent supporters of President

Buhari or who are APC members have been dismissed. Some of these people include Professor Usman Yusuf, a former director of the National Health Insurance Scheme, Abdulrasheed Maina, a former director of the Pension Scheme, and Mr. Andrew Yakubu, a former general manager of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), Babachir Lawal, a former special assistant to the president, Ambassador Ayodele Oke, a former director of the National Intelligence Agency (Bada, 2018; Bello, 2018; Akinkuotu, Adeoye & Alagbe, 2018; Tukur, 2019; Sobechi, 2020). For instance, it is claimed that President Buhari was shown evidence in 2016 that his Chief of Staff, Abba Kyari, accepted a bribe from MTN in the amount of N500 million to assist the company lower the \$5 billion fine imposed upon it for breaking Nigerian telecommunications laws that interfered with national security (Opejobi, 2016). MTN fired the employees involved in the bribery incident (Sahara Reporters, 2016). Abba Kyari's continued position as chief of staff, however, infuriated the populace, which prompted Buhari to declare an investigation into Kyari. The investigation's findings were never disclosed (Sahara Reporters, 2016; Omonobi, 2016). Furthermore, Abdulrasheed Maina, a supporter of President Buhari who was in charge of pension reforms under President Goodluck Jonathan, left the nation in 2015 following accusations that he had stolen \$2 billion (\$5.6 million, 4.8 million euros). Despite an Interpol arrest warrant being issued, he was still able to return to Nigeria, where he reportedly received protection from the Buhari administration (Vanguard, 2017). Maina was terminated and the subject of an investigation for engaging in corrupt behavior while Goodluck Jonathan was president; however, after Buhari took office, Maina was reinstated and given a double promotion (Abdulaziz, & Busari, 2017). Corrupt people have escaped punishment because of a person's party

loyalty. Numerous cases failed, perhaps as a result of the accusers' shifting political allegiances or a lack of zeal on the part of the prosecution. They include Adams Oshiomhole, the former national chairman of the APC, who was charged with taking \$55 million in bribes and was quoted as saying that any corrupt politician who joins the ruling party will have their sins pardoned. They also include Senator Adamu Abdullahi, who was accused of stealing N15 billion, Godswill Akpabio, who was accused of stealing N180 billion, and Senator Adamu Abdullahi, who was accused of stealing N15 billion (Sobechi, 2020). For instance, Godswill Akpabio, who has been charged with corruption, was appointed minister of affairs in the oil-rich Niger Delta. He led Akwa Ibom State as the PDP's governor from 2007 to 2015. During the most recent legislative session, he also served as the Senate Minority Leader and a senator for the PDP. In August 2018, he became well-known after he changed from the -PDP to the -APC. Before his nomination was made public, the EFCC declined to respond to questions from the press about ongoing corruption investigations against him and his wife (Kreck, 2019).

Additionally, did you know that Babachir Lawal the immediately preceding Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF) stole money intended for rehabilitation in the crisis-ridden North-East of Nigeria for his own use? He has had free movement because he is a well-known APC (All Progressives Congress) member (Adebusuyi, 2019). Former Bayelsa State governor Timipre Sylva is another well-known donor to and supporter of President Muhammadu Buhari's APC government. He is currently on trial before Justice A. Y. Mohammed of the Federal High Court in Abuja on charges of embezzling N19.7 billion. However, on June 1, 2015, the charges against Sylva were dropped by the new APC administration two days after President Buhari took office. On

October 3, 2018, the EFCC returned Sylva's 48 homes that had been taken from him in 2013 by the Goodluck Jonathan administration (Bada, 2018; Akinkuotu, Adeoye & Alagbe, 2018). Nepotism and favoritism, both of which are manifestations of corruption, have also been questioned in relation to the majority of President Buhari's appointments to significant positions. The main issue with the Buhari administration has been referred to as "lopsided appointments," "nepotism," "sectionalism," "parochialism," and more (The Guardian Editorial, 2020). Most of these have been exposed without repercussions. For instance, there is an imbalance in the people appointed to lead the military and paramilitary organizations.

To put it mildly, the "northernization" of federal offices is notorious and a direct assault on individual merit or national unity (The Guardian Editorial, 2020). Additionally, the following organizations and government bodies have a glaring imbalance and unmatched northern dominance at the top: Customs and Excise, the Universal Basic Education Commission, the Nigerian Asset Management Corporation, the Petroleum Pricing and Regulation Agency, the Petroleum Equalization Fund, the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation, the Federal Inland Revenue Department, the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency, the Nigerian Ports Authority, the Central Bank of Nigeria, the Tertiary Education Fund, the Bank of Industry, and the Pension Co. (Adebowale, 2020: The Guardian Editorial, 2020).

All indications point to leaders from the nation's north overseeing nearly all significant federal departments and agencies under President Buhari. The Federal Character Principle of Nigeria is violated by these appointments (The Guardian Editorial, 2020). More specifically, Chapter 2, Section 14,

subsection 3 of the 1999 Constitution, as amended, requires that the conduct of its affairs be carried out in a way that reflects Nigeria's federal character and the need to foster national unity as well as to command national loyalty, ensuring that there will not be any predominance of people from a few states. In defiance of long-standing tradition, the President of Nigeria appointed Dr. Muheeba Farida Dankaka (Kwara State) as the chairman of the Federal Character Commission and Mohammed Bello Tukur (Taraba State) as the secretary. This is another blatant attack on the federal character principle (Omeihe, 2020). If a balancing institution's constitutional purpose can be so seriously damaged, what else is left? It is evident that when it comes to appointments, President Buhari routinely disregards the federal character clause in the country's constitution. The clause seeks to correct unfair appointments and bring about the peace that has eluded us since gaining independence nearly 60 years ago (The Guardian Editorial, 2020).

### **Practical of Efforts of President Buhari's Anti-Graft War in Nigeria**

By passing anti-corruption laws, rules, and policies like the Integrated Personnel Payroll and Information System (IPPIS), Treasury Single Account (TAS), Whistle-blowing Policy, Code of Conduct Bureau, and Nigerian Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, among others, the Buhari administration made some attempts to combat corruption in Nigeria (Akpan, & Eyo, 2018). These actions led to some improvements in the corruption perception index. Nigeria, on the other hand, has tragically and persistently remained on the unfavorable corruption perception index, both regionally and globally (Akpan, & Eyo, 2018). No matter whose ox was gored, President Buhari promised to end corruption in Nigeria when he took office in 2015. (Onya & Elemanya; Ozah, 2020). But even after



five years, the public still has a poor opinion of Buhari's anti-corruption campaign (Abosedo, 2018). Significant convictions have only occasionally come about as a result of investigations, despite a number of high-profile trials in the early months of the Buhari administration. Jolly Nyame and Joshua Dariye, two former governors, were recently found guilty, but this hasn't convinced the populace that anything has changed. The length of court proceedings and financial settlements reached outside of the courtroom by wealthy people and organizations have also hampered successful prosecutions (Abosedo, 2018). Unfortunately, the current administration can be compared to a toothless bulldog that lacks the drive and motivation to achieve its goals (Ozah, 2020).

President Buhari worked closely with the United States, the United Kingdom, and other Middle Eastern countries at the start of his administration in 2015 to recover and repatriate assets allegedly acquired with shady money from public officials. The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), which also increased its activity, launched a number of investigations into former high-ranking public officials from previous administrations, particularly former cabinet members, state governors, and senior civil servants (Abosedo, 2018). The Buhari administration has made an effort to convict numerous national politicians and influential elites of corruption through the EFCC. The Alison-Madueke case is one of the few examples of success in the fight against corruption (Kreck, 2019). Diezani Alison-Madueke, a former oil minister, is one of the most prominent former officials from the previous administration who is being accused of corruption. From 2010 to 2015, Mrs. Alison-Madueke served as the petroleum minister of Nigeria. According to the EFCC, she is connected to at least N47.2 billion and \$487.5 million in cash, real estate, and other valuables. The

EFCC claims that the assets include a \$37.5 million apartment building in Abuja and "boxes of gold, silver, and diamond jewelry worth several million pounds sterling" at one Abuja property. A number of senior government officials from the Jonathan administration have also been detained by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission after they were implicated in the \$2.1 billion armaments deal fraud (EFCC). The People's Democratic Party's publicity secretary Olisa Metuh and Colonel Dasuki, a former national security adviser, were two of the main scandal perpetrators who were charged with multiple offenses and prosecuted. However, two different courts granted N700 million in bail to Olisa Metuh, who is alleged to have received N400 million from the arms trade scandal. The former military governor of Kaduna State, Lawal Jafaru Isa, who was accused of stealing N170 million from the sale of armaments, was, however, freed on bail after returning N100 million and promising to repay the remaining N70 million (Ekpo, Chime & Enor, 2016). The president has demonstrated political will to combat corruption, but his objectives and intentions appear to be in the wrong direction. The goal of recovering stolen funds from dishonest public officials is to combat the symptoms of corruption rather than actual corruption (Ekpo, Chime & Enor, 2016).

In spite of the anti-corruption agencies' tenacious efforts and widespread exposure of phenomenal corruption in the public sector, a significant problem with the current anti-corruption campaign in Nigeria under President Muhammadu Buhari is that few people who have been indicted have actually been found guilty. This might be connected to the incompetence of the judiciary, the politicization of the anti-corruption movement, and the partial independence of the anti-corruption institutions (Momoh, 2018). All signs point to the anti-corruption campaign of

the Buhari administration favoring the eradication of corruption's outward manifestations while ignoring its root causes and promoters. Like his predecessors, his anti-corruption campaign uses any of the nation's intelligence agencies to apprehend suspected looters, then uses the antics of those agencies for general investigation and questioning before bringing the suspect before the court for trial (Ekpo, Chime & Enor, 2016). Buhari's critics, including those in his ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) and the PDP, make a convincing case that he is pursuing political rivals with anti-corruption initiatives (Abosedo, 2018). This is because many of the people under investigation for corruption allegations were connected to the administration of former President Jonathan or PDP members (Kreck, 2019). This assertion is supported by the numerous petitions that prominent APC members like Rotimi Aamechi (a former governor of Rivers State) and Babatunde Raji Fashola (a former governor of Lagos State) have faced against them but which have gone unanswered. Instead, the president elevated this duo to ministerial positions in his cabinet, protecting them by giving them difficult tasks (Ekpo, Chime & Enor, 2016). Other APC politicians have recently defected to the PDP, but the EFCC has already begun an investigation into them. As soon as Benue state governor Samuel Ortom switched from the APC to the PDP, the EFCC started looking into allegations that Ortom was involved in the theft of public funds (Abosedo, 2018).

The NNPC inquiry, in which Mrs. Diezani Alison Madueke was required to give a thorough account of her stewardship while in office, was one of the reasons why President Buhari vowed to fight corruption in Nigeria regardless of whose ox was gored. The investigation revealed a large number of oil transactions by the NNPC. A few of these are: (1) The illegal withdrawal of \$2.2

billion from the Excess Crude Oil Account, of which \$1 billion was allegedly approved by the then-President Jonathan to fund his reelection campaign without the knowledge of the National Economic Council, according to (www.punchng.com) (2) The investigation into the \$11.6 billion USD (NLNG) in unpaid dividends that NEITI and Izeze found to be missing (2015). (3) Domestic crude allocation and subsidies totaling \$11.63 billion USD that were paid to NNPC on crude swaps between 2005 and 2012, according to Izeze, were not deposited to the federation account (2015). (4) Between 2009 and 2012, Izeze, an employee of NNPC, oversaw the theft of 60 million barrels of oil worth \$13.7 billion USD. (2014). Tax Invasion, Daily Sun: Oil Prospecting Licenses (OPL) and Oil Mining Licenses (OML) (2016).

(6) The Federal Ministry of Finance's \$1 billion USD foreign loan from the Chinese, Izeze, was diverted by 60%. These were additional incidents that were investigated outside of NNPC. (2015). (7) Siteadmin misappropriated and diverted \$2.2 million USD meant for child immunization (2014). (8) Abiodun used N1.9 billion that was intended for the fight against Ebola to cover other costs (2015). The Federal Ministry of Finance allegedly rushedly paid a contractor for the Federal Ministry of Health \$2.2 million USD in disputed invoices, according to Punch (2015). (8) The currently under investigation NIMASA fraud (www.punch.com). (9) Premium Times, "The NDDC scandal involving a contract award worth N27 billion Nigerian naira" (8th August 2015). (10) Police Service Commission scam investigation involving N150 million in Nigerian Naira. (11) According to the Africa Oil and Gas Report, the terrorists' security agreements for the oil and gas pipeline (2016). (12) According to Daily Sun (2016), the government agencies involved diverted the reported N50 billion Nigerian naira down payment for the N1 trillion penalties

imposed on MTN by the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) for breaking the nation's SIM registration laws.

In general, President Buhari's administration has made an effort to look into a number of corruption allegations that allegedly took place under President Goodluck Jonathan. However, some critics of Buhari's anti-corruption campaign contend that because the majority of the people and corporate entities under investigation are PDP supporters and his alleged rivals, he is not sincere or thorough in his approach to the fight against corruption. Even worse, in their opinion, no case that has been investigated and taken to court thus far has resulted in a clinical conclusion. This line of reasoning also contends that President Buhari lacks the moral integrity to fight corruption because he is corrupt himself. To bolster their arguments, they offered the following examples: (1) Buhari as minister of petroleum The former military head of state Lt. Gen. Obasanjo established a "crude oil sales tribunal" to investigate the actions of the former Nigeria National Oil Company (NNOC), now known as the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation, when \$2.80 billion in oil revenue vanished in 1977 while Buhari was serving as petroleum minister (NNPC). The tribunal learned that for three years, Shell, Mobil, and Gulf had not paid the then-NNOC its \$2.80 USD equity share of the oil they produced ([www.thecable.nigerianmonitor.com](http://www.thecable.nigerianmonitor.com)).

(2) Buhari as head of the military: The incident involving the 53 suitcases "filled with cash" that his soldiers and aide-de-camp, then-Major Mustapha Jokolo, allegedly forced to pass through Muritala Mohammed Airport (MMA) in Lagos without security checks after Gen. Buhari, as the military head of state, announced a change in the currency of Nigeria and issued an order that all luggage arriving at or departing from the

country's borders, seaports, and airports be screened.

The Fourth Republic of Nigeria's Vice President and Controller of Customs at the time of this incident at MMA Lagos, Atiku Abubakar, claimed that the Buhari administration tried to get him to deny that any smuggling had taken place but that he refused and told the truth instead ([therainbowonline.net](http://therainbowonline.net)). (3) Buhari's mismanagement of \$25.758 billion, 758 million, 532,000, 488,800, and 48,000 naira while serving as the Petroleum Trust Fund's (PTF) chairman (N25,758,532.448). On July 7, 1999, the interim report for the Petroleum (Special) Trust Fund was made public by the president at the time, Obasanjo. The committee had advised President Obasanjo, according to the report, to set up a strong judicial panel to recover the enormous public fund and to take necessary action against any officers, consultants, or contractors, including the Afri-Project Consortium (APC), a business hired by the Petroleum Trust Fund (PTF) as a management and project consultant. (4) Forgery of Buhari's Certificate: An Abuja lawyer named Nwokocha-Ahaaiwe has filed a lawsuit against President Buhari for allegedly forging a certificate. He argued that President Buhari is ineligible to serve as president of the Federal Republic of Nigeria because he did not complete the Cambridge West African School Certificate (WASC) in 1961 as reported.

However, those who disagree with President Buhari on this issue contend that the fact that he hired 23 of the nation's top Senior Advocates of Nigeria (SAN) to defend him against the charge of forging a certificate is proof that he does not hold the Cambridge West African School Certificate (WASC) that he claimed to have, and that as a result, he lacks the morality to fight corruption. (5) The president Buhari's cabinet is corrupt: President Buhari's assertions that his Ministers are not corrupt have

drawn criticism from the People's Democratic Party (PDP) chapter in Lagos State. The party asserted that because some of President Buhari's corrupt Ministers contributed financially to his victory, he was undoubtedly protecting them. They argued that if President Buhari truly believed none of his Ministers were corrupt, he should be present for live questions and answers. They charged him with pretending to be free from corruption ([www.informationng.com](http://www.informationng.com)). Buhari's All Progressives Congress (APC) continues to struggle with corruption, which appears to be vindicating those who have criticized Buhari's anti-corruption campaign. Cases like (6) The Party's National Leader, Senator Bola Ahmed Tinubu, accusing the National Party Chairman, Chief John Oyegun, of corruption, and Oyegun's retaliation against Tinubu, according to *This Day* (2016), point to the illusion concept of this subject since no one has been invited or interrogated as of the time this paper was being written. (7) After being ousted from office, Hon. Abdulmumin (Ph.D.) of the APC, a representative for Kano State's Kiru-Bebeji Federal Constituency, stated in a press conference that the "House of Representatives is a nest of systemic corruption" (*Punch*, 2016). Hon. Abdulmumin explained in the initial release how they divided the money from Nigeria as additional proof. He acknowledged, starting with himself, the following: House Whip Alhassan Ado Doguwa received N700 million, House Minority Leader Leo Ogor received N800 million, House Majority Leader Femi Gbajabiamila received N1.2 billion, and House Deputy Majority Leader Buba Jubrin also received N1.2 billion. Yakubu Dogara, the speaker, received N1.5 billion, and Yusuf Lasun, his deputy, received N800 million. The honorable Abdulmumini Jubrin received N650 million. The fact that senior members of President Buhari's APC party have recently leveled accusations of corruption against one another while

neither an invitation nor an arrest has been issued by anti-graft authorities actually shows that Buhari's anti-corruption campaign has different rules for the wealthy few and the general public.

## CONCLUSION

Despite President Muhammadu Buhari's efforts to combat it, corruption appears to be spreading throughout Nigeria. Even though the Buhari government says it is fighting corruption, it is not clear why it exists in Nigeria. It has prioritized punishment over addressing the socioeconomic causes of corruption as a result of this flaw. The majority of Nigerians do not have access to portable water, dependable electricity, good roads for conducting commerce, or a sufficient level of per capita income to do anything other than consume in order to survive. These are the miserable conditions that the average Nigerian has to live in. The fight against corruption by President Buhari shouldn't be dismissed as empty rhetoric given how pervasive it is in Nigeria and how deeply it has ingrained itself into the social fabric of the nation. Corruption is a problem because of the federal government's monopoly on the economy and numerous institutional and political factors. It has had numerous and disastrous effects on the sociopolitical and economic development of the country. Because of the damage done to the country's reputation abroad, Nigeria is now regarded as one of the most corrupt countries in the world. This has discouraged foreign investment, sparked inflation, and caused a decline in the value of our currency. Last but not least, while the Buhari administration's fight against corruption in Nigeria is encouraging, if he wants Nigerians to believe and have faith in his anti-corruption campaign, it must be thorough and transparent, not focusing only on a specific region of the country, members of a particular political party, or his passive opponents.

## Recommendations

Based on the nature and character of President Buhari's Anti-Graft War and the conclusions therefrom, the following recommendations are made for policy makers to take into consideration:

1. 1. President Buhari should take a comprehensive rather than selective approach to combating the corruption threat, regardless of the political ties or affinities of those accused of corrupt behavior.
2. 2. All Nigerians should have access to welfare services from all levels of government, especially the public and civil servants. Favoritism in hiring for public positions and in the distribution of national resources must be avoided.
3. 3. In order to combat corruption, social justice, equity, a reenergized socialization process and a consistent rise in the standard of living of Nigerians, especially civil and public officials, are required. This would be one of the best ways to get rid of corruption in Nigeria's public sector, or at the very least, to reduce it.
4. 4. The anti-graft organizations ought to see to it that those who take part in corrupt practices are swiftly brought to justice. There shouldn't be any "holy cows" or "two sets of laws" with various punishments for various groups of people.
5. 5. The code of conduct aims to prevent false claims. Every public official's income will be carefully inspected by the bureau both before and after they assume their positions.

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