

Research Article

## The Mass Media, Whistle Blowing Laws, and Corruption in Nigeria

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**Abstract:** This study: “The Mass Media, Whistle blowing Laws, and Corruption in Nigeria” was conducted against the contextual of corruption concerns in Nigeria. It is a survey that involved the use of questionnaire as the instrument for data collection from respondents that were drawn from the sectors concerned. The concepts of corruption, and whistle blowing laws under the Ethical and Social Responsibility Theories were reviewed in a brief literature. Findings revealed that the mass media through news, current affairs, features, documentaries and other media contents have supported whistle blowers, and thereby contributing to the fight against corruption in Nigeria. Results also revealed that there is the challenge of disclosure of information, and the fear of attack from corrupt folks on whistle blowers and journalists. Hence, the study recommends that the whistle blowing laws should be strengthened, and the public should be sensitized on the tenets of whistle blowing to get more Nigerians involved. It is also a recommendation that the mass media should dig deeper in their investigations to unfold this heinous crime being perpetuated in Nigeria and to increase the campaign for the prosecution of culprits to discourage this act that has continued to serve as bane to our development.

**Keywords:** Whistle blowing, Whistle blowing Laws, the Mass Media, Corruption and Nigeria.

### Introduction

It is worth nothing that investigative journalism plays an important role in combating fraud and corruption and that, there are common activities between journalist and anti-corruption professionals in the way experts in both fields do their jobs even with similar tools. The media are commonly referred to as the mass media. The mass media are channels of mass communication through which messages get to large, heterogeneous audience simultaneously. Examples of the mass media channels includes: newspapers, magazines, books, radio, television, cinema, photographs and lately the internet. According to Komolafe, “The mass media derive powers and influence from a unique and popular feature which is the simultaneous communication of messages to a large heterogeneous audience” (p 24). Professionals in both the print and broadcast media organizations through their publications and broadcast expose any kind of information or activity that is deemed illegal, unethical or not correct, within an establishment or organization that is either private or public. Over the years, the development and growth of the Nigerian State has been hampered by corruption which is the sum total of several illegal and unethical activities taking place in Nigeria’s

public and private sectors. Corruption is a dishonest or fraudulent conduct by those in power, and it typically involves bribery and the use of immoral or wicked acts to achieve personal or selfish gains. In line with the responsibilities of the media, it is expected that corrupt practices should be exposed.

Poverty is no doubt one of the greatest problems confronting the Nigerian people. Over the years, public policies have been designed to tackle the problem but poverty continues to increase. The crucial question is: why have these public policies failed and what kinds of policies are needed to eradicate poverty in Nigeria. There have been a lot of studies that have tried to explore the relationships between poverty and corruption. Most of the studies lead to the conclusion that corruption exacerbates conditions of poverty (low income, poor health and education status, vulnerability to shocks and other characteristics) in countries already straggling with the strains of economic growth and democratic transition. Similarly, countries experiencing chronic poverty are seen as natural breeding grounds for systemic corruption due to social and income inequalities and perverse economic incentives. The media can do much in the fight against corruption. The media may not be the traditional tools in the fight against corruption. However, they are crucial in achieving the cultural change that must accompany any legislative change to make laws and institutional changes sustainable. The media can amplify the effect of anti-corruption legislation by reaching and mobilizing a broader audience; by motivating political leaders to act and by facilitating a cultural change that will improve the sustainability of change.

The media are crucial in changing people's beliefs about the prevalence and legitimacy of corruption. The media's ability to change perceptions, norms, and behaviour is at the core of their relevance for the fight against corruption. Every society is built on norms. Norms are standards of expected behaviour and they regulate the way we interact with one another. The media certainly has the potentials to bring to the surface information or allegation of wrong doings through investigative journalism. However, this can only be made possible by a source who releases the scoop exclusively or otherwise, to the journalist or the media. This source is a whistle blower.

Whistle blowing, in the simplest of terms, means providing information about illegality usually for the purpose of protecting the public interest. The Nigeria's Federal Ministry of Finance (FMF) has defined a whistle-blower as "a person who voluntarily discloses to the Federal Government of Nigeria, through the media or Federal Ministry of Finance, a possible misconduct or violation that has occurred, is on-going, or is about to occur with specific concerns which are in the public interest," (FMF, 2017,p15). Thus, anyone who is whistle blowing is a whistle-blower. The whistle-blower is protected by laws, covered by the media and should be determined to unravel any wrong doing for national interest. The concern of this study is to identify the laws protecting the whistle-blower, as well as, to establish the extent to which the media have covered, or help to uncover the information the whistle-blowers have to whistle blow. To this end is the fight against corruption. This research seeks to find out what role has the media played in facilitating the work of the whistle-blower in the fight against corruption.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The Federal Government of Nigeria has come up with policies, programmes and laws to protect whistle-blowers that are expected to shoulder the responsibility of providing government and the media with information that can directly lead to uncovering activities that are fraudulent, unethical and illegal within an organization that is either private or public.

In spite of these programmes, policies and laws, illegalities and fraudulent practices still thrive in every sector of the Nigerian society.

Worst still is the fact that the media whose responsibility and functional role is to serve as a third party to the whistle-blowers and their activities, or fight against corruption has not been able to firmly establish its place in this regard, thus a problem. Therefore, this study takes up the challenge to investigate the whistle blowing laws, policies and programmes vis-a-vis the contribution of the media to this regard and above all, the fight against corruption, which has not yielded significant achievement, whistle-blowers and the media notwithstanding.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The following have been identified as the major objectives of this study.

- 1) To identify the whistle blowing laws, policies and programmes of the Federal Government of Nigeria and the significance of these laws, policies and programmes to the fight against corruption.
- 2) To establish the contribution of the media to the fight against corruption, and to the success of whistle-blowers.
- 3) To determine the relationship that exists between the whistle-blowers and the media, and the impact of the latter on corruption.
- 4) To determine the challenges faced by the media and whistle-blowers in their fight against corruption with the view to proffering solutions to the problems.

### **Research Questions**

- 1) How has the whistle blowing laws, policies and programmes contributed to the fight against corruption in Nigeria?
- 2) How has the mass media contributed to the fight against corruption, and to the success of whistle-blowers?
- 3) What is the relationship that exists between the whistle-blowers and the mass media?
- 4) What are the challenges faced by the media and whistle-blowers in the fight against corruption and how these challenges can be addressed?

### **Theoretical Underpinning and Brief Literature Review**

There are several theories, thoughts, principles or concepts that have direct bearing with this study. Amongst which are the political ethical theories, the social responsibility theory and the Agenda setting theory of the media these theories would be discussed in line with their relevance to the present study one after the other.

#### **The Ethical theory**

The ethical theories are the Kantian way, virtue theory and the ethical theory of consequentialism (Bolsin) 2005; Grant, 2002; Kline, 2006). The ethical theories justified whistle blowing as an acceptable practice and to Thomas Bolsin:

Kantian theory instructs people to act in harmony with universally accepted roles. Telling the truth is at theory where self-sacrifice is often required in whistle blowing regardless of personal outcome (Bolsin, 2005, p. 36).

Critically, the Kantian theory had no way of knowing the self-sacrifice that is often required in whistle blowing the theorist would want an individual to stand firm in telling the truth no matter whose horse is guts. But it is practically difficult to say the truth when put wider

pressure or duress by social, political and economic factors or reasons, especially in a society as Nigeria's.

Another theory under the ethical theories is the virtue theory. This theory was expanded by Tom Adams in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Virtue theory holds that an individual is required to personify integrity and courage. Adams who is in the health service sector in America asserts that:

Reporting unethical colleagues' patient safety, incautious or health care fraud requires the integrity found in professional characters. A primary goal is to remain loyal to providing relief to a patient in suffering; turning a blind eye to practices that go against that primary aim would not only breach the nursing code of ethics, but would also violate the basic virtues of honesty and courage (Adams, 2006, p. 21).

Similarly, the ethical theory of consequentialism or utilitarian provides a powerful justification for whistle blowing in the same manner as other ethical theories. They all stress on the need to maximize the human benefit and minimize the harm it could cause. The ethical theories have set up standards to describe when whistle blowing is morally required for the greatest good of society (Davis, 2003, p. 89). The ethical theories are relevant to this work because they are theories that defined the standard needed for whistle blowing, and those standards are guided by laws and practices which is the basis of this study.

### **The Social Responsibility Theory**

The Social Responsibility Theory has the desire to maintain security of government and society and to check the tendency of irrational information. This theory assigns to the media a role which is to tailor their operations to run on a responsible path to suit societal obligations and to protect rights and aspirations of individuals (like the whistle-blowers).

The major planks and functional approach to this theory, as propounded by McQuail, 1987, cited in Ndimele and Innocent include:

- (a) The mass media have to accept and carry out certain duties or obligations to society.
- (b) The mass media should set high or professional standards of truth accuracy, objectivity, balance and informativeness as a way of fulfilling these obligations.
- (c) The mass media should ensure equal and adequate representation of the various viewpoints in society through the provision for a multiplicity of voices in the media, and
- (d) In the process of this job, journalists should not be accountable to only their employers and others who have any form of economic control over them, but also to the larger society in which they operate (McQuail, 1987, cited in Ndimele and Innocent 2006 p. 270).

This theory is relevant to this study because, it is only a socially responsible media that can serve the people or society diligently for the sake of development in all ramifications. A socially responsible media holds the government accountable to the people in all areas of services that could yield positive changes and advancement in society.

### **Review of key Concepts (Conceptual Framework)**

#### **Whistle blowing**

The Nigerian Federal Ministry of Finance (FMF) defines whistle blowing as "the means of providing information about any illegality, usually for the purpose of protecting the public

interest (Ojeifo, 2017 p. 21); while a whistle blower is a person who voluntarily discloses to the government or any agency concerned including the media, a possible misconduct or violation that has occurred, is on-going, or is about to occur with specific concerns which are in the public interest (Osegis, 2017). In Nigeria, information on impropriety in the dealing or use of public funds or property, theft or corruption is acceptable by the FMF, from any whistle blower, particularly if such information is in the public interest.

In Nigeria, the whistle blowing protection Bill, 2008 was sponsored for an Act to provide for the manner in which individuals may in the public interest disclose information that relates to unlawful or other illegal conduct or corrupt practices of others, to provide for the protection against victimization of persons who make these disclosures, to provide for related matters.

Generally, as reiterated by Goel and Nelson, whistle blower laws are designed to encourage whistle blowers by protecting them from wrongful dismissal, attacks and victimization, and in some cases, by promising them some percentage of the money recovered or damages won by the government, (Goel and Nelson, 2011).

The implication here is that, the act of blowing the whistle or exposing wrong doing voluntarily on part of the whistle-blower should attract potential monetary rewards. More formerly, whistle-blower laws in the U.S, Nigeria and elsewhere, in the world reduce the potential costs of exposing illegal activity, by protecting them against repercussions, while at the same time increasing the related potential benefits by promising monetary rewards from bring wrong doing to light.

It suffices to say that the whistle blowing activities in Nigeria have not been fully backed by any known law. The Bill is still before the National Assembly and what the government of Nigeria has done, or is doing is to design a policy or programme through the ministry of finance. This policy and its provisions are now seen as the framework for whistle-blowers in Nigeria. The whistle blowing programme in Nigeria has states by Anderson:

is aimed at encouraging anyone with information about a violation of financial regulations, mismanagement of public funds and assets, financial malpractice, fraud and theft to report it (Anderson, 2009 p.126).

Under this configuration, information on impropriety in the dealing or use of public funds or property, theft or corruption is acceptable by the federal Ministry of Information.

Information could be submitted anonymously without the whistle-blower necessarily not having to mention his identity. Even if he chooses to disclose his identity, the utmost confidentiality would be maintained and his identity would not be disclosed, except in circumstances stipulated by the law (FMF, 2017 p.15).

A whistle-blower is expected to submit his information with evidence, if he has any and with a much precision and specifies as to dates, time, events and persons involved in order to aid proper investigation. As mentioned by Adekinle:

A whistle-blower has no criminal or civil liability and would not be subjected to disciplinary action of any kind for supplying information which turns out to be untrue if, at the time of supplying such information, he had reasonable belief that the information provided was substantially true beyond reasonable doubt and if his concerns were raised in public spirit and good faith (Adekunle, 2017 p. 29).



This study may not totally agree with Adekunle because, it is almost certain that if it is discovered that a whistle-blower intentionally supplied false and misleading information or made malicious claims, such a whistle-blower may stand the risk of being prosecuted after an investigation is concluded.

As already stated elsewhere in this research, a whistle-blower is entitled to a reward, and in Nigeria, it is between 2.5% - 5% of the amount recovered if he provided the government— with information that directly led to the voluntary return of stolen or concealed public kinds or assets; provided the information is one that the government does not already have and which it could not have obtained from any other publicly available source. The whistle-blower would only get rewarded if the money is recovered on account of the information supplied by him (Ruzindama, 2007).

Obviously, no law court will accept a policy statement or guideline from the federal government as an acceptable contractual relationship between the government and a third party. As a matter of fact, the refusal of the government to pay a reward to the whistle blowers cannot entitle the third party (the whistle blower) to a legal redress against the government. This is where another third party in the process of the fight against corruption becomes very relevant. That is the mass media. If such issues amongst others in this regard are brought to the mass media, the media may put them in the front burner of their contents or programming (Agenda setting role), for the general public to debate on them in the appropriate direction. Thus, the mass media constitute significant party in the fight against corruption. But then, what is corruption?

### **Corruption**

Corruption is a deviation from the formal duties of a public role because of private regarding (personal, close family, private clique) pecuniary exercise of certain types of private regarding influence. This includes such behaviour as bribery (use of reward to prevent the judgement of a person in position of trust) nepotism (appointment by reason of inscriptive relationship rather than merit); and misappropriation (illegal appropriation of public resources for private regarding uses (Nye 2000, p 61). This position of Nye places corruption as a deviance behaviour. This presupposes that the normal behaviour will be anti-corruption. Thus, it will be difficult with this position to operationalize in places as Nigeria where corruption is widespread and regarded as the norm by majority of the people. Riding on the same pedestal with Nye, Hontington views corruption as “a behaviour of public officials, which deviates from acceptable norms in order to serve private end” (p. 19).

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank declare corruption as:

The abuses of public office through the instrumentalities of private agents, who actively offer bribes to circumvent public policies and processes for competitive advantage and profit. Beyond bribery, public office can also be abused for personal benefit through patronage and nepotism, for example the theft of state asserts or the diversion of state revenues (World Bank in Bello-Iman, 2005, p. 15).

Obviously, corruption goes as far as to the perversion of integrity or state of affairs though bribery, favour or moral depravity from the all the scholars meanings of corruption, it can be deduced that corruption is a dishonest act, wicked and bad thing to indulge in; corruption is immoral and antithetical to the positive virtues of society, and that indeed, corruption involves an abuse or misuse of position and authority.

The definitions studied so far also imply that good people will not be involved in corruption; there should be a social disapproval of anyone who engages in corrupt practices as well as an abuse expected to be met with sanctions. This study believes that whatever understanding implied about corruption and the treatment of its eradication can best be achieved by the mass media. It is the mass media that will mount the campaign for its eradication, or through the media the campaigns for its elimination will thrive. Thus, everything the media does to expunge corruption from our political, economical, religious, social and cultural systems is the mass media fight and contribution to the fight against corruption.

### **Categories of Corruption**

Corruption can be categorized from different perspectives. Corruption can be classified according to the rule where an official receives private gain for doing what he /she is paid to do. The second is done against the rule where an official is paid bribe to give services that he/she is prohibited from providing. According to Onofasa Otite (1986):

Corruption can also be classified according to the scale lie petty or survival corruption and grand corruption petty or survival corruption is practiced by civil servants, who may be grossly underpaid and depend on small rents from the public to feed their family and to pay school fees. The grand corruption is practiced by high public officials and it often involves large sums of money (p. 54).

Corruption has also been hush-hush based on the spheres or arenas of special activities where it takes place. Using this criterion, bureaucratic corruption, judicial corruption, moral corruption and political corruption are manifested in activities connected with elections and succession, and manipulation of the people and institutions in order to retain power and office. Economic corruption occurs when business people use corrupt means to prevent the normal institutional regulation hasten or shorten procedures to get undue advantage or value for goods and services. Bureaucratic corruption involves buying favours from bureaucrats, who formulate and administer government economic and political policies including foreign exchange, privatization exercises, import licenses and taxes. Judicial corruption occurs when the law enforcement agencies and the courts prevent the administration of justice and moral corruption occurs when people engage in practices that are morally reprehensible (Briggs and Bolanta, 2002).

### **Causes of Corruption**

There are different perspectives on what causes corruption in society. Some scholars have argued that poverty is at the root cause of corruption and that without poverty there would be no corruption. Most people would agree that poverty definitely contributes to corruption. As started by Ochile Igbuzor in many poor countries the wages of public and private sector workers is not sufficient for them to survive. Many people therefore engage in petty corruption to make ends meet” (p. 19).

There is also the suggestion that corruption is part of the culture of many developing countries. This line of argument is mostly pushed by eurocentric scholars. They argue that:

What is regarded as corruption in Africa is a myth because it is expected that a beneficiary should show appreciation for a favour granted him/her. If a government official offers one a job or contract, the beneficiary would be obliged to show appreciation either in kind or cash to a village chief of granted a land to cultivate crop or build a house. Corruption is a myth because one's cultures bribery is another's mutual good will (Kazibwe, 2008, p. 36).

But this position that corruption is a part of African culture has been criticized by many African scholars, activists and politician. It is clear that the traditional African society frowns at corruption or stealing of anything that does not legally belong to one and there are strong community sanctions for such behaviours. As Maduagwu (1996) argues:

It is mere trivialization or a serious issue of corruption in the modern society for anyone to suggest that corruption or embezzlement of public fund or extortion of money (bribe) from people looking for jobs or contracts or others benefits from government could be equated to the chief for permission to cultivate a land and such things (p. 42).

Former President Olusegun Obasanjo (1995) also attacked the notion that corruption is part of African culture when he state that:

I shoulder at how an integral part of our culture could be taken as the basis for rationalizing otherwise despicable behaviour, in the African concept of appreciation and hospitality, the gift is usually a token. It is not demanded. The value is usually in the spirit rather than in the maternal worth. It is usually done in the open and never in secret where it is excessive, it becomes an embarrassment and it is returned. If anything, corruption has perverted and destroyed the aspect of our culture (p. 19).

Every society has ways of showing attraction, which is quite different from corruption as we have defined it above in Europe and America, the giving of ties to bar attendants is an accepted way to showing appreciation akin to appreciation Shown to a chief, who gives permission for land to be cultivated. Some scholars have also attributed corruption in the African continent to the legacy of colonialism; they argue that the colonial state lacked transparency and accountability to the African people and institutions. This is why after independence, the post-colonial state and government have remained alliance to the African.

### **The Actions of Corruption**

Corruption manifests itself, in various ways. According to the manifestations of corruption: ....the inflation of government contract in return for kickbacks, frauds and falsification of accounts in the public service, examination malpractices in our educational institution including universities, the judiciary and other organs for administering justices; and various heinous crimes against the state in the business and industrial section of our economy, in collusion with multinational companies such as over- invoicing of goods exchange swindling hoarding, an smuggling (Gboyaja, 1996 p. 46).

The African union convention on preventing and combating corruption and related offences lists the act of corruption to include:

- (a) The solicitation or acceptance, directly or indirectly by a public official or any other person, of any goods of monetary or other benefit such as a gift, favour, promise or advantage for himself or herself or for another person or entity, in exchange for any act or omission in the performance of his or her public function;
- (b) The offering or granting, directly or indirectly, to a public officials or any other person of and goods of monetary value, or other benefit such as a gift, favour promises or advantage for himself or herself or for person or entity, in exchange for any act or omission in the performance of his or her public functions.
- (c) The offering or granting directly or indirectly to a public officials or any other person for the purpose of illicit obtaining benefit for himself or herself or for third party.
- (d) The diversion by a public official or any other person, for purposes unrelated to those for which they were intended, for his own or her own benefit or that of a third party, of any



- property belonging to the state or its agencies, to an independent agency or to an individual that such official has received by virtue of his or for position;
- (e) The offering or giving promising solicitation or acceptance, directly or indirectly, or any undue advantage to or by any person, who directs or works for, in any capacity, a private sector entity, to himself or herself or for anyone else, for him or her to act or restrain from accepting in breach of his or her duties;
- (f) The offering, giving, soliciting or accepting directly or indirectly or promising of any person performing functions in the public or private sector in consideration thereof, whether the undue advantage is for himself or herself or for anyone else, as well as the request, receipt or the acceptance of the offer or the promise of such an advantage, in consideration of that influence, whether or not the influence is exerted or whether or not the supposed influence leads to the intended result.

The damages that corruption can cause in a society are unquantifiable. It can returned a nation and hinders economic growth, infrastructural development, misallocation of talents, wrong composition of government and expenditure, as well as huge loss of tax revenue, limited foreign aids and loss of international respect and integrity. Thus the fight against corruption should form the bases of most mass media campaign in both the electronic and print media. Suffice it that the media can contribute pointedly to the fight against corruption, but whether this is the reality or not is the crux of this study.

### Research Design

This study adopted the survey research method to show the relationship between whistle blowers, the media and the anti-corruption conflict. This work was designed in such that the survey provided qualitative data for analysis through the information interviews while questionnaires provided quantitative data for audience analysis. The area of study in this work is Rivers State. Rivers State has Port Harcourt as its capital with an estimated population of about 10million, (Kediehor 2017, p.17). The choice of Rivers State boils down to the fact that there are over a dozen radio and television stations located in the state, and all national newspapers and magazines have Rivers State or Port Harcourt representations. Thus, this blend of media axis provides the necessary structure for media analysis. A Sample size of 540 respondents was selected from the entire population of study. The population sample was selected using the purposive sampling techniques.

The purposive sampling techniques requires that respondents are chosen based on their perceived knowledge on the subject matter The questionnaires which contained closed and opened ended questions were constructed and administered by hand. This is to ensure that the questionnaires got to the target respondents. The data from the questionnaires were presented on tables, using frequencies and percentages before the discussion of findings.

### Data Presentation and Analysis

**Table 1. The mass media have contributed to the fight against corruption through their news, current affairs, documentary, features and personality interviews.**

Respondents	Responses	Percentage
Strongly Agreed	250	50
Agreed	150	30
Disagreed	70	14
Strongly Disagreed	30	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 2. The challenges faced by the media and whistle blowers in the fight against corruption include lack of information, insecurity and lack of access to the right source.**

Respondents	Responses	Percentage
Strongly Agreed	230	46
Agreed	170	34
Disagreed	80	16
Strongly Disagreed	20	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>

The provisions of Table 1 indicates that the Nigeria Mass media have contributed to the fight against corruption in Nigeria and could do more if challenges faced by journalists and media practitioners in the field of journalism practice could be addressed as indicated in tables 1 and 2. The responses to the mentioned tables reflect the research questions 2, 3 and 4 of this study and achieving major objections of this work.

**Table 3. These challenges can be addressed through access to classified information and adequate protection (by law) of journalist as well as the whistle blowers.**

Respondents	Responses	Percentage
Strongly Agreed	160	32
Agreed	140	28
Disagreed	150	30
Strongly Disagreed	50	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>

In a subtle manner, the whistle blowing programme is yielding some fruits with the necessary policies and laws facilitating the success of the programme to a reasonable height. This has been the position of the respondent interviewed in this study. These findings also reflect the application of research Question 1 of this research which sought to know if the laws and programmes of the whistle blowing policies have aided to reduce the war against corruption in Nigeria.

### Discussion of Findings

The media in Nigeria have given noteworthy coverage to the things of corruption with a view to discouraging the act. National, state and private radio and television stations have designed programming aimed at winning the war against corruption. For instance, the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) has in its programming, programmes that are geared towards winning the war. Programmes such as 'Periscope', 'Panorama', 'platform', 'Towards a Greater Nation', and 'One-on-One'; feature topics that deal with corruption scourge. In the same vein, private television stations like the AIT, Channels, etc. have allotted several hours per broadcasting week to the fight against corruption. As revealed in the study, programmes as "Focus Nigeria" Matters Arising, Policy Talk, Straight Talk, etc. on the African Independent Television are anti-corruption based. These are not including, the several news programmes on both the state and the private television stations.

Radio stations across the country also have programmes in the contents that are anti-graft supportive. Any programme or media content that is development centered will not support any corrupt practices, and events that are corruption based will definitely form the top discussions of such a radio station, and that is all that is done by the talk radio stations in Nigeria, (talk for development) particularly 95.1 Today FM Port Harcourt and 92.3 Nigeria Info FM in Port Harcourt, Lagos, Abuja, Jos, Kano and elsewhere in Nigeria. These

programmes on radio and television have been very productive in the fight against corruption, especially when the characteristics and strengths of the broadcast media are taken into account. These are the major findings of this study and a huge reflection of the research questions posed in this study and application of the theoretical base of this work that harps on the Social Responsibility Theory of the press.

Newspapers and Magazine across the country have been very vibrant in the fight against corruption right from the dependable and post-independence era. National newspapers as the Guardian, the Punch, the Daily Trust, Thisday Newspaper and major magazines as the Tell, the News, and others have devoted significant spaces, and major headlines and reports to anti-corruption. The Punch, the Guardian and the Daily Trust even have columns or columnists who write on the anti-corruption war in the media these coverage and media contents for both the broadcast and print media largely include reports of whistle-blowers and the government policies or programmes on whistle blowing. The media have always been the source of information including the information bordering on economic and financial crimes that are deemed to be in the interest of the general, public. The media permit the person (whistle blowing) disclosing the information to perform a status check on matters that have links to whatever the whistle blowers have to report. Anyone who has authentic information about violation, misconduct, or improper activity which can impact negatively on the Nigeria people, government and society always have access to the media for the appropriate and adequate media campaign against such misconduct.

By conducting debates, investigative journalism and opinion polls, the media reveals hidden misconduct. With the freedom of information Act 2014, the media and journalist can now have access to official information, though not without official oppositions. Effective media coverage of anticorruption activity brings exposure of such corrupt practices by individuals and institutions to public shame whether institutions or individuals concerns are public or private such embarrassing broadcast or publications or act now serves as a deterrent for potential corruption and also restrict the possibilities of corruption.

Information from whistle blowers and effective media campaign through news stories, features documentaries, and editorials have resulted to the recovery of 19.8 million cash in a Kaduna slum residence in Sabon-Tasha and over 30 million cash in an apartment in Ikoyi, Lagos. At an exchange rate of N350 to 11, the cash reconvened so far in 2017 and 2018 will be over N14,000, 000, 000 (Fourteen trillion naira in cash). This is just a few from whistle blowers and several media campaigns against corruption in Nigeria.

## **Conclusion**

In concluding this discussion, it is necessary to mention that though whistle-blowers and the media have the laws (press law), ownership and the complete media environment to contend with, the contributions of the mass media to the campaign against corruption in Nigeria cannot be over stated.

## **Conflicts of interest**

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

## **Recommendations**

- 1) The study recommends that the whistle blowing laws should be strengthened and the public should be properly sensitized of the tenets of the whistle blowing laws to get more Nigerians involved.

- 2) It is also a recommendation in this study that the mass media should dig deeper in their investigation to unfold the heinous corruption being perpetuated in our country.
- 3) The mass media should increase the campaign for the prosecution of those involved in corruption to discourage this bastardly act that has continued to serve as a bane to our development.

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