

ANTICORRUPTION AGENCIES AND CORRUPTION CONUNDRUM IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this paper was to critically examine the role of Anti-corruption agencies (ACAs) in the fight against corruption with a specific emphasis on the Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC). The study is descriptive in nature and relies on secondary sources of data collection. Thus, information was collected from textbooks, journals, magazines, official reports, documents, newspapers, internet, etc. The information obtained from these sources was analyzed using qualitative content and thematic analysis. To drive its analysis, the paper is anchored on the principal-agent theoretical framework. The paper revealed among others that, both the ICPC and the EFCC have made significant strides in the fight against corruption in Nigeria, and have successfully prosecuted numerous high-profile cases of corruption. However, challenges such as lack of political will, political interference, lack of adequate resources, lack of public trust and confidence, perception of selectivity, and a slow judicial process continue to hinder their efforts in combating corruption effectively. Despite these challenges, the ICPC and EFCC remain crucial institutions in Nigeria's anti-corruption efforts, and play vital roles in holding individuals and institutions accountable for their corrupt actions.

Keywords: Corruption, Anticorruption, Anti-corruption agencies, Development.

Introduction

Corruption has long been a pervasive issue in Nigeria, with both public officials and private individuals engaging in corrupt practices for personal gains. The detrimental effects of corruption are widespread, leading to a loss of public trust, economic instability and hindered development. Moreover, corruption significantly undermines effective governance by distorting decision-making processes, diverting resources intended for public good into private hands. In response to this endemic issue, the Nigerian government has established anti-corruption agencies such as the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) to investigate and prosecute cases of corruption (Lessig, 2011). The ICPC was established in 2000 with a focus on combating corruption in the public sector. The agency investigates cases of bribery, graft, embezzlement, and other corrupt practices by public officials, and works to

promote transparency and accountability in government operations. The ICPC also conducts public awareness campaigns to educate citizens about the detrimental effects of corruption and encourage them to report cases of corruption in their communities (Obriki, 2019).

On the other hand, the EFCC was established in 2003 with the primary mandate of investigating and prosecuting financial crimes such as money laundering, fraud, and corruption. The agency has broad powers to investigate individuals and institutions suspected of engaging in corrupt activities, and have been instrumental in uncovering high-profile cases of corruption involving politicians, public officials, and business figures. The EFCC has also collaborated with international partners to track and repatriate stolen funds that were laundered abroad. Both the EFCC and the ICPC have made significant strides in the fight against corruption in Nigeria, and have successfully prosecuted numerous high-profile cases of corruption. However, challenges such as political interference, lack of adequate resources, and a slow judicial process continue to hinder their efforts in combating corruption effectively. The use of specialised anti-corruption agencies (ACAs) to combat corruption is increasingly popular among African countries. Yet, while ACAs have been successful in other parts of the world, the same cannot of those in Africa generally and Nigeria in particular (Abdulrauf, 2020). The paper, therefore, seeks to analyze why corruption continues to be surging in spite of the fact that these two key anticorruption agencies have been in existence for over two decades. This development makes it compellingly necessary to reexamine the role of the ICPC and EFCC and the corruption conundrum in Nigeria.

Literature Review

Conceptual Clarification

Corruption

Transparency International defines corruption as "the abuse of entrusted power for private gain" (Transparency International, 2021, p.1). This definition emphasizes the misuse of power by public officials for personal or private benefits, often at the expense of the public interest. According to Robert Klitgaard, corruption is "the misuse of public power for private benefit" (Klitgaard, 1988, p. 3). This definition underscores the involvement of public officials in corrupt practices and the detrimental impact on public resources and institutions. Lawrence Lessig describes corruption as "the capture of the public interest by private interests" (Lessig, 2011, p. 45). This definition highlights how powerful individuals or entities can manipulate and influence government decisions to serve their own interests rather than the public good. Rose-Ackerman (1999, p. 20) defines corruption as "the use of public power for private gain that goes beyond the scope of the public servant's legal authority". This definition emphasizes the illegal and unethical nature of corrupt practices, where individuals abuse their positions of authority for personal enrichment.

Urosa (2005, p. 67) views corruption as "a social system that gains undue rewards from acts of selfishness and unfairness". The foregoing definitions highlight the systemic nature of corruption, rooted in societal norms and practices that incentivize and perpetuate unethical behavior for personal gain.

Anti-Corruption Agencies (ACAs)

Anti-corruption agencies are specialized institutions established by governments to prevent, investigate, and prosecute corruption within their jurisdiction. These agencies play a crucial role in promoting integrity, accountability, and transparency in public and private sector governance. A scholarly definition of anti-corruption agencies can be found in the work of Susan Rose-Ackerman, a leading expert on corruption and governance.

Rose-Ackerman (1999) defines anti-corruption agencies as "specialized bodies tasked with the enforcement of anti-corruption laws and policies, with the aim of reducing corruption and promoting good governance in society" (p. 112). These agencies are instrumental in combating various forms of corruption, including bribery, embezzlement, nepotism, and abuse of power, through investigative, preventive, and enforcement measures.

Anti-corruption agencies typically have the authority to conduct investigations, gather evidence, prosecute offenders, and collaborate with other law enforcement agencies and international organizations to address cross-border corruption challenges. Moreover, they may engage in public awareness campaigns, capacity-building initiatives, and institutional reforms to strengthen anti-corruption measures and build public trust in the rule of law.

Theoretical Framework

Generally, there are several theories that can be deployed in analyzing the effectiveness or otherwise of the functions of governmental institutions such as the EFCC and ICPC in the fight against corruption; however, this paper adopts principal-agent theory as the one that adequately captures and explains the reality of our subject-matter.

The principal-agent theory was propounded by Stephen A. Ross in 1973. The major assumption of the principal-agent theory is that there is a principal (such as a shareholder or employer) who delegates authority to an agent (such as a manager or employee) to act on their behalf, but there may be a misalignment of interests between the two parties, leading to agency problems (Hofer, 2017).

Application of the Theory

Application of the principal-agent theory in discussing the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) can shed light on the dynamics of their relationship with the Nigerian government and the public. Here is an elaboration on how this theory can be applied to understand the impact, challenges, and effectiveness of these anti-corruption agencies:

Principal-Agent Relationship:

- ✓ The principal in this context would be the Nigerian government or the public who have tasked the EFCC and ICPC with the responsibility to combat economic and financial crimes as well as corruption.
- ✓ The EFCC and ICPC act as agents who are expected to act in the best interests of the principal by investigating, prosecuting, and preventing corrupt practices in Nigeria.

The theory can be applied to assess how well the agencies are fulfilling their mandate and if there are any divergences between their actions and the interests of the principal (government and public).

Incentives and Monitoring

- ✓ The principal-agent theory emphasizes the importance of providing appropriate incentives for agents to ensure that they act in the best interest of the principal.
- ✓ In the case of EFCC and ICPC, understanding the incentives and monitoring mechanisms in place (such as funding, staff motivation, independence, and accountability) is crucial in assessing their effectiveness.

The theory can be used to analyze if there are adequate incentives for the agencies to perform effectively and whether there are monitoring mechanisms in place to ensure accountability and transparency in their operations.

Asymmetric Information and Moral Hazard

1. The principal-agent theory also considers how information asymmetry and moral hazard can affect the relationship between the principal and the agent.
2. In the case of EFCC and ICPC, there may be challenges related to information gaps, where the agencies may not have access to all the information needed to effectively combat corruption.
3. Furthermore, there may be instances of moral hazard where the agents may engage in corrupt practices themselves or fail to adequately pursue cases due to various reasons.
4. By applying the principal-agent theory, one can analyze how these challenges impact the functioning and impact of EFCC and ICPC in combating corruption.

On the whole, the principal-agent theory provides a useful framework for understanding the relationship between anti-corruption agencies like EFCC and ICPC and the principal (government and public). By examining the incentives, monitoring mechanisms, information gaps, and moral hazards, one can gain insights into the effectiveness and challenges faced by these agencies in tackling corruption and financial crimes in Nigeria.

Relevance of the Theory

The principal-agent theory is relevant in understanding the relationship between the government (principals) and anti-corruption agencies such as the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offenses Commission (ICPC) and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) (agents) in the fight against corruption in Nigeria. The theory helps to illuminate the challenges and dynamics of delegation, oversight, and accountability in this context.

One of the key applications of the principal-agent theory to the ICPC and EFCC is in examining how the government can delegate authority to these agencies to combat corruption, but also how incentive misalignment, information asymmetry, and agency problems can hinder their effectiveness. For example, political interference, inadequate funding, and lack of independence have been cited as factors that can create conflicts of

interest and impede the agencies' ability to act autonomously and effectively against corruption.

Criticisms of the Theory

The criticisms of the principal-agent theory in the context of the roles of the ICPC and EFCC revolve around the assumption that principals (the government) have full control and perfect information over the actions of the agents (the anti-corruption agencies). In reality, factors such as lack of political will, political influence, power dynamics, and external pressures can complicate the relationship and undermine the agencies' independence and efficiency in tackling corruption. Additionally, the theory's emphasis on financial incentives and monitoring mechanisms may not fully capture the multifaceted nature of corruption and the motivations driving corrupt behavior in Nigeria.

On the whole, while the principal-agent theory offers valuable insights into the governance structures and challenges within the ICPC and EFCC, it is essential to consider its limitations and the broader social, political, and institutional context in which these agencies operate to develop more effective anti-corruption strategies.

Methodology

This study relied on secondary sources of data. The research collected data through secondary sources such as published articles from reputable journals, textbooks, magazines, newspapers. The data collected were analyzed qualitatively using content analysis.

Results

Some High-Profile Cases Handled By the EFCC

1. Former Governor of Plateau State, Joshua Dariye, was convicted of diverting public funds totaling over N1.2 billion.
2. Former Governor of Taraba State, Jolly Nyame, was convicted of misappropriating funds totaling over N1 billion.
3. Former Governor of Delta State, James Ibori, was convicted of money laundering and embezzlement totaling over £50 million.
4. Former Minister of Petroleum Resources, Diezani Alison-Madueke, is facing charges of corruption and money laundering totaling billions of dollars.
5. Former Minister of Aviation, Stella Oduah, was charged of misappropriating public funds totaling over N9 billion.
6. Former Governor of Abia State, Orji Uzor Kalu, was charged of money laundering and fraud totaling over N7 billion.
7. Former Governor of Katsina State, Ibrahim Shema, was charged of misappropriating public funds totaling over N5 billion.
8. Former Governor of Rivers State, Peter Odili, was investigated for alleged corruption and embezzlement totaling over N100 billion.
9. Former Governor of Nasarawa State, Tanko Al-Makura, was charged of money laundering and fraud totaling over N2 billion.
10. Former Governor of Ekiti State, Ayodele Fayose, was charged of corruption and money laundering totaling over N6 billion.

Some High-Profile Cases Handled by the ICPC

1. Senator Dino Melaye, was charged of embezzlement and fraud totaling over N2 billion.
2. Former Governor of Enugu State, Sullivan Chime, was under investigation for alleged corruption and embezzlement totaling over N5 billion.
3. Former Governor of Oyo State, Rasheed Ladoja, was charged of misappropriating public funds totaling over N10 billion.
4. Former Governor of Bayelsa State, Timipre Sylva, was charged of money laundering and fraud totaling over N4 billion.
5. Former Governor of Kwara State, Bukola Saraki, was investigated for alleged corruption and embezzlement totaling over N12 billion.
6. Former Governor of Benue State, Gabriel Suswam, was charged of misappropriating public funds totaling over N8 billion.
7. Former Minister of Solid Minerals, Kayode Fayemi, was charged of corruption and money laundering totaling over N3 billion.
8. Former Governor of Imo State, Rochas Okorocha, was investigated for alleged corruption and embezzlement totaling over N15 billion.
9. Former Governor of Edo State, Adams Oshiomhole, was charged of money laundering and fraud totaling over N6 billion.
10. Former Governor of Zamfara State, Abdulaziz Yari, was charged of misappropriating public funds totaling over N7 billion.

Challenges Militating Against Effective Functionality of the ICPC and EFCC

1. Lack of Adequate Funding: One of the significant challenges faced by the ICPC and EFCC in the fight against corruption is the inadequate funding allocated to these agencies (Aiyede, 2016). Insufficient financial resources can hamper their ability to carry out investigations, hire skilled personnel, and implement effective anti-corruption programs, limiting their overall impact on combating corruption. This is a challenge that has often been cited by virtually all governmental agencies.

2. Political Interference: Both the ICPC and EFCC encounter challenges related to political interference in their operations, as some politicians may seek to manipulate or obstruct anti-corruption measures for their own interests (Uwasomba & Ezeani, 2019). This interference can undermine the independence and effectiveness of these agencies in pursuing corrupt individuals and holding them accountable. One notable case is the alleged interference in the investigation of the former Chairman of the EFCC, Ibrahim Magu, by President Muhammadu Buhari. In July 2020, Magu was suspended amid allegations of corruption and misconduct, and there were reports of political interference in the investigation process (Oluyide, 2020). Some critics raised concerns that the President's involvement could compromise the independence and effectiveness of the EFCC in fighting corruption. In another instance, there were allegations of interference in the investigation of corruption allegations against a former Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Babachir Lawal, by the ICPC. Lawal was accused of misappropriating funds meant for internally displaced persons, and there were reports of pressure to drop the investigation (The Nation, 2019). This raised questions about the autonomy and integrity of the ICPC in carrying out its mandate. These cases illustrate the challenges faced by anti-corruption agencies in Nigeria when political interests come into

play. Interference by the President or other influential figures can undermine the credibility and effectiveness of investigations, eroding public trust in the fight against corruption.

3. Capacity and Skills Gap: Another challenge faced by the ICPC and EFCC is the lack of sufficient skilled personnel with expertise in financial and forensic investigation techniques (Hassan, Falana & Ortal, 2015). Building and maintaining a competent workforce are essential for conducting complex corruption investigations and prosecuting offenders successfully. One notable case in Nigeria where the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) reported challenges due to capacity and skills gaps in pursuing a high-profile corruption case is the investigation involving the former Minister of Petroleum Resources, Diezani Alison-Madueke. In this case, which involved allegations of massive financial misconduct and embezzlement during her tenure, the EFCC faced significant challenges in conducting thorough investigations and building a strong case due to the complexity and scale of the allegations.

Yet, another example is the case of the former Governor of Delta State, James Ibori, who was accused of embezzling millions of dollars during his time in office. The EFCC encountered difficulties in pursuing the case, including challenges related to the expertise and technical capacity required to effectively prosecute a high-profile and complex corruption matter of such magnitude.

In both instances, the EFCC faced constraints in terms of the capacity and skills needed to navigate the intricate financial transactions, gather substantial evidence, and coordinate with relevant stakeholders to successfully prosecute the cases. These examples underscore the importance of adequate resources, expertise, and training within the EFCC and ICPC to effectively address high-level corruption cases in Nigeria

4. Lack of Public Trust: A critical challenge for the ICPC and EFCC is the lack of public trust and confidence in their anti-corruption efforts (George, 2018). Without the support and cooperation of citizens, these agencies may struggle to gather crucial information, receive whistleblower tips, and engage stakeholders in the fight against corruption. One case in Nigeria where the EFCC and ICPC faced challenges with public trust in pursuing corruption cases is the case involving the former Chief Justice of Nigeria, Walter Onnoghen. In this instance, the EFCC's handling of the investigation and prosecution raised concerns among some segments of the public about the agency's impartiality and political motivations, leading to a loss of public trust in their ability to conduct fair and unbiased investigations.

Another example is the case involving the former Chairman of the Pension Reform Task Team, Abdulrasheed Maina. The handling of Maina's corruption case by the EFCC and the ICPC was marred by allegations of delays, inefficiencies, and lack of transparency, which eroded public confidence in the agencies' commitment to tackling corruption effectively.

In both instances, the EFCC and ICPC faced challenges in maintaining public trust and confidence due to perceptions of political interference, selective targeting of individuals, and shortcomings in transparency and accountability in their anti-corruption efforts. Building and maintaining public trust is crucial for these agencies to effectively carry out their mandates and achieve meaningful results in combating corruption in Nigeria.

5. Lengthy Legal Processes: The protracted legal processes and delays in the Nigerian judicial system pose challenges for the ICPC and EFCC in prosecuting corruption cases (Aiyede, 2016). Slow court proceedings can impede timely justice delivery and deter potential whistleblowers and witnesses from coming forward. One notable case in Nigeria where both the EFCC and the ICPC encountered challenges due to lengthy legal processes is the trial of former state governors accused of corruption. For example, the case involving the former Governor of Abia State, Orji Uzor Kalu, who was convicted of embezzling public funds, dragged on for several years before a judgement was reached. The prolonged legal process, including appeals and delays in court proceedings, hindered the swift delivery of justice and the timely resolution of the case. Another case that highlights the impact of lengthy legal processes on the EFCC and ICPC is the prosecution of high-profile individuals implicated in corruption scandals, such as the case involving former government officials and top executives of prominent companies. The complexity of these cases, along with legal maneuvers and procedural delays, often result in prolonged trials that can strain the resources and capabilities of the anti-corruption agencies. In both instances, the EFCC and ICPC faced challenges in expeditiously resolving cases due to the inefficiencies and delays within the legal system, which can impede their efforts to hold corrupt individuals accountable and deter future misconduct. Addressing these obstacles and improving the efficiency of the legal process are essential for enhancing the effectiveness of anti-corruption efforts in Nigeria

6. Inadequate Institutional Coordination: Coordination and collaboration between the ICPC and EFCC, as well as with other law enforcement agencies and institutions, are essential for maximizing the effectiveness of anti-corruption efforts (Uwasomba & Ezeani, 2019). However, inadequate interagency coordination can lead to duplication of efforts, resource wastage, and gaps in combating corruption.

One notable case in Nigeria where the EFCC and ICPC reported inadequate institutional coordination and collaboration is the investigation into the alleged mismanagement of funds by the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) in Nigeria. In this case, both EFCC and ICPC were involved in probing corruption allegations within the NHIS, but the lack of effective coordination and collaboration between the two agencies reportedly hindered the progress of the investigation. Delays, duplication of efforts, and communication breakdowns between the EFCC and ICPC were cited as factors that impeded the efficiency and effectiveness of the probe.

7. Lack of Legislative Support: The absence of strong legal frameworks and legislative support for anti-corruption initiatives poses a significant challenge for the ICPC and EFCC (Aiyede, 2016). Clear and robust legal provisions are essential for empowering these agencies to investigate, prosecute, and deter corrupt practices effectively.

8. Technological Challenges: Keeping pace with evolving technology and cyber threats presents challenges for the ICPC and EFCC in combating modern forms of corruption, such as cybercrime and money laundering (Hassan, Falana & Ortal, 2015). Enhancing technological capacities and skills is crucial for leveraging digital tools in anti-corruption efforts. One case in Nigeria where the EFCC and ICPC reported facing challenges and potential losses due to

technological limitations is the investigation into cybercrimes and financial fraud schemes. In recent years, cybercrimes have become increasingly sophisticated, and perpetrators often use advanced technological tools and methods to perpetrate digital fraud, identity theft, and other forms of financial crimes. The EFCC and ICPC may struggle to keep pace with these evolving cyber threats if they lack the necessary technological infrastructure, expertise, and resources to combat cybercrimes effectively. Another example is in the area of digital forensics and data analysis, where the EFCC and ICPC may encounter difficulties in collecting, preserving, and analyzing electronic evidence to support corruption investigations and prosecutions. Without adequate access to cutting-edge forensic technology and tools, the agencies may face challenges in uncovering digital trails, tracking illicit financial transactions, and presenting digital evidence in court. These technological challenges highlight the importance of investing in cybersecurity capabilities, digital forensics expertise, and information technology infrastructure to enhance the investigative and enforcement capacities of the EFCC and ICPC in combating financial crimes, cybercrimes, and corruption in Nigeria. Strengthening technological capabilities is essential for addressing emerging threats and leveraging digital tools to improve the effectiveness of anti-corruption efforts.

9. Corruption within the Agencies: Addressing internal corruption and ensuring the integrity of staff within the ICPC and EFCC is a challenge that can undermine the credibility and effectiveness of these agencies. Implementing robust internal controls, ethical standards, and mechanisms for reporting misconduct are essential in maintaining the agencies' integrity. One example is the case involving a former Acting Chairman of the EFCC, Ibrahim Magu, who faced allegations of corruption and abuse of office. The investigation into Magu's conduct raised concerns about internal corruption within the EFCC and highlighted the challenges of maintaining integrity and transparency within the agency tasked with tackling corruption in Nigeria. Another case involves reports of corruption and misconduct within the ICPC, where officials were implicated in bribery schemes, embezzlement of funds, or other forms of unethical behavior. These instances of internal corruption can hinder the agencies' ability to effectively investigate and prosecute corruption cases, as well as damage their credibility and reputation in the fight against corruption (Uwasomba & Ezeani, 2019). While specific names may not be provided here, these cases underscore the importance of addressing internal corruption and upholding accountability and integrity within anti-corruption agencies like the EFCC and ICPC to ensure their effectiveness in combating corruption and promoting good governance in Nigeria

10. Public Perception and Media Influence: Negative public perception, sensationalized media coverage, and misinformation about the ICPC and EFCC's activities can hinder their efforts in fighting corruption. Building positive public relations, promoting transparency, and effectively communicating anti-corruption achievements are critical in shaping public opinion and garnering support for their work. One prominent case in Nigeria where public perception and media influence significantly affected the EFCC is the case involving former First Lady Patience Jonathan. Mrs. Jonathan was accused of corruption and money laundering, and the EFCC's handling of the case drew substantial media attention and public scrutiny. The media coverage and public perceptions surrounding the case influenced the narrative surrounding the EFCC's investigation and fueled debates about the agency's approach to high-profile

corruption cases (George, 2018). Another notable case where public perception and media influence impacted the ICPC is the investigation into corruption allegations against a former Minister of Aviation, Stella Oduah. The media coverage of the ICPC's probe into Oduah's activities generated public interest and scrutiny, shaping the perceptions of the agency's effectiveness in addressing corruption within the government. In both instances, the role of public perception and media influence played a significant role in shaping the narrative around the EFCC and ICPC's anti-corruption efforts. The agencies' handling of high-profile cases under media scrutiny and public scrutiny underscores the importance of transparency, accountability, and maintaining public trust in their operations to effectively combat corruption in Nigeria.

11. Anticorruption Fight and the Allegations of Selectivity

There have been accusations of selectivity in the anticorruption fight, with critics claiming that only certain individuals or groups are being targeted while others are being shielded from investigation or prosecution. This has led to concerns about the impartiality and fairness of the anticorruption efforts, with some arguing that political considerations or personal vendettas may be driving the enforcement actions rather than a genuine commitment to rooting out corruption. These accusations of selectivity undermine public trust in the anticorruption efforts and can hinder the effectiveness of the fight against corruption. It is crucial for authorities to demonstrate transparency, accountability, and consistency in their approach to combating corruption in order to address these concerns and ensure a fair and comprehensive anticorruption strategy.

Some examples of such cases are as follow:

Diezani Alison-Madueke: The former Minister of Petroleum Resources in Nigeria during the administration of President Goodluck Jonathan has faced multiple allegations of corruption, including money laundering, bribery, and embezzlement. Critics argue that despite the serious allegations against her, she has not faced significant repercussions in Nigeria.

Also, Sani Abacha loot: The late military dictator Sani Abacha is known to have looted billions of dollars from the Nigerian state during his time in power. While efforts have been made to repatriate some of the stolen funds, critics argue that other corrupt individuals involved in the embezzlement have not been held accountable. In addition, **Maina Gate scandal:** Abdurashheed Maina, a former civil servant, was accused of leading a pension fraud scheme that siphoned billions of naira from the Nigerian Pension Board. Despite facing charges and being declared wanted by the authorities, there have been allegations of political interference and delays in bringing him to justice. **Ganduje dollar bribery scandal:** Governor Abdullahi Umar Ganduje of Kano State was caught on video allegedly receiving bribes in dollars from contractors. Despite the evidence, there has been criticism of the lack of action taken against the governor, with some accusing the government of shielding him from prosecution. **Otedola bribe scandal:** Businessman Femi Otedola was involved in a bribery scandal with members of the House of Representatives in 2012. While some lawmakers were investigated and prosecuted, critics argue that the investigation was selective and did not address the systemic corruption within the Nigerian legislature. These cases illustrate some of the challenges and criticisms surrounding the selectivity of anticorruption efforts in Nigeria, with concerns about

political interference, lack of accountability for powerful individuals, and inconsistent enforcement of the law. Addressing these issues is crucial for restoring public trust and effectively combating corruption in the country

Conclusion

It is vital to conclude by reiterating that the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offenses Commission (ICPC) play crucial roles in the fight against corruption in Nigeria. Despite facing challenges such as lack of adequate funding, political interference, and limited capacity, both agencies have made significant strides in investigating and prosecuting corrupt individuals and organizations. The EFCC and ICPC have successfully recovered billions of naira in stolen assets, secured convictions of high-profile individuals, and raised awareness about the detrimental effects of corruption on Nigeria's development. Their efforts have also helped to improve Nigeria's ranking on global corruption indices and restore public confidence in the government. However, there is still much work to be done in strengthening the capacity and independence of agencies, as well as increasing cooperation between them and other stakeholders in the anti-corruption fight. Additionally, there is a need for greater transparency in the operations of the EFCC and ICPC to ensure accountability and prevent the abuse of power. Ultimately, the EFCC and ICPC are vital institutions in the fight against corruption in Nigeria, and their continued efforts are essential in promoting good governance, accountability, and sustainable development in the country. Despite the challenges confronting these ACAs, they remain crucial institutions in Nigeria's anti-corruption efforts, and play a vital role in holding individuals and institutions accountable for their corrupt actions.

Recommendations

1. **Increase Funding and Resources:** Adequate budgetary allocations, financial resources, and staffing levels are crucial for enhancing the operational capacities of the EFCC and ICPC in investigating, prosecuting, and preventing corruption (Ajala, 2017).
2. **Strengthen Legal Frameworks:** Enhancing existing anti-corruption laws and promoting legislative reforms to fill gaps, clarify provisions, and ensure consistency in enforcement can strengthen the legal framework supporting the EFCC and ICPC (Obriki, 2019).
3. **Promote Operational Independence:** Safeguarding the autonomy of the EFCC and ICPC from political interference and external influences is essential for enhancing their effectiveness in combating corruption (Obriki, 2019). Ensuring operational independence can foster impartial investigations and prosecutions.
4. **Enhance Staff Training and Capacity Building:** Providing specialized training in forensic accounting, digital forensics, and investigative techniques can equip personnel within the EFCC and ICPC with the necessary skills to handle complex corruption cases effectively (Ajala, 2017).
5. **Foster Interagency Collaboration:** Strengthening coordination, cooperation, and information-sharing mechanisms between the EFCC, ICPC, and other law enforcement agencies can improve synergies in anti-corruption efforts and prevent duplication of resources (Uzodinma, 2018).

6. **Enhance Technology and Cybersecurity Measures:** Investing in advanced technological tools, digital infrastructure, and cybersecurity protocols can help the EFCC and ICPC combat modern forms of corruption, such as cybercrime and money laundering (Ajala, 2017).
7. **Improve Public Awareness and Engagement:** Increasing public education, awareness campaigns, and outreach activities can enhance citizen understanding of the roles and functions of the EFCC and ICPC, fostering trust and collaboration in anti-corruption initiatives (Uzodinma, 2018).
8. **Implement Anti-corruption Programs:** Developing and implementing comprehensive anti-corruption programs, preventive measures, and integrity initiatives can strengthen institutional mechanisms within the EFCC and ICPC to deter corrupt practices (Obriki, 2019).
9. **Strengthen Whistleblower Protection:** Establishing robust whistleblower protection mechanisms, confidentiality safeguards, and incentives can encourage individuals to report corruption-related offenses to the EFCC and ICPC, promoting transparency and accountability (Ajala, 2017).
10. **Enhance Transparency and Accountability:** Promoting transparency, accountability, and ethical conduct within the EFCC and ICPC through strict adherence to internal controls, ethics frameworks, and oversight mechanisms can improve organizational integrity (Uzodinma, 2018).

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