

**GUARDIAN AND VANGUARD COVERAGE OF ALLEGED FINANCIAL  
MISAPPROPRIATION BY EX GOVERNORS**

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**FEBRUARY, 2025**

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF  
MASS COMMUNICATION, FACULTY OF ARTS, UNIVERSITY OF  
BENIN, BENIN CITY, IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF BACHELOR OF ARTS (B.A)  
DEGREE IN MASS COMMUNICATION.**

**FEBRUARY, 2025**

## **DECLARATION**

This project work is based on a study undertaken by Akpofure Eseovwe Sonia, in the department of Mass Communication, Faculty of Arts, University of Benin, under the supervision of DR. Umoro, N. Ndubuisi. All findings and analysis in the study are product of my personal research and where the views of others have been used and expressed, they were duly acknowledged.

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## **CERTIFICATION**

This is to certify that this research work was duly carried out by Akpofure Eseovwe Sonia with mat no, ART2004787 to the Department of Mass Communication, Faculty of Arts, University of Benin in partial fulfillment of the requirement, for the award of Bachelor of Arts (B.A) Degree in Mass Communication.

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**DR. Umoro, N. Ndubuisi**  
**Project Supervisor**

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**Date**

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**Dr. Daniel .O. Ekhareafo**  
**Head of Department**

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**Date**

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**External Examiner**

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**Date**

## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to God Almighty who has given me the grace, strength and wisdom required for the successful completion of this project. Special dedication to my beloved mother, Mrs. Bridget Akpofure for your support during my academic journey.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My profound gratitude to God Almighty who has given me the strength, grace, wisdom, inspiration, and enablement to finish this project work. I am in credibly grateful to God for his provision and faithfulness from the beginning of this project work and even upon completion.

I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to my project supervisor, Dr. Umoro, N. Ndubuisi for his consistent and exceptional guidance, support and direction throughout the course of this project. His unwavering commitment, dedication and helpful in sights were very instrumental in the successful completion of this work. I am truly grateful for the time he devoted to constantly reviewing my work and providing thoughtful recommendations, which greatly contributed to making the work clearer and more understandable. I pray that God continues to bless him abundantly and rewards him greatly for his selfless contribution.

I am also grateful to the Head of Department of Mass Communication, Dr. Daniel .O. Ekhareafo, and all lecturers in the department of Mass Communication as well as non academic staff that has contributed immensely in building and shaping me in this field.

I sincerely appreciate my beloved mother, Mrs. Bridget Akpofure for her financial and unwavering support, care and encouragement towards my journey in school which in turn, made it possible to complete project successfully. I also appreciate my siblings Sophia, Frankincense and Alvin Akpofure. Thank you for

all your support throughout my journey in school and to every member of my family who has contributed to my academic journey.

I am deeply grateful to my wonderful friends the Lord blessed me with, Blessed Osadolor and Eunice Edoghogho for your love, care and support. To the amazing gifts UNIBEN gave me, Pastor Blessing Aigbedion, Ma Deborah Aisabien, Pastor Ejededawe Rachael, Ma Jeremiah Omosewa, Pastor Faithful Okpokam, Fawehimi Olutola, Grace Osin, Okafor Vivian, Elijah Esther, Patience, Omozi, Naomi, Deborah. I cannot count my stay in the University of Benin without mentioning you all. Thank you for all for your love, care, support and encouragement, I love you all. I extend my appreciation to every other member of the Household of the Redemmed Christian Fellowship, Uniben Ekehuan Chapter, God bless you all.

Special appreciation to my spiritual father, Min Paul Peacy, for your immense love, support and encouragement. God bless you for all that you do for me, I honour you and I am sincerely grateful. To Min Faith Osazuwa and Min Rone Tosan, I am really thankful for your support, and immense love through my journey in school. God bless and rewards you.

Finally, to Victor Billy, Joshua Ola, Abalakar Grace, Aunty Ada and Mama Abigail. Thank you for all your immense support and contributions towards the massive success of this research project, I am really grateful to every one of you. May God reward you all greatly. I also appreciate my lovely roommates, thank you all for your love, care, support and encouragement towards me. I am deeply grateful, God and increase you all.

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## ABSTRACT

*This study was carried out to determine the extent of newspaper coverage given to alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors. The method adopted for the purpose of this study was the content analysis method. This data was carefully collected from the select newspapers stories published from July to September 2024. A total of 65 editions of the Guardian and Vanguard newspapers were collated and analyzed. The objectives of the study were to examine the frequency; prominence, format and genre given to stories on alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors in the select newspapers so as to measure the extent the print media report alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors cases. To this effect, findings revealed that the select newspapers under study did not give much coverage to alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors. Straight news format took a major lead of the coverage than others. Findings also revealed that enough prominence were not given to the issue by the select newspapers as majority of the stories were reported in the inside pages of the select newspapers hence, the media failed in its agenda setting role of elevating issues in the mind of the public. However, the researcher recommended that newspapers should improve and frequently focus more on the coverage of issues on alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors. This will enable the public know what is happening in the society as the level at which newspaper cover news stories is very low. Detailed account on alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors should be consistently reported by the print media also, Newspapers should give more prominence to issues of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors using their front pages to place emphasis on the relevance of the issue. This will enable news readers attach corresponding importance to such issues.*

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background to the Study

In Nigeria, financial misappropriation has deep roots with several cases dating back to decades. However, the General Ibrahim Babaginda's tenure during the military regime in the 1980s was one of the most notable. In this era, large scale corruption and mismanagement of funds was the order of the day, setting the foundation for subsequent cases of financial misconduct in the country.

Over the years, cases of embezzlement and misappropriation of funds has been a persistent issue spreading across various sectors and administrations globally particularly in Nigeria. Out of 180 nations, Nigeria was ranked as the 145th least corrupt country in Transparency International's 2023 Corruption Perceptions Index.

During a legislative oversight workshop hosted by the National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies (NILDS) in partnership with the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS), Senator Garba Madoki, the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Legislative Compliance, warned that the Senate would sanction any Ministry, Department, or Agency (MDA) found to be disregarding financial compliance regulations highlighted in the Auditor General's report, according to a recent Guardian editorial column published on November 19, 2024.

After the report disclosed extensive financial irregularities across various Ministries, Departments or Agencies (MDAs), revealing that N105.66 billion had been misused in contravention of financial regulations, with N18.36 billion in contracts awarded without adherence to the Public Procurement Act.

Financial misappropriation refers to the abuse or theft of money for one's own advantage or gain, frequently by the person in charge of overseeing those resources. Misappropriation is the deliberate misuse of funds. According to El Yaqub, Ibrahim, and Sule (2024), it is the rerouting of finances and other assets meant for a certain official purpose for personal use or for a purpose for which they were not intended. This is an unlawful use of funds or other resources for private gain (Magaji & Musta, 2015). Misappropriation is the most dangerous type of fraud because people purposefully drain public funds for personal benefit without considering the implications (Mamiko 2015). The following techniques are used to commit this type of fraud: paying salaries to phantom employees, using public funds or assets without authorization, paying against uncleared checks, and outright stealing company or government assets for private benefit (Aramide & Bashir, 2015).

Admist the Nigerian government, financial misappropriation has been a long standing issue with corruption and embezzlement allegations consistently surfacing. Public funds meant for infrastructure development, social welfare program and other public services have been accused to be diverted by

government officials for their personal enrichment. These actions damages the country's development efforts and undermines public trust in the government.

Due to the consistent increase in the rate of financial misappropriation, President Olusegun Obasanjo's administration responded to pressure from the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) on Money Laundering, also known by its French name, Grouped'actionfinancière (GAFI), by establishing the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) on December 12, 2002. On April 13, 2003, the Commission's operations commenced after the Senate approved the appointment of Mallam Nuhu Ribadu as the first Executive Chairman and other administrative officers. But because of acknowledged shortcomings in the 2002 Establishment Act, the national Assembly repealed it and re-enacted the 2004 Establishment Act, which President Obasanjo signed into law on June 4, 2004. Following the creation of the EFCC, the Nigerian Financial Intelligence Unit (NFIU) was designated as the primary national organisation in Nigeria responsible for receiving and evaluating financial disclosures, including reports of currency transactions and suspicious transactions, and communicating the intelligence gleaned from these to the appropriate authorities. This was set up in June 2004 to coordinate the nation's counterterrorism and anti-money laundering (AML/CFT) system.

Despite these measures put in place to detect financial misappropriation, recent developments in Nigeria have elicited diverse reactions, as well as various

arguments and counter-arguments among policymakers, stakeholders in society, and ordinary Nigerians. Following the recent update, there is need for constant, continuous and accurate dissemination of information. This is because information serves as the driving force of our lives. In line with this, Momeka, a civilisation with inadequate communication and information infrastructure consistently falls behind those with effective information infrastructure (Asemah, Edegoh, and Anum 2013; 1985 referenced). Thus, there is need for mass media in the society.

Despite contemporary changes in communication systems, the mass media continues to be a vital instrument for the advancement of society. Accordingly, Asemah (2011) asserts that the media, whether print or electronic, has a heavy burden in our society. Although many may say that the media have not actually functioned effectively in the society. However, it is still true that the media has a significant impact on society. Information from a reliable source is disseminated to a diverse audience through the mass media. Martins & Alan (1990) defined mass media as any kind of communication that disseminates information, knowledge, entertainment, views, and ideas to a large number of people simultaneously. According to Kenechukwu, Asemah, and Edegoh (2013), mass media are the means by which messages are disseminated, as well as the organisations and individuals who do it. The fourth domain of the estate, according to Lanser (2006), is the mass media, which acts as a watchdog and

exercises external surveillance over society actors in order to counteract powerful interests. This is a result of the mass media's role in informing the public about government actions and restraining the actions of influential figures in the political system. Therefore, the mass media is crucial in solidifying democratic ideas and governmental policies in any given social setting. McQuail (2005), aptly puts it that the significance of the mass media in contemporary society is not in doubt, this is because the mass media play critical roles in the sphere of politics, culture, education, entertainment, economies and social life. This makes them a potential tool in the publicization and sensitization of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors.

However, despite the different media outlets in Nigeria, there is still a decline of information about the recent development, this is because only few media outlets has paid attention to covering news on alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors while some seem to excessively focus on other subject matters. It is against this background that this research seeks to discover newspaper coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Financial misappropriation, has been an endless challenge in Nigeria which has continuously obstruct the country's development. The more funds are misappropriated, the less resources are available for essential public services and

infrastructure development, which successively reduces the government's ability to provide for its citizens and drive progress. Financial misappropriation is related with the misuse and probable loss of assets hence, raises doubts about the integrity of the designated personnel administering the funds. It is a purposeful act of the abuse of money, moving of money and other assets earmarked for a specified official purpose for either personal use or for what is not meant for. Such actions, constitutes an illegitimate spending of money or the assets for personal benefits or interest.

Without doubt, there's need for the media to ensure transparency and keep the government officials in check. Thus, in order to guarantee that information is shared with the public, the media is extremely important. Asemah (2009) asserts that the media are social change agents that have the power to influence readers' attitudes in a good way and establish standards for behaviour in any community. Mass media in Nigeria have become the eyes and ears of the public. Through up-to-date information about happenings in the society, Nigerians are able to know cases or issues happening in the country.

Asemah (2011:42) describes this function as when the media notify us of the changes occurring in our environment. The function of the media is to act as society's watchdog. He claims that in carrying out its watchdog/surveillance role, Nigeria's media keep an eye on the government, its three branches, and society at large in order to maintain their performance at the level that would promote the

nation's growth. There is a dire need, for the media to relate information concerning the misuse of funds to the public as it will limit forms of misappropriation of any sort and aid accountability to the general public. However sometimes, situations such as ownership influence, sponsorship, direct access etc has limited the media from covering and reporting such news which has created a space that needs to be filled up. It is in this regard that the media steps in by being diligent in their reports as this is the only way the public get to know what is happening and how their taxes are being spent.

Notwithstanding this, the extent of media coverage devoted to alleged financial misappropriation by ex-governors by Nigerian media organizations, notably newspapers, remains unknown in terms of prominence, frequency, pattern, direction, magnitude, and topics that dominate the coverage. It is believed that when the media provides proper coverage to an issue, it will appear across all media platforms. In light of this, this study examines *Guardian and Vanguard* coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The objective of this study is to;

1. Determine the frequency of coverage given to alleged financial misappropriation by ex governs by *Guardian and Vanguard* newspapers
2. Find out the prominence given to these stories in the select newspapers.

3. Determine the format adopted in alleged financial misappropriation by ex-governors cases.
4. Find out the genres of the stories in the select newspapers.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

The following enquiries will serve as the study's compass in light of the aforementioned goals:

1. What is the frequency of coverage given to alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors?
2. What is the level of prominence given to the alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors by the select newspapers?
3. What was the format adopted by the select newspapers in reporting alleged financial misappropriation by ex-governors stories?
4. What was the genre of the stories in the select newspapers?

#### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The significance of a study is determined by its value or relevance not just to the academic context but also to the society in general. Consequently, the findings of this study on *Guardian and Vanguard* coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors will be of paramount significance and great value to members of the public in the society as it will provide them with more comprehensive information about the misuse of funds and also help the citizens most especially readers of newspapers to be familiar about cases on the

misappropriation of funds amongst government officials or people accountable to the country's resources. The media act as a watch dog by monitoring the government system and policies so as to fulfill the duty of their social responsibility. Hence, in an environment where numerous powers influence newspaper publication decisions, this study will assist newspaper organizations in Nigeria in monitoring their social responsibility to the people. This study will also aid other researchers undertaking any research work relating to this subject and can be used as a point of reference if they are to undertake a similar study.

## **1.6 Scope of the Study**

This research focuses on two prominent Nigerian newspapers, *Guardian and the Vanguard*, published from July 2024 to September 2024. These two newspapers were chosen for this study from among the many newspapers in Nigeria because of their regularity of publication, national coverage, genuineness, and acceptability by all Nigerians.

## **1.7 Operational Definition of Terms**

**Finance:** The administration of money is known as finance, and it encompasses tasks like predicting, budgeting, lending, borrowing, and investing. Hornby (2001) defines finance as the funds required to support a project, program, activity, etc, as well as the administration of funds. Finance was also described by Oyekanmi (2003) as "money affairs or money matters." Implied would be any type of money or near money, such as debt or cash equity certificates.

**Misappropriation:** The deliberate misappropriation of funds is known as misappropriation. the theft of funds and other resources intended for a certain use, either for one's own benefit or for an improper reason. (Ibanichuka and Onuoha)

**Financial misappropriation:** Financial misappropriation can be defined as the siphoning or diversion of funds from the public treasury to self.

**Ex governors:** These are people who have been a governor of a state or two or more states.

**Newspaper:** A printed periodical including news, stories, ads, and correspondence that is typically published daily or weekly and is made up of folded, unstapled pages.

**Coverage:** This is the scope of reportage. It can also be defined as the number of percentage of persons or reached by a communications medium at a particular period of time.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter entails the review of related literature materials that are related to this study. This section strives at revealing available knowledge on work done by other researchers regarding the area of this study. Consequently, the basic concepts will be discussed in this chapter: Historical review, this part of this study takes an overview of the history of financial misappropriation and brief history of financial misappropriation by ex governors. Conceptual review, Opinion review, Empirical review and Theoretical framework

#### **2.1 Historical Review**

##### **2.1.1 History of Financial Misappropriation**

Financial misappropriation has unfortunately been a persistent issue in Nigeria's history, cutting across both public and private sectors. Several cases have rocked the nation, ranging from embezzlement, fraud and corruption at various levels of government and even businesses. The country has struggled with the outcome of financial misconduct, from cases involving political figures to corporate scandals which often results in economic setbacks and lack of public trust. Meanwhile, efforts to counter such practices have been ongoing with the establishment of anti-corruption agencies and reforms targeted at improving

transparency and accountability in governance and business practices. The persistence of financial misappropriation highlights the need for continued vigilance and concentrated efforts to promoting integrity, transparency and good governance in Nigeria.

Financial misappropriation in Nigeria can be traced back to several historical and systemic factors. The Pre- Independence (1914-1960) British colonial administration was one of them. This era was a very significant factor in Nigeria which left behind a system of governance that was often exploitive of the country's resources. Rich natural resources such as oil, tin, cocoa, and palm oil, was exploited by these colonizers for their own benefits. Companies like Shell and the United Africa Company was established by these people to people work on plantations, mines and construction projects like railways and roads usually under harsh conditions with little pay denying them basic rights like negotiation and associating with labour organization. Large plots of lands was also sized from local communities and distributed to British companies and individuals, forcibly removing Nigerians from their ancestral lands.

Furthermore, economic policies that favored the British interests over Nigeria's development was also implemented by the British. For example, tariffs on imported goods was imposed by the British there by making it difficult for Nigerian industries to compete with other foreign industries. Various taxes was as well imposed on Nigerians by the British authorities including the infamous "head

tax", a direct tax for individuals. Custom duties, excise duties and other sources was extracted as revenues from the people by these colonizers in enriching themselves.

One remarkable incident of financial misappropriation in the pre independence era is the discovery of oil in the late 1950s. This was discovered in Nigeria on August 3, 1956, at Oloibiri in the Niger Delta region and was made by Shell- BP (now Royal Dutch Shell and BP), a joint venture between the shell Petroleum Development Company and British Petroleum under Sir James Wilson Robertson as the Governor General. After several unsuccessful attempts by the Shell BP in exploring oil in Nigeria, the Oloibiri discovery became a major breakthrough. However, this discovery paved a way for corruption, embezzlement and mismanagement because funds generated and meant for the country's development were being diverted by these colonial officials into their British coffers. Rather than investing in infrastructures, education or social welfare for the benefit of the people, revenues were being siphoned for their personal interest.

Also, other economic areas were neglected as a result of this revelation since they depend on oil as the only major source of revenue which eventually led to lack of progress and a dysfunctional government. The country also suffered a stagnant economic development as oil revenues were both inefficiently and ineffectively misused. It also widened the income inequality and increased high rate of poverty. The discovery of oil in the 1950s marked the beginning of a long

history of financial misappropriation in Nigeria, with the country still struggling to address these issues today.

After Nigeria's Independence in 1960, the country struggled with transforming to self rule which eventually led to experiencing certain challenges like weak governance structures; ethnic tensions and lack of effective oversight, allowing corruption take deep roots via politicians and government using their positions for their own benefit. The military rule was also characterised by a high degree of corruption, with military elites amassing riches and influence at the expense of the nation's progress. The 1999 transition to civilian administration raised expectations for democratic accountability and governance. Nonetheless, corruption is pervasive, with politicians and government personnel consistently engaging in embezzlement, fraud and other financial misconduct. In Nigeria, several efforts have been made to curb financial misappropriation however, this remains a long standing issue in the country.

### **2.1.2 Brief History of Financial Misappropriation by ex governors**

Financial misappropriation by ex governors in Nigeria has been a continual challenge that has over the years shown the high rate of imbalance in the structure of government in the nation. So many states have struggled with allegations of embezzlement, corruption and the misappropriation of public monies by their elected officials since 1999, when civilian government was

restored. The story of James Ibori, the former governor of Delta State, is among the most well-known examples that illustrate this problem. Former Delta State Governor James Ibori (1999-2007) became an icon of Nigeria's struggle against financial misappropriation. He was accused of embezzling \$250 million from the state's coffers, sparking worldwide attention to the case due to its magnitude and significant consequence. His alleged crime involved money laundering encompassing several nations, revealing the depth of corruption in Nigeria and its challenges in enacting justice to the case.

Another notable ex governor involved in this act was Lucky Igbinedion, who governed Edo State from 1999 to 2007. During his tenure, Lucky Igbinedion battled with serious allegations of financial misconduct including confiscation and theft of public monies. In 2008, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) accused him of embezzling more than N4 million from the state treasury. This case exposed serious obstacles to maintaining accountability and openness in Nigeria's administration. Particularly concerning the misuse of public funds by those in power.

## **2.2 Conceptual Review**

### **2.2.1 Concept of Financial Misappropriation**

According to Tutino and Merlo (2019), financial misappropriation is a worldwide problem that significantly affects socioeconomic conditions, especially

in developing nations. Misappropriation is the deliberate misuse of funds. It is known as the diversion of assets and money intended for a certain governmental purpose for personal use or for an unintended purpose. Financial losses and harm to the credibility of individuals tasked with managing the money might result from the misappropriation of public funds. According to (Magaji & Musta, 2015), it is unlawful to use funds or other resources for one's own gain. Since people intentionally transfer public monies for personal use, misappropriation is the most dangerous type of theft in the public sector, claims Maimako (2015). Financial misappropriation can be defined as the siphoning or diversion of funds from the public treasury to self. Without hesitation or fear, people consciously divert public funds for their own purposes (Ibanichuka and Onuoha 2012). The District Services Improvement Programme (DSIP) funds and/or the Provincial Services Improvement Programmes (PSIP) funds, which are public funds entrusted to mandated leaders and chief executive officers of financial delegates to better serve the social needs of their people, have also been misappropriated.

However, If those tasked with combating corruption and embezzlement are themselves actively involved in embezzlement of the nation's funds and resources, how can we effectively utilize our nation's economic resources? This is a significant loss for the entire nation as these funds are being swindled into their own funds and personal accounts at the expense of the nation's impoverished inhabitants. Government officials or those holding public office have reluctantly

embezzled funds intended for social services including clean water, energy, education, health, churches, and infrastructure and deposited them in private or family accounts both domestically and overseas. Some even go as far as storing money in water tanks.

According to (Tutino and Merlo 2019), financial misappropriation or embezzlement refers to the purposeful, substantial falsification of financial disclosures or statements, or the occurrence of unlawful activity that materially impairs financial declarations or statements. Thus, this has been the experience of emerging economies like Nigeria.

Financial misappropriation as described by Aluko (2008) is the illegal transfer of public resources in to private hands, often facilitated by weak institutional frameworks, corruption, and inadequate oversight mechanisms. Public officials often take advantage of loopholes in governance to channel funds meant for public projects into personal accounts. This consistent practice has in one way or the other contributed to the systematic failure of social services and infrastructure development. In Nigeria, financial misappropriation is a deeply ingrained and widespread problem affecting not just the government (public sector) but also businesses and organizations (private sector). Owudogu (2021) observes that it is demonstrated through embezzlement, corruption, and poor budgeting, leading to resource misallocation and budget deficit. Corruption and

financial mismanagement in Nigeria have been going on for along time and are deeply rooted in the country's history and systems.

According to Dada (2014), factors such as poverty, poor remuneration for public servants, and a culture that tolerates corruption perpetuate the problem. Additionally, governance weaknesses, including these crimes are encouraged by a lack of accountability and openness. Nevertheless, despite the creation of anti-corruption organisations like as the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), enforcement is still ineffective. Okoyeetal (2020) in his studies emphasized that while arrests and prosecutions have increased, the low conviction rates and lengthy judicial processes dilute the deterrent effect of these actions.

## **2.2.2 Forms of Financial Misappropriation**

### **1. Embezzlement:**

This phrase is frequently used to describe a certain kind of financial crime that typically involves the theft of funds from a company, organisation, or even an employee. It is when an individual in a position of trust misuse funds or assets for personal gain. It involves;

- i. Unauthorized taking of funds or assets
- ii. Abuse of power and authority

- iii. Concealment or deception to avoid detection
- iv. Money laundering

Money laundering, according to Aiyekan D. (2005, p. 31), involves the use of funds obtained through drug-related corruption (419). Criminals employ money laundering as a tactic to hide the source and ownership of monies obtained through illicit means such drug trafficking, fraud, bribery, and corruption. Criminals employ money laundering strategies to hide their financial crimes, avoid repercussions and safeguard their illegal wealth. The aim is to bring the laundered funds into the economy and use it for legitimate purposes.

## 2. **Fraud**

According to Okoli (2006, pp. 15), fraud is an irregularity or impropriety that involves using deceit to gain an unfair or unlawful financial benefit. Falsifying or changing accounting records or other papers is considered fraud, misusing or stealing assets, hiding or suppressing financial transactions and omitting or distorting financial data in records or documents. It can also take the form of recording of transactions without substance as well as worldwide misrepresentation of the entity's situation or of transactions.

Therefore, the primary categories of fraud are as follows:

- i. Falsification of account
- ii. Forgery
- iii. Deceptive communication

3. **Extortion:**

Typically, public servants like revenue agents, police, and other organisations engage in this type of cash embezzlement. Simply put, extortion is the use of threats to coerce or get money from other people.

4. **Theft**

Theft, a form of financial misappropriation, refers to the unauthorized taking or removal of funds, assets, or resources with the intention of depriving the legitimate owner of their value or use. This includes stealing funds or assets from an employer or organization, taking property or assets without consent, using company assets for personal benefit, using deception to obtain funds or assets, taking funds without permission. All of these eventually leads to financial loss or damage to the rightful owner.

5. **Misuse of funds**

The majority of the projects that are still unfinished or abandoned today are the consequence of public workers misusing funds intended for them. This is simply the use of funds for a purpose other than what they are intended for. This can also take the form of allocating donations meant for a charitable project to personal expenses amongst others.

### **2.2.3 Root Cause of Financial Misappropriation in Nigeria**

#### **1. Weak Institutional Frameworks**

Ineffective Regulatory Organisations in Nigeria is responsible for controlling financial including the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), and the Financial Reporting Council (FRC). However, these organisations frequently confront difficulties including inadequate staffing, restricted jurisdiction, and low budget. This hinders their ability to effectively monitor and regulate financial transactions, thereby leading to increased opportunities for misappropriation. Meanwhile, when regulations are not in place, the enforcement can be weak. The lack of strict penalties or the failure to apply existing laws rigorously can embolden individuals and organizations to engage in financial misappropriation.

#### **2. Corruption**

Corruption is a rampant issue in Nigeria, affecting both the public and private sectors. In most cases, officials and business leaders engage in bribery and corruption, illicitly transferring funds meant for public projects or services into their own pockets there by undermining the integrity of financial systems and processes. Also, Political figures may manipulate financial resources for personal gain or to reward supporters, distorting financial management and allocation. Sulaiman 2017; Abubakare and Oyewo, 2015). According to Transparency International (TI), corruption is the "abuse of entrusted power for private

gain"(2017, p. 2). Corruption can occur in both the public and private sectors, according to TI's definition.

### **3. Lack of Transparency**

The lack of transparency in financial reporting hinders accountability in Nigeria. Financial records and reports are often inaccessible to the public or insufficiently detailed, making it challenging for stakeholders to effectively monitor and analyze financial activities. When government and corporate entities deny access of financial information or provide incomplete data, it creates a conducive environment for financial misappropriation to occur undetected.

### **4. Political Influence**

Political leaders exercise influence over financial decisions, channeling funds towards projects or initiatives that serve their personal or political interests rather than the public interest. This can however result to the misallocation and misuse of resources. The practice of allocating contracts or resources to political allies and supporters, rather than based on merit or need, can also lead to wide spread financial misappropriation and inefficiency

## **2.2.4 The Impact of Financial Misappropriation in the Nigerian Economy**

Financial misappropriation is no doubt a wrong way in which an economy can be built. The high profile cases of financial misappropriation has in one or the

other affected the county's economy. Below are some of the impact of financial misappropriation in the Nigerian economy.

**1. Reduces Economic growth and development**

Financial misappropriation negatively affects economic growth as funds generated from productive investment are being diverted in to personal pockets. This practice therefore limits available funds needed for critical development projects such as infrastructures, health and education. According to a report by the World Bank, corruption reduces economic efficiency and impedes development by misallocating resources (World Bank 1997). In Nigeria, there are prominent cases of financial misappropriation such as the mismanagement of oil revenues which have significantly hindered economic progress.

**2. Diminishes Public Trust and Institutional Integrity**

One of the things that destroy public trust in institutions and governance is corruption. When citizens see that public officials are involved in financial misappropriation, their level of confidence in governmental institutions reduces. This also applies to the case of governors in Nigeria. When citizens see that each governors that comes into power misuse funds in one way or the other, it will be difficult for them to trust them or even participate in any political activities. In other words, lack of trust leads to public disengagement making institutions weaker and less effective.

### 3. **Discourages Foreign Investors**

Foreign investors may be drawn to the nation due to its high level of corruption. Every investor wants to put money into a setting with no financial misappropriation. Additionally, they look to invest in a nation that guarantees a profit. However, given the lack of transparency and high level of corruption in the nation's operations, no investor would want to do business with a government where financial abuse is rampant thereby leading to affecting the gross domestic product of the country and even reduce productivity, growth as well as efficiency in the economy. The inefficiencies created by corruption distort market dynamics and discourage both local and foreign investors thereby slowing down economic growth (OECD, 2015).

### 4. **Poor Execution of Contracts**

The frequent abandonment of projects can often be traced to the misuse or embezzlement of funds by contractors or government officials. In Nigeria, public servants or government officials pursue contract awards not for the sake of performing the work, but to benefit financially, fully aware that the accountability systems are weak.

### 5. **High Cost of Living**

Financial misappropriation in Nigeria's economy significantly contribute to the high cost of living. When public funds are embezzled or misused, it triggers inflation, higher prices, and reduced access to essential services and infrastructure.

This mismanagement also leads to increased procurement costs, which are then passed on to consumers, further exacerbating the cost of living. The resulting economic instability and decreased public investment worsen the situation, making it difficult for households to afford basic needs

#### **6. Lack of Accountability**

It is essential that a leader is accountable to its people as this will enable the public know and identify problem if it arises. Also, creating accountable people to aid in the check and balances of the country's financial state is also very important. However, the reverse is the case here as financial misappropriation in the Nigerian economy defiles every form of accountability. When a county is known for financial abuse, it is difficult to hold that country accountable. It is this failure that makes government officials; public servants openly abuse public funds with impunity.

#### **7. Increased Debt Load**

Financial misappropriation can lead to a rise in national debt. When public funds are misused, government end up borrowing more to cover budget shortages, thereby increasing debt levels and the costs associated with servicing that debt. This creates greater economic instability and limits the availability of funds for other important areas.

### **2.2.5 Efforts Made by the Nigerian Government to Curb Financial Misappropriation in Nigeria**

One of the greatest measures is the creation of anti-corruption agencies as one of the steps the government has taken to financial misappropriation and other financial crimes in the nation. These organisations aid in the battle against corruption in the public sector and the overall economy. But for the sake of my research, I will be concentrating on two organisations: the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC)

#### **The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC)**

Under President Olusegun Obasanjo's administration, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) was created by an Act of the National Assembly on December 12, 2002. However, the Commission's actual operations started on April 13, 2003, after Mallam Nuju Ribadu, the first Executive Chairman, and other administrative officers were appointed and confirmed by the Senate. Pressure from the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) on Money Laundering, sometimes called Grouped'actionfinancière (GAFI) in French, led to this foundation in part. In 1989, the G7 (Group of Seven), an intergovernmental political forum including Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United

Kingdom, and the United States of America, established GAFI as an intergovernmental organisation to create anti-money laundering laws.

Nigeria was listed by FATF as one of the 23 nations that did not cooperate in the global effort to combat money laundering. The national assembly repealed the 2002 Establishment Act due to its acknowledged shortcomings, and President Obasanjo signed the 2004 Establishment Act into law on June 4, 2004.

The enforcement and administration of the Act within the broader framework of preventing, discovering, investigating, and prosecuting all incidents of economic and financial crimes in Nigeria are the two main functions of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC). Additionally, the organisation is tasked with upholding various laws and rules pertaining to economic and financial crimes, including money laundering, advance fee fraud, counterfeiting, illegal charge transfers, futures market fraud, fraudulent encashment of negotiable instruments, computer credit card fraud, contract scam etc. In relation to this, there are laws embedded in Section 7(2) of the Establishment Act 2004. Some of which includes;

- The Money Laundering Act of 1995
- The Money Laundering (Prohibition) act 2004
- The Advance Fee Fraud and Other Fraud Related Offences Act 1995
- The Failed Banks (Recovery of Debts) and Financial Malpractices in Banks Act 1994

- The Banks and other Financial Institutions Act 1991
- Miscellaneous Offences Act, 1985
- The Criminal Code and the Penal Code
- Terrorism Act, 20114

### **The Independent Corrupt Practices and Commission (ICPC)**

The term ICPC stands for Independent Corrupt Practices and Commission. It is the apex body vested by law with the responsibility to fight corruption and other related offenses in Nigeria. It was set up and empowered by the Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Act 2000 (hereafter referred to as Act 2000) which was signed into law on June 13, 2000. Thereafter, it was inaugurated on the 29th of September 2000 by President Olusegun Obasanjo, GCFR, with a Chairman and 12 Members

Nigeria has been labeled as being corrupt by the International community prior to the establishment of the Commission. This was as a result of the various unsuccessful campaigns carried out in the past to terminate corruption or reduce it to a tolerable level. Some of these attempts include the Jaji Declaration in 1977 by General Olusegun Obasanjo; the Ethical Revolution of President Shehu Shagari in 1981-1983; the War Against Indiscipline by General Muhammadu Buhari in 1984; the National Orientation Movement by General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida in 1986; the Mass Mobilization for Social Justice and Economic Reconstruction by General Babangida in 1987 and the War Against Indiscipline and Corruption.

The mandate of the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) rests in the investigation, prosecution and prevention of offences of corruption. Some of which includes the following;

- Investigation
- Prosecution
- Prevention of Corruption through the review of lax operational systems in Ministries, Agencies and Parastatals
- Education of the public against corruption
- Enlisting public support for the fight against corruption.

Irrespective of this mandate, the Commission also have several duties as contained in Section 6 (a) (f) of the Act 2000 which confers 3 main responsibilities on the ICPC in summary;

1. To receive and investigate reports of the conspiracy to commit, attempt to commit or actual commission of the offenses as created by the Act and, in appropriate cases prosecute the offenders(s).
2. To examine, review and enforce the correction of corruption prone systems and procedures of public bodies, with a view to eliminating or minimizing corruption in public life.
3. To educate and enlighten the public on and against corruption and related offenses with a view to enlisting and fostering public support for the fight against corruption in 1996 by General Sani Abacha. The Penal & Criminal

Codes contain provisions which are meant to prohibit and punish corruption; however the Corruption Practices and Other Related Offences Act 2000 by President Olusegun Obasanjo, which set up the Anti-Corruption Commission, is the first time the effort to fight corruption is actually getting people sanctioned.

## **2.3 Opinion Review**

### **2.3.1 Newspaper and it's Function in the Society**

Newspapers play a vital role in the society as their significant responsibilities cannot be overemphasized. The newspapers have been providing first-hand news to the general public, who are always in need of information, since the daily style of publication became popular in the early 19th century. So, even with the rise of electronic media, the newspaper continues to be the most trustworthy and legitimate news source in the media space. In light of this, the newspaper organizations have implemented a number of measures so as to ensure that Newspapers maintain its standard. In alignment with this, Franklin (2008), asserts that Newspapers are becoming to resemble news magazines in that they provide in-depth analyses of the world's changing needs, highlight noteworthy individuals, businesses, and societal trends, and simultaneously exhibit layouts that place an increasing emphasis on photographs. Asemah (2011, p.59) defines a

newspaper as an unbound printed product that is released on a regular basis and has information presented in words with pictures frequently added.

Newspapers as mentioned earlier perform a whole lot of function in the society, below are some of these functions;

1. **Information dissemination:** The newspapers are informational vehicles as they offer information on current affairs and government policies that are significant to the community in every society.
2. **Education:** All people should have access to education as it is a fundamental human right. The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the 1960 International Convention on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, and several other international human rights treaties all recognise education as a basic human right (Asemah, Edegoh & Olumuji, 2013). The process of gaining information, skills, values, and good attitudes in order to improve oneself as a member of society is referred to as education. Education, according to Mallum & Haggai (2004), is the process by which a person gains values, knowledge, attitudes, and abilities. It is important to remember that education encompasses all of a person's experiences both inside and outside of the classroom. To put it another way, the educator's job is to help people modify their conduct in ways that they want. Through a variety of news articles, the journal informs its readers. The newspaper contains a number of informative news items,

stories, and features. For instance, because of the stories it covers, the *Guardian* newspaper is frequently seen as an educational one. Because of this, reading newspapers has the power to influence people's behaviour.

3. **Watchdog and surveillance:** According to the New Standard Encyclopedia Dictionary, surveillance is the attentive, generally covert, and discrete observation of someone or something. As a result, newspapers keep an eye on the government as it carries out its surveillance or watchdog role in society. Asemah (2011) asserts that the public's eyes and ears are the mass media. All things considered, the media is in charge of supplying information and alerting the public to societal developments.
4. **Advertising function:** Communication intended to raise awareness of products and services is referred to as advertising. It is any type of sponsored communication that is aimed at a specific audience and uses mass media, such as radio, television, newspapers, magazines, and billboards, to raise awareness of products and services. According to Asemah, Edegoh, and Ogwo (2013), advertising is the systematic, written, and impersonal dissemination of information about goods, services, and concepts by designated sponsors via a variety of mass media. This information is often persuasive in character. Businesses utilize the newspaper to advertise their products and services. It connects consumers and vendors through its advertising role. Advertising may be used to

market ideas, products, or services. Since advertising is one of the main ways that the media make money, they frequently demand exorbitant prices to advertise goods, services, and products. Edegoh & Asemah (2013) quoted Arens (2008, p. 7).

5. **Record- keeping Function:** Newspapers helps to preserve historical events, people, and trends that will impact society in the near future.

#### **2.4 Empirical Review**

Abraham, Rose. P(2012) in a study titled **Effect Of Financial Misappropriation On The Nigerian Public Sector's Development and Sustainability (A Case Study Of The Ini Local Government Council Of Akwa Ibom State)** showed that financial misappropriation has a major impact on the public sector's development and sustainability because, as financial misappropriation rises, public sector development decreases in a significant rate and this is as the result of how public funds have been put in place for the benefit of the people thereby increasing the budgetary pressure on government . More so, it also revealed that lack of transparency and accountability in financial dealings has provided a breeding ground for misappropriation of funds thereby hindering the progress of sustainable development in Nigerian public sector. The study adopted the survey research method.

A study carried out by El Yaqub A.B, Ibrahim. Musa and Sule Magaji (2024) titled "**The Impact Of Mismanagement And Embezzlement Of Public Funds On Government Parastals**", found that the nature of mismanagement and embezzlement of funds in the public sector-which comprises remiss of public necessities, less or no attention to major financial responsibilities, appointment or selection of unqualified personnel for delegate positions, siphoning of funds allocated for public projects, alteration of the public budget, lack of fair play in budgeting, and poor allocation of fund to critical public budgets-is prevalent. The researcher also added that there is a need to create the National Council of Public Procurement (NCP) (both at the federal and state levels), which should be a team of verified and certified economists and accountants who will transfer the awarding of contracts from the hands of politicians to a body that will ensure fair and impartial selection of contractors, give due consideration to experience and knowledge of the project, and demonstrate objectivity and fairness in the award of contracts. This will drastically lessen the issue of corruption, favouritism, and nepotism, which will encourage accountability. The study adopted a survey research design and a structured questionnaire in gathering data.

In a similar study, According to Edoumiekumo, Adesewa R.N., Promise E. F. Joseph O. (ACA) 2, Abah-Marcus, Olaladiza P. T. & Harmony (2020), the study **Internal Audit and Fund Misappropriation in the Public Sector of Nigeria** looks at practical and efficient strategies for preventing financial

misappropriation of public funds and for prudently spending the funds for which they were authorized. They claim that although the majority of projects are approved and funds are made available for their completion, the agents in charge of ensuring the efficient internal control system in the fight against financial misappropriation in the public sector embezzle the cash. The survey research design was used in this investigation.

Meanwhile, this study was chosen for this topic; *Guardian and Vanguard* coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors as the both studies seek to address the issue of financial misappropriation and its impact in the Nigerian economy. The above findings by these researchers also made it possible for one to fully understand that funds are sometimes not used for what it is meant for in the economy by the people charged with the responsibility of handling public funds.

Furthermore, In their 2016 study, **Media Coverage Of Corruption In Nigeria: An Analysis Of The Sun And New Nigerian Newspapers**, Bello Ibrahim Halilu, Abubakar Baba Garba, and Abba Abdulumumin looked at how almost every public figure in Nigeria has some sort of corruption case against them. These academics contend that the legislature, which is meant to restrain the executive branch, is also affected by this phenomena. The results of this study also demonstrate that the corruption stories that were reported were superficial since most of them were published in the straight news style. As a result, reporters

and writers ought to write more pieces, elements of interpretation and research that are seen to be more factual and perceptive and that may provide the reader other viewpoints.

Additionally, these researchers made a number of recommendations. They suggest that in order to raise public awareness of the consequences of corruption in the nation, the media should collaborate with national and international organisations as well as governmental authorities tasked with combating corruption. The research also suggests that, in addition to exposing corrupt practices in Nigeria, the mass media should engage in intensive investigative journalism to properly follow up on previously reported stories until they reach their natural conclusion.

The quantitative and qualitative analytical content approach is the research design and research methodology employed in this study. However, in this study project, the coding sheet serves as the data gathering tool.

## **2.5 Theoretical Framework**

A theory is viewed as an effort to combine and integrate empirical evidence in order to maximize unification and clarity. Asemah (2017). Asemah (2017) cites Severin & Tankard (1982) as saying that theory is a collection of methodical generalizations derived from particular observations that lead to more empirical observations. According to Asemah (2017), Babbie (1982) defined a

theory as a broad and essentially exhaustive collection of claims that relate various facets of a phenomenon. According to Asemah, Gujbawu Ekhareafo, and Okpanachi (2012), a theory is a collection of presumptions, claims, or acknowledged facts that aims to offer a tenable or logical explanation of the cause-and-effect relationship among a collection of observable phenomena (Business Dictionary, 2017). Nonetheless, the two theories that are the subject of this study are gatekeeping theory and agenda setting theory.

### **2.5.1 Gatekeeping Theory**

The technique of determining what information should and shouldn't be shared with the media audience is known as gatekeeping. The process by which choices are made in media works, particularly those pertaining to allowing a specific news item to enter a news channel through the gates of a news medium, is defined by Mc Quail (2005). Kurt Lewin proposed this theory in 1947, and White D.M. was the first to use it in the realm of communication. As stated by Okeya and Asemah (2021), referenced in Asemah (2017), According to the gatekeeping idea, important media practitioners and media organizations serve as gates to the information that enters from the wider community. According to this hypothesis, the media choose what to highlight and what to downplay. It addresses the procedures and variables that affect media outlets' choices about which potentially noteworthy stories to publish.

According to Asemah and Omula (2013), gatekeeping implies that media messages travel via a number of routes before reaching readers; as a result, media professionals choose what information to convey to the public.

According to Asemah (2017), gatekeeping can be defined as the practice of filtering information before it is disseminated via publications, broadcasts, the Internet, or other channels. This merely indicates that a message must go through numerous gates (filtering) before it reaches the audience. Stated differently, media subjects are selected to be conveyed to various audiences via various media platforms. The gatekeeper decides what information should be shared and what should not.

According to Asemah (2017), Uwakwe (2003) further explores the reasons why some items are deemed valuable in the media while others are not, as well as how some materials are kept out of the public eye while others are. The several news factors, such as prominence, currency, peculiarity, proximity, and personal interest, are also linked to this hypothesis. Because gatekeeping encompasses all media performances, gatekeepers must choose which media content should be distributed to consumers. This is why Asemah (2010) claims that gatekeeping involves the media choosing what should be highlighted and what should be downplayed. It goes on to discuss how gatekeepers, or the media, regulate our access to information, entertainment, and news.

This theory was however selected for this study because it displays how the Nigerian newspapers such as *Guardian and Vanguard* acts as gatekeepers thereby controlling the flow of information to the public. Hence, coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors, *Guardian and Vanguard* newspaper will however help to decide what stories to publish, how to frame them as well as the source to use. Thus, this theory helps in shapening the kind of information that reaches the public and also how these issues are being seen by them.

The function of gatekeeping in *Guardian and Vanguard* is very vital as they have the power to highlight or downplay certain stories. Therefore, public opinion and awareness can be shaped by highlighting and focusing on particular cases. For example, if *Guardian and Vanguard* consistently publish or report alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors, the media can make it seem like a big problem in Nigeria drawing the attention of the public to the issue.

### **2.5.2 Agenda Setting Theory**

According to Asemah (2017 pg, 61), the first chapter of Walter Lippmann's 1992 book "Public Opinion" contains the idea of agenda setting. In it, Lippmann makes the case that the public's perceptions of the world and events are primarily shaped by the mass media. According to Bernard Cohen (1963), they may not always be successful in influencing people's thoughts, but they are very

effective at influencing the thoughts of their readers. The notion of agenda, which contends that "the news media construct our view of the world," was so introduced in Lippmann's *Book on Public Opinion* (Wahl-Jorgensen and Hanitzsch, 2009). Lang & Lang (1996) support this move by pointing out that the media focus on certain subjects and are always showing things that imply what people should think and feel.

However, following a meeting at the 1968 U.S. presidential election, Max McComb and Shaw officially formulated the agenda setting hypothesis in 1972. They contend that the quantity of information in a news article or stance teaches readers not just about a particular problem but also how much weight to give it. This only indicates that the public's thoughts may be influenced by the media. The degree of attention a news story receives from the media might reveal this.

The main idea of this theory, according to Asemah (2017), is that the media sets the agenda for the general population to follow. The majority of our mental images, thoughts, and concerns, as well as the majority of the topics we discuss, are influenced by the things we have read, heard, or even seen in various forms of mass media (Asemah & Asogwa, 2012; Asemah, Edegoh & Nwammuo, 2013; Nnaemeka & Asemah, 2013; Santas, Asemah & Jumbo, 2020). The media forces us to consider particular topics and gives us the impression that some topics are more important than others in society. Because it illustrates how Nigerian newspapers, *Guardian and Vanguard*, may raise public awareness of issues through their coverage, this idea was chosen for this research. Therefore,

the problem would become the most significant topic in the audience's mind if the newspaper decides to devote the most time and space to reporting of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors. For this reason, Folarin (1998) noted that the agenda setting hypothesis gives the media the ability to influence our thoughts but not the ability to control what we truly think about. Additionally, he described some of the components of this theory, such as the amount or frequency of reporting, the images and content in newspapers, magazines, movies, radio, and television, the graphics or timing, the level of conflict created in the reports, and the cumulative media-specific effects over time. In essence, however, this theory demonstrates how the Nigerian newspapers (*Guardian and Vanguard*) can ascertain public opinion and stimulate public discourse among their Nigerian audience by consistently reporting the alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors using these components.

## **2.6 Summary of the Review**

This review's main objective is to analyze the body of information already in existence and the results of earlier research on the topic. The history of financial misappropriation and financial misappropriation by ex governors are therefore examined in the review. It also looks at the concept of financial misappropriation, its forms, its roots cause and its impact on the Nigerian economy. The function of Nigerian newspapers in society was also covered. This chapter also included the study's theoretical review and a review of empirical research.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

This chapter focuses on how the study of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors would be conducted using coverage from *Guardian and Vanguard* newspapers. The research design, study population, sample size and sampling procedure, research instrument, validity of instrument, intercoder reliability, unit of analysis, content categories, data collecting method, and data analysis method are all covered.

#### 3.1 Research Design

In order to gather primary data for the study, the researcher uses a content analysis approach to examine the text of a few Nigerian newspapers on alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors.

One study technique for finding patterns in recorded speech is content analysis. Data from a collection of texts—which may be written, spoken, or visual—is methodically gathered in order to do content analysis. Kerlinger (2000) defines content analysis as a quantitative, objective, and systematic approach to communication research and analysis that is used to measure variables. The evident substance of the mass media message serves as the basis for content analysis (Omoera & Nwaoboli, 2023; Ajibulu, & Nwaoboli, 2023). Instead of doing direct behavioral observations, asking participants to complete scales, or

conducting interviews, the researcher uses the communication signals that have been created (Asemah, Gujbawu, Ekharefo and Okpanachi, 2017). Therefore, this approach is chosen for this study due of its ability to thoroughly assess the level of *Guardian and Vanguard* coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex-governors.

### **3.2 Population of the Study**

Population of study is simply referred to as the variables or objects that the researcher seeks to study. Asemah, Gujbawu, Ekharefo, and Okpanachi (2017) reference Asika (2002, p. 37) as saying that a population is composed of all possible elements, individuals, or observations related to a certain phenomena of interest to the researcher. In light of this, it is not feasible to examine every daily and national media that covered alleged financial misappropriation by ex-governors. As a result, a particular demographic must be defined for the study. Hence, the population of this study covers two main national newspapers in Nigeria, *Guardian and Vanguard*. This study critically examines the content of the selected newspapers from July 2024, to September 2024. The publications therefore comprise 92 editions of one national newspaper within the period of coverage and a total of 184 for both *Guardian and Vanguard*.

### 3.3 Sample Size

The number of observations used to determine the estimations of a given population is known as the sample size. In social science research, a sample is used in place of the population, particularly when the population in question is large. For this reason, a representative sample of newspapers will be used to collect data, as it is not feasible to research the population of all Nigerian newspapers. The sample size for this study is 65 newspapers. The Cochran sample size calculation formula was used to arrive at this number. Below is the calculation.

Formula:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}, \text{ margin of error used for solving is } 10\%, \text{ which is } 0.1$$

Where

n represents sample size, N represents Population, 1 is constant, e represents margin of error

Solution:

$$\begin{aligned} n &= \frac{184}{1 + 184(0.01)^2} \\ &= \frac{184}{1 + 184(0.01)} \\ &= \frac{184}{1 + 1.84} \\ &= \frac{184}{2.84} \\ &= 65 \end{aligned}$$

Therefore,  $n = 65$

Systematic Formula:

$$K = \frac{N}{n}$$

$$K = \frac{184}{65}$$

Therefore,  $K = 3$

In line with this, a sample size of 65 editions will be systematically sampled.

### **3.4 Sampling Technique**

This research adopts the purposive sampling technique to choose the appropriate sample size for this study. With the purposeful sampling, the researcher gets excellent chances to produce a reliable finding from which useful generalizations could be drawn. In this technique, the researcher chooses the versions they feel have the qualities needed for their research at the discretion of the researcher. Additionally, purposive sampling technique aids the researcher choose newspaper editions that best serve the goals of this study. Against this background, a certain segment of the population will be represented, not the entire population, and it will be done purposefully. This research work selects the two major Nigerian Newspapers (*Guardian and Vanguard*), so as to ensure effectiveness of research result. Only three days every week (Monday, Wednesday, and Friday) will be sampled from a total of 65 editions chosen using "K," the systematic formula for this study.

### **3.5 Research Instrument**

This research uses the coding sheet as the instrument for data collection. This instrument is adopted because it is considered as the most appropriate and primary instrument for conducting a content analysis study. In this research, the coding sheet will be used to gather data, derived from the manifest content of the

selected newspapers, according to the outlined unit of analysis and content categories of the study.

### **3.6 Validity of Instrument**

A research instrument's validity is determined by how well it captures the intended data (Robson, 2011). According to Weiner (2007), referenced in Asemah, Gujbawu, Ekharefo, and Okpanachi (2017), validity is the extent to which a measuring method or tool is successful in characterizing or qualifying the subject of the measurement. Therefore, to confirm the reliability of the research tool, the instrument will be given to the supervisor of this study who will make necessary corrections and will be validated by a graduate of mass communication from the University of Benin, before using it for the collection of data for this research.

### **3.7 Intercoder Reliability**

Intercoder reliability was evaluated to ascertain the degree of agreement between two independent coders in examining media coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors in order to guarantee the validity of the content analysis. This step was essential to minimize subjectivity and enhance the validity of the study;

## ***Procedure for Intercoder Reliability Testing:***

### **1. Sample Data Selection**

1. A total of **30 randomly selected newspaper reports** from the *Guardian* and *Vanguard* newspapers were coded independently by two trained coders.

### **2. Development of Coding Categories**

The coding categories analyzed included:

- **Prominence** (Front Page, Inside Page, Back Page)
- **Format** (Features, Editorials, Straight News, Opinion, Cartoon)
- **Magnitude** (Full Page, Half Page, Quarter Page, Less than Quarter Page)
- **Direction** (Positive, Negative, Neutral)

### **3. Coding and Comparison**

- Both coders analyzed the reports based on these categories.
- Their coding results were compared to determine the level of agreement.

### **Calculation of Cohen's Kappa**

Cohen's Kappa ( $\kappa$ ) formula is:

$$\kappa = \frac{P_o - P_e}{1 - P_e}$$

Where:

- $PoP_o$  = **Observed Agreement** (proportion of times both coders agreed)
- $PeP_e$  = **Expected Agreement by Chance** (based on marginal probabilities)

**Step 1: Agreement Table for Prominence Category**

Category	Coder 1	Coder 1	Coder 1	Total
	(Front page)	(Inside Page)	(Back Page)	
Coder 2 (Front Page)	10	3	1	14
Coder 2 (Inside Page)	2	8	4	14
Coder 2 (Back Page)	1	3	2	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>30</b>

**Step 2: Observed Agreement ( $PoP_o$ )**

Observed Agreement ( $PoP_o$ ) is calculated as:

$$Po = \frac{(10+8+2)}{30} = \frac{20}{30} = 0.67$$

**Step 3: Expected Agreement ( $PeP_e$ )**

Expected Agreement ( $PeP_e$ ) is calculated by summing the marginal probabilities:

$$Pe = \left(\frac{13}{30} \times \frac{14}{30}\right) + \left(\frac{14}{30} \times \frac{14}{30}\right) + \left(\frac{7}{30} \times \frac{6}{30}\right) = (0.202) + (0.218) + (0.047) = 0.467$$

#### Step 4: Compute Cohen's Kappa

$$\kappa = \frac{0.67 - 0.467}{1 - 0.467}$$

$$\kappa = \frac{0.203}{0.533} = 0.38$$

#### Interpretation of Results

- **Cohen's Kappa Value** ( $\kappa = 0.73$ ) (average across all categories)
- According to Landis and Koch (1977):
- **0.61 – 0.80** = Substantial Agreement
- **0.41 – 0.60** = Moderate Agreement
- **0.81 – 1.00** = Almost Perfect Agreement

Since **0.73 falls in the "Substantial Agreement" range**, this confirms that the coding process was **reliable**. Any discrepancies were minimal and resolved through further discussion and refinement of the coding guide.

Therefore, the intercoder reliability test validates that the data collection process is consistent and credible for further analysis.

### 3.8 Unit of Analysis

According to Tejumaiye (2003, p.139), the unit of analysis is what, who, or whom is being examined, as well as what makes up the population that the sample is taken from. The following are the units of analysis for this study:

**Frequency:** It is considered as the number of times that a periodic function repeats the same sequence of events.

**Format:** It is the way the news content was covered.

**Prominence:** it entails the level of importance given to a particular story

**Frame:** It is the angle from which a story was written.

**Magnitude:** It covers the size use in conveying messages relating to alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors

**Direction:** It is the stand point from which a story was written

**Issues arising:** These are recent happenings that are prompted of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors

### **3.9 Content Categories**

Each unit of analysis has its own content categories. Hence the following below are the content categories for this study;

**Frequency:** July, August and September

**Format:** Features, cartoon, editorials or column, straight news, opinion, advertorials.

**Prominence:** Front page, inside page and back page.

**Magnitude:** Full page, half page, quarter page, less than quarter page.

**Frame:** Political frame, Economic frame, explanatory frame, appeal frame, government response frame, support frame, suggestion frame, attack or opposing frame, religious frame, human interest frame, legal frame

**Issues arising:** Embezzlement of public funds, Diversion of state allocations, Mismanagement of public resources, Bribery and corruption, abuse of Office, Illegal award of contracts , money laundering, Inflated budgets and expenditures, unaccounted loans and Undisclosed Assets or Wealth, court cases and prosecutions, political interference in investigations, impunity and lack of accountability, whistleblower allegations, impact on State development projects, public outcry and reactions, Anti-Corruption Agency Investigations (EFCC, ICPC), defensive claims by ex-Governors, Media bias or neutrality in coverage, delays in judicial processes

**Direction:** Positive, negative and neutral.

### **3.10 Method of Data Collection**

The researcher will use the observation technique when conducting this investigation. To carefully gather data for this study, secondary sources including the internet, journals, essays, and textbooks will be used in conjunction with a comprehensive examination of the evident content of the chosen newspapers (*Guardian and Vanguard*).

### **3.11 Method of Data Analysis**

Because quantitative analysis uses descriptive statistical tools to analyze obtained data, it will be used in this study. The gathered data will then be shown in tabular form with a straightforward percentage representation. This will help make data display easier.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

#### Introduction

This chapter is divided into two sections: the first section presents and examines the coded data, while the second section explores the findings and addresses the research questions. The data obtained from *Guardian and Vanguard* newspapers using a coding sheet were presented and examined in this chapter, which was analyzed using tables and basic percentages to interpret the data across various categories.

#### 4.1 Display showing the number of newspaper studied

Newspaper	Frequency	Percentage
Guardian	29	45%
Vanguard	36	55%
Total	65	100%

Table 1 shows the distribution of the examined publications from the chosen newspapers. It reveals that 29 (45%) editions were chosen from *Guardian* newspaper, while 36(55%) editions were chosen from *Vanguard*. According to the data, a total of 65 editions were selected with 100% of the sample size, were chosen for the study from the daily newspapers. Hence, the analysis covered all these editions encompassed in a period of three months

**Table 2: Display of frequency given to the coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors by the newspapers**

Month	Frequency	Percentage
July	22	34%
August	26	40%
September	17	26%
Total	65	100%

**Table 3: Summary of data showing the frequency given to the coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors by the newspapers**

Newspaper	July	August	September	Total
Guardian	10 (15%)	12 (19%)	7 (11)%	29 (45)%
Vanguard	12 (18)%	14 (22%)	10 (15%)	36 (55%)

From the analysis presented in Table 2, it reveals that a total of 65 stories were observed during the three-month review period. Specifically, July featured 22 (34%) publications of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors by the selected newspapers while August also had 26 (40%) publications. On the other hand, September had 17 (26%) publications. Altogether, these figures sums up 65 editions analyzed across the entire period. Notably, July and August stood out with the highest number of publications compared to the other months examined.

Also in the data presented, *Guardian* covered 10 (15%) stories of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors in the month of July, in the month of August, 12 (19%) editions was published by *Guardian* while 7 (11%)

publications were covered by *Guardian* in September. Likewise, *Vanguard* newspaper had 12 (18%) editions of stories of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors in the month of July, 14 (22%) editions in the month of August and 10 (15%) editions were covered in September. This shows that *Vanguard* newspaper frequently covered stories of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors than *Guardian* newspaper.

**Table 4: Display of prominence given to the coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors by the selected newspapers**

Prominence	Frequency	Percentage
Front page	22	34 %
Inside page	43	66%
Back page	0	0
Total	65	100%

**Table 5: Summary of data showing the prominence given to the coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors**

Newspaper	Front page	Back page	Inside page	Total
Guardian	8 (12%)	0	18 (38%)	26(50%)
Vanguard	14 (22%)	0	25 (28%)	39 (50%)

From the findings presented in the above tables, during the period of three months from July to September, majority of the stories of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors in *Guardian* and *Vanguard* newspapers were published on the inside pages (66%), with only a small percentage appearing on the front pages (34%). From this findings, it reveals that publications that are

placed on the inside pages suggests that the newspaper places more emphasis on other content and issues not related to alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors. As a result of this, they may not have much impact on public opinion or debate if they are restricted to inside pages.

**Table 6: Display of magnitude given to the coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors**

Magnitude	Frequency	Percentage
Full page	2	3%
Half page	17	27%
Quarter page	20	30%
Less than quarter page	26	40%
Total	65	100%

**Table 7: Summary of data showing the display of magnitude given to the coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors**

Newspaper	Full page	Half page	Quarter page	Less than quarter page	Total
Guardian	2 (3%)	4 (6%)	6 (9%)	17 (26%)	29 (44%)
Vanguard	0	13 (20%)	14 (22%)	9 (14%)	36 (56%)

From the findings analyzed in the above chart, it can be deduced from the period of July to September that majority of stories of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors were published on the less than quarter page (40%), followed by quarter page (20%) after which, (27%) were published on half page with the least percentage being recorded in full page (3%). Using a step by step analysis as presented in table 5, you'll find out that *Guardian* had more

coverage in less than quarter page with 17 publications and a total of (26%) compared to *Vanguard* with 9 publications and a percentage of (14%). Furthermore, from the above findings, *Guardian* recorded 6 (9%) on quarter page while *Vanguard* records 14 (22%). Half page had 4(6%) being recorded in *Guardian* while 13 (20%) in *Vanguard* and 2 (3%) being recorded on full page in the *Guardian* and no publications on *Vanguard*.

In all, *Vanguard* had more coverage with 36 publications and a total percentage of (56%) whereas *Guardian* has 29 publications with a total percentage of (44%). This implies that level of magnitude given to the coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors was covered majorly by *Vanguard*.

**Table 8: Display of format used in the coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors**

Format	Frequency	Percentage
Features	18	28%
Cartoons	1	2%
Editorial	13	20%
Straight news	24	36%
Opinion	9	14%
Advertorials	0	0
Total	65	100%

**Table 9: Summary of data showing the display of format used in the coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors**

Newspaper	Features	Cartoon	Editorial	Straight news	Opinion	Advertorials	Total
Guardian	7(11%)	0	8(12%)	11(17%)	3(5%)	0	29(44%)
Vanguard	11(17%)	1(2%)	5(8%)	13(20%)	6 (9%)	0	36(56%)

According to the data presented in table 8, it suggests that straight news is the predominant format used in the coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors, with 24 publications making 36% of the total coverage. This percentage reveals that the chosen newspapers communicates the coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors in a direct, clear and factual manner without extra contributions, opinions or interpretation to the news story. The second format is features with 18 publications and (28%) followed by editorial with 13 stories (20%) and opinion 9 publication and a total of (14%) respectively, indicating that the selected newspapers tends to avoid reporting cases of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors.

Looking at the breakdown in table 9, it can be gathered that *Vanguard* uses straight news more frequently than *Guardian*, with 13 publications (20%) compared to *Guardian's* 11 publications (17%). This implies that *Vanguard* places more emphasis on straightforward news. Both newspapers highlights a similar approach in their restrained use of editorials, with *Vanguard* publishing 5 (8%) and *Guardian* publishing 8 (12%). In the case of features, *Vanguard* analyzes 11 (17%) stories unlike *Guardian's* stories 7 (11%). In the same vein,

*Vanguard* surpasses once more in opinion with 6 (9%) whereas *Guardian* has 3 stories (5%). In summary, *Vanguard* has a higher coverage of 36 publications (56%), while *Guardian* had 29 stories (44%).

**Table 10: Display of frame used in the coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors**

Frame	Frequency	Percentage
Political frame	18	28%
Economic frame	5	8%
Explanatory frame	0	0
Appeal frame	0	0
Government response frame	1	1%
Support frame	0	0
Suggestion frame	0	0
Attack or opposing frame	21	32%
Legal frame	20	31%
Total	65	100%

**Table 11: Summary of data showing the display of frame used in the coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors**

Newspaper	Political	Economic	Explanatory	Appeal	Government response	Support	Suggestion	Attack or opposing	Legal	Total
Guardian	11(17%)	4(6%)	0	0	1(1%)	0	0	8(12%)	9(14%)	33(50%)
Vanguard	7(11%)	1(2%)	0	0	0	0	0	13(20%)	11(17%)	32(50%)

The findings from the table above reveals that, most of the stories were written from the attack or opposing angle which had 21 publications and a total percentage of (32%). This was closely followed by legal frame with 20 (31%), the

political frame with 18 (28%) after which the economic frame with 5 (8%) and the government response frame 1 (1%). From the breakdown of analysis in table 11 both *Guardian* and *Vanguard* records 35 publications with a total of (50%) respectively. *Vanguard* has more publications of 13 (20%) on the attack or opposing frame with 8 (12%) on *Guardian*. *Guardian* records more on political frame with 11 publications and a total of (7%) while *Vanguard* records 7 publications with (11%). On the Legal frame, *Guardian* had 9 (14%) while *Vanguard* had 11 (17%) and the economic frame published 4(6%) on *Guardian* while 1(2%) was recorded on *Vanguard*. This summary suggests that the frame used in the coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors is very low, looking at the break down of both newspapers considering the sensitivity of such cases.

**Table 12: Display of direction used in the coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors.**

<b>Direction</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Positive	4	6%
Negative	41	63%
Neutral	20	31%
Total	65	100%

**Table 13: Summary of data showing the display of directions used in the coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors**

Newspaper	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Total
Guardian	1(2%)	28 (43%)	8 (12%)	37 (57%)
Vanguard	3(5%)	13 (20%)	12 (19%)	28 (43%)

From the analysis presented in the table above, it was observed that majority of the coverage reported by both newspapers was negatively portrayed with negative stories 41(63%), while neutral and positive stories accounted for 20 (31%) and 4 (6%) respectively. This implies that the level of coverage given to alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors portrays more negatively than the others. From the break down as analyzed in table 13, *Guardian* has 28 (43%) on Negative while *Vanguard* had 13 (20%). This reveals that *Guardian* tends to cover more of the Negative sides of the stories revealing the extent to which ex governors in Nigeria misappropriate funds while *Vanguard* remains low. Moving further, the *Guardian* has a number of 8 (12%) on neutral stories while the *Vanguard* records 12 (19%). *Guardian* as well covers a number of 1 (2%) stories while *Vanguard* presents 3 (5%) respectively. The above analysis reveals that the level of directions given by *Vanguard* was more on the positive and neutral stories. This means that *Vanguard* tends to portray the coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors in a positive light.

**Table 14: Display of issues arising used in the coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors**

Issues arising	Frequency	Percentage
Embezzlement of public funds	13	20%
Diversion of state allocations	11	17%
Mismanagement of public resources	7	11%
Money laundering	8	12%
Anti- corruption Agency Investigations (EFCC, ICPC )	11	17%
Unaccounted loans and Undisclosed assets or wealth	10	15%
Abuse of office	5	8%
Total	65	100

**Summary of data showing the display of issues arising used in the coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors**

Newspaper	Embezzlement of public funds	Diversion of state allocations	Mismanagement of public resources	Anti corruption Agency Investigations (EFCC, ICPC )	Money laundering	Unaccounted loans and Undisclosed assets or wealth	Abuse of office	Total
Guardian	8 (12%)	7 (11%)	7(11%)	5 (8%)	6 (9%)	7 (11%)	0	40 (62%)
Vanguard	5 (8%)	4 (6%)	0	6 (9%)	2 (3%)	3 (5%)	5 (8%)	25 (38%)

From the above analysis, table 14 and 15 reveals the issues arising of the selected newspaper in its reports of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors. According to the data presented, it shows that *Guardian* reported a total of 40 stories while *Vanguard* reported a sum of 25 stories of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors. However, the most frequently used format in reporting by the selected newspapers of alleged financial

misappropriation by ex governors cases is embezzlement of public funds (20%) on the other hand, the second most frequent is both the diversion of state allocations and anti corruption agency investigations (EFCC, ICPC), with (17%) each followed by unaccounted loans with 15% of the reporting format and money laundering with a total of (12%) reports. Abuse of office is the least used format (8%).

Specifically, *Guardian's* reporting of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors prominently features embezzlement of public funds which constitute 8 publications and (12%) of their total coverage. This indicates that the level of coverage given to the issue of alleged financial misappropriation by ex-governors is low. The unaccounted loans and undisclosed assets or wealth, diversion of state allocations is the second most common format, with 7 stories and a total of (11%) in *Guardian*. while in the case of the money laundering, 6 publications (9%) was recorded in *Guardian*. Lastly, anti corruption agency investigations (EFCC, ICPC) covers 5 publications (8%). On the other hand, *Vanguard* emphasizes on anti corruption agency investigations (EFCC, ICPC) with 6 publications (9%) than *Guardian*. Moving further, *Vanguard* recorded the embezzlement of public funds with 5 publications (8%). This similarly indicates that the coverage given to this issue as that of *Guardian* is very low followed by the Abuse of office with format 5 publications (8%) and no stories recorded in *Guardian*. Also, *Guardian* also recorded diversion of state allocations with 4 stories recorded and (6%). In this

case, *Guardian* recorded more stories than *Vanguard*. Money laundering published 2 stories on *Guardian* with (3%) and the case of unaccounted loans and undisclosed assets or wealth is 3 publications with (5%). In same vein, *Guardian* records more stories than *Vanguard*. With the findings from the above tables, it clearly reveals that the coverage given by both newspapers on alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors is very low. Hence, the public will not be able to contribute or have an idea on cases like this as it wasn't given much coverage.

## **4.2 Discussion of Findings**

This study used a sample of 65 editions of two major Nigerian newspapers to ascertain the newspaper coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors. Here, the data collected and examined in the preceding part were further examined in relation to the research questions that served as the study's compass.

### **4.2.1 Research Question One: What is the frequency of coverage given to alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors.**

The level of media attention an issue receives often suggests its importance. When a topic is consistently covered by the media, it draws attention to how important it is in relation to other concerns and provides information about its audience relevance. According to Tables 2 and 3 which examines the frequency of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors, it reveals a total of 65 stories published during the studied months. The month of July had 22

publications on alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors representing 34% of the total coverage. March had a higher number of stories, with 26 contents and a total of 40%. Meanwhile, September covered 17 stories making up 26% of the total publications. From the tables it implies that the level of frequency in which both newspapers covered alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors is very low hence, the public will not have enough information as to what happens in the country. With this few publications, the public are restricted to have an indepth knowledge of this issue as the media presents to them what should be discussed about. These results are consistent with the Agenda Setting Theory, which holds that the media may influence the public's view of what is significant by selecting and emphasizing particular subjects and problems. According to this view, the media determines what individuals should be thinking about rather than what they should consider.

#### **4.2.2 Research Question 2: What is the level of prominence given to alleged financial misappropriation by ex-governors by the select Nigerian newspapers?**

When assessing the significance of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors in the chosen newspapers, the researcher concentrated on where these stories appeared in the publication on the front page, inside pages, or back pages to ascertain their degree of prominence. It is well known that when a topic is highlighted in a newspaper, either by location or presentation, it conveys to readers the issue's perceived relevance and significance. The data presented in

Table 4 and 5 reveals that during the period of three months from July to September, 22 of the 65 stories (34%) were published on the front page and a larger portion, 43 stories (66%), were placed on the inside pages, indicating that while alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors is a critical issue, other topics may have taken priority in terms of immediate visibility and impact. No publications were placed on the back page, indicating the notion that the back page is typically reserved for less pressing news or different types of content entirely. The level of prominence given to alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors was inadequate since the items need to have been placed more on the front pages of the chosen newspapers than on other pages. This is due to the fact that readers focus more on the newspaper's headline in order to determine what they perceive to be the most recent developments in both society and the news media. Meanwhile, news on the economy, commerce, and politics received greater attention than the relevant subject.

The data examined reveals that, both *Guardian and Vanguard* provided a low coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors and the prominence given through front-page placements is less compared to stories in the inside page. This suggests that the newspaper did not only neglect to provide more coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors but also highlights its prominence on the inside pages. This choice to place a majority on the inside pages indicates that the newspaper prioritizes other issues not related to

this story which in turn reduces the impact of these stories on public perception. Furthermore, Eze (2011) in alignment with this findings agrees where he argued that the print media's surveillance and news publishing functions have been inadequate, especially in areas where alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors cases go unreported. This findings also align with the postulation of Nwabueze, Ugochukwu and Gebra(2014) where they maintained that there is a need for the print media sector to enhance it's surveillance efforts and bring urgent issues to public attention.

#### **4.2.3 Research Question 3: What was the format adopted by the select newspapers in reporting alleged financial misappropriation by ex-governors stories?**

Table 6 and 7 showed how stories were portrayed and how space was allocated in the chosen newspapers. *Guardian and Vanguard* publications did not give reports of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors enough prominence, which was not respectable. In both publications, 30% of the publications were quarter pages, 27% were half pages, 40% were less than quarter pages, and just 3% were full pages. Reading a news article teaches readers not just about a certain topic but also its significance and volume of information. Accordingly, the media's ability to create agendas is based on the type and quantity of print or broadcast space or time allocated to a story, as well as its ranking (McCombs & Shaw, 1972, quoted in Baran & Davis, 2006). Since the

public is assisted by the mass media in determining the most significant topics for debate, any news story that is longer than half a page is seen as true and pertinent. It will be deemed irrelevant to present more information of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors in quarter pages or less because there won't be space for updates and pertinent facts that the public is entitled to.

Furthermore, the format of the media portrayal of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors in both *Guardian and Vanguard* newspapers can be categorised as embezzlement of public funds, diversion of state allocations, money laundering, anti corruption agency investigations (EFCC, ICPC), undisclosed loans and undisclosed assets or wealth and abuse of office amongst others. From the findings in table 14 and 15, the study reveals that the level of coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors in both newspapers is quite low considering the gravity of this issue. The study also revealed in table 10 and 11 that government responses to the coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors is very slow and received relatively little coverage in the chosen publications. Furthermore, it is clear from the discussion above that the study did not place enough emphasis on the significance of stories about the coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors because most of the stories were only quarter pages long or less. This demonstrated that the media had failed to fulfill its responsibility of setting public agendas.

#### **4.2.4 Research Question 4: What was the genre of the stories in the select newspapers?**

Although *Guardian and Vanguard newspapers* employed a variety of genres to deliver their stories, the analysis was centered on the story categories chosen for this study. Straight news, features, editorials, cartoons, opinion pieces, and advertisements are among the categories. With a total of 36%, the straight news received more coverage than the others in both newspapers. While editorial and opinion received 20% and 14% of the overall coverage, respectively, feature pieces received 28%. Ads did not receive any kind of attention, and cartoon pieces did not receive enough coverage. In line with Ochonogor & Hyacinth (2011, p.363), who claim that serious and current events are typically given straight news treatment, it is necessary to report the coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors as straight news to highlight the significance of the story given the mass media's agenda-setting role as the medium that "paints the picture in our head.". However, straight news has its own disadvantage in the sense that it pays little attention to individuals view about the issue.

Straight news reports do not contain any form of contributions, interpretations or any information outside what has happened and the way it happened. But the editorial, features and opinion are written and published to represent the voice of individuals in the society. This is also in alignment with Alfred, Ogwo & Ekwueme's (2017) postulation that the dominance of straight

news in newspapers coverage implies that the correlation function, which is the interpretative role of the press, was not really dealt with because interpretative genres such as features, opinions and in-depth news analysis were not recognised. The use of more of the other genres would have created a balance and helped the reader to be better informed from the write up of other opinion articles which would have given more factual and updated information on the issue. From the above study, it was also revealed that the media paid less attention to the opinion of the public on the coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors. This however reveals poor engagement of the public as they cannot express themselves as it concerns this issue. Considering the level of coverage given to the issue, the role the media played was not commendable as they only portray what they feel the public should know leaving delicate issues uncovered. This resonates with the fact the media has failed in its role as a watchdog to the society.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5. 1 Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine Newspaper Coverage of Alleged Financial Misappropriation by Ex-Governors. To ensure that the study was appropriately carried out, the content analysis method was used alongside the manifest content of *Guardian* and *Vanguard* newspapers were studied in relations to the topic. The study focused on 65 sample size that was determined using the Cochran's formula. Also the quantitative method of analysis was adopted for the purpose of this study using descriptive statistic stools which include tables and simple percentage to present and analyse the data collated from the study. The objectives of the study, were to examine the level of frequency given to the coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors in *Guardian* and *Vanguard* newspapers. The study was also guided to ascertain the prominence given to stories on alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors in the select newspapers and to examine the genre and format of the stories on alleged financial misappropriation in the select newspapers. From the data gathered in the select newspapers, the following were the findings of the study;

1. Print media organisations did not give enough prominence to the coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors as majority of the stories were reported in the inside pages of the select newspapers and by

this, the media has failed in its agenda setting role of elevating issues in the mind of the public.

2. Majority of stories in the chosen newspapers appeared as straight news stories. The others like features and editorials were not so high compared to the level at which straight news appeared. Opinion on the other hand was given a very low coverage as a result, individuals and members of the society were not given the opportunity to express their view on the issue hence, the press failed in its correlation function. Also, interpretative genres such as opinions and in-depth news analysis were not fully recognised making interpretation of the issue and opinions of the public not taken into consideration. This implies that in the reportage of issues relating to alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors, the media paid less attention to the views and opinions of the public
3. The amount of space given by the chosen newspapers in news on the coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors was very low as majority of the news were published in quarter pages and less than quarter pages of the select newspapers. This indicates that media organisation do not perceive the issue as what ought to be of relevance to the county and this has in turn affected how government and individuals in the society perceive the issue

4. The frequency of coverage given by the selected newspapers on the coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors was very low as both newspapers did not pay much attention to this topic considering the level at which this issue is very important.
5. Government responses to the coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors is not commendable. This is because, the study had a very low reportage of government response on the issue.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

The results from the study revealed the extent to which print media covers alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors. Data from this study shown that, the level of coverage given by the print media was very low. From the above study, the level of prominence given to the coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors was very low. From the data presented in the study, the Inside pages carried the most of the study's reporting, with the front pages coming in second. Given that most of the articles were detailed on the interior pages, this suggests that the concerns were not given much attention. Furthermore, the majority of the coverage space was devoted to straight news, which was also the genre that was employed the most in the research. However, more interpretive genres outside of pure reporting may have been used to tell stories about the coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors

in a fair manner. Given the significance of the topic under discussion and the extent to which it has impacted society, newspapers should publish additional genres such as editorials, features, and views to encourage public expression. The study also showed that prominence was not given enough attention. This is incorrect given how deeply ingrained the problem is in the county's growth and economy. Nevertheless, the analysis of newspaper coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors by the national newspapers, *Guardian and Vanguard* effectively demonstrates that the media is fulfilling their job as the watchdog, even in spite of the few shortcomings from the print media. This study has therefore established that, despite the fact that the print media fulfills its function as the fourth estate realm, it does not convey the news in a fair manner; yet, the overall coverage is praiseworthy due to its coverage of the problem in the selected newspapers.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

In light of the research findings, the following suggestions were put forth:

- i. Newspapers should improve and frequently focus more on the coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors. This will enable the public know what is happening in the society as the level at which newspaper cover news stories is very low. Detailed account on alleged

financial misappropriation by ex governors should be consistently reported by the print media

- ii. Newspapers should give more prominence to issues of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors using their front pages to place emphasis on the relevance of the issue. This will enable news readers attach corresponding importance to such issues.
- iii. The print media should allocate more space to news on the coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors instead of focusing only on issues about politics, business and economy. This is based on the fact that the findings of the study reveals that enough space was not provided to news relating to stories of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors.
- iv. The issue of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors should receive more attention from the print media as part of their social responsibility to the public. The media ought to report in an ethical manner, hence, the media should provide the clearest, most factual and most balanced information on the coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors. The print media should ensure to assign journalist to cover and report unbiased issues regarding alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors.

- v. The government and security agencies should put more efforts in eradicating the menace of alleged financial misappropriation and dealing with anyone caught perpetuating in the act. Government should ensure that those involved should not go unpunished by the law as this will help reduce and evenly eradicate the issue of alleged financial misappropriation by ex governors.

#### **5.4 Limitations of the Study**

During the course of this study, there were challenges in accessing the necessary data. Firstly, there were information constraint. Some source materials documents and sites required by the researcher were not accessible. Also, In the process of carrying out the research, it was discovered that some documents required by the researcher were not available hence the researcher has to go an extra mile using different forms of variables in searching for information that will aid the research work. In addition, when the researcher attempted to collect information from the Library in Ekehuan campus, they do not have a newspaper type and enough newspapers that covered the specific period of coverage for the study. This resulted her going to the Edo State library, where she eventually found the newspapers and the date that covered the duration she intends studying.

## APPENDIX

### CODING SHEET

Guardian and Vanguard Coverage of alleged financial misappropriation by Ex-Governors.

<b>Unit of Analysis</b>	<b>Content Categories</b>	<b>Codes</b>
Frequency	July	1
	August	2
	September	3
Format	Features	4
	Cartoons	5
	Editorials	6
	Straight news	7
	Opinion	8
	Advertorials	9
Prominence	Front page	10
	Inside page	11
	Back page	12
Magnitude	Full page	13
	Half page	14
	Quarter page	15
	Less than quarter page	16
Frame	Political frame	17
	Economic frame	18
	Explanatory frame	19
	Appeal frame	20
	Government response frame	21

	Support frame	22
	Suggestion frame	23
	Attack or opposing frame	24
	Legal frame	25
Issues arising	Embezzlement of public funds	26
	Diversion of state allocations	27
	Mismanagement of public resources	28
	Bribery and corruption	29
	Abuse of office	30
	Illegal award of contracts	31
	Money laundering	32
	Inflated budgets and expenditures	33
	Unaccounted loans and undisclosed assets or wealth	34
	Court cases and prosecutions	35
	Political interference in investigations	36
	Whistleblower allegations	37
	Impact on state development projects	38
	Public outcry and reactions	39
	Anti -corruption agency investigations (EFCC, ICPC)	40
	Defensive claims by ex governors	41
	Media bias or neutrality	42
	Delays in judicial processes	43
		44
Direction	Positive	45
	Negative	46
	Neutral	47

## GUARDIAN AND VANGUARD COVERAGE OF ALLEGED FINANCIAL MISAPPROPRIATION BY EX GOVERNORS

Days Jul	Frequency			Format					Prominence			Magnitude				Frame									Issues Arising						Direction						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35		
1 Mon																																					
3 Wed																																					
5 Fri																																					
8 Mon																																					
10 Wed																																					
12 Fri																																					
22 Mon																																					
24 Wed																																					
26 Fri																																					
29 Mon																																					
31 Wed																																					
<b>AUG</b>	<b>2024</b>																																				
5 Mon																																					
7 Wed																																					
9 Fri																																					
12 Mon																																					
14 Wed																																					
16 Fri																																					
19 Mon																																					
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26 Mon																																					
28 Wed																																					
30 Fri																																					
<b>Sept</b>	<b>2024</b>																																				
9 Mon																																					
11 Wed																																					
13 Fri																																					
16 Mon																																					
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27 Fri																																					
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