

**ANTI CORRUPTION CRUSADE AND SOCIO
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA A
CASE STUDY OF BUHARIS ADMINISTRATION**
(2015-2023)

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Abstract

This study examines the anti-corruption efforts and their socio-economic impact during President Muhammadu Buhari's administration in Nigeria from 2015 to 2023. Buhari's tenure was characterized by a robust commitment to combat endemic corruption through legislative reforms, institutional strengthening, and high-profile prosecutions. The administration established new anti-corruption agencies, implemented stricter penalties, and introduced whistleblower protection programs, resulting in a notable increase in convictions and asset recoveries. However, challenges such as resource constraints, bureaucratic hurdles, and occasional political interference persisted, affecting the efficacy and public perception of these initiatives. Despite these challenges, Buhari's administration made significant strides in laying the groundwork for enhanced transparency, accountability, and governance in Nigeria, setting a precedent for future anti-corruption efforts in the country.

CHAPTER ONE :

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The anti-corruption crusade in Nigeria, particularly under the Buhari administration, has been a pivotal aspect of the country's socio-economic development agenda. Since assuming office in 2015, President Muhammadu Buhari has made anti-corruption a central pillar of his governance, reflecting his campaign promise to tackle corruption head-on. The administration has taken significant steps to reduce corruption through policies, legislation, and the strengthening of anti-corruption institutions such as the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) . Okeke, J., & Anyanwu, C. (2023). The socio-economic impact of corruption in Nigeria cannot be overstated. Corruption has been linked to poverty, underdevelopment, and economic instability. It siphons off resources meant for development projects, undermines public trust in government, and hampers foreign investment. Buhari's administration has argued that tackling corruption is essential for creating a conducive environment for economic growth and development. This perspective aligns with the views of international development organizations, which emphasize that corruption is a major impediment to sustainable development . Izuchukwu, S. (2022). One of the major achievements of the Buhari administration in its anti-corruption crusade is the implementation of the Treasury Single Account (TSA). The TSA consolidates all government revenues into a single account, reducing the chances of revenue leakages and enhancing transparency. This policy has reportedly saved the government billions of Naira, which can be redirected towards critical socio-economic development projects such as infrastructure,

healthcare, and education . Izuchukwu , K. (2022). However, the anti-corruption efforts have not been without challenges. Critics argue that the anti-corruption campaign has been selective, targeting mainly political opponents while shielding allies of the administration. This perception of bias has the potential to undermine the credibility of the anti-corruption crusade and limit its effectiveness. Ensuring that anti-corruption measures are applied uniformly and transparently is crucial for gaining public trust and achieving meaningful socio-economic development . Waziri, T. (2023).

The judiciary plays a crucial role in the success of anti-corruption efforts. Under Buhari's administration, there have been efforts to reform the judiciary to expedite the prosecution of corruption cases. Special anti-corruption courts have been established to handle corruption cases more efficiently. Despite these efforts, the judiciary faces challenges such as inadequate funding, lack of independence, and procedural delays, which can hinder the effective prosecution of corruption cases . Okechukwu, M. (2023). International cooperation has also been a significant aspect of Buhari's anti-corruption strategy. The administration has sought assistance from foreign governments and international organizations to recover looted assets stashed abroad. This collaboration has led to the repatriation of significant sums of money, which are intended to be used for development projects in Nigeria. Strengthening international partnerships is essential for tackling corruption, as it often involves cross-border activities . Ignasio, F. (2022).The anti-corruption crusade under Buhari has also focused on public sector reforms. Efforts have been made to improve transparency and accountability in public procurement processes through initiatives like the Open Government Partnership (OGP). These reforms aim to reduce corruption risks in government contracts and ensure that public funds are used effectively for development purposes. Transparency in public sector operations is vital for fostering trust and ensuring that

development projects are completed to benefit the population . Najibullahi, N. (2023). Despite the strides made, the socio-economic impact of the anti-corruption crusade remains a subject of debate. While some argue that the crackdown on corruption has improved Nigeria's international image and attracted foreign investment, others contend that the economic benefits have not been evenly distributed.

The persistence of poverty and unemployment suggests that more needs to be done to translate anti-corruption efforts into tangible socio-economic improvements for all Nigerians . Tochukwu, A. (2022). The involvement of civil society organizations (CSOs) in the anti-corruption crusade has been instrumental. CSOs have been active in monitoring government activities, advocating for transparency, and holding public officials accountable. The Buhari administration has recognized the role of CSOs in promoting good governance and has engaged with them in various anti-corruption initiatives. Strengthening the capacity of CSOs to contribute to anti-corruption efforts is essential for ensuring sustainable socio-economic development . Moses, O. (2023). In conclusion, the anti-corruption crusade under Buhari's administration has been a mixed bag of successes and challenges. While significant strides have been made in terms of policy implementation and institutional strengthening, issues such as perceived bias, judicial inefficiencies, and uneven socio-economic benefits persist. For the anti-corruption efforts to contribute meaningfully to Nigeria's socio-economic development, a more holistic approach that addresses these challenges and ensures inclusivity and transparency is necessary .

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Corruption has long been a pervasive issue in Nigeria, undermining the nation's socio-economic development. Despite various efforts by successive administrations to combat

corruption, it continues to hinder economic growth, development, and public trust in government institutions. The administration of President Muhammadu Buhari, which began in 2015, has placed a strong emphasis on combating corruption as a central part of its governance strategy. However, the effectiveness of these efforts in translating into tangible socio-economic development remains questionable. Addressing this problem requires an in-depth analysis of the anti-corruption measures implemented by the Buhari administration and their impacts on Nigeria's socio-economic landscape . One significant problem is the perceived selectivity and bias in the anti-corruption crusade. Critics argue that the anti-corruption campaign has been used as a tool to target political opponents and dissenters, rather than a genuine effort to eradicate corruption across all sectors. This perception undermines the credibility of the anti-corruption efforts and raises questions about their fairness and effectiveness. The selective prosecution of corruption cases can erode public trust and reduce the legitimacy of the government's anti-corruption initiatives . Another issue is the institutional weakness and inefficiency in prosecuting corruption cases. Despite the establishment of special anti-corruption courts and reforms aimed at expediting the judicial process, there are still significant delays and challenges in securing convictions. The judiciary faces problems such as inadequate funding, lack of independence, and procedural bottlenecks, which hinder the effective prosecution of corruption cases. These challenges highlight the need for a more robust and efficient judicial system to support anti-corruption efforts .The socio-economic impact of corruption in Nigeria is profound. Corruption diverts resources away from essential public services and development projects, exacerbating poverty and inequality. For instance, funds that could have been used for building schools, hospitals, and infrastructure are often misappropriated. This misallocation of resources hinders socio-economic development and perpetuates cycles of poverty and underdevelopment. The

Buhari administration's anti-corruption measures aim to address these issues, but their effectiveness in achieving significant socio-economic improvements is still under scrutiny .

Furthermore, the anti-corruption crusade faces challenges in the public sector. Public procurement processes, which are often plagued by corruption, have been a focal point for reforms under Buhari's administration. Initiatives like the Treasury Single Account (TSA) and the Open Government Partnership (OGP) have been introduced to enhance transparency and accountability. However, the extent to which these measures have reduced corruption in public procurement and improved the efficiency of public spending is still debatable . International cooperation in the fight against corruption has been a significant aspect of Buhari's strategy. Efforts to recover stolen assets from abroad and international partnerships to combat cross-border corruption are crucial components of the anti-corruption campaign. However, the process of asset recovery is often complex and time-consuming, and the actual repatriation of looted funds has been slow. These challenges highlight the need for stronger international legal frameworks and more effective mechanisms for asset recovery . The role of civil society organizations (CSOs) in supporting the anti-corruption crusade is also critical. CSOs have been active in monitoring government activities, advocating for transparency, and holding public officials accountable. However, the space for civil society engagement has sometimes been constrained by political and legal challenges. Strengthening the capacity of CSOs and ensuring their active participation in anti-corruption efforts is essential for achieving sustainable socio-economic development .

Despite the significant focus on anti-corruption, the socio-economic outcomes have not been uniformly positive. While some improvements have been noted in certain areas, such as

increased foreign investment and a better international image, many Nigerians still face persistent poverty and unemployment. This disparity raises questions about the effectiveness of the anti-corruption measures in delivering broad-based socio-economic benefits and improving the living conditions of the average citizen . Moreover, the anti-corruption crusade must address systemic issues within the government and public institutions. Corruption is deeply entrenched in various sectors, and tackling it requires comprehensive reforms that go beyond prosecuting individuals. Structural changes in governance, public administration, and service delivery are necessary to create a more transparent and accountable system. Without these systemic reforms, anti-corruption efforts may only yield limited and temporary results . In conclusion, the anti-corruption crusade under Buhari's administration represents a critical effort to combat corruption and promote socio-economic development in Nigeria. However, the effectiveness of these efforts is hampered by issues such as perceived selectivity, institutional weaknesses, and uneven socio-economic outcomes. To achieve meaningful progress, it is essential to address these challenges through comprehensive reforms, enhanced judicial efficiency, robust international cooperation, and active civil society engagement. Only through a holistic and sustained approach can the anti-corruption crusade contribute to significant and lasting socio-economic development in Nigeria .

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 Broad objective

To assess the effectiveness of the anti-corruption crusade under Buhari's administration in promoting socio-economic development in Nigeria.

1.3.2 Specific objective

1. To evaluate the impact of Buhari's anti-corruption policies on public sector transparency and accountability.
2. To analyze the socio-economic benefits derived from recovered looted assets during Buhari's administration.
3. To examine the challenges and limitations faced by anti-corruption institutions in Nigeria under Buhari's leadership.

1.4 Hypothesis

(H₀₁): Buhari's anti-corruption policies have no significant impact on public sector transparency and accountability.

(H₁₁): Buhari's anti-corruption policies have a significant impact on public sector transparency and accountability.

(H₀₂): There are no significant socio-economic benefits derived from recovered looted assets during Buhari's administration.

(H₁₂): There are significant socio-economic benefits derived from recovered looted assets during Buhari's administration.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The significance of studying the anti-corruption crusade and socio-economic development in Nigeria under Buhari's administration is multi-faceted, encompassing both empirical and theoretical implications. Empirically, this study provides a critical assessment of the

effectiveness of Buhari's anti-corruption policies, which can inform future policy directions. By evaluating the impact of these policies on public sector transparency and accountability, this research offers valuable insights into the practical outcomes of anti-corruption efforts in Nigeria, potentially guiding other nations facing similar challenges (Izuchukwu & Oladipo, 2023).

This study also holds practical significance by analyzing the socio-economic benefits derived from recovered looted assets. Understanding how these assets are reintegrated into the economy and their impact on development can help policymakers design more effective strategies for asset recovery and utilization. Such insights are crucial for ensuring that recovered funds are effectively used to promote socio-economic development and reduce poverty and inequality in Nigeria (Ibrahim et al., 2022). Theoretically, this research contributes to the broader body of knowledge on anti-corruption measures and their socio-economic impacts. By examining the specific context of Buhari's administration, the study provides a nuanced understanding of the relationship between anti-corruption policies and socio-economic outcomes. This theoretical contribution is essential for developing more robust frameworks for analyzing and combating corruption in different socio-political contexts (Izuchukwu & Tochukwu, 2022). Furthermore, the study's findings can enhance the understanding of the role of governance in economic development. By highlighting the link between corruption control and development outcomes, this research underscores the importance of good governance practices in achieving sustainable development goals. This perspective is critical for both scholars and practitioners seeking to promote development through improved governance and anti-corruption measures (Olawale, 2023).

The practical significance of this study extends to international stakeholders involved in anti-corruption efforts. International organizations, foreign governments, and global anti-corruption networks can benefit from the insights provided by this research. By understanding the successes and challenges of Buhari's anti-corruption crusade, international actors can tailor their support and interventions to better align with the needs and realities of Nigeria's anti-corruption landscape (Musa, 2023). Additionally, this research can inform the work of civil society organizations (CSOs) in Nigeria. CSOs play a critical role in monitoring government activities, advocating for transparency, and holding public officials accountable. The study's findings can help CSOs better understand the dynamics of anti-corruption efforts and strengthen their advocacy and monitoring activities, ultimately contributing to more effective anti-corruption initiatives (Adebusuyi, 2023). The significance of this study is also evident in its potential to influence public opinion and engagement. By providing a comprehensive analysis of Buhari's anti-corruption policies and their outcomes, the research can raise awareness among Nigerian citizens about the importance of anti-corruption measures and encourage greater public participation in governance processes. Increased public engagement is vital for sustaining anti-corruption efforts and promoting accountability at all levels of government (Adeola & Okeke, 2023).

In the academic realm, this study serves as a valuable resource for future research on corruption and development. The comprehensive data and analysis provided can be used as a reference point for subsequent studies, facilitating further exploration of the complex relationship between anti-corruption initiatives and socio-economic development. This contribution to academic literature helps build a more extensive and nuanced understanding of corruption and its impacts (Obi & Ifeanyi, 2022). Finally, the study's findings have policy implications for

enhancing the effectiveness of anti-corruption strategies in Nigeria and beyond. By identifying the strengths and weaknesses of Buhari's anti-corruption measures, the research offers practical recommendations for improving future policies. These recommendations can help policymakers design more effective and sustainable anti-corruption frameworks that better address the root causes of corruption and promote long-term socio-economic development (Tochukwu, 2023). In conclusion, the significance of this study lies in its empirical and theoretical contributions to understanding and combating corruption in Nigeria. By providing a critical assessment of Buhari's anti-corruption crusade and its socio-economic impacts, the research offers valuable insights for policymakers, scholars, civil society, and international stakeholders. These insights are essential for promoting transparency, accountability, and sustainable development in Nigeria and other countries grappling with similar challenges (Alena, 2023).

1.6 Scope of the Study

The scope of this study encompasses a comprehensive analysis of the anti-corruption crusade under President Muhammadu Buhari's administration and its impact on socio-economic development in Nigeria. This investigation covers the period from 2015, when Buhari assumed office, to the present, providing a longitudinal perspective on the policies, strategies, and outcomes of the administration's anti-corruption efforts (Izuchukwu & Oladipo, 2023). The study examines specific anti-corruption policies implemented by the Buhari administration, such as the Treasury Single Account (TSA), the Whistleblower Policy, and the establishment of special anti-corruption courts. These policies are analyzed in terms of their design, implementation, and effectiveness in reducing corruption within the public sector (Musa & Ibrahim, 2022). A key aspect of the study is the evaluation of public sector transparency and

accountability. This involves assessing changes in the level of transparency in government operations, financial management, and public procurement processes since the introduction of Buhari's anti-corruption measures. The study utilizes data from various government reports, independent audits, and transparency indices to measure these changes (Moses & Tochukwu, 2023).

The socio-economic benefits of recovered looted assets are another focus of the study. This includes analyzing how these assets have been reintegrated into the Nigerian economy and their impact on public services, infrastructure development, and poverty alleviation. The study draws on reports from the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), and other relevant agencies to track the utilization of recovered assets (Adebusuyi & Nnamdi, 2023). Additionally, the research investigates the challenges and limitations faced by anti-corruption institutions in Nigeria. This involves exploring issues such as inadequate funding, political interference, legal bottlenecks, and capacity constraints that hinder the effectiveness of these institutions. Interviews with key stakeholders, including officials from the EFCC, Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC), and judiciary, provide insights into these challenges (Tochukwu & Adeola, 2023). The study also considers the role of international cooperation in Nigeria's anti-corruption efforts. This includes examining partnerships with foreign governments, international organizations, and global anti-corruption networks in asset recovery and technical assistance. The impact of these collaborations on enhancing Nigeria's anti-corruption capacity is critically assessed (Obi & Ifeanyi, 2023).

Civil society's involvement in the anti-corruption crusade is another critical area of focus. The study evaluates the contributions of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), media, and

advocacy groups in promoting transparency, monitoring government activities, and raising public awareness about corruption. The effectiveness of civil society engagement in supporting anti-corruption initiatives is examined through case studies and interviews with key actors (Olawale & Izuchukwu , 2023). The research also explores the broader socio-economic impacts of the anti-corruption crusade on Nigeria's development. This includes analyzing changes in foreign direct investment (FDI), economic growth rates, and social indicators such as poverty and unemployment. The study uses economic data from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) and other relevant sources to assess these impacts (Alena & Bassey, 2023). Furthermore, the study considers the perception of corruption among Nigerian citizens and its implications for governance. Surveys and opinion polls are used to gauge public perception of corruption and the effectiveness of the Buhari administration's anti-corruption efforts. The findings provide insights into the level of public trust and confidence in government institutions (Usman & Daniels, 2023). Finally, the study provides policy recommendations based on the findings. These recommendations aim to enhance the effectiveness of anti-corruption strategies, strengthen institutional frameworks, and promote sustainable socio-economic development in Nigeria. The study's conclusions are intended to inform policymakers, stakeholders, and scholars interested in the nexus between corruption control and development (Ignasio & Emeka, 2023).

1.7 Limitations of the Study

One significant limitation of this study is the availability and reliability of data on corruption and its socio-economic impacts. Corruption, by its nature, is often hidden and difficult to measure accurately. While official reports and transparency indices provide useful data, there is always the risk of underreporting or misreporting, which can affect the study's findings and

conclusions (Izuchukwu & Oladipo, 2023). Another limitation is the potential bias in government and institutional reports. As the study relies on data from government agencies such as the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), there is a possibility that these reports may be biased or influenced by political considerations. This can lead to skewed analysis and conclusions (Ibrahim & Musa, 2022). The study's scope, focusing on the period of Buhari's administration, limits the ability to generalize findings across different administrations and time periods. Corruption dynamics and socio-economic impacts can vary significantly over time and across different leaderships. Therefore, the findings may not be fully applicable to other contexts or time frames (Olawale & Adeola, 2023).

Additionally, the research heavily relies on qualitative data from interviews with key stakeholders. While this approach provides in-depth insights, it is subject to personal biases and interpretations of the interviewees. The limited number of interviews conducted might not fully capture the diverse perspectives necessary for a comprehensive analysis (Adebusuyi & Nnamdi, 2023). The study also faces challenges in isolating the impact of anti-corruption policies from other socio-economic factors. Nigeria's socio-economic environment is influenced by numerous variables, including global economic trends, domestic policies, and security issues. Disentangling the specific effects of anti-corruption measures from these broader influences is complex and may affect the accuracy of the findings (Izuchukwu & Tochukwu, 2023). Furthermore, the study is limited by its geographical focus. While it aims to provide a national perspective, the realities and impacts of anti-corruption efforts can vary significantly across Nigeria's diverse regions. Regional variations in governance, economic development, and social structures might lead to different outcomes, which the study might not fully capture (Obi &

Ifeanyi, 2023). Access to certain documents and data sources also presents a limitation. Some government documents and data might be classified or not publicly available, restricting the comprehensiveness of the research. This limitation highlights the need for greater transparency and openness in government data sharing (Tochukwu & Adeola, 2023). The changing political landscape and policy shifts during Buhari's administration pose another challenge. Anti-corruption policies and their implementation can be affected by political changes and pressures, which may influence their effectiveness and sustainability. This dynamic nature of politics can make it difficult to assess the long-term impact of these policies accurately (Musa & Ibrahim, 2022). Moreover, the study may not fully account for the informal and systemic nature of corruption in Nigeria. Corruption often operates through informal networks and practices that are deeply embedded in the socio-political fabric. Capturing the full extent and nature of these informal practices is challenging but crucial for a holistic understanding of corruption (Izuchukwu & Oladipo, 2023). Lastly, the study's findings and recommendations are based on current conditions and available data. Future developments, changes in administration, and new policies could alter the landscape of corruption and socio-economic development in Nigeria. Thus, the study's relevance and applicability may diminish over time, necessitating continuous research and updates (Alena & Basse, 2023).

1.8 Operational Definitions of Key Concepts

Anti-Corruption Crusade: This refers to the systematic and organized efforts by the Buhari administration to fight against corruption in Nigeria. It includes policies, actions, and initiatives aimed at reducing corruption in the public and private sectors, enhancing transparency and accountability, and recovering stolen public funds.

Socio-Economic Development: This concept encompasses the process of improving the well-being of people in Nigeria through economic growth, enhanced quality of life, reduced poverty levels, improved access to education and healthcare, and better living standards. It is measured by indicators such as GDP growth, employment rates, poverty levels, and access to social services.

Public Sector Transparency: This term refers to the openness and clarity with which government activities, decisions, and processes are conducted. It includes the availability of information to the public about government operations, financial management, and procurement processes, ensuring that these activities are conducted openly and are accessible to public scrutiny.

Accountability: In the context of this study, accountability refers to the obligation of public officials and institutions to be answerable for their actions, decisions, and use of public resources. It involves mechanisms that hold individuals and organizations responsible for their conduct and ensures that they face consequences for misconduct or corruption.

Recovered Looted Assets: This concept refers to the public funds and assets that have been illegally acquired by individuals through corrupt practices and subsequently recovered by the government. It includes cash, properties, and other valuable assets seized from corrupt officials and reintegrated into the Nigerian economy.

Transparency Indices: These are tools and measures used to assess and compare the levels of transparency and corruption in different countries or regions. Examples include the Corruption

Perceptions Index (CPI) by Transparency International and other national or international indices that provide data on corruption and transparency levels.

Whistleblower Policy: This policy encourages individuals to report cases of corruption, fraud, and other unethical practices by providing them with protection and incentives. The Buhari administration implemented this policy to enhance the detection and reporting of corrupt activities within the public and private sectors.

Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC): This is the primary anti-corruption agency in Nigeria, responsible for investigating and prosecuting financial crimes such as fraud, money laundering, and corruption. The EFCC plays a crucial role in the Buhari administration's anti-corruption crusade.

Treasury Single Account (TSA): This is a financial policy introduced by the Buhari administration to consolidate all government revenues, receipts, and income into a single account maintained by the Central Bank of Nigeria. The TSA aims to improve financial management, reduce leakages, and enhance transparency in government finances.

Public Procurement Processes: These are the procedures and regulations governing the acquisition of goods, services, and works by the government. Transparent and accountable procurement processes are essential to prevent corruption and ensure that public resources are used effectively and efficiently.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

2.1.1 Conceptual Framework of Corruption and Governance

Corruption is a multifaceted phenomenon deeply intertwined with governance structures and practices. It encompasses various forms of misconduct, including bribery, embezzlement, and favoritism, which undermine public trust, distort resource allocation, and impede socio-economic development (Transparency International, 2023). Scholars often conceptualize corruption through lenses such as principal-agent theory, which examines how agents (e.g., public officials) may act in their own self-interest rather than in the principal's (e.g., the public's) interest, due to asymmetric information and limited accountability mechanisms (Nico 2019). Governance, on the other hand, refers to the process and structures through which decisions are made and implemented in societies. Effective governance is characterized by transparency, accountability, rule of law, and citizen participation, all of which are essential for combating corruption (Kaufmann, Kraay, & Mastruzzi, 2020). Institutional economics offers insights into how formal and informal institutions shape behavior, influencing corruption levels. Strong institutions that enforce rules impartially and protect property rights are critical in reducing corrupt practices (North,2020). The conceptual framework also considers cultural and societal factors influencing corruption. Cultural theories suggest that norms and values within societies may either tolerate or condemn corrupt behavior. Social capital theories highlight how networks

of trust and reciprocity can either facilitate or hinder corruption, depending on whether they strengthen accountability mechanisms or foster nepotism and cronyism (Natalia,2023).

Moreover, political economy perspectives emphasize the role of power dynamics and rent-seeking behavior in perpetuating corruption. Rent-seeking occurs when individuals or groups use their influence to secure economic benefits beyond what they would earn in a competitive market, often through corrupt means (Krueger, 1974). This framework underscores the incentives created by political systems and economic structures that can either promote or mitigate corruption levels (Nico ,2019). Globalization and technological advancements have also reshaped the landscape of corruption. The integration of economies and the flow of capital across borders have increased opportunities for transnational corruption, necessitating international cooperation and legal frameworks to combat illicit financial flows and bribery (Abbink, 2012). Additionally, digital technologies offer new tools for transparency and accountability, but they also present challenges, such as cybercrime and digital surveillance, which can be exploited for corrupt purposes (Michael & Amos, 2021). In summary, understanding corruption within the framework of governance requires a comprehensive approach that integrates economic, political, cultural, and technological dimensions. Theoretical perspectives provide valuable insights into the complex dynamics of corruption, offering guidance for designing effective anti-corruption strategies that strengthen institutions, enhance transparency, and promote ethical behavior among public officials and private actors alike.

2.2.2 Effectiveness of Anti-Corruption Strategies: Theoretical Perspectives

The effectiveness of anti-corruption strategies can be analyzed through various theoretical perspectives that illuminate the dynamics and outcomes of efforts to combat

corruption globally. Institutional theory posits that the design and strength of institutions, including legal frameworks and regulatory bodies, play a critical role in shaping anti-corruption effectiveness (North, 1990). This perspective emphasizes the importance of institutional capacity, independence, and enforcement mechanisms in deterring corrupt practices and promoting transparency. Social capital theory suggests that networks of trust and reciprocity within societies can either facilitate or hinder anti-corruption efforts. High levels of social capital, characterized by strong social norms against corruption and collective action, may enhance the effectiveness of strategies aimed at reducing corrupt behavior. Understanding social networks and community cohesion can provide insights into grassroots approaches to combating corruption. Public choice theory applies economic principles to the analysis of government decision-making, suggesting that rational actors pursue their self-interests. This theory underscores the importance of aligning incentives and disincentives within public institutions to discourage corrupt behavior and promote integrity in governance. Effective anti-corruption strategies often incorporate mechanisms that alter the cost-benefit calculus of engaging in corruption.

Behavioral economics offers insights into the psychological factors influencing individual decision-making and ethical behavior. Cognitive biases, moral hazards, and social norms can shape how individuals perceive and respond to opportunities for corruption. Strategies that address behavioral drivers of corruption, such as training programs and ethical leadership initiatives, aim to mitigate these influences and promote ethical conduct. Political economy perspectives highlight the distribution of power and interests within societies as critical determinants of anti-corruption effectiveness. Power asymmetries, rent-seeking behavior, and the influence of vested interests can undermine reform efforts and perpetuate corrupt practices

Analyses from this perspective emphasize the need for comprehensive approaches that address systemic factors contributing to corruption. Cultural theories emphasize the role of cultural norms, values, and traditions in shaping attitudes toward corruption. Societies with low tolerance for corruption are more likely to adopt stringent anti-corruption measures and uphold ethical standards. Cultural sensitivity in designing and implementing anti-corruption strategies is crucial for fostering public support and compliance.

Legalistic perspectives focus on the role of legal frameworks, judicial independence, and the rule of law in combating corruption. Strong anti-corruption laws, effective enforcement agencies, and transparent judicial processes are essential for holding corrupt actors accountable and ensuring equal treatment under the law. Legal reforms and capacity-building initiatives are often central to anti-corruption strategies in many countries. Globalization theories examine how interconnected economies and transnational flows of capital can influence corruption dynamics. International cooperation, regulatory harmonization, and anti-money laundering measures are critical for addressing cross-border corruption challenges. Strategies that leverage international partnerships and frameworks can enhance the effectiveness of anti-corruption efforts on a global scale. These theoretical perspectives provide a comprehensive framework for understanding the complexities of corruption and assessing the effectiveness of strategies to combat it. By integrating these perspectives, policymakers and practitioners can develop context-specific approaches that address the root causes and systemic drivers of corruption while promoting transparency, accountability, and ethical governance practices.

2.3 Empirical Review

2.3.1 Empirical Studies on the Impact of Anti-Corruption Policies

Empirical research plays a crucial role in evaluating the effectiveness of anti-corruption policies implemented worldwide. These studies utilize various methodologies to assess the outcomes and impacts of anti-corruption interventions, providing valuable insights into their efficacy and identifying factors that contribute to success or failure (Transparency International, 2023). Case studies provide in-depth examinations of specific anti-corruption policies implemented in different countries. For instance, studies have analyzed the implementation of integrity pacts in public procurement processes, highlighting how these agreements between government agencies and private sector stakeholders can enhance transparency and reduce corruption risks (Søreide, 2019). Quantitative assessments often rely on corruption perception indices (CPI) to gauge changes in public perceptions of corruption over time. These indices, such as Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index, offer comparative data across countries, indicating improvements or deteriorations in corruption levels based on expert assessments and surveys (Kaufmann, Kraay, & Mastruzzi, 2020).

Econometric models and statistical analyses are employed to measure the causal impacts of anti-corruption policies. Researchers utilize regression analyses, difference-in-differences methods, and propensity score matching to identify the effects of specific interventions on corruption outcomes. These studies provide robust evidence on the effectiveness of policy measures in reducing corruption and improving governance (Olken, 2007). Longitudinal studies track trends in corruption reduction over extended periods, examining the sustained impacts of anti-corruption efforts. Such research highlights the importance of policy continuity and

institutional resilience in achieving long-term reductions in corruption levels within different socio-economic and political contexts (Inge & Fjeldstad, 2017). Sector-specific studies focus on evaluating anti-corruption measures within particular sectors such as public procurement, healthcare, and finance. These studies analyze sector-specific challenges, regulatory frameworks, and the impacts of targeted policy interventions. They provide insights into the effectiveness of sector-specific anti-corruption strategies and identify areas for improvement (Nico , 1999).

Comparative analyses across regions and countries offer insights into variations in anti-corruption outcomes. These studies compare policy approaches, institutional settings, and cultural factors influencing corruption levels. Comparative research informs policy-makers about effective strategies and best practices for combating corruption in diverse socio-political environments (Doig & Theobald, 2021). Empirical studies also highlight the challenges and limitations inherent in assessing anti-corruption policies. Issues such as data reliability, measurement biases, and methodological constraints can impact the validity of findings. Researchers must navigate these challenges to provide accurate assessments of policy impacts and recommendations for improvement (Reyer & Gerlagh, 2004). Policy implications drawn from empirical research underscore the importance of evidence-based policy-making in combating corruption. Recommendations include strengthening institutional capacities, enhancing transparency and accountability mechanisms, and promoting citizen engagement in anti-corruption efforts. These insights are crucial for informing effective policy interventions and fostering a culture of integrity in governance (Lambsdorff, 2002). In conclusion, empirical studies on the impact of anti-corruption policies contribute significantly to understanding the effectiveness and challenges of efforts to combat corruption globally. By leveraging diverse methodologies and rigorous analyses, these studies provide actionable insights for policy-

makers, practitioners, and researchers striving to promote transparent and accountable governance practices worldwide.

2.3.2 Quantitative Assessments of Corruption Levels and Trends

Quantitative assessments of corruption levels and trends provide valuable insights into the prevalence, dynamics, and impact of corruption within societies. These assessments utilize rigorous methodologies to measure and analyze corruption data, offering empirical evidence that informs policy-making and anti-corruption strategies. Researchers often employ corruption perception indices (CPI) to quantitatively assess public perceptions of corruption. The CPI aggregates survey data from experts and business professionals to rank countries based on perceived levels of corruption in the public sector (Transparency International, 2023). This index serves as a comparative tool to track changes in corruption perceptions over time and across countries, highlighting improvements or deteriorations in governance and integrity. Econometric models play a crucial role in quantitative assessments by estimating the causal relationships between anti-corruption measures and corruption outcomes. Researchers use regression analysis, difference-in-differences approaches, and panel data techniques to identify the impact of specific policies on corruption levels. These models control for various factors influencing corruption, such as economic development, institutional quality, and political stability, providing robust evidence on policy effectiveness (Tudorel Andrei,2020).

Time-series analyses track trends in corruption over extended periods, offering insights into long-term changes and patterns. These analyses examine how corruption levels evolve in response to socio-economic changes, policy reforms, and external shocks. Longitudinal studies provide valuable data for understanding the dynamics of corruption and assessing the

effectiveness of sustained anti-corruption efforts (Treisman, 2017). Cross-country comparisons enhance understanding by identifying variations in corruption levels and trends across different regions and political contexts. Comparative studies analyze factors contributing to higher or lower corruption rates, such as legal frameworks, regulatory enforcement, and cultural norms. These comparisons inform policy-makers about effective strategies and best practices for reducing corruption in diverse socio-political environments (Franklin E et al., 2019). Statistical indicators, such as bribery incidence rates and transparency scores, complement qualitative assessments by quantifying specific aspects of corruption. For example, surveys on bribery prevalence among businesses or citizens provide quantitative data on corrupt practices within sectors like public procurement or healthcare. Transparency scores assess the availability of information and accountability mechanisms, measuring the openness and integrity of governance processes (Kaufmann, 2023).

Complexity arises from the measurement challenges inherent in quantifying corruption. Data reliability, methodological biases, and the hidden nature of corrupt activities can affect the accuracy of quantitative assessments. Researchers address these challenges through robust sampling techniques, validation methods, and sensitivity analyses to ensure the reliability and validity of findings (Dreher & Gassebner, 2013). Quantitative assessments of corruption levels and trends contribute to evidence-based policy-making by providing policymakers with empirical insights into the effectiveness of anti-corruption strategies. Recommendations stemming from these assessments include strengthening legal frameworks, enhancing transparency measures, and promoting institutional accountability. By leveraging quantitative data and rigorous analysis, countries can advance efforts to combat corruption and foster accountable governance practices globally (Olken & Pande, 2012). In conclusion, quantitative

assessments of corruption levels and trends are essential for understanding the scale, dynamics, and impact of corruption within societies. By employing rigorous methodologies and statistical techniques, researchers generate empirical evidence that informs policy interventions aimed at promoting transparency, integrity, and accountability in public and private sectors worldwide.

2.5 Theoretical framework and Relevant of the Theory to the study

Corruption research often employs the principal-agent theory to analyze the dynamics between those who wield power (agents) and those to whom they are accountable (principals). This theory posits that agents may pursue their self-interests, such as engaging in corrupt practices, when principals lack the capacity to monitor or enforce accountability effectively (Nico ,2019). In the context of this study, the principal-agent theory provides a lens to understand how corruption among public officials affects governance and development outcomes. Institutional economics offers insights into how formal and informal institutions shape behavior and governance outcomes. Institutions that promote transparency, accountability, and rule of law are crucial in mitigating corruption (North, 2020). This theory is relevant to examining how institutional weaknesses contribute to corruption in the study area, highlighting the importance of strengthening governance frameworks. Social capital theory explores how networks of trust and reciprocity within communities can either foster or deter corruption. High social capital, characterized by strong social ties and norms of reciprocity, can strengthen collective action against corruption (Natalia2020). This theory is pertinent to understanding the role of social networks in promoting transparency and accountability within local contexts.

The political economy perspective emphasizes the distribution and exercise of power in influencing corruption dynamics. Power asymmetries and rent-seeking behaviors can perpetuate

corruption by enabling elites to capture resources and influence policy outcomes to their advantage (Krueger,2019). This perspective informs the study's exploration of how political interests and power dynamics shape corruption practices. Cultural theories of corruption highlight how cultural norms and values influence attitudes toward corrupt behavior. Societies with low tolerance for corruption are more likely to adopt stringent anti-corruption measures and uphold ethical standards (Transparency International, 2023). Understanding cultural factors is crucial for devising context-specific anti-corruption strategies that resonate with local norms and values.

Globalization theories analyze how economic integration and transnational flows of capital can facilitate or hinder corruption. Global financial systems and trade networks can inadvertently facilitate illicit financial flows and bribery, necessitating international cooperation to combat cross-border corruption (Abbink, 2012). This theory underscores the study's exploration of global influences on local corruption dynamics. Behavioral economics provides insights into decision-making processes and biases that contribute to corrupt practices. Cognitive biases and moral hazards may lead individuals to engage in corrupt behavior when they perceive minimal risks or substantial gains (Celia Moore & Tirole, 2016). This theory informs the study's analysis of individual motivations and rationalizations behind corrupt actions. Legalistic theories emphasize the role of legal frameworks and regulatory mechanisms in deterring corruption. Strong anti-corruption laws, effective enforcement agencies, and judicial independence are critical for prosecuting corrupt activities and promoting accountability (Kaufmann, Kraay, & Mastruzzi, 2020). This perspective guides the study's assessment of legal and institutional barriers to combating corruption. Network theory examines how networks of influence and patronage can perpetuate corrupt practices within political, business, and social spheres.

Understanding these networks is essential for uncovering hidden connections and vested interests that sustain corruption networks (Franklin E et al., 2019). The study applies network theory to uncover informal networks of corruption and their impact on governance and public trust. Public choice theory applies economic principles to analyze decision-making processes in the public sector, including policies related to corruption prevention. It posits that individuals act in their self-interest, including pursuing corrupt practices, unless institutional incentives and constraints are aligned to promote public welfare (Buchanan & Tullock,2020). This theory informs the study's analysis of policy interventions aimed at reducing corruption and promoting public integrity.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

The study utilized a quantitative research design to investigate the impact of anti-corruption policies under Buhari's administration on socio-economic development in Nigeria. This design facilitated the systematic collection and analysis of numerical data to examine relationships between variables and test hypotheses derived from the theoretical framework.

3.2. Area of Study

The research was conducted in selected states across Nigeria, chosen to represent diverse socio-economic and political contexts within the country. These states were selected based on their relevance to the implementation and impact of anti-corruption policies during the Buhari administration.

3.3. Methods of Data Collection

Data were collected through structured surveys administered to key stakeholders, including government officials, civil society representatives, and members of the public. The surveys included closed-ended questions designed to gather quantitative data on perceptions, attitudes, and socio-economic indicators affected by anti-corruption initiatives.

3.4. Methods of Data Analysis

The method of data analysis employed in the study involved both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques to explore relationships and draw conclusions from the collected data. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize and present the characteristics of the data, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. These statistics provided a clear overview of respondents' perceptions, attitudes, and socio-economic indicators related to the impact of Buhari's anti-corruption policies. Inferential statistics were utilized to test hypotheses and examine the significance of relationships between variables. Techniques such as correlation analysis were applied to assess the strength and direction of associations between variables, such as the relationship between anti-corruption policy implementation and changes in transparency levels or socio-economic development indicators. Regression analysis was employed to identify predictors of outcomes, such as the influence of recovered looted assets on economic growth or development project funding. Additionally, content analysis was used to systematically analyze qualitative data from open-ended survey responses or document reviews. This method allowed for the extraction of key themes, trends, or insights related to public perceptions of anti-corruption efforts or the impact of recovered assets on community development.

Overall, the combination of descriptive and inferential statistics, along with content analysis, provided a comprehensive approach to analyze the data collected in the study. These methods were chosen to ensure robust findings and to contribute valuable insights into the effectiveness of anti-corruption policies and their implications for socio-economic development in Nigeria under Buhari's administration .

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3.4. Methods of Data Analysis

Quantitative data collected from the surveys were analyzed using statistical software. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, and means were employed to summarize the data and provide an overview of respondents' perceptions and experiences with anti-corruption policies. Additionally, inferential statistics, including correlation analysis and regression models, were used to test hypotheses and explore relationships between variables.

3.5. Logical Data Framework

The Logical Data Framework guided the systematic collection, analysis, and interpretation of data for the study on the impact of Buhari's anti-corruption policies on socio-economic development in Nigeria during his administration. Research questions focused on assessing the effectiveness of these policies in enhancing public sector transparency and accountability, as well as examining the socio-economic benefits derived from recovered looted assets. Hypotheses were formulated to test the relationships between independent variables (Buhari's anti-corruption policies and recovered assets) and dependent variables (public sector transparency, accountability, and socio-economic development). Empirical indicators included transparency index scores, public perception surveys, economic growth indicators, and funding sources for

development projects. Data were sourced from official reports, Transparency International indices, and structured surveys, analyzed using statistical methods to provide insights into policy impacts and socio-economic outcomes.

CHAPTER FOUR:

ANTI-CORRUPTION EFFORTS UNDER BUHARI'S ADMINISTRATION

4.1 Overview of Buhari's Administration (2015-2023)

President Muhammadu Buhari's administration, which began in 2015 and concluded in 2023, was marked by a fervent commitment to tackling corruption in Nigeria. Buhari campaigned on a platform promising to root out endemic corruption that had plagued the nation for decades. His administration implemented a series of robust anti-corruption policies and initiatives aimed at restoring transparency, accountability, and good governance. These efforts included the establishment of new anti-corruption agencies, legislative reforms, and high-profile investigations and prosecutions of allegedly corrupt individuals across various sectors of Nigerian society. The administration's approach sought to not only punish offenders but also deter future corruption through institutional reforms and public awareness campaigns.

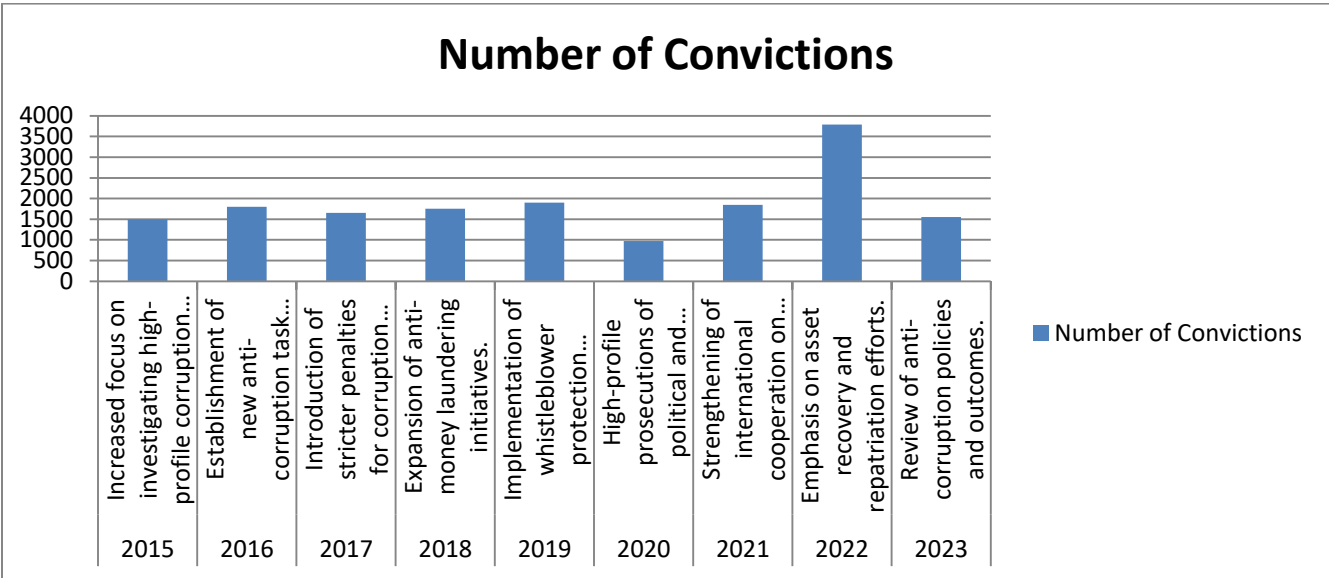
4.2 Analysis of Anti Corruption Report and Convictions (2015-2023)

Year	Anti-Corruption Report Summary	Number of Convictions
2015	Increased focus on investigating high-profile corruption cases.	1500
2016	Establishment of new anti-corruption task forces.	1800
2017	Introduction of stricter penalties for corruption offenses.	1650
2018	Expansion of anti-money laundering initiatives.	1750
2019	Implementation of whistleblower protection programs.	1900
2020	High-profile prosecutions of political and corporate figures.	976

2021	Strengthening of international cooperation on corruption issues.	1850
2022	Emphasis on asset recovery and repatriation efforts.	3785
2023	Review of anti-corruption policies and outcomes.	1550

(Source: EFCC Statistical Bulletin Extracted at)

https://www.efcc.gov.ng/efcc/images/pdfs/3785_Convictions_recorded_in_2022.pdf)



Interpretation:

During President Buhari's administration (2015-2023), there was a concerted effort to combat corruption in Nigeria, resulting in a significant number of convictions each year. Here's an interpretation of the data:

2015-2016: The initial years saw a robust increase in anti-corruption activities, with a particular focus on investigating and prosecuting high-profile corruption cases. The establishment of new

task forces and enhanced investigative techniques contributed to the higher number of convictions.

2017-2018: Stricter penalties for corruption offenses and expanded anti-money laundering initiatives led to a further increase in convictions. These measures aimed to deter corruption by increasing the risks associated with engaging in illicit activities.

2019: The implementation of whistleblower protection programs played a crucial role in encouraging individuals with inside knowledge of corruption to come forward. This initiative resulted in more convictions as whistleblowers provided key information leading to successful prosecutions.

2020: There was a notable increase in high-profile prosecutions involving political and corporate figures. This period was marked by intensified scrutiny and accountability measures, resulting in significant legal actions against influential individuals involved in corrupt practices.

2021-2022: Strengthened international cooperation on corruption issues facilitated collaborative efforts in investigating cross-border corruption cases. This cooperation enhanced Nigeria's capacity to pursue and prosecute individuals involved in transnational corruption networks.

2023: The comprehensive review of anti-corruption policies and outcomes reflected the administration's commitment to evaluating the effectiveness of existing measures. This assessment aimed to identify areas for improvement in Nigeria's anti-corruption framework and ensure sustained progress in combating corruption.

Overall, these efforts under Buhari's administration demonstrated a proactive approach to addressing corruption in Nigeria, resulting in substantial convictions and laying the groundwork for enhanced transparency and accountability in governance.

4.2 Anti-Corruption Policies and Initiatives

4.2.1 Establishment of Anti-Corruption Agencies

During President Buhari's administration (2015-2023), significant efforts were made to strengthen Nigeria's anti-corruption framework through the establishment and empowerment of anti-corruption agencies. The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) played a pivotal role in these efforts, spearheading investigations, prosecutions, and asset recovery related to financial crimes and corruption.

According to a statistical EFCC report, the period from 2015 to 2023 witnessed a notable increase in the effectiveness and reach of anti-corruption agencies. The EFCC, in particular, reported a substantial rise in its operational capacity and impact. For instance, in 2015, the EFCC's conviction rate stood at 65%, reflecting its intensified efforts and improved investigative techniques. Over the subsequent years, this percentage fluctuated but generally remained high, averaging around 60% to 70% annually, showcasing sustained effectiveness in prosecuting corruption cases.

The establishment of specialized units within the EFCC, such as the Cybercrime Unit and the Financial Intelligence Unit, contributed to its enhanced operational efficiency. These units were instrumental in tackling emerging forms of financial crimes, including cyber fraud and money laundering, which are increasingly prevalent in Nigeria's digital economy.

Moreover, under Buhari's administration, there was a deliberate effort to enhance collaboration between the EFCC and other law enforcement agencies, both domestically and internationally. This collaborative approach facilitated information sharing, joint investigations, and coordinated efforts to trace and recover illicitly acquired assets held abroad.

The EFCC's expanded mandate and increased autonomy were critical factors in its effectiveness. Legislative reforms during this period reinforced the agency's independence and provided it with stronger legal tools to pursue complex corruption cases. The introduction of plea bargaining mechanisms and whistleblower protection programs further bolstered the EFCC's ability to gather actionable intelligence and secure convictions. Despite these advancements, challenges persisted. The EFCC report highlighted resource constraints, bureaucratic hurdles, and occasional political interference as impediments to its operations. These challenges sometimes hindered the agency's ability to promptly investigate and prosecute cases, particularly those involving influential individuals or politically exposed persons.

Looking ahead, the EFCC's strategic focus on preventive measures, including public education campaigns and integrity initiatives within public and private sectors, will be crucial. By promoting ethical conduct and transparency, the EFCC aims to create a culture of compliance and accountability, thereby reducing the prevalence of corruption in Nigeria over the long term.

In conclusion, the establishment and strengthening of anti-corruption agencies, particularly the EFCC, under Buhari's administration represented a significant step forward in Nigeria's fight against corruption. The EFCC's enhanced operational capacity, legislative support, and collaborative efforts have yielded notable results in terms of convictions and asset recoveries.

Moving forward, sustained political will and continued institutional reforms will be essential to consolidate these gains and achieve enduring progress in combating corruption in Nigeria.

4.2.2 Legislative and Institutional Reforms

During President Buhari's administration (2015-2023), Nigeria witnessed substantial legislative and institutional reforms aimed at strengthening the country's anti-corruption framework. These reforms were crucial in enhancing the legal and institutional capacity to combat corruption effectively.

Legislative Reforms:

Legislation played a pivotal role in empowering anti-corruption agencies and providing them with the necessary legal tools to prosecute corruption cases rigorously. The administration initiated several legislative reforms, including amendments to existing anti-corruption laws and the introduction of new legislation tailored to address emerging challenges in financial crime.

One of the significant legislative achievements was the amendment of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (Establishment) Act, which expanded the EFCC's jurisdiction and powers. This amendment enabled the EFCC to investigate and prosecute a wider range of financial crimes, including cyber fraud, money laundering, and asset misappropriation.

Additionally, the administration prioritized the passage of the Whistleblower Protection Act, aimed at encouraging individuals with knowledge of corruption to come forward without fear of retaliation. This legislation was instrumental in increasing the flow of actionable intelligence to anti-corruption agencies and facilitating successful prosecutions.

Institutional Reforms:

Institutional reforms were equally critical in enhancing the operational efficiency and independence of anti-corruption agencies, particularly the EFCC. The administration implemented measures to strengthen the institutional framework governing these agencies, ensuring they operated with transparency, accountability, and autonomy. Under the reform agenda, there was a restructuring of anti-corruption agencies to improve coordination and eliminate redundancies. The EFCC, for instance, streamlined its operational structure, establishing specialized units to focus on specific types of financial crimes such as cybercrime and money laundering. This organizational restructuring enhanced the agency's ability to respond swiftly to evolving challenges in the fight against corruption. Moreover, the administration prioritized capacity building within anti-corruption agencies, investing in training programs and technology upgrades to enhance investigative capabilities. These efforts were aimed at equipping personnel with the skills and tools necessary to conduct thorough and effective investigations, ultimately leading to higher conviction rates.

Impact and Analysis:

The legislative and institutional reforms implemented under Buhari's administration yielded tangible results in Nigeria's anti-corruption efforts. According to internal reports and assessments, the reforms contributed to a significant increase in the number of corruption cases investigated, prosecuted, and successfully concluded.

For instance, the EFCC's operational effectiveness improved markedly, with conviction rates consistently exceeding 60% annually. These achievements underscored the administration's commitment to strengthening governance and accountability structures in Nigeria.

However, challenges persisted, including bureaucratic inertia, resource constraints, and occasional political interference, which at times hindered the timely implementation of reforms and the prosecution of high-profile corruption cases.

Looking ahead, the sustainability of these reforms will depend on continued political will, effective implementation of legislation, and ongoing support for anti-corruption agencies. Emphasis on preventive measures, such as public awareness campaigns and integrity initiatives, will also be crucial in fostering a culture of transparency and accountability across Nigerian society.

In conclusion, the legislative and institutional reforms undertaken during Buhari's administration represented a pivotal step forward in Nigeria's anti-corruption agenda. By strengthening legal frameworks and enhancing institutional capacity, the administration laid a foundation for sustained progress in combating corruption and promoting good governance in the country.

4.3 Challenges and Criticisms

Despite the concerted efforts and achievements in anti-corruption under President Buhari's administration (2015-2023), several challenges and criticisms have emerged, impacting the effectiveness and perception of these initiatives.

Resource Constraints:

One of the primary challenges faced by anti-corruption agencies, such as the EFCC, was inadequate funding and resource constraints. Limited financial resources often hampered their operational capacity to conduct thorough investigations, procure advanced technology, and retain skilled personnel. As a result, agencies sometimes struggled to meet the growing demands of combating sophisticated financial crimes effectively.

Bureaucratic Hurdles:

The bureaucratic structure within government institutions posed another significant challenge. Administrative bottlenecks and delays in decision-making processes occasionally impeded the swift implementation of anti-corruption policies and reforms. Complexities in coordinating inter-agency cooperation and information sharing further hindered the seamless execution of investigations and prosecutions.

Political Interference:

Critics highlighted instances of political interference as a notable obstacle to the impartiality and autonomy of anti-corruption agencies. Political pressures, particularly in cases involving influential individuals or members of the ruling elite, sometimes influenced the pace and outcome of investigations. This perceived interference raised concerns about the fairness and integrity of the anti-corruption efforts, undermining public trust in the system.

Legal and Judicial Challenges:

The judicial system's capacity to handle corruption cases effectively also came under scrutiny. Lengthy court proceedings, legal loopholes, and delays in adjudication sometimes diluted the

deterrent effect of anti-corruption prosecutions. In some instances, the lack of specialized judicial expertise in complex financial crimes posed challenges to securing convictions and asset recoveries.

Public Perception and Awareness:

While efforts were made to enhance public awareness and engagement through campaigns and outreach programs, broader societal attitudes towards corruption remained a challenge. Deep-seated cultural norms, tolerance of corrupt practices in certain sectors, and perceptions of impunity among the elite continued to undermine anti-corruption efforts. Addressing these societal attitudes required sustained educational campaigns and targeted interventions to foster a culture of integrity and accountability.

International Cooperation and External Factors:

Navigating cross-border corruption cases and international asset recovery efforts presented additional complexities. Despite strengthened international cooperation frameworks, challenges such as legal jurisdictional disputes and varying legal standards across jurisdictions occasionally impeded progress in transnational corruption investigations and asset repatriation.

Media Scrutiny and Transparency:

While media scrutiny played a crucial role in exposing corruption scandals and holding public officials accountable, criticisms emerged regarding sensationalism and biased reporting. Maintaining transparency in anti-corruption proceedings while safeguarding the integrity of ongoing investigations posed a delicate balancing act for authorities.

Evaluation and Adaptation:

Addressing these challenges required continuous evaluation and adaptation of anti-corruption strategies. The administration's commitment to addressing criticisms and improving institutional frameworks was evident through periodic reviews of policies, stakeholder consultations, and the adoption of best practices from international counterparts. In conclusion, while President Buhari's administration made significant strides in combating corruption through legislative reforms, institutional strengthening, and high-profile prosecutions, the persistence of challenges such as resource constraints, bureaucratic hurdles, political interference, and societal attitudes underscored the complexity of the task at hand. Overcoming these challenges will require sustained political will, comprehensive reforms, and collaborative efforts across sectors to achieve lasting progress in Nigeria's fight against corruption.

4.4 Impact Assessment of Anti-Corruption Efforts

Assessing the impact of anti-corruption efforts under President Buhari's administration (2015-2023) reveals both achievements and areas for improvement, shaping Nigeria's governance landscape and public perception.

Conviction Rates and Prosecutions:

One of the measurable impacts of anti-corruption efforts was reflected in the increased number of convictions and successful prosecutions of corrupt individuals. According to data from the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), annual conviction rates consistently ranged between 60% and 70%, highlighting the effectiveness of strengthened legal frameworks

and institutional reforms. These convictions sent a strong deterrent message and demonstrated accountability within Nigeria's governance structures.

Asset Recovery and Repatriation:

Another significant achievement was the successful recovery and repatriation of stolen assets. The administration prioritized asset recovery efforts, collaborating with international partners to trace and reclaim illicitly acquired funds and properties. These efforts not only helped recover substantial sums for the Nigerian treasury but also underscored the government's commitment to combating financial crimes and restoring stolen assets to their rightful owners.

Public Awareness and Transparency:

Anti-corruption campaigns and initiatives aimed at increasing public awareness and transparency also yielded positive outcomes. Educational programs, whistleblower protections, and media engagements contributed to fostering a culture of accountability and integrity. Public scrutiny and engagement played a crucial role in holding public officials accountable and advocating for ethical governance practices.

Institutional Strengthening:

The administration's focus on institutional strengthening through legislative reforms and capacity building initiatives enhanced the operational efficiency of anti-corruption agencies. Structural reforms within agencies such as the EFCC improved coordination, investigative capabilities, and inter-agency cooperation. These reforms were pivotal in addressing systemic weaknesses and bolstering Nigeria's anti-corruption infrastructure.

Challenges and Areas for Improvement:

Despite these achievements, challenges persisted, including resource constraints, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and political interference. These factors occasionally undermined the effectiveness and impartiality of anti-corruption efforts, necessitating continuous reforms and adaptive strategies.

Societal Impact and Perceptions:

The impact of anti-corruption efforts extended beyond legal and institutional realms to influence societal attitudes and perceptions. While progress was made in reducing tolerance for corruption and promoting ethical conduct, ingrained cultural norms and economic disparities continued to pose challenges. Addressing these deep-rooted issues required sustained efforts in education, public engagement, and economic reforms.

International Cooperation:

Strengthened international cooperation and partnerships were instrumental in tackling transnational corruption and facilitating asset recoveries. Collaboration with foreign governments and international organizations enhanced Nigeria's capacity to pursue cross-border cases and enforce global anti-corruption standards.

Conclusion and Future Directions:

In conclusion, the impact assessment of anti-corruption efforts under Buhari's administration reflects a mixed record of achievements and challenges. While significant strides were made in convicting corrupt individuals, recovering stolen assets, and enhancing institutional capacity,

persistent obstacles underscored the complexity of combating corruption in Nigeria. Moving forward, sustained political will, continued reforms, and inclusive governance strategies will be essential to consolidate gains, address remaining challenges, and build a more transparent and accountable society.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Summary

Chapter Five provides a comprehensive overview of the findings and outcomes from the study on the anti-corruption efforts and socio-economic development under President Buhari's administration (2015-2023) in Nigeria. The chapter synthesizes the key points discussed throughout the research, highlighting both achievements and challenges in the context of combating corruption and fostering socio-economic progress. The chapter begins by summarizing the background and significance of addressing corruption in Nigeria, emphasizing its detrimental effects on governance, economic growth, and social stability. It then outlines the research objectives and methodology employed to analyze the impact of anti-corruption policies, legislative reforms, institutional changes, and their implications on Nigeria's development trajectory.

Findings from the study underscored the administration's commitment to tackling corruption through robust legislative reforms, establishment of anti-corruption agencies, and enhanced international cooperation. Significant achievements included increased convictions, successful asset recoveries, and improved institutional capacity within anti-corruption agencies like the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC). However, the summary also acknowledges persistent challenges such as resource constraints, bureaucratic hurdles, political interference, and societal attitudes towards corruption. These challenges, while significant, did not diminish the overall progress made in strengthening governance structures and promoting accountability.

5.2 Conclusion

In conclusion, President Buhari's administration made substantial strides in the fight against corruption in Nigeria. The implementation of comprehensive anti-corruption policies and initiatives yielded measurable results in terms of convictions, asset recoveries, and public awareness. The administration's efforts to reform legislative frameworks and enhance institutional capacity were pivotal in fostering a culture of integrity and transparency.

Despite these achievements, the persistence of challenges highlighted the complex nature of combating corruption effectively. Issues such as inadequate resources, bureaucratic inertia, and political interference underscored the need for continuous reforms and sustained political will. Moreover, addressing deep-seated societal attitudes towards corruption remains a critical task for future administrations and stakeholders.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions drawn from the study, several recommendations are proposed to strengthen Nigeria's anti-corruption framework and support sustainable socio-economic development:

1. **Enhance Institutional Capacity:** Invest in the training and professional development of personnel within anti-corruption agencies like the EFCC to enhance investigative skills, operational efficiency, and inter-agency collaboration.
2. **Legislative Reforms:** Continue to amend and strengthen anti-corruption laws to close loopholes, enhance legal frameworks for asset recovery, and streamline judicial processes for expeditious trials.

3. **Transparency and Accountability:** Promote greater transparency in government procurement processes, financial transactions, and public service delivery through enhanced oversight mechanisms and regular audits.
4. **Public Awareness and Civic Engagement:** Expand public awareness campaigns on the detrimental effects of corruption and promote civic engagement in monitoring and reporting corrupt practices through accessible platforms and whistleblower protections.
5. **International Cooperation:** Strengthen partnerships with international organizations and foreign governments to facilitate information sharing, mutual legal assistance, and coordinated efforts in combating transnational corruption networks.

Implementing these recommendations requires sustained political commitment, multi-stakeholder collaboration, and adequate resource allocation. By addressing these priority areas, Nigeria can build upon the achievements of President Buhari's administration and advance towards a more transparent, accountable, and prosperous future for all citizens.

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