Research as a Tool for Fighting Corruption in Nigeria: A Focus on ICPC and EFCC

David U. Enweremadu

Department of Political Science
Faculty of the Social Sciences
University of Ibadan, Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper examines the research efforts of anti-corruption agencies (ACAs) in Nigeria, with a view to identifying the challenges and prospects involved in getting ACAs to conduct quality research on corruption and integrate same into the design and implementation of anti-corruption interventions. Relying on existing secondary sources and some primary data, the study noted that Nigeria's ACAs are endowed with sufficient research mandate mostly derived from their establishment Acts. These have enabled them to carry out some research on the activities of key sectors or institutions of the national economy. The findings from some of these research identified loopholes which enabled corrupt practices to proliferate, as well as exposed some of the major hurdles involved in fighting corruption in Nigeria. Consequently, several policy and institutional reforms have been put in place through the support of the ACAs concerned, some of which have led to improvements that could minimise the potential for future corrupt practices. At the same time, these ACAs face several daunting challenges including paucity of funds, inadequate prioritisation of research activities by the leadership of ACAs and low research capacity. These factors have undermined the capacity of these ACAs to effectively carry out their onerous research tasks.

Introduction

Since the return to democratic rule in 1999, a combination of domestic and foreign pressure has made successive administrations in Nigeria to make anti-corruption programmes integral part of the nation's public policy and economic development planning (Akinola, 2006; Nwolise, 2006; Enweremadu, 2012). This is hardly surprising considering reports that more than $500 Billion has allegedly been stolen from public coffers by previous Nigerian leaders (Otive Igbuvor, 2008) and the devastating consequences this has had on national development (Egulakhe, 2007; Erhieyovwo and Onokero, 2013; Agbiboa, 2013). So pervasive was corruption in Nigeria that several reports of Transparency International in the late 90s and early 2000s, ranked the country among the most corrupt countries in the world. To curb this menace, it became increasingly important for the government to initiate policies and programs to reform public service and introduce global best practices. Such reform has been very visible in such areas like accounting, banking, budgeting, procurement, recruitment, salaries and wages administration, and the establishment of Anti-Corruption Agencies (ACAs) like the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) and the Economic and Financial Crimes

Commission (EFCC) with clear mandates to tackle corruption (Ajay, 2006; Igbokwe-Ibeto and Okoye, 2014). The creation of these agencies is perhaps the boldest step taken to institutionalize the war against corruption and demonstrate the political will to fight corruption in the country.

The ICPC was established in September 2000 and charged with the responsibility of fighting corruption in Nigeria. This was to be done through three principal tools as stipulated in the enabling Acts: conduct system studies and review of public agencies, investigate and prosecute corruption cases and promote public education and mobilization in support of the fight against corruption (ICPC Act, 2000). On the other hand, the EFCC was established in 2004 with a mandate to enforce all economic and financial crimes, laws as well as co-ordinating all the various institutions involved in the fight against money laundering and dealing with economic and financial crimes such as bank frauds, money laundering, illegal arms deal, smuggling, human trafficking, foreign exchange malpractices, counterfeiting, cyber-crimes, theft of intellectual property and piracy, among others (EFCC Act, 2004).

Since their establishment both agencies have made significant efforts to advance the declared war against corruption in Nigeria. These efforts have been particularly visible in the area of public education or awareness through media campaigns. Indeed, as Fadairo, Fadairo and Aminu (2014) observed, in contemporary times, the attention to corruption has shifted from the pulpits' and philosophers' arenas to that of the media (2014: 55). Similarly, the activities of these agencies have also resulted in the investigation and prosecution of some high level officials. A few have even been convicted, as assets and funds running into several billion dollars have been recovered from corrupt individuals, or saved as a result of plugging corrupt prone areas in the public sector (Adebanwi, 2010; Enweremadu, 2010; 2012). But despite these commendable efforts, there remains a growing concern that Nigeria is not making much progress in its quest to significantly reduce corruption and financial crimes (Abdullahi, 2004; Adesoji and Rotimi, 2008; Adebanwi, 2010; Enweremadu, 2012; Agbiboa, 2013).

One of the major reasons for this is perhaps insufficient attention to research by these agencies and/or poor integration of available research products into the design, implementation and review of anti-corruption interventions by both government agencies and relevant stakeholders. Indeed, while an increasing number of Nigeria's anti-graft agencies have, as part of their effort to fight corruption, established research departments/units which are expected to regularly conduct studies on corruption as a phenomenon, the quality of such research remains doubtful. Moreover, there is little evidence that the outcomes of such anti-corruption research efforts are coming to the attention of anti-corruption policymakers that ought to influence policymaking in Nigeria. This policy-research gap is believed to have, in turn, contributed to the failure of successive anti-corruption projects in Nigeria (UNDP, 2008: 7; Akinrinade *et al.*, forthcoming).

It is against this background that the paper attempts a review of the research mandate and efforts of the two major anti-corruption agencies in Nigeria namely; the ICPC and the EFCC. This is done with a view to identifying the challenges and prospects involved in getting ACAs to conduct quality research on corruption and their integration of available research products into the design and implementation of anti-corruption interventions. The data used for analysis in this paper were collected through two principal sources: content analysis of existing published scholarly materials and some primary data generated from major stakeholders. The article is structured in five parts, with the introduction serving as the first part. The second part of the article clarifies the meaning of the term research and its role in anti-corruption programmes. The third examines scope of the research mandate of anti-corruption agencies in Nigeria, focusing specifically on EFCC and ICPC. In section four, the article examines the extent to which Nigeria's anti-corruption agencies have been committed to carrying out their research obligation since their establishment and what effect that has had on the declared war against corruption. The fifth and last section summarises the challenges and prospects involved in achieving the research goal of Nigeria's major anti-corruption agencies.

The Concept of Research and Its Role in Anti-Corruption Programmes

Research is indispensable for any organisation willing to achieve its set objectives and break new grounds in its field of endeavour (ICPC, Annual Report, 2008). By its nature, research is designed to shed more light into a phenomenon that is not well understood, so that effective solutions can be found. The fight against corruption therefore requires research which will analyze the environment where the phenomenon is occurring in order to identify and understand why or how corruption spreads or specific corruption prone areas in the system, the specific forms it takes and the vulnerability of institutions and processes to corruption. This will enable ACAs to design and implement effective enforcement measures (United Nation Development Programme, 2009). Also, preventing corruption calls for prior investigation and collection of reliable information that are most relevant to eliminating or minimising corrupt practices and related offences (Gorta, 2008; Aiden, 2010). In other words, effective anti-corruption crusade cannot be designed without a careful assessment of and prior understanding of the problem.

Scholars have argued that several transiting economies like Nigeria present an administrative system in which patronage, nepotism and decision making through non-transparent channels of personal influence are integral part of public service thus, accounting for the various facets of obstacles encountered in anti-corruption crusade (Smith, 2007; Adebanwi and Obadare, 2011; Enweremadu and Ladapo, 2016). In this instance, strengthening systems and procedures of operation in public institutions through detailed and systematic study of these institutions will become an effective and institutional way of fighting graft. The essence of research can be seen both from a repressive, as

well as a preventive essence to fighting corruption. From a repressive perspective, anti-corruption research will facilitate the adoption of multi-facet approach, rather than a *straight-jacket approach* usually seen in places where corruption is poorly understood. Similarly, a good research-base will enable the prioritization of a preventive approach, for instance, by allowing anti-corruption workers to identify the gaps across the system and ultimately bring about improvement that would minimise the potentials for future conduct of corrupt practices that is constantly evolving as corrupt individuals continuously learn new tactics in order to sustain their nefarious acts. Conversely, the lack of regular institutionalised research and access to information on the nature and dynamics of corrupt practices can provide motivation to corrupt individuals to seek out ways to earn income through corrupt practices.

Further, corruption is complex phenomenon given that encompasses different forms of misuse of power or office that manifests in many different ways, and fighting it is usually compounded by deficiencies in many broad areas, sectors, institutions and governance processes (UNDP, 2008: 4; Enweremadu and Ashiru, Forthcoming). Resources available to prosecute the fight against corruption are also highly limited, so that it is impossible to attack the problem in all areas it is manifesting at the same time. However, adopting an effective research strategy would reveal the agencies that are facing significant corruption problem (Manandhar, 2014: 5). In this way, ACAs can design specific intervention programmes to promote a transparent, accountable and efficient administrative system in line with their preventive mandates (African Freedom of Information Centre, 2017: ii). It is for this reason that Nigeria's anti-corruption legislations, notably the ICPC and EFCC Acts, included research as a major component of their anti-corruption strategy.

However, despite the inclusion of research as a major component of anti-corruption strategy, available evidence reveals that the prosecution of the anti-corruption crusade in Nigeria is facing significant capacity problems at both the organisational and individual levels. Officials of anti-graft agencies in Nigeria, especially investigators and prosecutors, appear to lack sufficient knowledge of this vice they have been recruited to fight. This is why, for instance, in spite of the numerous measures taken to prosecute Nigerian officials for corrupt practices, few of such cases have actually resulted to conviction and/or imprisonment. Indeed, it is a known fact in Nigeria that administering justice, especially when it involves people in the high echelon of politics and businesses who can afford the services of the best lawyers in town, is not an easy task (Adesoji and Rotimi, 2008; Ladapo, 2011; Enweremadu, 2012; Adebanwi and Obadare, 2011). This raises the question, what then is the relevance of these provisions for research in the ongoing struggle to curb corruption in Nigeria? It must be noted that researching corruption requires the researchers that are well trained in a broad range of social science research methods such as interviews, surveys, personal observations, focus group discussions and field tests. Are Nigeria's ACAs properly endowed with the necessary research mandate and capacity to actualize their research tasks?

The Scope of Research Mandates and Capacities of Nigeria's ACAs

As is the case with most anti-corruption agencies around the world, Nigeria's ACAs are all charged with one form of research mandate or the other (Okediran, 2006). These mandates are often derived from their various establishment Acts. Generally, the research mandate of most of the anti-corruption agencies in Nigeria comes under their preventive responsibilities, which implies that they are required to regularly carry out some form of research to find out the true nature of corrupt practices and the best way to tackle them before they occur. This applies to the ICPC and the EFCC which are the two major anti-corruption agencies the country.

ICPC

The ICPC research mandate is provided for in two separate sections of its establishment act. The first one is Section 6 (b) of the law which mandated the Commission to "examine the practices, systems and procedures of public bodies and where, in the opinion of the Commission, such practices, systems or procedures aid or facilitate fraud or corruption, to direct and supervise a review of them" (ICPC Act, 2000). The second section is Section 6 (e) which enjoined the Commission to "educate the public on and against bribery, corruption and related offences" (ICPC Act, 2000). This dual research mandates are executed through two different institutional mechanisms. The first one is known as 'system study and review of public organizations, which is aimed at studying the management structures, internal controls, operational procedures and cultures of MDAs for corruption prone areas and drawing up guide for correction of identified loopholes to guard against corrupt practices. System study and review is co-ordinated by the Planning, Research and Review Department of the Commission located at the headquarters. The output the system study and review are usually disseminated through combined efforts of the Education and Public Enlightenment Departments respectively. The second institutional mechanism created for the actualization of ICPC's research mandate is the Anti-Corruption Academy of Nigeria (ACAN), which functions as the capacity building and research arm of the Commission. ACAN is located in Keffi, in Nassarawa state **(**Olaosebikan Dapo, 2017).

These two units are expected to assist the Commission in the area of identifying, developing, and monitoring the implementation of effective and co-ordinated anti-corruption policies through research and planning respectively. The essence of their work is to identify gray areas in the system that require institutional reforms in every sphere of national life and develop the required capacity needed for conducting investigation into all the factors aiding corruption in Nigeria and enact regulatory framework for preventing or combating it.

EFCC

In order to enhance the actualization of its overall mandate, the EFCC is empowered by its establishment Act, to initiate and execute research on issues

related to the major concerns of the Commission – corruption and economic crimes (EFCC Act, 2004). As stipulated in Section 6 of its enabling law, the functions of the Commission include among others, "undertaking research and similar works with a view to determining the manifestation, extent, magnitude, and effects of economic and financial crimes and advising government on appropriate intervention measures for combating same". More specifically, the law also mandates the establishment of a Research Unit. According to Section 12 (1)c: "for the effective conduct of the function of the Commission, there may be established for the commission the following units- (a) the general and Asset Investigation Units; (b) the legal and Prosecution Unit; (c) the Research Unit; etc…." (EFCC Act, 2004).

The Directorate of Planning, Policy and Statistics (DPPS) is the unit responsible for executing the research mandate of the Commission. The DPPS was initially created pursuant to an 'Executive Memorandum' dated 13th April, 2012, which directed all MDAs to establish a Directorate of Planning, Research and Statistics. In Compliance with this Directive the Commission established the Directorate of Planning, Policy and Statistics (DPPS) in the first quarter of 2012, which functioned as the think tank of the Commission (Interview, June 27, 2016). The functions of the DPPS also has legal backing, courtesy of Section 6 (Sub-Sections v-vi) of the EFCC's establishment law which listed its functions as follows: (v) Maintaining data, statistics, records and reports on persons, organizations, proceeds, properties, documents or other items or assets involved in economic and financial crimes; (vi) Undertaking research and similar works with a view to determining the manifestation, extent, magnitude and effects of economic and financial crimes and advising government on appropriate intervention measures for combating same (EFCC Act, 2004). For efficient service delivery, the DPPS is further divided into four (4) sections or units namely: Planning and Cooperate Strategy; Statistics, Research and Publication; Monitoring and Evaluation; and Policy Formulation[i].

In addition to the DPPS, and like the ICPC, the EFCC also executes its research mandate through the EFCC Academy, formerly known as the EFCC Training and Research Institute (TRI). The EFCC Academy, which is headed by a Commandant, is the training arm of the Commission. It has responsibility for the implementation of various research and training programmes aimed at improving the capacity of officers and men of the Commission in line with the manpower objectives of the commission[ii]. A number of regular and ad hoc training programmes are domiciled at/in the Academy including its premier programme, the annual Officer Cadet Course. Beside these, the Academy also organizes programmes for other law enforcement agencies on need basis, besides maintaining a library which holds thousands of corruption related materials (EFCC, 2016).

How effective have these legal provisions and supporting institutional research structures been? Or to what extent has these anti-corruption agencies been able to carry out their research mandate since establishment?

Research Activities of Nigeria's ACAs

The overall effect of anti-corruption programmes and policies in Nigeria in the last 16 years has continued to be a subject of scholarly debate. For some scholars, Nigerian anti-corruption agencies are succeeding in their major objectives of reforming, strengthening and modernising institutions. This can be seen, for instance, when they take steps to foster and enforce compliance with the law; step up measures to check economic and financial crimes and related corrupt practices, adopting firmer code of ethics for all organisations and sectors as well as institutionalising the process of training staff in ethical behaviours to fast-track the process of reform in governance codes in public service and corporate organisations (Aina, 2014). These scholars have also praised these anti-corruption agencies for the remarkable successes they recorded since their inceptions which have seen the prosecution and conviction of some highly place Nigerians both home and abroad and recovered from them the stolen public funds and properties thereby giving the country some respect in the comity of nations (Opara, 2007; Igwilo, 2009; Ekeanyanwu, Undated; Ngwube and Okoli, 2013). However, other scholars have pointed out some gray areas in their operations, notably the relatively small number of top officials convicted, political interference, insufficient funding and manpower, and the over-lapping nature of their functions (Adebanwi and Obadare, 2011; Enweremadu, 2010; 2012; Oke, 2014), all of which have worked to undermine the impact of their interventions.

A detailed assessment of the accuracy of these positions is however beyond the scope of this paper, because as noted earlier, this article is only concerned with appraising the performance of research functions and how that impacts on the overall effectiveness of the anti-corruption struggle. To what extent have ACAs in Nigeria engaged in research? How much of the advertised successes recorded by them have been due to their investment in research? What factors are affecting their research activities or outcome? Following a review of the activities of the various research units of the two leading ACAs in Nigeria, EFCC and ICPC, it was discovered that, although not very much an issue of public discussion, Nigeria's ACAs, especially the ICPC, have made some efforts in the direction of actualizing their research mandates. This is true for both institutions, but even more so for the ICPC. The question then is what exactly has been done and how effective have such efforts been?

Since its inception in 2000, ICPC has conducted system study and review of large number of MDAs including Nigerian Prisons Service; Energy Commission of Nigeria; National Commission for Museums and Monuments (NCMM); Bwari Local Government Area of FCT; Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Lands Administration; National Pension Commission (PENCOM) and several universities through the University System Study and Review (USSR). Others are National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS); Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Water Board; Abuja Environmental Protection Board (AEPB); Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC); National Water Resource Institute Kaduna; FCT Department of Road Traffic Service (DRTS); Nigerian

Institute of Oil Palm Research; Yaba College of Technology, Lagos and the National Hospital Abuja (http://icpc.gov.ng/about-icpc/system-study-review-mdas/). Many of these studies have led to specific intervention measures by both the ICPC and the institutions concerned to ensure that the management of these institutions moved in the direction of reforms to correct observed deficiencies.

A very relevant example occurred in the education sector, where the University System Study and Review undertaken by the ICPC in 2013 revealed massive corrupt practices in several key areas: management of funds; contract awards and contract management; appointments, promotion and discipline of staff; admissions, enrolment and registration of courses; examination administration and award of degrees; departmental administration and faculty governance; research and research administration and teaching and learning services and facilities (ICPC, 2013). In response to these findings and to build the capacity of stakeholders towards tackling the above mentioned challenges, ICPC took several measures. The first step was the convening of the National Conference on Transparency, Accountability and Ethical Values in Tertiary Institutions for Sustainable Development held on 20–21 May 2014, in collaboration with the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund). An important outcome of the conference was that more tertiary institutions were able to access over N25billion from TETFund for infrastructural development and capacity building for the 2013/2014 academic year (ICPC, 2014). A second step was a series of workshops organized by the Anti-Corruption Academy of Nigeria (ACAN) for top-management staff of tertiary institutions between July and August, 2015 to build their capacity to aid the mitigation of the infractions observed during the system study and review exercise. Plans are said to be in place for follow-up workshops for the benefit of other staff of these institutions (*Vanguard*, August 13, 2015).

A similar study conducted on the Universal Basic Education Commission in 2014, which covered the period between 2010 and 2013 found that there were non -compliance with extant rules and regulations; financial irregularities; flaws in administrative policies and procedures; and abandonment of projects. The report of the study was presented to the stakeholders and several areas of reforms were suggested. Although it is not certain if all the remedial measures floated at the meeting of stakeholders have been fully implemented, there already some noticeable improvement in the area of compliance in counterpart funding by State Governments; increased number of projects duly completed; and reduction in crisis within the basic education sector. As part of the follow-up measures, ICPC through the Anti-Corruption Academy of Nigeria (ACAN) in collaboration with the Universal Basic Education Commission, has organized workshops for staffs of the Universal Basic Education Commission and the Universal Basic Education Boards of the thirty-six states and the Federal Capital Territory in November, 2015. Earlier, The Education department of the Commission had developed a National Values Curriculum in conjunction with the Nigeria Education Research and Development Council

(NERDC) with the aim of imbibing ethics and integrity values in the basic and secondary school curriculum (ICPC, 2013; Nta, 2016).

The education sector is not the only sector that has benefited from system studies and review organized by the ICPC. In the transport sector, the commission with the support of the Maritime Anti-corruption Network and in conjunction with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Technical Unit on Governance and Anti-Corruption Reforms (TUGAR), has also conducted a Corruption Risk Assessment (CRA) of six seaports namely, Apapa, Tin Can, Onne, Port Harcourt, Calabar and Warri (ICPC, BPP and TUGAR, 2014). The findings of this study led to the adoption of a harmonized Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) and the installation of a Port Service Support Portal (PSSP) as a mechanism for addressing complaints by port users (http://icpc.gov.ng/). Also following a study of some selected airports in the country, the Commission in 2014 signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Aviation for an 'Anti-corruption Intervention' which involves, Surveillance, Corruption Risk Assessment of international Airports and Ethics and Integrity Training for officers (http://icpc.gov.ng/icpc-to-conduct-systems-study-and-review-in-aviation-sector/). In the health sector, in collaboration with the National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA), a review of 1,355 projects for primary healthcare centres was undertaken. The study identified 629 abandoned projects. As in the other cases presented here, the Commission also intervened here, by compelling those who had been mobilized in excess of work done to go back to site (http://icpc.gov.ng/downloads/).

Apart from its enabling law which had made regular study and review of public organization a key function of the ICPC, the interventions reviewed here demonstrate a growing awareness of the power of research as a tool for fighting corruption in Nigeria.

Relative to the ICPC, the EFCC has carried out fewer number of researches. This might not be unconnected with the Commission's well known preference for a repressive, as against a preventive approach which is more commonly associated with the ICPC (Olakanmi, 2008). Never-the-less, the EFCC has not completely shied away from seeking to actualize its research mandate. One of the most impactful studies executed by the Commission was the April 2014 study titled "combating the challenges of advance fee fraud: The economic and financial crimes commission's experience (2003-2011)". The study which was carried out by researchers employed in the Research and Development Department of the EFCC Academy was motivated by the need to better understand the reason for the continued proliferation of Advance Fee Fraud, a crime that is still considered one of the most rampant in Nigeria despite concerted effort to check it, and awareness of better ways of dealing with it (EFCC, 2014).

The study highlighted the extent of the problem and the challenges involved in curbing its spread in Nigeria. Many of the recommendations emanating from the findings of this research, most of which touched on the

deficiencies in the area of investigation and prosecution, as well as lack of synergy between different units of the EFCC, have been integrated into the intervention programmes of the EFCC and other critical stakeholders leading to significant improvement in the fight against the crime. Among the measures proposed by the study that has been adopted are increased synergy among stakeholders, training on advance free fraud for judges and some kind of mock trials before the real trials with relevant actors, such as prosecutors, investigators and witnesses participating. More noteworthy was the recommendation requiring that lawyers from the commission's legal department be attached to individual operatives/investigators right from inception of each case. This has brought greater efficiency in the areas of cost and time management.

Conclusion: The Challenges and Prospects of Achieving the Research Mandates of Nigerian ACAs

Contemporary Nigeria is buffeted by several perennial governance-relate challenges. Among the elements that threaten good and effective governance, is systemic corruption, including financial fraud, which is perhaps the most destructive. Despite co-ordinated efforts at tackling corruption in Nigeria in recent years, the phenomenon has remained widespread and pervasive partly because of wrong anti-corruption polices or their poor application, which itself is largely derived from insufficient attention paid to research by those charged with the responsibility of fighting corruption, and poor integration of available research products into the design, implementation and review of anti-corruption interventions by both government agencies and other stakeholders.

Yet, research is indispensable for any organisation willing to achieve its set objectives and break new grounds in its field of endeavour. Effective anti-corruption interventions cannot be designed without a careful understanding of the problem. This is more so, when corrupt practices are constantly evolving as individuals continuously learn new tactics in order to sustain their nefarious acts.

In recent times, Nigeria's ACAs, especially the ICPC and the EFCC have made some efforts to integrate research into their various anti-corruption work. As has been demonstrated in this article, a number of studies have been carried out on the activities of key sectors of the national economy such as MDAs were corruption is rife. The findings from the research carried out in some MDAs identified administrative and systemic gaps which have enabled corrupt practices to proliferate. They have also exposed some of the major hurdles involved in fighting corruption in Nigeria. Arising from the reports of assessments already carried out where gaps have been identified, several policy and institutional reforms have been put in place in areas where institutional practices and safeguards appear to be relatively weak and prone to corrupt practices. Some of these reforms have led to improvements that would minimise the potential for future corrupt practices. More importantly, the researches carried in some MDAs have served as wake-up calls to these bodies

to tighten loose ends that are prone to corrupt practices and adopt best practices in their activities through recommendations made to their heads in order that the objectives of the research carried in these MDAs could be achieved. This entailed strengthening systems and procedures for carrying out government businesses in order to reduce the possibilities of corruption occurring.

Achieving zero-level corruption in Nigeria through research by the ICPC and EFCC, has however faced several daunting challenges due to factors such as paucity of funds, poor prioritisation of research work by the leadership of ACAs and low research capacity. Insufficient funds and poor prioritisation of research work by the leadership of ACAs is responsible for the low research capacity, or shortage of qualified researchers, observed in these agencies. This has in turn limited the capacity of these ACAs to effectively carry out their onerous research tasks. Both the ICPC and the EFCC have very broad research mandates which empower them to conduct reviews of management systems of all state institutions, carry out research on various policies, laws, regulations of different institutions in order to detect loopholes that lead to corruption. This is however possible, only when the required resources are made available to these agencies.

Therefore, there is an urgent need to sustain the current anti-corruption onslaught in Nigeria by increasing budgetary allocation to these agencies to enable them execute their broad research mandate. Having identified institutional corruption as the bane of the Nigerian state, no effort should be spared at mobilising the nation's resources including finance in tackling the problem headlong. Once that is done, there will be need for the leadership of the various ACAs to immediately begin to develop the required research capacity in their various agencies. This will make it possible for them to undertake more rigorous study and assessment of the MDAs and link their findings with the challenges of fighting corruption in Nigeria. One of the challenges will obviously be how to reform institutional and regulatory framework of anti-corruption bodies in Nigeria. In the interim, it may be necessary for ACAs to hire consultants and experts from home and abroad, including academics on Sabbatical Leave, as the ICPC is currently doing. This will assist in the development of research capacities of their staff, as well as help them conduct some of the research that is required to facilitate the fight against corruption. Finally, there is need for synergy and collaborative efforts between and among the various ACAs, especially the ICPC and EFCC, in conducting joint research, and dissemination of the findings of such researches.

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[i] Personal communication with Mr. Faruk, former Head, Research and Publication at the EFCC Academy: Monday, June 27, 2016.

[ii] The EFCC staff regulation 2007, page 25, part 6 (vi)Section 24 (iv) provides that: "the training and Research Institute shall be responsible for all the training and Research programmes of the Commission in the following areas of need and/or in any such other area which the Commission may with the passage of time consider necessary. (i) training of all EFCC staff; (ii) Organising of training including seminars, conferences and workshop on economic and financial crimes for other stakeholders from within and outside the country; (iii) Organising confirmation and promotion examinations including conversion examination for all staff; (iv) Serve as the Research centre for economic and financial crimes in Nigeria.