# Application of Public Relations Tools in the Fight against Corruption in Nigeria

## Member Solace Gbakighir
BSU/SS/COM/PhD/16/7344
Department of Mass Communication, Benue State University, Makurdi

**Abstract**: *Although several works on the fight against corruption in Nigeria exist, studies on the use of public relations tools in fighting against corruption in Nigeria are limited. This study "Application of public relations tools in the fight against corruption in Nigeria" therefore assess how the tools of Public Relations are been used in the fight against corruption in Nigeria thereby highlighting the significance of the tools as relevant communication devices that can be effective in combating corruption in Nigeria. The Excellence theory of public relations was adopted while the survey research design was used. Questionnaire was used as the research instrument to collect quantitative data. Findings from the study revealed that public relations tools were extensively employed by the EFCC and ICPC in the fight against corruption however, the tools were under-utilized. It was found that among several tools of public relations, tools such as press releases, newsletters and speaking engagements were more often used by the agencies to publicize their activities. Other tools such as media relations, newsletters, speaking engagements, advertorials and press releases were used in educating employees, and providing information about arrests, detention, and prosecution of corruption offenders. The study therefore recommends that in order to effectively fight against corruption in Nigeria the appropriate tools of public relations should be identified and appropriately applied. Professionals should be engaged to help in strategic management of anti-corruption programmes at all levels in Nigeria.*

**Keys words:**    *Public Relations, Tools, Corruption.*

## Introduction

The weaknesses in previous policies against corruption, conventional law enforcement and criminal justice institutions in the Nigerian system have pushed for more innovative measures of fighting corruption. Not only did past measures failed but have made corruption more sophisticated in character and method. Corruption still remains the greatest challenge to Nigeria's development (Abu & Staniewski, 2019). Although a lot of anti-corruption programmes made efforts to combat corruption, the menace still remains high. The Transparency International 2022 stated that Nigeria stands as the 'Second Most Corrupt Country in West Africa', a ranking that represents a drop for the third successive year. On the global scene Nigeria was ranked 154 out of 180 countries (Erezi, 2022) as one among the most corrupt countries in the world, signifying that 'corruption is still pervasiveness in the economic and functioning of Nigerian society' (Adelabu, 2021).

Evidently, billions are constantly lost through illicit flows from Nigeria, from bad roads, high rate of unemployment, lack of healthcare services, rapidly falling educational standard, skyrocketing prices of goods and services, high rate of insecurity, kidnapping, banditry, lack of accountability and transparency in governance process etc all these suggest that the Nigerian system is still highly corrupt. Consensus from different scholarly studies have equally continued to provide evidence of high rate corruption in the Nigerian system (Abu & Staniewski, 2019, Abdulmalik, & Ayinla, 2017).  Given that very little has been achieved in the fight against corruption, the global call for more comprehensive initiatives to tackle corruption has intensified.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2021) have emphasized the need for multi-disciplinary and coordinated approaches in tackling corruption. Strategies that engage non-state actors like the civil society, private sector, youth groups and the media. The recommendations also lay prominence on the use of robust communication strategies that will intensify public participation and build public trust**.** The United Nations (UN), the World Bank (WB), the Organisation of American States (OAS), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other Non-governmental Organisations like the Transparency International (TI) have also endorsed for creative, innovative and strategic measures against corruption (UNODC, 2021 This advocacy has resounded the need for citizens' centred approaches (Verdenicci, & Hough, 2015), which recommends for public buy-in and support as essential foundations for winning the war against corruption. Established that 'communication and other innovative communication tools play an important role in contributing to reduction of corruption' (Richards, 2020), and 'effective communication been essential to mobilizing public support towards anti-corruption programmes Public relations represents a strategic communication intervention that may be the most effective for addressing this problem of corruption in Nigeria. Obiagu, (2009) recognizes that the tools of public relations are very powerful for opinion molding. The tools when applied strategically are effective in attaining set objectives and goals of organisations. According to Zakayo, (2015) the tools are relevant in helping the public to 'understand and appreciate the intentions of government'. Interestingly, studies on the use of public relations tools in fighting corruption as has been carried out by other developing nations like New Zealand, Hong Kong and Botswana and proved to be encouraging. According to the Communication Strategy for the government of Malawi's anti-corruption Bureau (2007), public relations tools can be used in preventing corruption, building public trust as well as increasing public participation in anti-corruption campaigns. With studies having variously acknowledged the significance in use of public relations tools in addressing different national issues (Hashim & Mahpuz, 2011; Zhanga, & Benoit, 2004; Ugwuonah, & Okonkwo 2018; Kriyantono, Destrity, Amrullah & Rakhmawati 2017), this study evaluates the use of public relations tools in the fight against corruption in Nigeria.


**Statement of the problem**

Over the decades Nigeria has been battling with how best to tackle corruption. Several efforts have been made which include the establishment of different anti-corruption policies and programmes like the War Against Indiscipline WAI, Mass Mobilisation for Social Justice and Economic Recovery (MAMSER), National Orientation Agency (NOA), War Against Indiscipline and

Corruption (WAIC) etc All in effort to combat corruption, however the menace of corruption has continued unabated. In its recent rating in 2022, the Transparency International indicated that Nigeria still stands as the 'Second Most Corrupt Country in West Africa' confirm a similar report from the global scene where Nigeria was ranked 154 out of 180 countries, as one among the most corrupt countries in the world. The increasing rate in different dimensions of corruption in the country has intensified the call for other innovative measures against corruption. Development Actors like the United Nations (UN), the World Bank (WB), the Organization of American States (OAS) etc continue to emphasize the need for multi-disciplinary and coordinated approaches, and given that 'communication and other innovative communication tools a crucial role in reducing corruption' (Richards, 2020), Public relations tools are considered as effective communication strategies against corruption. Considering that the anti-corruption agencies the EFCC and the ICPC make use of various public relations tools this study examines the specific tools used, how the tools are been used and the extent used in the fight against corruption in Nigeria.

**Research Questions**

1. What are the specific tools used by the EFCC and ICPC in the fight against corruption in Nigeria?

2. How are the tools of public relations used in the fight against corruption in Nigeria?

3. To what extent are the tools of public relations used in the fight against corruption in Nigeria?

**Literature Review**

**Corruption in Nigeria**

Global consensus remains that corruption in Nigeria is endemic and is responsible for delaying the country's development (Nzeaka, Ehondor, & Edosonwan, 2021; Enakhimion, 2011; Akihgbe, 2011). Corruption is indeed Nigeria's greatest developmental challenge (Ogbonaya, 2018). Empirical studies establish the negative impact of corruption on Nigeria's economic growth (Ben, Udo, Abner, & Ibekwe, 2018). Nigeria's bad image and reputation globally is known to be responsible for persistent corruption (Jamo, (2021). High level and low level corruption co-exist in Nigeria (Sanni, 2018; Dikko, 2020). Corruption in the Nigerian system as simply alarming, (Nzeaka, Ehondor, & Edosonwan, 2021; Jamo, 2021).

According to the Transparency International corruption in Nigeria has undermined good governance, fundamentally distorted public policy, led to misallocation of resources, has harm the private sector and development and particularly hurts the poor (Transparency International). Worsening crisis of development in the country is linked to pervasive corruption, 'Nigeria's development challenge is attributed to the mismanagement of the country's revenue and resources (Nasir, 2018). 'corruption does not only exist in Nigeria but has fertilized, reproduced, developed, germinated, survived, multiplied and indeed is thriving prosperously still manifesting itself in all spheres of the country's social, political, economic, religious, educational, military, business and otherwise' (Abdulmalik & Ayinla, 2017).

Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index (CPI) continue to classify Nigeria as one among the most corrupt countries in the world (Onyema, Roy, Oredola & Ayinla, 2018). Over the years there has been significant increase in the rate of corruption in the country. For instance as of 1996 and 1997 Nigeria was rated as the most corrupt nation in the world by the Transparency International (Onyema, et al, 2018). In 1999 it was rated the second most corrupt. In 2000 it regained its position as the most corrupt in the world out of 90 countries. In 2001 and 2002 Nigeria was ranked the second most corrupt out of 91 and 102 countries. In 2009 Nigeria occupied the 130th position out of 180 countries surveyed by the global perception index Transparency International. In 2018 corruption rating in the country stood at 144, while in 2019, it dropped to 146, ranking as the second most corrupt ECOWAS country (Transparency International, 2018 and 2019). In 2020 Transparency International ranked Nigeria 146 out of 180 countries surveyed. In 2021 the country scored 24 out of 100 points ranking 154 out of 180 countries.

Corruption in Nigeria is manifested in a number of ways. The increasing poverty, insecurity, insurgency, kidnapping, public theft of national resources to the abuse of public positions, misappropriation, extortion, embezzlement, theft, bribery and fraud etc. From the above understanding, corruption in Nigeria is described to be systematic (Ibidolapo, 2016), so much that it has almost become 'part of the Nigerian culture'. Nigeria's average score in the annual Transparency International Corruption Perception Index from 2014 to 2023 is 27 out of 100 ranking 145 most corrupt out of 180 countries (Punch, 20 September 2023).

**Utilization of public relations tools in the fight against corruption in Nigeria**

The relevance of public relations tools in the fight against corruption in Nigeria is not in doubt. As Arkwright, (2017) asserted, that Public relations instruments remain traditionally the basic tools for creating impact, 'even though the 'nature and complexity of corruption has made it challenging to eradicate', 'the use of 'innovative communication tools can be useful in reducing corruption'. Public relations strategies and tools when skillfully employed, help in producing the desired success in any public campaign (Calkins, 2020). Investigating the communication strategies used by the ICPC in the fight against corruption in Nigeria, Chiakaan, Gapsiso & Oliver, (2017) found that communication strategies used by the ICPC include public relations tools such as workshops, advocacy visits, radio/television jingles/programs, billboards, branded shirts, and sponsorship of special festivals amongst others. The study however, indicated minimal effects in creating awareness for attitudinal change using those tools the reasons were as a result of several challenges which include lack of audience research. Ugwuonah & Okonkwo (2018) explored the use of public relations tools in crisis management by major international oil companies in Nigeria the study evaluated the effect of the tools used to maintain healthy relationship between the companies and the host community analysing how the public relations tools affect the corporate performance of the companies. Results revealed that the companies employed various PR crisis management tools like periodic meetings, corporate social responsibility activities (road projects, schools, hospitals markets, employment, sponsorship and participation in annual festivals and special events, dialogue). Findings revealed that the tools employed contributed significantly to the corporate performance and in maintaining healthy relationship between the companies and host community.

Samaila, Odigbo, & Ugwu, (2017) assessed some selected public relations reputation management strategies as weapons against corruption in Nigeria findings from their research revealed that reputation management strategies such as self-image audit, corporate and institutional image audit matched with marketing communications strategies contributed to stem the tide of corruption in the country. In their study, Iringe-Koko, Woyengikuro, & Wagbara (2019) examined the perspective of public relations in the quest to eliminate corruption by the Nigeria Police. The Nigerian police adopted public relations tools such as press releases, conferences, seminars, as well as special events in fighting corruption. Findings revealed that the efforts were not able to combat corruption because of the unprofessional use and application of the tools by non-professionals.

**Theoretical framework**

*The Excellence theory:*

Drawing on the principles of excellence, the theory assumes that public relations is instrumental in attaining organisations' objectives and thus responsible for the success of organizations. Effectiveness in organization is attained only when effective communication is used excellently which underscores the importance of using the symmetrical model. Thus, the concept of excellence in public relations is based on the two-way balanced approach (IvyPanda, 2019). The position of the excellence studies is that organisations must manage communication programmes strategically to be effective. Grunig's conceptualization of excellence in public relations revolves around the consistent involvement of public relations in strategic management as the best predictor of excellent public relations. This concept is considered necessary in this study because it directs how public relations experts can use the tools of public relations to achieve set objectives of an organisation. The theory is considered relevant to our study because it provides for public relations practitioners the opportunity to think through the ways in which communication can be strategically planned and how the tools of public relations can be used strategically to achieve organisations set objectives.

**Methodology**

This study adopted the survey design to collect data. While questionnaire was used as the research instrument to collect the quantitative data. The population of the study consist of internal and external publics of the anti-corruption agencies from the six major cities in Nigeria. The overall population of the study was 18,922,305 internal and external publics of the EFCC and ICPC; out of which the population of the internal publics of the two agencies under study was 2, 784 while that of the external publics is expected to be 18,919,521 respectively. The sample size of the study was 601 which was determined using online Survey Monkey sample size calculator software (2021, https://www.surveymonkey.com/mp/sample-size-calculator/) under the population size of 18, 922, 305, confidence level of 96% and error margin of 4% respectively.

The multi-stage sampling was used for easy sampling since the geographical area of study is large. The cluster sampling technique was used to group Nigeria into six (6) main geo-political zones. Since this study is to cover a large geographical area, cluster sampling techniques offered more flexibility in grouping the area into manageable geographical clusters or strata. Purposive

sampling technique was used to select one state from each geo-political Zone. The purposive sampling technique was used for the purpose of selecting only city capitals with both EFCC and ICPC offices. Purposive sampling was again used to select one EFCC and ICPC offices from the cities that are expected to be sampled. Subsequently, six EFCC and six ICPC offices were sampled.

**Population of the Study**

| S/N | City | Geopolitical Zone | EFCC | ICPC | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Internal Publics | | External Publics | |
| 1 | Maiduguri | North-East | 173 | 21 | 1112449 | 1112643 |
| 2 | Kano | North West | 231 | 43 | 3626068 | 3626347 |
| 3 | Makurdi | North Central | 124 | 31 | 2753077 | 2753232 |
| 4 | Lagos | South West | 553 | 141 | 9000000 | 9000694 |
| 5 | Enugu | South East | 224 | 32 | 688862 | 689118 |
| 6 | Port-Harcourt | South-South | 396 | 51 | 1148665 | 1149112 |
| 7. | Abuja | HQ FCT | 571 | 193 | 590400 | 591164 |
| | | | **2, 272** | **512** | **18, 919, 521** | **18,922,305** |
| | **Total** | | **2,784** | | | |

**Source:** Field Research, 2021.

Proportionate sampling technique was used to distribute the sample to the areas sampled to select the respondents proportionate to the population size of each city using the formula thus:

$$\frac{S \times n}{N}$$

Where;

S =     Size of State

n =     Sample Size

N =     Total Population

| Maiduguri | $\dfrac{1,112,643 x 601}{18,922,305}$ | 35 |
|---|---|---|
| Kano | $\dfrac{3,626,347 x 601}{18,922,305}$ | 115 |
| Makurdi | $\dfrac{2,753,232 x 601}{18,922,305}$ | 88 |
| Lagos | $\dfrac{9,000,984 x 601}{18,922,305}$ | 285 |
| Enugu | $\dfrac{689,118 x 601}{18,922,305}$ | 22 |

| Port-Harcourt | $\dfrac{1,149,112 x 601}{18,922,305}$ | 37 |
|---|---|---|
| Abuja | $\dfrac{591,164 x 601}{18,922,305}$ | 19 |
| **Total** | | **601** |

**Distribution of Sample according to areas that are expected to be sampled in the Study using Proportionate Sampling Technique**

| Area | Population of the Study per State and the FCT | Number of Respondents expected to be proportionately sampled per city |
|---|---|---|
| Maiduguri | 1112643 | 35 |
| Kano | 3626347 | 115 |
| Makurdi | 2753232 | 88 |
| Lagos | 9000694 | 285 |
| Enugu | 689118 | 22 |
| Port-Harcourt | 1149112 | 37 |
| Abuja | 591164 | 19 |
| **TOTAL** | **18,922,305** | **601** |

**Source:** Field Research, 2021.

**Data presentation**

Out of the 601 copies that were administered, 563 copies were properly filled, 16 copies were found unusable while 22 copies were not returned. This means the study recorded a 93.7% return rate. However, out of the 563 copies of questionnaire, 60 were for Administrative and Information Units of EFCC and ICPC Abuja, the remaining 503 copies were for the external publics of EFCC and ICPC across the six states and FCT Abuja. The data is presented in two sections which include members of Administrative and Information Units of EFCC and ICPC and the external publics.

**Table 1:** Specific tools used by the EFCC and ICPC in the fight against corruption in Nigeria

| Items | Frequency | | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **EFCC** | **ICPC** | |
| Advertorials | 4(6.7) | 2(3.3) | 6(10.0) |
| Newsletters | 3(5.0) | 6(10.0) | 9(15.0) |
| Speaking Engagements | 4(6.7) | 3(5.0) | 7(11.7) |
| Posters/Handbills | 00(00) | 2(3.3) | 2(3.3) |
| Media Relations | 6(10.0) | 4(6.7) | 10(16.7) |
| Press Releases | 2(3.3) | 3(5.0) | 5(8.3) |
| Community relations | 00(00) | 00(00) | 00(00) |
| Crisis management | 00(00) | 00(00) | 00(00) |
| All the above options | 11(18.3) | 10(16.7) | 21(35.0) |
| **Total** | **30(50.0)** | **30(50.0)** | **60(100%)** |

*Source: Field Survey, 2022*

Table 1 presents data on the specific tools of public relations used by EFCC and ICPC in the fight against corruption in Nigeria. Accordingly, 6(10.0%) respondents went for advertorial of which 4(6.7%) of them came from EFCC and 2(3.3%) respondents came from ICPC, 9(15.0%) respondents identified newsletters of which 3(5.0%) came from EFCC and 6(10.0%) were from ICPC, 7(11.7%) respondents picked speaking engagements of which 4(6.7%) came from EFCC and ICPC had 3(5.0%), 2(3.3%) respondents who are from ICPC chose posters/handbills, 10(16.7%) respondents indicated media relations of which 6(10.0%) respondents came from EFCC and 4(6.7%) were from ICPC, 5(8.3%) respondents opted for press release of which 2(3.3%) of them came  EFCC and ICPC has 3(5.0%) and 21(35.0%) respondents went for all the options listed on the table of which 11(18.3%) of them came from EFCC and ICPC had 10(16.7%).

Information from the above table indicates that all the listed tools are been used however, media relations, newsletters, and speaking engagements appear to have been used more often than the others while advertorials and press releases followed. This implies that, the agencies gave more preference to the use of these tools in their engagement with the public.

**Table 2: How the tools of public relations are used in the fight against corruption in Nigeria**

| Items | Frequency | | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **EFCC** | **ICPC** | |
| The tools are used in informing the employees about the EFCC/ICPC's arrests, detention and prosecution of offenders | 4(6.7) | 3(5.0) | 7(11.7) |
| The tools are used to educate employees about the effect of corruption | 5(5.0) | 7(11.7) | 12(20.0) |
| The tools are used to highlight programmes and policies that will help in fighting corruption in government and society | 4(6.7) | 2(3.3) | 6(10.0) |
| The tools such as seminars, panels, workshops and conferences are used to sensitize citizens about corruption in Nigeria | 8(13.3) | 7(11.7) | 15(25.0) |
| All of the above | 9(15.0) | 11(18.3) | 20(33.3) |
| **Total** | **30(50.0)** | **30(50.0)** | **60(100%)** |

*Source: Field Survey, 2022*

Table 2 presents data on how the tools of public relations were used in the fight against corruption in Nigeria. Consequently, 7(11.7%) respondents said that the tools were used in informing the employees about the EFCC/ICPC's arrests, detention and prosecution of offenders of which 4(6.7%) of them came from EFCC and ICPC had 3(5.0%). The table also shows 12(20.0%) respondents indicating that the tools are used to educate employees about the effect of

corruption in Nigeria of which 5(5.0%) of them came from EFCC and 7(11.7%) came from ICPC. Next, the table reveals that 6(10.0%) respondents indicated that the tools are used to highlight programmes and policies on corruption in government and society of which 4(6.7%) of them came from EFCC and ICPC had 2(3.3%). 15(25.0%) respondents indicated that the tools are used to sensitize citizens about corruption 8(13.3%) came from EFCC and 7(11.7%) came from ICPC. On the whole, 20(33.3%) respondents indicated that all of the above tools were used in fighting corruption. The data provided above imply that public relations tools are used more or less as tools for providing information about the activities of the agencies like arrests, detention and prosecution of offenders.

**Table 3: To what extent are the tools of public relations used in the fight against corruption in Nigeria?**

| Items | Not at all | Little extent | Somewhat extent | Great extent | Rating |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Advertorials/publicity | 22 (36.7%) | 28(46.7%) | 4(6.7%) | 6(10.0%) | 7 |
| Newsletters | 7(11.7%) | 8(13.3%) | 26(43.3%) | 19(31.7%) | 2 |
| Speaking engagements | 11(18.3%) | 9(15.9%) | 26(43.0%) | 14(23.3%) | 4 |
| Posters/Handbills | 18(30.0%) | 31(56.7%) | 7(18.6%) | 4(6.7%) | 5 |
| Media Relations | 3(5.0%) | 6(10.0%) | 29(48.3%) | 12(20.0%) | 3 |
| Press Releases | 1(1.7%) | 8(13.3%) | 31(51.7%) | 22(43.7%) | 1 |
| Community Relations | 21(35.9%) | 37(28.3%) | 8(13.3%) | 4(6.7%) | 6 |
| Crisis Management | 26(43.3%) | 29(48.3%) | 3(5.0%) | 2(3.3%) | 8 |
| **Total** | **109** | **136** | **134** | **83** | |

*Source: Field Survey, 2022*

Table four presents data on the extent to which public relations tools are been used by the EFCC and ICPC in the fight against corruption in Nigeria. In view of the press releases, 1.7%, 13.3%, 51.7% and 36.7% of the respondents indicated not at all, little extent, somewhat extent and great extent. Concerning the speaking engagement used as tools of public relations by EFCC and ICPC in the fight against corruption, 18% of the respondents said it was extensively used at all, 15.0% said little extent, 43.3% went for somewhat extent and 23.3% said great extent. On media relations 5.0% of the respondents went for not at all, 10.0% opted for little extent, 48.3% indicated somewhat extent and 20.0% picked great extent. With regards to posters/handbills, 30.0%, 56.7%, 11.7% and 6.7% went for not at all, little extent, somewhat extent and great extent respectively. Pertaining newsletters, 11.7% respondents opted for not at all, 13.3% went for little extent, 43.3% ticked somewhat extent and 31.7% indicated great extent. Advertorial and publicity had 36.7%, 46.7%, 6.7% and 10.0% representing not at all, little extent, somewhat extent and great extent. Responses concerning the extent to which crisis management have been used as tool of public relations in the fight against corruption, 43.3.0% went for not at all, and 48.3% picked little extent while 5.0% and 3.3% indicated somewhat extent and great extent respectively. Finally, community relations had 35.0%, 28.3%, 13.3% and 6.7% representing not at all, little extent, somewhat extent and great extent respectively.

The data provided above shows that press releases are been used to a large extent followed by newsletters, and speaking engagements and subsequently advertorials in the fight against corruption, equally are community relations, handbills, and crisis communication. By

implication, this means the agencies have preference in use of some of the tools and as such, makes use of some of the tools more often than others.

**Table 4: Effectiveness of the tools of public relations in the fight against corruption in Nigeria**

| Items | Not Effective | Effective | Very Effective | Most Effective |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Community Relations | 20(33.3%) | 26(43.3%) | 8(13.3%) | 6(10.0%) |
| Newsletters | 5(8.3%) | 9(15.0%) | 22(36.7%) | 24(40.0%) |
| Speaking engagements | 10(16.7%) | 8(13.3%) | 28(46.7%) | 14(23.3%) |
| Posters/Handbills | 19(31.7%) | 27(45.0%) | 5(8.3%) | 9(15.0%) |
| Media Relations | 2(3.3%) | 7(11.7%) | 31(51.6%) | 20(33.3%) |
| Press Releases | 2(3.3%) | 9(15.0%) | 28(46.7%) | 21(43.7%) |
| Advertorials/Publicity | 19(31.7%) | 24(40.0%) | 9(15.0%) | 8(13.7%) |
| Crisis Management | 28(46.6%) | 22(36.7%) | 3(5.0%) | 7(11.7%) |
| **Total** | **105** | **132** | **134** | **109** |

*Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2022*

Table 4. Presents data on the effectiveness of the tools of public relations used by EFCC and ICPC in the fight against corruption in Nigeria. The data show that 11.7% of the respondents agreed that media relations was effective, 51.6% said it was very effective, 33.% accepted that it was the most effective while 3.3% said it was not effective. The rating of press release in the table revealed that 15.0% of the respondents agreed that it was effective, while 46.7%, 35.0% and 3.3% said very effective, the most effective and not effective. Pertaining to newsletters, while 15.0%, 36.7% and 40.0% said it was effective, very effective and the most effective, 8.3% rated it as not effective. On speaking engagements 13.3% of the respondents agreed it was effective, 46.7% said it was very effective while 23.3% and 16.7% were of the opinion that it was the most effective and not effective respectively. With regards to advertorials/publicity 40.0% of the respondents agreed it was effective, 15.0% said it was very effective while 13.3% and 31.7% were of the opinion that it was the most effective and not effective respectively Also, 45.0%, 8.3% and 15.0% indicated that posters/handbills were effective, very effective and the most effective while 31.7% of the respondents said it was not effective in the fight against corruption in Nigeria. The rating of community relations shows that while 43.3% agreed that it was effective, 13.3%, 10.0% and 33.3% said very effective, the most effective and not effective. Lastly, the rating of crisis management shows that 46.6%, 36.7%, 5.0%, and 11.7% representing not effective, effective, very effective and most effective.

The data from the above reveal that newsletters, press releases, speaking engagements, posters/handbills are effective tools used by the agencies in the fight against corruption in Nigeria. This implies that these particular tools very helpful in the fight against corruption.

**Discussion of Findings**

This study was conducted to evaluate the use of public relations tools by the EFCC and the ICPC in the fight against corruption in Nigeria. It sought to find out the specific tools of public relations used by the EFCC and ICPC in the fight against corruption in Nigeria and how the tools have been used and to what extent.

The study found out that public relations tools are very much used by the agencies in the fight against corruption in Nigeria, tools such as media relations, newsletters and speaking engagements are the specific tools used by both the EFCC and ICPC in the fight against corruption. However other tools such as advertorials and news releases are also used. The implication is that most of the specific tools used are basically one-way communication flow where information flows from the agencies to the people, the fight against corruption through this means may not yield the much desired result.

From the data presented in table 2, the ways in which the tools of public relations such as media relations, newsletters, and speaking engagements, advertorials and press releases are used in fighting corruption include educating employees about corruption, providing information about the arrests, detention, and prosecution of offenders. By way of providing information about what the agencies are doing, it is believed the agencies are educating, enlightening, and creating awareness about corruption, as well as highlighting the effect and consequences of corruption. This may eventually help in dissuading the public from further indulging in corrupt practices. Data equally shows that the tools are used to highlight programmes and policies that help in fighting corruption in government and the society.

Data also shows that tools such as seminars, panels, workshops and conferences are used to sensitize citizens about corruption in Nigeria. Although some of the responses 33.3% agree that the tools are used in various ways, underscoring the fact that public relations tools are indeed useful in fighting corruption, however, public assessment of the level of use of the tools revealed that majority of the respondents (136%) indicated that the tools are used to a little extent, while 134% indicated that the tools are used to somewhat extent. 109% responses shows the tools are not used at all, while 83% indicated that the tools are used to a great extent. This result by analysis shows that though the tools are extensively used, they did not meet 100% expectations of the people in combating corruption in Nigeria.

To further emphasize on this, information on the effectiveness of the tools in the fight against corruption, shows a higher percentage of responses (134%) agreeing that the tools of public relations used are very effective. 132% indicated that the tools are effective, 109% indicated that the tools are most effective while 105% stated the tools are not effective. These responses however represents the feelings of the publics towards the activities of the agencies as majority of the responses in Table 3 (136%) indicated that the tools are used to a little extent. The overall result of findings revealed that the use of the tools of public relations in the fight against corruption in Nigeria are far-reaching, but are not in all effective in combating corruption.

**Conclusion**

The study evaluates the use of Public Relations tools in the fight against corruption in Nigeria. The result of the study shows that public relations tools are very useful in the fight against corruption Nigeria. Findings revealed that the tools are extensively used in the fight against corruption in Nigeria however they are not effectively utilized. Findings revealed the anti-corruption agencies make use of few specific tools which does not go beyond merely providing information about corruption. By merely sensitizing, creating awareness, and educating the people about the activities of the agencies against corruption without a strategic

communication plan for the public, the anti-corruption agencies under-utilize the tools thereby de-emphasizing the value of public relations tools as strategic communication devices. Result from the study revealed that the agencies rely so much on publicity of what the government (agencies) was doing in terms of their arrests, detention and prosecution of offenders which gave the impression that the tools were very effective in the fight against corruption in Nigeria. The study underscores the importance of using public relations tools strategically in addressing the problem of corruption in Nigeria.

**Recommendations**

Based on the findings from the study, the following recommendations were put forward;

1.  The anti-corruption agencies (the EFCC and ICPC) should deploy the appropriate application of the tools of public relations, employ public relations professionals to design programmes targeting the different levels of publics in addressing the problem of corruption in Nigeria.
2.  The integration of public relations as a strategic communication tool for managing the communication plan of government agencies like EFCC and ICPC is crucial. Public relations professionals must be employed to handle all communication programmes that has to do with the public.
3.  There is need for the government to accord public relations the full recognition as a management function by ensuring that the public relations departments in the agencies are fully established and equipped to execute its functions effectively.

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