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Effects of Whistle Blowing Policy on Labour Management Relations: A study of Isiala Ngwa North Local Government council of Abia State

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the effects of whistle blowing policy on labour management relations in Isiala Ngwa North Local Government Council of Abia state.. The objective of the research was to find out the effects of whistle blowing policy on violation of government's financial regulations, misappropriation of public funds and assets, underreporting of revenues and conversion of funds for personal use on indicators of labour management relations: disputes, understanding, cooperation and partnership. Quasi-experimental design was adopted using survey method to take a snapshot at the situation in the organization and analyse same. Purposive/quota sampling technique of non probability sample was adopted with the aide of Taro Yamen's formula to determine the sample size in eight (8) departments in Isiala North Local Government Council of Abia state. Primary data were obtained through questionnaire while secondary data were obtained from textbooks, internet printout, and journals. Four null hypotheses were tested using spearman's rank correlation coefficient statistical tools. The findings revealed that the four null hypotheses were rejected which indicated positive significant relationship between whistle blowing policy on violation of government's financial regulations, misappropriation of public funds and assets, underreporting of revenues and conversion of funds for personal use, and indicators of labour management relations: disputes, understanding, cooperation and partnership. Finally, we recommend that whistle blowing has the possibility to increase accountability and transparency in the management of public funds and develop a corrupt free workforce for positive labour management relations.

KEYWORDS: Labour Management, Policy, Whistle Blowing

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I. INTRODUCTION

Public policy in Nigeria is an attempt by government to address a public issue by instituting laws, regulations, decisions, or actions pertinent to the problem at hand. Numerous issues can be addressed by public policy including social, economical, cultural, political even corruption. Nigeria's years of military rule resulted in a top-down policy-making process. Power is concentrated in the presidency, and his cabinet ministers through channels established by patron-clientelism. Senior government officials are supported by broader based of loyal junior officials, creating a sort of loyalty pyramid. Public policy is made at governmental level and it affects the general public within the area of jurisdiction of the government or public institution formulating the policy.

Private policy, on the other hand, belongs to the private sector and is formulated by a private company or group for itself and for guidance of the members, management and staff. Its motive is generally private in nature and more often than not, profit-oriented or geared towards the survival and excellence of the organization concerned especially in a competitive environment. But private policy should reflect public policy because the government policy provides platform for the private policy. More still, some policies are meant for the guidance of private organization such as the interest rate policy formulated by government in the form of guidance for implementation by banks and financial institute under the supervision of the central bank. Thus, there is an inter-relationship between public and private policies (Ayuba, 2012). Considering whistle blowing policy as one of the public policies in Nigeria to be research upon, reveals that this work will concentrate on employee to raise concerns about workplace malpractices, in a confidential manner for the organization to investigate alleged malpractices and take steps to deal with such in a manner consistent with the organizational policies and procedures, and relevant regulations.

This whistle blowing policy promotes transparent structure and effective clear communication resulting to good industrial relation since through this whistle blowing policy illegal and unethical conduct and any other misconduct across the organization will be treated allowing legal and ethical conducts to stand supreme making the organization effective in the operation as such resulting in positive labour management relation. This study of whistle blowing policy on labour management relation (LMR) refers to the rules and policies which govern and organize

employment, how these are established and implemented, and how they affect the needs and interest of employees and employers especially as employees take the risk of whistle blowing which has negative consequences like: isolation, humiliation, formation of anti-you group, loss of job, questioning of the whistle blower's mental health, vindictive tactics to make the individual's work more difficult and court proceedings.

In workplace across the world, there is a unwritten culture and practice that gives a strong message that employees should turn a blind eye to wrongdoing and should not raise their concerns internally or externally. The consequences of this culture are that it discourages normal decent people from questioning wrongs that they come across in their jobs. It encourages employees to be guided exclusively by their own short term interest and undermines any sense of mutual interest between the workforce, the organization and those it serves. This makes a whistleblower an enemy in such situation. Whistleblowers in above situation suffer in various ways including ostracism, harassment, punishment, punitive transfers, reprimands and dismissal. Bosses and top managers are responsible for many attacks of whistleblowers but workers often join in or do nothing often due to fear that they could be the next victim. Premeaux and Bedenan (2003) are of the view that employees hesitate to raise voice as this might lead to retaliation. Poverty and unemployment are rampant in these countries and whistle-blowing can result in jobless (Vinten, 2000).

These effects of whistle blowing policy on working relations calls for investigation on how proper to manage this policy in relation to labour and management. As whistle blowing policy is new in Nigeria, so it is in Isiala Ngwa North Local Government Council. It could also be seen as a borrowed policy from federal ministry of finance, to support the fight against financial crime and corruption. Therefore, it is because of this newness of this policy and lack of investigation of this policy in relation to working environment in Nigeria and Isiala Ngwa North Local Government Council respectively that necessitated the need for this study.

Statement of the Problem

The drive for greater efficiencies and long term success has forced many organizations to increasingly make policies that encourage employees and others who have serious concern about wrongdoing or malpractice within the organization to come up without any fear of victimization, subsequent discrimination disadvantage or dismissal to raise such serious concern within the organization rather than ignoring it or blowing it outside. This force for efficiency has introduced whistle blowing policy in

Nigeria working environment which is of great positive effects in the working environment especially on corruption. Hence, wrongdoing or malpractice will become less appealing to employees because whistle blowing sends message of awareness to the public consciousness. This policy has also provided protection bill for whistle blowers but yet to consider its effects on labour management relation which might lead to low productivity and staff turnover. More still, because whistle blowing is revolutionary in nature, it has the tendency to attract harassment and intimidation from bosses and follow workers which spells doom to the labour management relation. So the effect of this policy (whistle blowing) on labour management relation is what this research has as an objective especially in Isiala Ngwa North Local Government Authority in Abia State.

Objectives of the Study

Broadly, this work is meant to examine the effects of whistle blowing policy on labour-management relations, especially the objectives are to:

- (i) find out the effects of whistle blowing policy against violation of government's financial regulations on disputes .
- (ii) find out the effects of whistle blowing policy against misappropriation of public funds and assets on understanding.
- (iii) determine the effects of whistle blowing policy against underreporting of revenues on cooperation.
- (iv) determine the effects of whistle blowing policy against soliciting of bribes on partnership.

Research Questions

Certain research questions formulated to get this work are:

- (i) To what extent does whistle blowing policy against violation of government's financial regulations have effect on disputes?
- (ii) To what extent does whistle blowing policy against misappropriation of public funds and assets have effect on understanding?
- (iii) To what extent does whistle blowing policy against underreporting of revenue have effects on cooperation?
- (iv) To what extent does whistle blowing against soliciting of bribes have effects on partnership?

Hypotheses

- H₀₁:** There is no significant effect between violation of government's financial regulations and disputes
- H₀₂:** There is no significant effect between misappropriation of public funds and assets and understanding.
- H₀₃:** There is no significant effect between underreporting of revenues and cooperation.
- H₀₄:** There is no significant effect between soliciting of bribes and partnership.

Review of Related Literature Policy

According to Ocheoha (1998), policy may be conceptualized as decision-making at the highest level, and from another view-point, it may be perceived as a general rule or principle within an organization, which is meant to guide future decisions, plans or actions. More still policy may also be defined as a selected and planned of conduct in the light of which individual decisions are made and co-ordinated towards the achievement of pre-determined goals or objectives. The New Webster's dictionary of the English language international edition defines policy as a selected, planned line of conduct in the light of which individual decisions are made and coordination achieved. Policy in this context is decision-oriented. It guides subsequent decisions in the organization.

Typologies of Policy

An important characteristic of policy-making is that different kinds of policies tend to be associated with different kinds of political relationship and processes. Lowi, (1972), has persuasively argued that there are three types of policies - distributive, redistributive and regulatory - and that each type of policy is associated with a particular political process.

Distributive policies: Policies concerned with the distribution of new resources are distributive policies. There are policies that have direct impact to the public, for example personal income taxation, water the resource, food relief, social power and so on. These also include grants and subsidies that give protection to certain interest against competition.

Redistributive policies: are concerned with changing the distribution of existing resources, and with the rearrangement of policies which are related to bringing about basic social and economic changes in the economy and society. They include those actions that affect credit and the supply of money, as well as taxes and social security and transfer payments.

According to Sapru, (2011), the distributive policies are generally ideological; they raise basic issues about the proper role of government in societal and economic matters.

Regulatory policies: are concerned with regulation and control of activities. They seek to alter individual behaviour directly by imposing standards on regulated industries, and are much more likely to arouse controversy. Private interests may be significantly constrained or have compliance costs imposed upon them by regulatory actions. Powerful interest groups are likely to be organized around regulatory issues, and the interaction of this policy advocates play an important role in determining the nature of the policies and the like, which are engaged in regulatory activities. Example: NAFDAC, NGLA, CBN, SON, FOREX. This is a policy that is formulated by the government to checkmate the activities of actions and inactions of some behaviours of members of the state through established agencies including the organizations in the day to day administration of the state. Whistle blower policy is among the regulatory issues which involve concerns on how public issue should be managed or used as such regulating the use of public property. This seminar research will be based on these regulatory policies.

Constituent policy issues: are those which are concerned with the setting up or reorganization of institutions.

Furthermore, Cobb, and Elder, (1972) proposed an alternative classification of policy issues in terms of conflict rather than content. Their focus is on the way in which conflict is created and managed. To them, a conflict may arise between two or more groups over issues relating to the distribution of positions or resources and may be created by situations such as:

- (a) Unfairness or bias in the distribution of positions or resources.
- (b) Framing of an issue for personal or group gain.
- (c) Unanticipated human events, natural disasters, international conflict, war and technological changes.

Such issues then constitute the agenda for policy or decision – making and are known as the conflict policy issues.

Again, Hoywood, and Wilson, (1987) use the criteria of costs and benefits from the point of view of the possibilities of different outcomes, forms of bargaining and conflict, and a range of other alternatives. There are redistribution or cuts issues

which involve bargaining over who gets what, who gets more and who gets less. For Wilson, criteria of costs and benefits may be concentrated or dispersed. An issue which may have very concentrated benefits to a small section of society, but whose costs are widely dispersed, is of a different kind to the one that may be for “the greatest happiness of the greatest number” or “greatest good to the greatest number”. These issues on policy according to Hoywood, and Wilson, (1987) are called bargaining policy issues.

Whistle Blowing Policy: Meaning and the Nigerian Experience

Whistle blowing in the workplace can be defined as bringing to the attention of someone in authority an act, incident or procedure that is not right, or a concern or suspicion that something is unethical. This includes such issues as malpractice, dangerous activity, abuse, fraud or corruption. This policy whistle blowing means the reporting by employees of suspected misconduct, illegal acts or failure to act within the organization (Best, 2015). The aim of this policy is to encourage employees and others who have serious concern about any aspect of the organization’s work to come forward and forte those concerns. According to Nottinghamshire county council, Whistle blowing is a positive act that can make a valuable contribution to the council’s efficiency and long-term success. It is not disloyal to colleagues or the council to speak up.

In the same line, First Bank Nigeria (FBN) Holding Plc. (2017), in ensuring a high ethical standard in all its business activities has established a code of ethics which set out the standard of conduct expected in the management of its business across the group. All stakeholders are expected to comply with these standards in the discharge of their duties. In furtherance of the FBN holdings Plc., whistle blowing policy and procedure provides a channel for the group’s employees and other relevant stakeholders to raise concerns about workplace malpractices, in a confidential manner, for the group to instigate alleged malpractices and take steps to deal with such in a manner consistent with the group’s policies and procedures and relevant regulations.

The Federal Government (FG) has launched a new programme that is aimed at encouraging anyone in the possession of information to report it for investigation. The whistle blowing programme came as an initiative from the federal ministry of finance as a means of helping the nation get useful information about a couple of things that could draw the nation backwards. Individuals are encouraged to provide useful information that entails violation of government financial regulations as well as procurement

procedures, misappropriation of public funds and assets, financial malpractices, fraud and theft of public assets (Temitope and Henry, 2018). A whistle blower responsible for providing government with information that directly leads to the voluntary return of stolen or concealed public funds or assets may be entitled to anywhere between 2.5% - 5.0% of amount recovered. In order to quantify for the rewards the whistle blower must provide the government with information it does not already have, and could not otherwise obtain from any other publicly available source to the government. The actual recovery must also be on account of the information provided by the whistle blower. This information is a powerful data in the hands of the government, helping the government to make amend on the security issue of ethical issues.

The initiatives aim at carrying Nigeria along and making them a part of the building process of the nation to wiped clean of the various forms of corruption that has plagued it. Also, the whistle blowing programme aims at finding anyone who can provide information on stolen or concealed public assets, covers information on manipulation of data or records, solicitation or collection of bribes, undocumented expenditure, splitting of contracts, conflicts of interest, diversion, under-reporting, concealment and non-remittance of government revenues. The program also wants information of any other form of corruption involving government funds and assets (Temitope and Henry, 2018). However, the objectives of whistle blowing policy is the possibility of increased accountability and transparency in the management of public funds, and the possibility that more funds would be recovered that could be deployed in financing Nigeria's infrastructural deficit.

A whistle blower is a person who voluntarily discloses to the Federal Government of Nigeria, through the Federal Ministry of Finance, a possible misconduct or violates that has occurred, is going or is about to occur with specific concerns which are in the public interest. According to the Minister of Finance, Mrs. Kemi Adeosun, (2017), the primary goal of the policy is to support the fight against financial crimes and corruption by increasing exposure of financial crimes and rewarding whistle-blowers. In order to promote such exposure, whistle-blowers are encouraged and offered protection from harassment or intimidation by their bosses or employers. The hope is that more looted funds will be recovered through the encouragement of voluntary information about corrupt practices. <https://www.proshareng.com>

There are two types of whistle blowing. The first is internal whistle blowing. This means that the whistle blower reports misconduct to another person

within the organization. The second type is external whistle blowing where the whistle blower reports misconduct to another person outside the organization. The whistle blowing policy must have a scope. This is why the ethics of the study organization must be stated with the objectives to state the scope of the policy. It is on this ground that this work samples a scope for whistle blowing policy in the study organization. This policy is intended to enable those concerned become aware of wrongdoing in the Isiala Ngwa North Local Government Council affecting some other persons or services, to report their concerns at the earliest opportunity so that they can be properly investigated. The whistle blowing policy is not intended to replace existing procedures.

Whistle Blowing Policy Selling Points

- (a) The possibility of increased accountability and transparency in the management of public funds and
- (b) The possibility that more funds would be recovered that could be deployed in financing Nigeria's infrastructural deficit.

In the final analysis, it is hoped that the more accountable the government becomes, the higher will be Nigeria's ranking on the individual's of openness and ease of doing business. The ultimate goal is to develop a corruption-free society and attract more and more foreign investors. Nigerians are encouraged to give concerned information on issues like:

- (a) Violation of government's financial regulations e.g. failure to comply with the financial regulations act, public procurement act and other extent laws.
- (b) Mismanagement or misappropriation of public funds and assets (e.g. prospectus and vehicles).
- (c) Information on stolen public funds.
- (d) Information on concealed public funds.
- (e) Financial malpractice or fraud
- (f) Theft
- (g) Collecting/ soliciting bribes
- (h) Corruption
- (i) Diversion of revenues
- (j) Underreporting of revenues
- (k) Conversion of funds for personal use
- (l) Fraudulent and unapproved payment
- (m) Splitting of contracts
- (n) Procurement fraud (kickbacks and over-invoicing etc)
- (o) Violation of public procurement procedures. <https://www.proshareng.com>

The Aim of Whistle Blowing Policy

The programme does not apply to personal grievances concerning private contracts. It is understandable that this policy does not encourage private grievances but encourage referring such issues to the disciplinary committee or sector. The purpose of whistle blowing policy in Nigeria is to:

- (a) Increase exposure of financial or financial related crimes
- (b) Support the fight against financial crimes and corruption
- (c) Improve level of public confidence in public entities
- (d) Enhance transparency and accountability in the management of public funds
- (e) Improve Nigeria's open government ranking and ease of going business indicators; and
- (f) Recovery of public funds that can be deployed to finance Nigeria's infrastructure deficit.
- (g) To encourage employees to report wrong doing in the organization.

While in First Bank Nigeria whistle blowing is aimed at encouraging staff and other relevant stakeholders to report perceived unethical or illegal conduct of employees management, directors and other stakeholders across the group to appropriate authorities in a confidential manner without any fear of harassment, intimidation, victimization or reprisal of anyone raising concern(s) under this policy. Specific objectives of the policy are:

- (a) To ensure all employees feel supported in speaking up in confidence and reporting matters they suspect may involve improper, unethical or inappropriate conduct within the group.
- (b) To encourage all improper, unethical or inappropriate behaviour to be identified and challenged at all levels of the organization.
- (c) To provide clear procedures for reporting and handling such concern(s)
- (d) To proactively prevent and deter misconduct which could impact the

financial performance and damage the group's reputation

- (e) To provide assurance that all disclosures will be handled seriously, treated as confidential and managed without fear of reprisal of any form, and
- (f) To help promote and develop a culture of openness, accountability and integrity. (First Bank of Nigeria Holdings Whistle blowing policy and procedures version 2.0 October 2016). From the ongoing discussion, we will observe that each organization has primary aim for whistle blowing policy and such is also applicable in Isiala Ngwa North Local Government Council.

Effects of Whistle Blowing Policy in Nigerian Government

According to Minister of Finance, Mrs Kemi Adeosun (2017), the primary purpose of the policy is to support the fight against financial crimes and corruption, promote accountability and enhance transparency in the management of public finances. The minister has also assumed that the administration of president Buhari would continue to encourage all Nigerians with information on misconduct, violation or improper activity which can impact negatively on Nigeria, to report it to the appropriate authority. The laudable initiatives of Federal Ministry of Finance, Kemi Adeosun (2017), on whistle blowing has resulted in the discovery of 59.8 million cash in Kaduna Shem residence in Sabon - Tasha and over \$30 million cash in an apartment in Ikoyi, Lagos State. The whistle-blowing policy provides agencies like Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) with actionable tips to track and recover stolen government funds like \$9.8 million retrieved from Andrew Yakubu, former group managing director of Nigeria's State Oil Company. Thanks to whistle blowing (Kazeem, 2017). Furthermore, adding to Yakubu's loot, Lai Mohammed, Nigeria's Minister of Information says the whistle-blowing policy has led to the recovery of over \$180 million from various corrupt individuals.

According to Usim (2017), twenty (20) whistle blowers whose information led to the recovery of about ₦11.635 billion loot have been paid ₦375.8 million, in line with the federal government's rewards package on the whistle blower policy. Minister of Finance, Mrs. Kemi Adesun, who disclosed this in Abuja yesterday (Wednesday, 7 June, 2017) said "this payment which is the first under the whistle blower policy, underscores the commitment of the president Muhammadu Buhari administration in meeting obligations to information providers under the whistle

blower policy. The policy is an essential tool in the fight against corruption, she stated. Again, when tips lead to the successful recovery of ill gotten funds, whistle-blowers are entitled to “between 2.5 - 5% of amount recovered. This relevant decision has allowed citizens who report corruption related offenses earn a cut from the recovered loot. (Kazeem, 2017)

By encouraging a whistle blowing policy, the Nigeria’s citizens promote transparent structure and effective clear communication. More importantly, whistle blowing protects the organization’s clients. The 2014 report to Nation on occupational fraud and abuse by the Association of certified fraud examiner (ACFE) found typical organizations lose 5% of its annual revenue to fraud. The ACFE concluded tip offs from employees being consistently and by far the most common detection method. Over 40% of all cases were detected by an employee tip-more than twice the rate of any other detection method. Organizations with external hotlines are much more likely to catch fraud by a tip and experience frauds that are 41% less costly and detected 50% more quickly. On the other hand, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) arraigned the duo of Buhari Fannami, and Bakura Abdullahi on two separate one count charges before a Federal High Court sitting in Maiduguri, Borno State for allegedly giving false information to the agency under the whistle blowing policy. Trial judge in the matter is Justice M. T. Salihu.

Legality of Whistle-Blowing in Nigeria Governance System

The questions about the legitimacy of whistle-blowing, the moral responsibility of whistle-blowing and the appraisal of the institutions of whistle-blowing are part of the field of political ethics. Legal protection for whistle-blowing varies from country to country and may depend on country of original activity where and how secrets were revealed, and how they eventually become published or publicized. Over a dozen countries have now adopted comprehensive whistle bower protection laws that create mechanisms for reporting wrongdoing and provide legal protections to whistle blowers. Over 50 countries have adopted more limited protections as part of their anti-corruption, freedom of information, or employment laws. To be a whistle bower takes bravery, the list of negative consequences to whistle blowing seems endless; broken promises to fix the problem, disillusionment, isolation, humiliation, formation of an anti-you group, loss of job, questioning of the whistle bower’s mental health, vindictive tactics to make the individual’s work more difficult court proceedings. It all depends on the level of what information one reveals and to whom. The consequences vary from a corporate whistle bower to federal whistle bower.

The minister of finance Mrs Kemi Adeosun (2017), also disclosed that the policy was recently amended with the introduction of a formal legal agreement between information providers and the federal government, which is executed by the minister of Justice and Attorney-General of the federation.

The Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria on Wednesday 19th July, 2017 passed into law the whistle bower protection bill. The whistle bower protection bill was passed into law to protect persons who make discourses of improper conduct by public officers and public bodies. The bill provides that false whistle blowers would be liable to a minimum of five years imprisonment or a fine of ten million naira (10,000,000.00). The bill also adopted the federal government policy to reward whistle blowers with five percent of the recovered loot, which their disclosure led to its recovery. This bill also known as “An act to protect persons making disclosures for the public interest and others from reprisals, to provide for the matters disclosed to be properly investigated and dealt with and for other purposes related there with” was sponsored by Senator Biodun Olujimi (Ekiti South). Under the new bill, a person who makes a disclosure shall not be victimized by his or her employers or by fellow employees (Oyedele, 2017).

Labour Management Relations

The term Labour management relations refers to the interactions between employees, as represented by labour union, and their employers. This interaction is important as labour management is the backbone of any business and poor industrial relations can mean that productivity will be low and staff turnover will be high. For the best from your employees, it is vital that all consideration and care is put into good labour management. Labour management relation (LMR) also refers to be rules and policies which govern and implemented, and how they affect the needs and interests of employees and employers. These labour management relations include aspects of industrial life such as collective bargaining, trades unionism, discipline and grievance handlings, industrials disputes, employee participation in management and the interpretation of labour laws. The Labour Management Relations Act (LMRA), commonly referred to as the Taft-Hartley Act, had two primary purposes: (a) to lessen industrial disputes and (b) to place employers in a more equal position with the unions in bargaining and labour relations procedures (www.shrm.org/resource).

Indicators of Labour Management Relations

Tripathi, (1992) observes that good industrial relations means absence of disputes between the two parties and existence of understanding, cooperation and partnership between them. Four indicators of labour management relations can be derived from this observation, viz, disputes, understanding, cooperation, partnership, non-payment of salary, non promotion, harassment, victimization, and dismissal between workers and management.

Industrial Disputes: means any dispute of difference between an employer and a workman or between employers and workmen or between workmen and workmen connected with the employment, or non employment, or the terms of employment, or with conditions of labour or the termination of services, or the re-installment in service, of any person. The Dictionary of personnel management (Ivanovic, 1988) defines industrial disputes or labour disputes as arguments between management or work-to-rule, the running sore strike, token strike, the overtime ban, picketing and go-slow etc.

Understanding: the Dictionary of personnel management defines the term as private agreement. Private agreements between unions and management are termed as collective agreements in the field of labour management relations. Glueck (1978) points out that labour relations includes the negotiation of a written contract concerning wages, hours, and other conditions of employment and the interpretation and administered without violating its any term or condition or rule by both parties over its period of coverage. The absence of collective agreement implies that rules regulating employment relations are not jointly agreed and determined by management and union(s).

Cooperation: means the ability to work harmoniously with others in the interest of overall organization and have good human relation with others (Tripathi, 1991). Umstot, (1984) defines the cooperation is working together to achieve mutual goals. This explains the roles of management and trade unions in bringing about a positive work culture.

Partnership: is a relationship in which two or more people work together as partners (Collins, Birmingham University International Language Data Base English Language Dictionary, 1987). Based on this dictionary definition, workers and managers should work together as partners in labour management relations in order to achieve organizational goals and objectives. As partners of the organization, workers should participate in managing or making decision to accomplish organization's goals and objectives. Hence,

workers participation seems to be an indicator of labour management relation.

Non Payment of Salary: paying salary is in accordance to the employment Act, your employer must pay your salary at least once a month and within 7 days after the end of the salary period. There are exceptions for overtime resignations. Salary refers to remuneration including allowances, paid for work done under a contract service. Non-payment of salary is an offence. Your employer must pay your salary on time, according to the terms of your employment contract. If you are not paid on time, approach your employer to

understand if there are reasons for the late payment, and whether the regular payment schedule can be resumed. If you do not receive your salary, you can file an employment-related claim at the appropriate office (ministry of power- paying salary. <https://www.mom.gov.sg>paying> salary).

Non Promotion: promotion is the usual means for filling vacancies in higher ranks in a grade by selecting officers from a lower rank in the same grade. Officers are selected for promotion on the criteria of character, ability, experience and any qualifications prescribed for the higher rank. The officer selected for promotion must be the most meritorious, one who is able and ready to perform the more demanding duties at a higher rank. When you do not see promotion coming your way or getting passed over, can be disheartening and even humiliating.

Harassment: workplace harassment is the belittling or threatening behavior directed at an individual worker or a group of workers. Recently, matters of workplace harassment have gained interest among practitioners and researchers as it is becoming one of the most sensitive areas of effective workplace management, because a significant source of work stress is associated with aggressive behaviours at workplace (William, 2001).

Victimization: is used to describe unfair treatment of a worker by an employer because of some action the worker has taken. Some employment legislation protects you from victimization if you are availing of your rights under the legislation or looking to avail of your right. This means that your employer cannot penalize you by dismissing you, treating you unfairly or changing you conditions of employment in an unfavourable way (citizens information: victimization at work. <https://www.citizen> information. Ie/en/employment/enforcement and redress/victimization at work.html).

Dismissal: is the termination of employment by an employer against the will of the employee. Though such a decision can be made by an employer for a

variety of reasons, ranging from an economic downturn to performance-related problems on the part of the employee being fired has a strong stigma in some cultures (Congress, Senate, United States, Committee on Foreign Relation, 1953)

Effects of Whistle Blowing Policy on Labour-Management Relations in Isiala Ngwa North Local Government Council

In recent time, in the case of the purported bill for the establishment and control of Isiala Ngwa North community vigilante Group (CVG) which compelled all staff of Isiala Ngwa North Local Government Council at Okpuala Ngwa to have their monthly Vigilante levies of two hundred naira deducted at source with receipts to evidence payment, Nigeria Union of Local Government Employees (NULGE) stated their position in support for the staff of Isiala Ngwa North Local Government Council worker. This in a nutshell expressed the timely intervention of NULGE for the sake of its members; it also enacted in us the functions of NULGE in Labour-Management issues which will also pay out in the provision of whistle blowing policy in the system against corrupt practices in Isiala Ngwa North Local Government Council. In another looming crisis in the local Government Council in which the Governor announced that 50% of the state share of the Paris Club refund shall be applied to settlement of arrears of salaries, consequent upon which a committee of government and labour was inaugurated the following day. The committee recommended that local government workers who were being owed several months arrears of salaries be paid only one month out of the entire liabilities should disbursed within three days. On January 30, 2017 Nigeria Union Of Local Government Employees Abia State Secretariat wrote a letter to his excellence the Governor to ensure that our right (NULGE) are protected especially when every other segment of the Labour force in Abia state has benefitted from the Paris Club refund except the Local Government Worker.

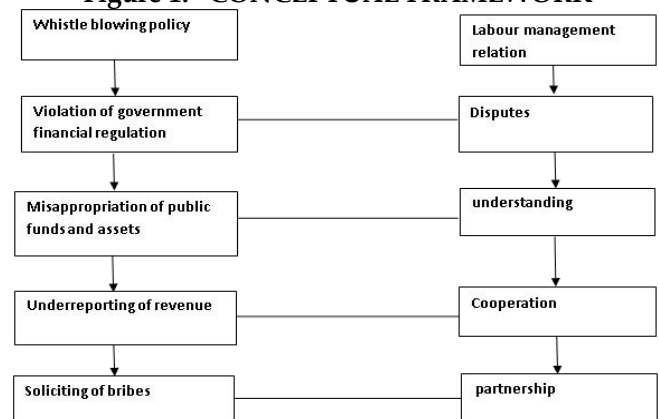
In another issue, on 24th August, 2014, in the protest/report of non-payment of our January 2014 incremental step and minimum wage arrears by the head of service/treasurer of Isiala Ngwa North L.G.A which was graciously given to us (NULGE) by His Excellence as right and entitlement of the staff, NULGE Isiala Ngwa North L.G.A applied to the Chairman Local Government Service Commission to use his good office to retrieve the above sum N583,239.00, incremental step and N380,000 minimum wages arrears which is the amount due to the staff of Isiala Ngwa North L.G.A. On 11th August, 2014, NULGE applied to the branch manager Enterprise Bank Plc, Faulks Road Aba, Abia state for grace period of seven (7) days from the due date of loan repayment

interest charged on NULGE workers because delay in salary payment by local government, which attracted additional interest charges the union frowns at it and threatened to leave the bank if application is not granted. Finally, on Wednesday 30th July, 2014 the State Executive Council (SEC) meeting of NULGE in Session deliberated on the State of affairs of the Local Government Administration in the State and other issues affecting the Welfare of the Workers and resolved as follows:

- 1) The Union once again commends the State Government for the commencement of the payment of Minimum wages arrears
- 2) The SEC in session however decry the excruciating trauma and untold hardship being meted out to local Government Workers as a result of undue and rampant lateness in the payment of salaries...
- 3) The SEC in session bemoaned the debilitating and demoralizing effects of the uncalled for suspension by the local Government Service Commission of the already concluded and implemented 2012 promotion exercise placing on hold the 2013 promotion exercise earlier advertised for...
- 4) The members of SEC in session also lamented the continued denial of four months arrears of salaries owed workers of Bende Local Government despite the agreement reached between NULGE.... With above effects of whistle blowing on labour-management relations in Isiala Ngwa North Local Government Employees, when adopted as policy in Isiala Ngwa North Local Government Council, Nigeria Union of Local Government Employees will ensure good labour-management relations by enacting procedures that regulates working relationship in conflict situation.

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Figure 1: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



Source: Researcher's conceptualization (2020)

II. METHODOLOGY

This study adopted the quasi-experimental design a survey method was adopted in order to the researcher take a snapshot at the situation in the organization and analyze same. The researcher selected sample from the assessable population of the eight (8) departments in Isiala Ngwa North Local Government Council. Going by Baridam, (2001), non probability sampling includes a variety of techniques among which are: convenience, purposive or judgment and quota. Purposive/quota sampling technique was adopted to select four hundred and eighty eight (488) staff whose level are within levels two (2) to levels twelve (12) because whistles are often blown by lower level staff from a population of 1260 (one thousand two hundred and sixty) drawn from the 8 (eight) departments in Isiala Ngwa North Local Government Council.

Departments and selected staff in Isiala Ngwa North Local Government Council

S/N	Name of Departments	Staff Population
1.	Administration	61
2.	Finance and Supplies	61
3.	Primary Health Care	61
4.	Works, Transports, Land and Housing	61
5.	Social Development	61
6.	Agriculture	61
7.	Environmental Health	61
8.	Budget, Planning, Research and Statistics	61
Total		488

Source: Field survey (2020)

The table above shows that the researcher administered twenty eight (28) copies of the questionnaire to each of the eight departments (staff within low level 2-5, middle level 6-9, top level 10-12). Data were collected from both primary and secondary sources, by the researcher namely Questionnaire personal interviews and textbooks, internet printouts, journals, law no. 9 of 2004 Abia State of Nigeria respectively. Spearman rank order correlation coefficient was used with the aid of statistical package for social science (SPSS) 20.0 to establish the association among the dimensions of independent variable and dependent variables. The Cronbach Alpha coefficients were used to measure the strength and reliability of the questions of the measuring instrument. Hence, only the item that returns alpha value of 0.7 and above were considered.

Data Analysis

A total of 221 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to all the 8 departments in Isiala Ngwa North Local Government Council. To this end, the number of questionnaire distributed to each department was dependent on the selected number of staff population in that department as shown in the table below.

Response rate on research instrument distributed to the departments in Isiala Ngwa North Local Government Council.

S/N	Respondent Department	No. of question distributed	No. of questionnaire returned	No. of unreturned questionnaire
1.	Administration	28	23	5
2.	Finance and Supplies	28	20	8
3.	Primary Health Care	28	24	4
4.	Works, Transports, Land and Housing	28	18	10
5.	Social Development	28	17	11
6.	Agriculture	27	20	7
7.	Environmental Health	27	21	6
8.	Budget, Planning, Research and Statistics	27	20	7
9.	Total	221	163	58

Source: Field survey (2020)

Based on the sample size, 221 copies of questionnaire were administered to 8 departments in Isiala Ngwa North Local Government Council and 163 were returned while 58 were unreturned. Therefore the discussion was based on 163 questionnaire returned.

Analysis of Research Question

Different research questions formulated were analyzed here but demographic data were omitted in the analysis but in the appendix because they do not have significant effect on the study.

Research Question One: Does whistle blowing policy on violation of government's financial regulation affects disputes?

Response rate on violation of government’s financial regulation and disputes

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
To a greater extent	60	36.8	36.8	36.8
To a considerable extent	50	30.7	30.7	67.5
To a moderate extent	30	18.4	18.4	85.9
To a slight extent	20	12.3	12.3	98.2
Not at all	3	1.8	1.8	100.00
Total	163	100	100	

Source: Field survey (2020)

From the table above, response rate on to a great extent was 60 (36.8%), to considerable extent was 50 (30.7%), to a moderate extent 30 (18.4%), to a slight extent was 20 (12.3%) and not at all was 3 (1.8%).

Research Question Two: Does whistle blowing policy on misappropriation of public funds and assets affects understanding?

Response rate on misappropriation of public funds and assets and understanding.

Response rate on misappropriation of public funds and assets and understanding.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
To a greater extent	70	42.9	42.9	42.9
To a considerable extent	60	36.8	36.8	79.7
To a moderate extent	20	12.7	12.7	92.4
To a slight extent	12	7.4	7.4	99.8
Not at all	1	0.6	0.6	100
Total	163	100	100	

Source: Field survey (2020)

From the table above, response rate on to a great extent was 70 (42.9%), to considerable extent was 60 (36.8%), to a moderate extent, 20 (12.7%), to a slight extent was 12 (7.4%), and not at all was 1 (0.6%).

Research Question Three: Does whistles blowing policy on underreporting of revenues affects cooperation?

Response rate on underreporting of revenues and cooperation

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
To a greater extent	90	55.2	55.2	55.2
To a considerable extent	60	36.8	36.8	92.0
To a moderate extent	10	6.1	6.1	98.1
To a slight extent	3	1.8	1.8	100.0
Not at all	0	0	0	100
Total	163	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey (2020)

From the table above response rate on to a great extent was 90 (55.2), to a considerable extent was 60 (36.8%), to a moderate extent was 10 (6.1%), to a slight extent was 3 (1.8%), and not at all was 0 (0%).

Research question four: Does whistle blowing policy soliciting of bribes affects partnership?

Response rate on soliciting of bribes and partnership

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
To a greater extent	87	53.4	53.4	53.4
To a considerable extent	63	38.7	38.7	92.1
To a moderate extent	7	4.3	4.3	96.4
To a slight extent	5	3.1	3.1	99.5
Not at all	1	0.6	0.6	100
Total	163	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey (2020)

From the table above, response rate on to a great extent was 87 (53.4%), to a considerable extent was 63 (38.7%), to a moderate extent was 7 (4.3%), to a slight extent was 5 (3.1%), and not at all 1 (0.6).

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Test of Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant effect between violation of government’s financial regulations and disputes

		Correlations		
			Violation government financial regulation	Disputes
Spearman's rho	Violation government financial regulation	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.732**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	163	163
	Disputes	Correlation Coefficient	.732**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	163	163

** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The above SPSS output shows the correlation between violation government’s financial relations and disputes ($r = 0.732, p < 0.05 = 0.0$). Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis (because our p value is less than 0.05) and accept alternative hypothesis that violation government’s financial relations has a positive significant relationship with disputes

H₀₂: There is no significant effect between misappropriation of public funds and assets and understanding

		Correlations		
			Misappropriation of public funds and asset	Understanding
Spearman's rho	Misappropriation of public funds and assets	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.722**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	163	163
	Understanding	Correlation Coefficient	.722**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	163	163

** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The above result shows the correlation between misappropriation of public funds and assets, and understanding ($r = 0.722, p < 0.05 = 0.0$). Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis (because our p value is less than 0.05) and accept alternative hypothesis that misappropriation of public funds and assets at wok have a positive significant relationship with understanding.

H₀₃: There is no significant effect between underreporting of revenues and cooperation

		Correlations		
			Under reporting of revenues	Cooperation
Spearman's rho	Underreporting of revenues	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.810**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	163	163
	Cooperation	Correlation Coefficient	.810**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	163	163

** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The above result shows the correlation between underreporting of revenues and cooperation ($r = 0.810, p < 0.05 = 0.0$). Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis (because our p value is less than 0.05) and accept alternative hypothesis that underreporting of revenues has a positive significant relationship with cooperation.

H₀₄: There is no significant effect between soliciting of bribes and partnership

		Correlations		
			Soliciting of bribes	Partnership
Spearman's rho	Soliciting of bribes	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.718**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	163	163
	Partnership	Correlation Coefficient	.718**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	163	163

** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The result above shows the correlation between soliciting of bribes and partnership ($r = 0.718, p < 0.05 = 0.0$). Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis (because our p value is less than 0.05) and accept alternative hypothesis that soliciting of bribes have a positive significant relationship with partnership.

III. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

- 1) Output of H₀₁, the SPSS output shows the correlation between violation government’s financial relations and disputes. The result revealed that violation government’s financial regulation has a positive significant relationship with disputes. This implies that as whistle blowing policy on violation of government’s financial regulations increases, disputes between labour and management will decrease in the workplace.
- 2) Result from H₀₂, the SPSS result shows the correlation between misappropriation of public funds and assets, and understanding. The result shows that misappropriation of public funds and assets at wok have a positive significant relationship with understanding. This means that when whistle blowing policy on misappropriation of public funds and assets increases, understanding between labour and management will also increase.
- 3) On H₀₃, the SPSS result shows the correlation between underreporting of revenues and cooperation. It therefore revealed that underreporting of revenues has a positive significant relationship with cooperation which means that as whistle blowing policy on underreporting of revenues is on the rise, employees tend to be motivated to do more and

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the resultant effect will be an increase in the good labour management cooperation.

- 4) From H_{04} , the SPSS result shows the correlation between soliciting of bribes and partnership. The result revealed that soliciting of bribes has a positive significant relationship with partnership. This implies that as whistle blowing policy on soliciting of bribes increases, labour management partnership will also increase.

IV. CONCLUSION

The study concluded from the research that the independent variable (Whistleblowing Policy) has a positive effect on dependent variable (Labour-Management Relations) in Isiala Ngwa North local Government Council of Abia state. From the secondary data collected from Nigeria Union of Local Government Employees (NULGE) and analyzed proved the effect of whistle blowing policy on corrupt practices in Isiala Ngwa North Local Government Council, settlement of several month arrears of salaries, protest/report of non-payment of January 2014 incremental step and minimum wage arrears, NULGE application to the branch manager Enterprise

Bank PLC, Faulks Road Aba, Abia state for grace period of seven(7) days from the due date of loan repayment interest charged on NULGE workers because of delay in salary payment by Local Government, and welfare of the workers. Finally, it was also concluded from the four null hypotheses that there is a significant relationship between that whistle blowing policy on violation of government's financial regulations, misappropriation of public funds assets, underreporting of revenues, and soliciting of bribes reduces disputes, and enhances the understanding, cooperation and partnership between labour and management in Isiala Ngwa North Local Government Council of Abia state.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

Having seen the effect of whistle blowing policy on labour management relations specially in Isiala Ngwa North Local Government Council in Abia State and beyond, I recommend that:

- 1) Whistle blowing policy has the possibility to increase accountability and transparency in the management of public funds since the result of this research revealed that whistle blowing policy has positive significant relationship on labour management relations.
- 2) Whistle blowing policy has the possibility to recover more funds that could be deployed in financing local government infrastructural deficit.

- 3) With whistle blowing policy, it is possible to develop a corrupt free workforce and increase positive relationship among employees and employers.
- 4) In case of any problem in implementing this whistle blowing policy in Isiala Ngwa North Local Government, Nigeria Union of Local Government Employee as the umbrella organization championing the cause, welfare and interest of all worker in employed in local government in Nigeria, when dully informed steps in for justice to prevail.

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