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ASSESSMENT OF WHISTLE BLOWING ACT IN ENSURING GOOD GOVERNANCE IN NIGERIA

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14515053>

Abstract: The study evaluates the assessment of whistle blowing Act in ensuring good governance in Nigeria. To achieve this, the study raised three objectives which are to; evaluate the opinions of journalists in Rivers State as to whether the Whistleblowing Act can bring about good governance; find out ways the media can contribute towards enthroning a corruption-free society using whistleblowing as a premise. The study was anchored on two theories; the ethical theory and the social responsibility theory. The research design used for this study is the analytical survey. The population comprised all the registered journalists in Rivers State given as 485 by the office of the Secretary of Nigerian Union of Journalists, Rivers State. The sample for this study was 228 drawn from a population of 485 journalists. To arrive at this sample size, Taro Yamane sample size determination formula was used. Therefore, purposive sampling technique was used to administer the instruments to the respondents. Finding of this study showed that Whistleblowing Act when effectively applied brings about good governance. Finding from this research question is that the media can contribute to a corruption free society through whistleblowing. The study concluded that the Whistleblowing Act has the potential to serve as a critical tool for enhancing governance in Nigeria by promoting transparency and accountability. However, the effectiveness of this legislation is largely contingent on how well it is implemented and how securely it protects those who expose corruption. The study recommended that government at all levels should develop and implement Whistleblowing Acts that would expose corruption practices in government so as to ensure good governance. The study also recommended that it is good and relevant for media houses and journalists to embark on investigative journalism so as to expose corrupt practices among politicians and political office holders thus, this would help ensure a corruption free society.

Keywords: Assessment, Whistleblowing Act, Good governance, Nigeria

Introduction

Whistleblowing has emerged as a critical mechanism in promoting transparency, accountability, and good governance, particularly in societies grappling with pervasive corruption. In Nigeria, corruption remains a

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significant impediment to national development, undermining public trust and eroding the quality of governance. The enactment of the Whistleblower Protection Act in Nigeria, introduced in 2016, marked a significant step in addressing these challenges. The legislation aimed to empower individuals to disclose corrupt practices while providing legal protections against retaliation. This initiative aligns with global efforts to bolster governance by ensuring that those who expose unethical or illegal practices do so without fear of retribution (Transparency International, 2021).

Good governance, a cornerstone of sustainable development, relies on transparency, accountability, participation, and the rule of law. However, in Nigeria, the absence of robust governance structures has exacerbated systemic corruption, weakened institutions, and hindered socioeconomic progress. The Whistleblower Protection Act seeks to bridge this gap by fostering an environment where citizens and employees can report misconduct within organizations or government agencies. This measure not only supports the fight against corruption but also underscores Nigeria's commitment to meeting international standards such as the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), to which the country is a signatory (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime [UNODC], 2019).

Despite its potential, the implementation of the Whistleblower Protection Act in Nigeria has faced challenges. Critics argue that whistleblowers continue to face retaliation, including harassment, job loss, and threats, despite the legal provisions. Furthermore, the lack of an independent body to oversee whistleblower reports and enforce protections has raised concerns about the Act's efficacy. For instance, cases have emerged where whistleblowers have reported their experiences of victimization, highlighting gaps in the enforcement mechanisms (Olaniyan, 2020). Such challenges necessitate a closer examination of the Act's effectiveness in achieving its objectives.

Additionally, the success of whistleblowing legislation is closely tied to public perception and trust in governance structures. In Nigeria, skepticism toward anti-corruption initiatives stems from historical instances of selective justice and political interference. Consequently, the effectiveness of the Whistleblower Protection Act in fostering good governance depends on addressing these broader issues of institutional integrity and fairness (Ogunlana, 2021).

This study assesses the Whistleblower Protection Act's role in promoting good governance in Nigeria by examining its implementation, outcomes, and challenges. It explores the extent to which the Act has empowered citizens, enhanced accountability, and contributed to reducing corruption. By critically analyzing these dimensions, the study aims to provide insights into the legislation's potential and limitations in advancing governance reforms in Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Corruption remains a pervasive issue in Nigeria, undermining the nation's socioeconomic development, institutional integrity, and public trust in governance. Despite numerous anti-corruption initiatives and policies, systemic corruption persists, manifesting in forms such as embezzlement, bribery, nepotism, and abuse of power. These practices have eroded public resources, hindered service delivery, and stifled economic growth. In response, the Nigerian government introduced the Whistleblower Protection Act in 2016, aiming to combat corruption and foster good governance by empowering individuals to report corrupt activities without fear of

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reprisal. However, the effectiveness of this Act in achieving its objectives has been met with significant challenges.

One critical issue is the inadequacy of legal and institutional frameworks to provide robust protection for whistleblowers. Reports indicate that many individuals who expose corruption face retaliation, including harassment, job loss, social ostracism, and threats to their lives. These occurrences contradict the Act's purpose, deterring potential whistleblowers and limiting the disclosure of unethical practices. The lack of an independent body to oversee whistleblowing cases further exacerbates the problem, as existing institutions often lack the autonomy and efficiency necessary to enforce protections effectively. This institutional weakness undermines the credibility of the Whistleblower Protection Act and diminishes its potential to foster transparency and accountability in governance.

Furthermore, societal attitudes towards whistleblowing in Nigeria present another significant barrier. Cultural norms and societal stigmas often discourage individuals from exposing misconduct, perceiving whistleblowers as informants or traitors. These perceptions, coupled with widespread distrust in government institutions, deter citizens from utilizing the Act's provisions. Consequently, the underutilization of the whistleblowing mechanism limits its impact on governance reforms, leaving systemic corruption largely unchecked.

Another issue is the selective application of the Act, which has led to allegations of political interference and partiality in handling whistleblower reports. High-profile cases involving politically connected individuals are often perceived to be handled with bias or dismissed outright, raising concerns about the fairness and transparency of the process. This inconsistency fuels skepticism about the government's commitment to combating corruption and erodes public confidence in the Act's efficacy.

Moreover, the incentive structure embedded in the Act, which offers monetary rewards to whistleblowers, has faced criticism for potentially encouraging false or frivolous reports. While financial incentives aim to motivate disclosures, they may inadvertently lead to abuse of the system, diverting resources and attention away from genuine cases of corruption.

In light of these challenges, there is a pressing need to assess the Whistleblower Protection Act's role in ensuring good governance in Nigeria. Specifically, it is essential to evaluate its implementation, identify gaps in its enforcement, and determine its impact on fostering transparency, accountability, and institutional integrity. Addressing these issues is critical for strengthening the Act's effectiveness and realizing its potential as a tool for governance reform.

This study seeks to examine these dimensions comprehensively, providing insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the Whistleblower Protection Act. By identifying actionable solutions, it aims to contribute to the broader discourse on combating corruption and enhancing good governance in Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives were to;

1. evaluate the opinions of journalists in Rivers State as to whether the Whistleblowing Act can bring about good governance
2. find out ways the media can contribute towards enthrone a corruption-free society using whistleblowing as a premise

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3. examine the essence of whistleblowing and its implications for governance in Nigeria

Theoretical Framework

The study was anchored on two theories; the ethical theory and the social responsibility theory.

The Ethical Theory

Proponents of ethical theory include deontology by Immanuel Kant in 1788, utilitarianism John Stuart in 1861, Rights by Tom Regan in 1983 and virtue ethics by John Rawls 1996. V John Stuart 1861 utilitarianism ethical theories are based on one's ability to predict the consequences of an action. To a utilitarian, the choice that yields the greatest benefit to the most people is the one that is ethically correct. There are two types of utilitarianism; act utilitarianism and rule utilitarianism.

However, this study is particularly anchored on the Kantian way also known as categorical imperatives. To Bolsin (2005), "Kantian theory instructs people to act in harmony with universally accepted roles. Telling the truth is often required in whistleblowing regardless of personal outcome" (p.36). Critically, the Kantian theory had no way of knowing the self- sacrifice that is required in whistleblowing. The theorist would want an individual to stand firm in telling the truth no matter whose ox is gored. But it is practically difficult to say the truth when put under pressure or duress by social, political and economic factors, especially in such a society as Nigeria.

The theory of Categorical Imperative (CI) is a theory of moral action that was developed by Immanuel Kant (1724-1804). According to Kant, "the conception of an objective principle, so far as it constraints a will, is a command, and the formula of this command is called imperative., all imperatives are expressed by an 'ought' and thereby indicate the relation of an objective law of reason to a will which is not in its subjective constitution necessarily determined by its laws" (Kant, 1804)

The relevance of this theory to this study is that it will help us to understand the role ethics play in the life of people especially among those occupying public offices. It will help us to understand how the Whistleblowing Act and effective communication impact on the people.

The Social Responsibility Theory

This theory of 1963 by Siebert, Peterson and Schramm originated from the work of the American-initiated Hutchins Commission (headed by Robert M. Hutchins) of 1947. The theory gained prominence in the 1947 against the backdrop of World War II. Henry Luce and from Encyclopedia Britannica, a group of eminent scholars and authors convened a commission under the direction of Robert Hutchins, president of Chicago university (Gunaratne & Hasin, 1996). The emphasizes phrases were "the public's right to know" and the public responsibility of the press.

In the view of Nwabueze (2012), this theory seems to be predominantly operational in most countries today. The United States, Japan, Britain, and many European and African nations operate their media systems based on this theory. Continuing, Nwabueze (2012) observes that in Nigeria, regulatory bodies such as National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) and the Nigeria Press Council (NPC) are reflections of a system operating the Social Responsibility press theory, adding that:

With respect to self-regulation which is also a basic tenet of Social Responsibility theory, bodies such as Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), Radio, Television and Theatre Workers' Union (RATTAWU), Nigeria Guild of Editors (NGE) and Newspaper Proprietors Association of Nigeria (NPAN) strive for professionalism

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and adhere to ethical standards among its members. This way, the press is streamlined towards operations with responsibilities to the society (p. 97).

The social responsibility theory approves of both state and private ownership of the press so that one will be a check on the other. This was the beginning of media laws to check the excesses of the press and of media ethics. This theory is relevant to this study because it is only a socially responsible press that can serve the people or society diligently for the sake of development in all ramifications, including the fight against corruption. A socially responsible press holds the government accountable to the people in all areas of its service that could yield positive changes and advancement of society.

Conceptual Review

Whistleblowing

The Nigerian Federal Ministry of Finance (FMF) defines whistleblowing as the means of providing information about any illegality, usually for the purpose of protecting the public interest (Ojeifo, 2017, p.21); while a whistle blower is a person who voluntarily discloses to the government or any agency concerned including the media, a possible misconduct or violation that has occurred, is on-going, or is about to occur with specific concerns which are in the public interest (Osegis, 2017, p23). In Nigeria, information on impropriety in the use of public funds or property, theft or corruption is acceptably the FMF, from any whistle blower, particularly if such information is in the public interest.

In Nigeria, the whistleblowing protection Bill, 2008 was sponsored for on Act to provide for the manner in which individuals may in the public interest disclose information that relates to unlawful or other illegal conduct or corrupt practices of others, to provide for the protection against victimization of persons who make these disclosures, to provide for related matters. Matters that could attract reportage from the public under the whistleblowing policy include:

The provisions of this bill certainly, are the replication of the whistleblowing laws of the United States. As observed by Rose-Ackerman, one of the first federal laws that protected whistle blowers was the 1863 United States false claims Act. The Act was designed to combat fraud by United States government suppliers during the civil war (Rose Anikerman, 1999, p. 42). In recent years, Serra (2006) reports that the U.S Federal Government enacted the whistle blower protection Act in 2007, which provides legal protections for Whistleblowing Activities of federal employees, and in the past few years, sector's efforts to improve corporate government (Serra, 2006). The whistle blowers laws of countries may, however, differ from state to state. Some countries provide whistle blower protection to public employees only, while others like Nigeria are intending to extend such protections to private sector employees as well.

Generally, as reiterated by Goel & Nelson (2011) whistle blower laws are designed to encourage whistle blowers by protecting them from wrongful dismissal, attacks and victimization, and in some cases, by promising them some percentage of the money recovered or damages won by the government (Goel & Nelson, 2011). The implication here is that, the act of blowing the whistle or exposing wrong doing voluntarily on the part of the whistle blower should attract potential monetary rewards. Formerly, whistle blower laws in the U.S, Nigeria and elsewhere, in the world reduced the potential costs of exposing illegal activity, by protecting whistle blower against repercussions, while at the same time increasing the related potential benefits by promising monetary rewards from bringing wrong doing to light.

It suffices to say that the Whistleblowing Activities in Nigeria have not been fully backed by any known law. The Bill is still before the National Assembly and what the government of Nigeria has done, or is doing is to design a policy or programme through the ministry of finance. This policy and its provisions are now seen as the framework for whistle blower in Nigeria.

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The Whistleblowing Act

Currently, Nigeria does not have a consolidated Whistleblowing Act that specifically governs whistleblower protection across various sectors. However, several existing policies and legislative frameworks address whistleblowing to varying extents, especially concerning corruption and financial misconduct. Below are key legal frameworks and policies that relate to whistleblowing in Nigeria:

1. Whistleblowing Policy (2016)

Nigeria's most significant whistleblowing initiative is the Whistleblowing Policy launched in December 2016 by the Federal Ministry of Finance. The policy aims to encourage individuals to report instances of corruption, fraud, and financial mismanagement, offering rewards of 2.5% to 5% of recovered stolen public funds. The policy resulted in the recovery of significant sums in its early implementation. However, it lacks legislative backing, meaning it is only a government policy rather than a law that provides comprehensive protections (Ojo, 2017).

2. Public Procurement Act (2007)

This Act governs public procurement processes in Nigeria and includes provisions that protect whistleblowers involved in procurement. Section 54(1) of the Public Procurement Act provides a mechanism for individuals to report violations of procurement laws and procedures. However, the protection under this Act is limited to procurement-related misconduct, excluding other forms of corruption and wrongdoing (Sahara Reporters, 2019).

3. Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Act (2000)

The Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) was established under this Act. It offers some level of protection to individuals who report cases of corruption. Section 64 of the Act makes provisions for the confidentiality of informants and witnesses. However, the Act does not fully address the need for comprehensive whistleblower protection, particularly in cases of retaliation against whistleblowers (Agbonifo & Ewubare, 2020).

4. Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) Act (2004)

This Act establishes the EFCC to combat financial crimes. The Act offers certain protections to individuals who assist the EFCC by providing information on financial crimes. However, like the Corrupt Practices Act, its focus is limited to financial crimes, and the level of protection for whistleblowers is not as robust as what a dedicated Whistleblowing Act would provide (Ameh, 2018).

5. Freedom of Information Act (2011)

Though not specifically a whistleblower protection law, the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act empowers individuals, including whistleblowers, to request access to public records without fear of retribution. Section 27 of the Act provides some protections for individuals who release information in the public interest. However, its scope does not extend to comprehensive whistleblower protection (Ojo, 2017). Recognizing the gaps in existing policies and laws, there have been several efforts to pass a dedicated Whistleblower Protection Bill. The most notable attempt was the bill proposed in the Nigerian Senate in 2019. The bill aimed to provide legal backing for the protection of whistleblowers from retaliation, offering safeguards such as confidentiality, job security, and protection from harassment. However, this bill has not yet been enacted into law (Sahara Reporters, 2019).

The Whistle Blower

A whistle blower is an employee who reports their employer 's wrongdoing to a government or law enforcement agency. This definition is restrictive in that only employees may qualify as whistle blowers. The modern form of whistleblowing extends beyond the walls of an organization to the general political settings (Eaton & Akers, 2007).

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In Nigeria for instance, one of the major aims of the policy is to tackle official corruption. In this regards the employee/employer dichotomy may not exist before a whistle may be blown. A whistle blower has also been defined as a person who tells the public or someone in authority about alleged dishonest or illegal activities occurring in a government department, a public or private organisation or a company. This definition is preferable because it dispenses with the employee/employer factor; hence it neutralizes a person who qualifies as a whistle blower.

In order for a disclosure to qualify as an act of whistleblowing, there must be a genuine concern about a crime, miscarriage of justice, danger to health and safety of the environment. This implies that malicious, false or misleading disclosure is not within the purview of whistleblowing. For instance, EFCC arraigned Mr Buhari Fanaami and Ba-kura Abdullahi before a Federal High Court in Maiduguri for allegedly giving false information to the agency under the whistleblowing policy. Similarly, Mr Ahmed Echoda was in May 2017 arraigned before an Abuja Upper Area Court sitting at the Gudu District of Abuja for allegedly giving false information that led the Nigeria Police Force to raid the Abuja home of the Deputy Senate President, Ike Ekweremadu (Bulusson, 2017).

According to Asis (2000) in order to arrest the issue of malicious disclosure, the 2017 Bill section 38 makes it an offence punishable with a fine of five hundred thousand naira or three years imprisonment or both for malicious or reckless disclosure. A similar provision is found in Zambia, India and Ghana. The Indian Act section 4(3) mandates a whistle blower to make a personal declaration that the information disclosed is substantially true. Where the disclosure turns out to be the contrary, the whistle blower will be liable for malicious disclosure. There is no equivalent provision in the 2017 Bill, it is suggested that Nigeria includes this in the Bill so that malicious disclosure will be taken care of. The 2017 Bill section 4(3) provides among others that an act of disclosure can be made to the police where it relates to an offence or to the EFCC or the Auditor General where it relates to unauthorized or irregular use or mismanagement of public resources (Adetula & Amupitan, 2018). A disclosure is also made to the National Judicial Council where it relates to a judicial officer. Where it relates to a legislator, it is made to the presiding officer of a legislative house where such a legislator belongs. There is no provision in the 2017 Bill empowering one to blow a whistle relating to a religious leader and to whom such disclosure may be made. It is presumed that the 2017 Bill has taken cognizance of the sacrosanct nature or religious heads notwithstanding the rate of corruption prevalent among some of them nowadays (Agu, 2016).

Tinubu, Whistleblowing and the Quest for Good Governance

Whistleblowing is steadily growing to become the dominant theme in ethics literature. It has earned a prime position as a forceful vehicle not only for delivering clarity and openness in workplace culture but also for defining responsible behaviour expected of an individual. On a wider scale, whistleblowing has shaped up to become a democratic accountability tool and a check on secrecy and abuse of power in many different contexts. In July 2016, the ECOWAS Commission met in Cotonou, Benin Republic, to launch a whistleblower protection strategy and plan of action to encourage member states to enact whistleblower protection legislation. This move was borne out of the regional body's acknowledgement of corruption as the leading cause of underdevelopment of West African states, and whistleblowing as one of the most direct methods of exposing corrupt acts and fostering accountability in the internal management of organisations (Read & Rama, 2003).

Empirical Review

Buckley, Cotter & Hutchinson (2010) in their study, "Whistleblowing: The Case of a Financial Services Company" investigated the intra-organizational attitude to whistleblowing in modern-day Ireland. Given the sensitive nature of their research topic, they decided to focus on one organization, to whom an assurance of

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anonymity was provided. A specific branch of that organization was identified, and access to staff was provided by the branch manager. The survey method was used to gather the data necessary for the study, with 42 employees being asked to complete a questionnaire. Responses were received from 32 respondents out of whom 18 were male and 14 females.

It was reasoned that the results from a single organisation might not be representative of organizations as a whole. Likewise, it was conceded that uniqueness is seldom an ingredient of scientific theory. Owing to the sensitivity of the topic, the sample size was small. Nonetheless, the authors believed that the results of the study would make a significant contribution, by adding to the knowledge base of whistleblowing in modern-day Ireland.

The study found that approximately 60% of employees surveyed would report someone in their organisation who is seen to be committing a wrongdoing. Surprisingly perhaps, the gravity of the offence does not appear to influence likelihood of its perpetrator being reported. Female employees were also found to be significantly more likely to whistle blow than their male colleagues.

A sense of responsibility to their organisation and their customers dominates as the reason why employees are likely to whistle blow on a work colleague. By contrast, the prospect of career advancement for a whistleblowing employee does not appear to be a significant motivating factor, particularly for female employees.

The most common reason cited for not whistleblowing was that the respondents felt it was outside their realm: of responsibility. Loyalty to their organisation was found to be the next most important factor.

In respect of the method of whistleblowing, a significant majority of respondents expressed a preference to do so internally, rather than report to an outside party or regulatory body. Reporting to an anonymous hotline and in person to the branch manager, were the most popular methods of reporting wrongdoings. In terms of the employees' perception of their organization's support for whistleblowing, a half of the respondents viewed the climate as 'neutral'; 6% saw it as being very supportive, while none held the view that the whistleblowing climate was hostile.

These results indicated a generally positive attitude to whistleblowing among the employees of this Irish financial services company. A worry, however, is the reluctance of male employees to report wrongdoings. That a sense of responsibility to the organisation was cited as a significant reason for not whistleblowing may also be a concern. This would suggest that organisations need to more actively espouse the advantages of whistleblowing if employees are to be convinced of its benefits (Buckley, Cotter & Hutchinson, 2010).

Adetude and Amupitan (2018) carried out a study entitled: Whistleblowing as a tool for combating the menace of fraud, forgery and corruption in Nigeria. Their objectives were to find out the possible ways of using whistleblowing to curb corruption in the country. The study employed descriptive statistics, regression and Pearson Correlation with questionnaire and interview guide as data gathering instruments. The data employed were both primary and secondary sources. The population of the study was 1200 while the sample size was 350. The finding of the study revealed that a relationship exists among fraud, corruption and whistleblowing. The finding of the study also revealed that whistleblowing can serve as a tool for fighting the menace of fraud, forgery and corruption in Nigeria only if the whistle blowers will be provided with adequate protection. The study concluded that a relationship exists between fraud, corruption and whistleblowing in Nigeria. The study also concluded that whistleblowing can adequately serve as a tool for fighting the menace of fraud, forgery and corruption in Nigeria if the government provides adequate protection for whistle blowers.

Therefore, the study recommended that there should be a relationship between fraud, corruption and whistleblowing in Nigeria. The study also recommended that whistleblowing can serve as a tool for combating

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the menace of fraud, forgery and corruption in Nigeria only if the government will provide adequate protection for the whistle blowers.

Methodology

The research design used for this study is the analytical survey. The population comprised all the registered journalists in Rivers State given as 485 by the office of the Secretary of Nigerian Union of Journalists, Rivers State. The sample for this study was 228 drawn from a population of 485 journalists. To arrive at this sample size, Taro Yamane sample size determination formula was used. Therefore, purposive sampling technique was used to administer the instruments to the respondents and the response rate was 225. Weighted Mean Score (Four Point Likert Scale) was used to analyses the data. The score of 2.5 was used as the criterion for discussion. A response which is equal to or more than 2.5 is positive, i.e. the respondents agree with the item while any mean response less than 2.5 was negative.

Table 1: Whistleblowing Act brings good governance

S/N	Respondent's view Items	Response in Mean Scores				TOTAL	MEAN	DECISION
		SA 4	A 3	D 2	SD 1			
1	The Whistleblowing Act can bring about good governance in Nigeria	150	50	15	10	225	4.91	Agreed
		600	450	45	10	1,105		
2.	The Whistleblowing Act does not bring good governance	10	15	50	150	225	1.48	Disagreed
		40	45	100	150	335		
3	Whistleblowing Act will encourage our leaders to be prudent and accountable	170	35	10	10	225	3.65	Agreed
		680	105	20	10	815		
4	Whistleblowing Act does not encourage the shadily deals by politicians	180	25	10	10	225	3.66	Agreed
		720	75	20	10	825		

Data in table 1 above shows that the response is that Whistleblowing Act can bring about good governance in Nigeria

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Table 2: The media through whistleblowing contribute to corruption free society

S/N	Respondent's view Items	Response in Mean Scores				TOTAL	MEAN	DECISION
		SA 4	A 3	D 2	SD 1			
1	By amplifying whistle blowers' voices	160	40	15	10	225	3.55	Agreed
		640	120	30	10	800		
2.	Through investigation journalism	180	25	10	10	225	3.66	Agreed
		720	75	20	10	825		
3	By creating public awareness and education	150	50	20	5	225	3.53	Agreed
		600	150	40	5	795		
4	By holding those in power to account for their activities while in office	170	30	15	10	225	3.6	Agreed
		680	90	30	10	810		

Data in table 2 above shows that the media can contribute to a corruption free society through whistles blowing

Table 3: Whistleblowing Act and implications for good governance

S/N	Respondent's view Items	Response in Mean Scores				TOTAL	MEAN	DECISION
		SA 4	A 3	D 2	SD 1			
1	Increased accountability	160	120	30	10	225	3.55	Agreed
		640	120	30	10	800		
2.	Fear of Exposure	180	25	10	10	225	3.66	Agreed
		720	75	20	10	825		
3	Loss of power and influence	150	50	20	5	225	3.53	Agreed
		600	150	40	5	795		
4	Changes in Behaviour	200	10	10	5	225	3.8	Agreed
		800	30	20	5	855		

Data in table 3 above show that the fear of Whistleblowing Act have positive implications on good government.

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Discussion of Finding

Research Question 1: What are the opinions of journalists in Rivers State on the Whistleblowing Act in bringing about good governance?

Finding of this study showed that Whistleblowing Act when effectively applied brings about good governance. The finding is in agreement with the principles of the ethical theory which states that the right established by a society are protected and given the highest priority. Rights are considered to be ethically correct, and valid since a large population endorses to do so, the finding of this study is also in agreement with the principles of the social responsibility theory which states the emphasize phrases were “The Public’s Right to Know” and the public responsibility of the press. The finding of this study more so, corroborates with earlier studies carried out by Buckley, Cotter and Hietchinson (2010) whose studies revealed a generally positive attitude to whistleblowing among the employees of this Irish financial services company. The finding is in agreement with earlier studies carried out by Adetunde and Amupitam (2018) whose study revealed that relationships exist among fraud, corruption, and whistleblowing.

Research Question 2: How can the media contribute towards enthrone a corruption free society using whistleblowing as a premise?

Finding from this research question is that the media can contribute to a corruption free society through whistleblowing. The finding of this study is in agreement with the principles of the ethical theory which states that rights are considered to be ethically correct and valid since a large population endorses them, individuals may also bestow rights upon others if they have the ability and resources to do so.

The finding of this study is also in agreement with the principles of the social responsibility theory which states that whereas the press has the right to publish, it should be responsible to the wishes and aspirations of the people to create a better society. The finding of this study corroborates with earlier study carried out by Adetunde and Amupitam (2018) whose study revealed that relationships exist among fraud, corruption, and whistleblowing. The finding of this study is also in agreement with the earlier studies carried out by Fasua and Osifo (2017) whose study revealed that an effective whistleblowing mechanism and audit committee will enhance a fraud and corruption free banking sectors in Nigeria. The finding of this study equally corroborates with earlier studies carried out by Apaza and Chang (2008) whose study revealed that there were mass effect, powerful allies, strong allies and evidence, legal protection for whistle blowers.

Research Question 3: How is the Whistleblowing Act and its implication for Governance in Nigeria?

Finding of this study showed that the fear of Whistleblowing Act has positive implications on good governance. The finding of this study is in agreement with earlier study carried out by Osagiodowu (2019) whose study revealed that whistleblowing has resulted to prosecution of corrupted public officers in Nigeria. The finding of this study also corroborates with the earlier study carried by Eleje (2021) whose study revealed that the government should embark on public enlightenment campaign through radio and television jingles as well as to use other communication media to educate the masses on the modus operandi of Whistleblowing Act. The finding of this study is also in agreement with earlier study carried out by Buckley, Cotter and Hutchinson (2010) whose study revealed that the most common reason cited for not whistleblowing was that the respondents felt it was outside their realm of responsibility. The finding of this study more so, corroborate with

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the principles of the ethical theory which states that rights are considered to be ethical and valid since a large population endorses them.

Conclusion

The Whistleblowing Act has the potential to serve as a critical tool for enhancing governance in Nigeria by promoting transparency and accountability. However, the effectiveness of this legislation is largely contingent on how well it is implemented and how securely it protects those who expose corruption. From the perspective of journalists in Rivers State, who play a crucial role in uncovering and reporting unethical practices, the Act may still face significant challenges, including inadequate whistleblower protection, fear of retaliation, and limited public awareness.

Recommendations

Based on the strength of the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made.

1. Government at all levels should develop and implement Whistleblowing Acts that would expose corruption practices in government so as to ensure good governance.
2. It is good and relevant for media houses and journalists to embark on investigative journalism so as to expose corrupt practices among politicians and political office holders. This will help ensure a corruption free society.
3. The citizens of Nigeria should be re-oriented on the issue of whistleblowing and its implication for governance in Nigeria.

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