

**WHISTLE BLOWER PROTECTION AND REDUCTION OF CORRUPTION  
IN EDO STATE MINISTRY OF WORKS**

**BY**

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**BEING A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF  
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## CERTIFICATION

We certify that this project was carried out by **Kolawole Faith Opemipo** with matriculation number **SSC2105830** is adequate in scope and quality in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Bachelor of Sciences degree in Public Administration.

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## **DEDICATION**

“In every step of this journey, I acknowledge and give thanks to God, for ‘I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me’ (Philippians 4:13). To Him, I dedicate this project. I’m grateful for his unwavering grace and guidance that sustained me throughout this academic pursuit.

I dedicate this work to my father, an academician, Mr. E.K Kolawole of blessed memory. Your memory continues to inspire me, and your values remain a guiding light in my life. This achievement is a tribute to your legacy and the foundation you have laid for me.

Lastly, I dedicate this work to my mother, Mrs Bolanle Rachel Kolawole (Nee Ajayi). Your strength, love, and resilience have been my anchor. Thank you for believing in me and for standing as my pillar through every challenge and triumph.

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study examined the whistle blower protection in the reduction of corruption in the Edo State Ministry Works. The study objectives among others were to investigate the whistle blowing mechanism, examine the whistle blower protection in Nigeria and Edo state as well as a look into whistle blower protection effectiveness in reducing corruption in Edo state Ministry of Works. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design, which is a non-experimental method. The purpose of descriptive research is to describe that which exists as accurately and clearly as possible. The study found out that whistleblower is one who engaged in exposing corruption in public and private sector institutions. The study found out that whistle blower does not enjoy any legal protection in Nigeria and Edo state. The study found out that whistle blowing protection has not been effective in reducing corruption in Edo state Ministry of Work. The study concluded that the absent of legal protection of whistle blower in Nigeria and Edo state is encouraging corruption. The study recommended that the Edo state government and Nigeria parliaments should pass a bill effectively protecting and regulating whistle blowing in Nigeria. There is still opportunity to fine-tune the provisions, especially those surrounding reporting mechanisms and protecting the whistleblower's identity. The study also recommended that the government should reconsider its policy of excluding private contracts related to fraud. The term voluntary return of funds by the wrongdoer should be removed from compensation claims for whistleblowers.

## SECTION 1

### Introduction

Whistleblowers expose corruption in both public and private sector institutions, a process referred to as whistleblowing, which entails revealing wrongdoing within an organization, company, or institution (Gobert and Punch, 2000). Whistle blowing serves as a vital mechanism for preventing corruption and malpractice in governments, facilitating accountability by allowing public employees to report wrongdoing, thereby saving resources, protecting rights, and averting malfeasance in public services (Klingner et al., 2010; Near & Miceli, 2008).

Whistle blowing in Nigeria refers to reporting suspected misconduct, fraud, or unethical practices within organizations or to authorities, serving as a tool against corruption and fostering transparency. It is emphasized that whistle blowing is rooted in the existence of corruption, which is characterized as an arrangement involving an exchange that misuses public responsibility for private gain (Salisu 2006).

The International Monetary Fund defines corruption as the abuse of authority or trust for private benefit, affecting not only public officials but also individuals in positions of trust within private enterprises and non-profit organizations (Cited Wolfe and Gurgun 2000).

Corruption significantly impacts nations, particularly hindering economic development in developing countries such as those in sub-Saharan Africa, with Nigeria being a notable example (Iroghama, 2011). Nigeria's ranking on Transparency International's

corruption index is notably low, reflecting significant involvement of public officials and politicians in corrupt practices like bribery, illicit payments in public procurement, and embezzlement of public funds (Salisu 2006).

Corruption in Nigeria's civil and public service varies, with a focus on the Edo state ministry of works. This analysis highlights bureaucratic corruption, characterized as low-level or street-level corruption, which citizens experience daily in hospitals, schools, local licensing offices, police, taxing offices, and other public agencies (Dike 2002, 2). Bureaucrats are bound by rules designed to ensure uniformity and equity. However, street-level bureaucrats exercise discretion in decision-making based on individual cases, which can result in corruption if misused. (Lipsky 2010). An efficient and neutral public bureaucracy is crucial for a democratic system, facilitating effective government administration, particularly in areas like infrastructure and equitable service delivery. However, corruption within Nigeria's bureaucracy has diminished the quality of government services and goods, presenting various challenges that obstruct its effectiveness (Okotoni 2001).

One issue in the public sector is the politicization of jobs, where bureaucrats, who should remain non-partisan, are affected by political influences. While it is acceptable for civil servants to engage in politics, it may compromise the integrity of their decisions (Okotoni 2001).

Corruption has existed throughout history, but it is now receiving more scrutiny. The extent of corruption varies among countries; for instance, in 2011, Nigeria ranked 143rd out of 182 in Transparency International's corruption perception

index. This ranking, while an improvement from prior years, was not due to better governance or civil service but rather a result of more countries participating in the survey (Chinelo, 2013).

The increase of corruption in Nigeria is a pressing issue, particularly noted within the civil service and among leaders, causing significant damage to the nation (Dike, 2002). The document discusses the pervasive issue of corruption in Nigeria, illustrating its impact through various examples like file delays, police extortion, traffic congestion, and election irregularities. It highlights the government's attempt to combat corruption through whistleblower protection legislation, though the effectiveness of this measure remains uncertain. The study specifically investigates the role of whistleblower protection in curbing corruption within the Edo State Ministry of Works, acknowledging that this ministry is not immune to the broader corruption issues faced by the country.

### Statement of the Problem

The high level of corruption in the Nigerian civil service has led to the emergence of whistleblowers. Corruption manifests through unethical behaviors like embezzlement of public funds, bribery, tribalism, nepotism, and other fraudulent acts. This ethical deficit is exacerbated by weak institutional arrangements that fail to effectively enforce standards of ethics and accountability (Thompson, 1985).

In Edo State, Nigeria, the Ministry of Works is not exempt from corruption, which includes embezzlement, bribery, and other unethical behaviors attributed to civil servants. Despite

the introduction of a whistleblower policy aimed at fighting corruption, there is inadequate protection and rewards for whistleblowers. They often face verbal and physical threats from those benefiting from corrupt practices, including job-related sanctions. This study investigates the effectiveness of whistleblower protection in reducing corruption within the Edo State Ministry of Works and highlights a gap in the existing literature on this topic.

### 1.3 Research Questions

1. What is whistle blowing?
2. Does whistle blower enjoyed any protection in Nigeria and Edo state?
3. Has whistle blowing protection been effective in reducing corruption in Edo state ministry of work?

### 1.4 Research Objectives

The specific objectives of the study are to;

1. investigate the whistle blowing mechanism,
2. examine the whistle blower protection in Nigeria and Edo state.
3. look into whistle blower protection effectiveness in reducing corruption in Edo state ministry of work.

### 1.5 Scope of the Study

The study examines whistleblower protection in Nigeria, specifically in Edo State, and identifies various mechanisms for protection and rewards. It highlights how these protections can aid in reducing corruption, with a focus on the Edo State Ministry of Works.

Limitations include researcher bias, civil servants' oaths, bureaucratic challenges, apathy towards discussing corruption, and limited time for the research.

### 1.6 Significance of the Study

This study is crucial for policymakers, the general public, and government agencies, particularly within the Edo state ministry of works. It aims to highlight the levels of corruption in civil service that necessitate whistleblower protection and to inform policymakers about existing protections and ways to enhance them. Additionally, it seeks to educate the public on the concept of whistleblowing, the associated dangers without governmental protection, and how whistleblowers can play a vital role in combating corruption in Nigeria. Furthermore, federal and state agencies and stakeholders can utilize this study for policy formulation and as a resource to improve measures supporting and protecting whistleblowers in the fight against corruption.

## SECTION II

### LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

##### Concept of Corruption

Whistleblowing is inherently linked to corruption, arising as a response to corrupt practices within governmental and organizational frameworks. It seeks to address and mitigate corruption, which is characterized as an exchange that distorts resource allocation for private gain. The International Monetary Fund further defines corruption as the misuse of authority

for personal benefit, applicable to public officials as well as those in trusted positions in private enterprises and non-profits (Wolfe and Gurgun 2000).

Corruption significantly hinders economic development in Nigeria and other sub-Saharan African nations, leading to poor economic performance in developing countries. (Iroghama, 2011). Nigeria ranks low on the Transparency International corruption index, which assesses the involvement of public officials and politicians in corrupt practices like bribery, illicit payments in public procurement, and embezzlement of public funds (Salisu 2006).

Corruption in Nigeria's civil service, particularly within the Edo state ministry of work, is characterized by bureaucratic or "street-level" corruption that citizens regularly face. This form of corruption manifests in daily interactions with public agencies such as hospitals and local offices. Bureaucrats are expected to adhere to rules that ensure uniformity and equity, yet the discretionary power they hold in decision-making can lead to its abuse and subsequent corruption. (Dike 2002, 2).

Street-level bureaucrats perform their duties by making decisions based on individual cases brought before them. They are given bureaucratic discretion which is the ability to decide how policies should be implemented but if this power is abused it can lead to corruption (Lipsky 2010). An efficient and neutral public bureaucracy is crucial in a democratic system, as it enhances government infrastructure management and equitable service delivery. However, corruption within Nigeria's bureaucracy has

deteriorated the quality of goods and services, impairing its effectiveness and hindering necessary reform (Okotoni 2001).

In Nigeria, the public sector faces challenges due to the politicization of jobs, where bureaucrats, who should ideally be non-partisan, hold positions that are heavily influenced by politics. While civil servants can have political interests, this involvement can occasionally compromise the integrity of their official decisions (Okotoni 2001).

Corruption has a long history, with varying degrees across different societies. In 2011, Nigeria ranked 143rd out of 182 countries in the Transparency International corruption perception index. This was an improvement from previous years, but it was not due to better governance or civil service performance, rather it stemmed from a rise in the number of countries participating in the survey (Chinelo, 2013).

The increase of corruption in Nigeria is a major unresolved issue, especially in the civil service and among leaders. It causes significant problems, including sluggish file processing, police extortion, traffic congestion, port delays, long queues at passport and gas stations, ghost workers, and election irregularities (Ojobo, 2023). The chaos caused by corruption in this country could be recognized even by a newly born baby. The funds allocated for their welfare disappear into the thin air (Ojobo, E. 2023). In Nigeria, the public sector is tasked with providing essential services such as welfare, infrastructure, security, social justice, education, and healthcare, in addition to regulating the economy. The government acknowledges the role of whistleblowers in fighting corruption within this sector (Okoduwa 2007). Public servants in Nigeria have

transitioned from a colonial focus on law enforcement and taxation to a more developed civil service since regionalization in 1954. This change aligned with Nigeria's federal system and enhanced regional services, particularly in the western region, which served as a model of efficiency. After independence, the civil service aimed to foster socioeconomic development but struggled to achieve efficacy due to the absence of a unified national identity compared to regional services (Okotoni 2001).

Post-independence, the administration faced issues until a military takeover led to the civil service becoming more influential in public policy. Civil servants took on political roles, formulating and implementing policies while the military focused on civil war and coups. The civil service was credited with efficiently steering the country towards recovery after the civil war and contributing to economic prosperity following the discovery of oil (Okotoni, 2001). This era saw the rise of Super Permanent Secretaries, influential civil servants with policy decision-making power. However, by the late 1970s, their authority began to wane due to rampant corruption between political officials and civil servants, leading to extensive dismissals. The intended political neutrality and meritocracy of the civil service ultimately resulted in ethnic favoritism and further corruption (Olowu 2001).

The nationalization of the civil service has failed due to ineffective reforms aimed at improving efficiency. Contributing factors include regime changes that disrupted government functioning and the prevalence of political affiliations in hiring and promotion, which limited accountability in public service delivery. (Suleiman 2009).

In 1999, the Nigerian constitution established a mandatory public service sector at both federal and state levels, which includes the civil service and public bureaucracy. The civil service consists of line ministries and extra-ministerial agencies, while the public bureaucracy encompasses services from state and national assemblies, the judicial branch, security agencies, paramilitary services, and various parastatals, including social services and educational institutions (Suleiman 2009). The civil service consists of millions of officials tasked with implementing government programs and policies. A 2003 reform aimed to alter the public sector's structure and procedures, specifically concerning salaries and allowances, but did not yield the expected changes. The civil service plays a vital role in coordinating ministries, advising political leaders, and ensuring effective policy implementation and service continuity. However, inefficiencies and various forms of corruption within Nigeria's public sector hinder its effectiveness. Addressing these challenges is crucial for promoting efficiency, equity, and effectiveness in public service delivery.

### 2.3 Forms of Corruption in the Public Sector

Bureaucratic corruption, often referred to as street level corruption, occurs in the public sector during policy execution. It involves bureaucrats exercising discretion in implementing policies established by lawmakers (Dike 2008). As earlier discussed, bureaucratic discretion can lead to corruption if not properly administered, because public officials can decide to treat certain individuals unfairly. Bureaucratic corruption can be manifested in a variety of ways. Bribery is the payment (in money or kind) that is taken or given in a transaction (Dike 2008). In the public sector, bribery significantly

affects government services like taxes, licenses, and legal outcomes. It influences contracting choices and the allocation of benefits such as subsidies and pensions. Bribes differ in their size and the benefits to public officials. Corruption is categorized into grand corruption, involving international transactions and complicity among bureaucrats and politicians, and petty corruption, where individuals seek licenses or services. Although grand corruption garners more media attention, the economic and political costs of petty corruption, particularly in Nigeria, can be even more substantial due to its widespread nature and the elaborate sharing among participants. (Moseley 1999).

Public sector fraud constitutes a form of bureaucratic corruption where individuals misuse government grants and services for personal gain, stealing public funds and impacting taxpayers. Such actions by public officials undermine the provision of essential goods and services to citizens (Moseley 1999). Bureaucratic embezzlement in Nigeria involves public officials stealing from their institutions, largely due to inadequate regulatory systems. Public sector extortion represents another form of bureaucratic corruption, where officials use coercion or violence to extract funds from civilians. Additionally, favoritism and nepotism by bureaucrats result in biased distribution of state resources, with public officials favoring friends, family, and individuals from their ethnic groups, often violating laws and regulations for personal benefit (Moseley 1999).

#### 2.4 History of Corruption in the Public Sector

Corruption in Nigeria's public sector dates back to colonial times, initiated by British colonizers who utilized both direct and indirect rule. Local officials, often not indigenous to

their regions, exploited their authority for personal gain, seeking greater influence and wealth through the abuse of power (Owolabi 2007). The military seized government control in 1966, citing corruption among public officials, yet the situation deteriorated, with each subsequent military regime exhibiting greater corruption. These regimes lacked transparency and accountability, with no checks and balances, and opposition primarily manifested through coup d'états that resulted in the complete overthrow of leadership. Citizens faced repression, as questioning military authority led to imprisonment or death, fostering a culture of corruption where public officials evaded accountability and citizens were powerless to demand it. (Owolabi 2007).

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Nigeria transitioned to democracy in 1999 under President Olusegun Obasanjo, who sought to foster a new governance culture through public sector reforms aimed at combating corruption. While these initiatives led to some improvements in the civil service structure, further changes are necessary for enhanced accountability to the public. This includes implementing stricter regulations and holding civil servants to higher responsiveness

standards, critical for the nation's economic growth. Moreover, accountability in the public sector is essential for ensuring transparency and preventing power abuse, thereby promoting efficiency and effectiveness in governance.

Ensuring accountability among government agencies allows them to fulfill their goals and better respond to public needs. When officials are responsive, transparency increases, enabling citizen oversight and reducing the risk of abuse of power. Enhanced transparency holds agencies to a standard, and penalizing defaulters further discourages officials from acting in self-interest (Dike 2002).

## 2.5 Causes of Corruption in the Public Sector

Corruption undermines democracy and oppresses individuals globally, with Nigeria cited as one of the most corrupt countries by Transparency International. Key causes include inadequate accountability for public servants, resource distribution inequality, ethnic favoritism, lack of nationalism, and weak enforcement agencies, all contributing to Nigeria's pervasive corruption culture. This study examines these factors in detail.

### Lack of Accountability

A lack of accountability in Nigeria's public sector leads to financial losses, employee theft, and inefficiency. There is a disconnect between government actions and citizen reports, with no transparent systems for public participation in policy formation. Despite abundant natural resources, ineffective accountability measures are exacerbated by inadequate infrastructure, such as poor roads and limited internet access. This mismanagement stems

from government officials who are not held accountable, which affects service delivery and social accountability (Okoye 2005).

### Inequality in the Distribution of Resources

Nigeria possesses ample natural resources to support its growing population; however, wealth generated from these resources is not widely accessible. The country ranks 48th with a score of 43.7 on the family income distribution index, indicating significant income inequality measured via the Lorenz curve, which plots cumulative family income against the familial population from the poorest to the richest (CIA Factbook 2013). Seventy percent of citizens in Nigeria live below the poverty line despite the country's wealth. Consequently, government employees often seek to accumulate wealth while in office, which could be mitigated by providing adequate pay to prevent fraud due to underpayment. The Nigerian Constitution recognizes the need for a reasonable living minimum wage for employees. In Section 16(2)d, it states that: The state is committed to ensuring all citizens have access to adequate shelter, food, a reasonable national minimum wage, old age care, pensions, unemployment benefits, sick benefits, and welfare for the disabled (Shilgba 2010).

Public officials often resort to alternative income sources to support their families, which, while not justifying corruption, underscores the difficulties in maintaining honesty under insufficient salaries (Shilgba 2010). Public officials often resort to alternative income sources to support their families, which, while not justifying corruption, underscores the difficulties in maintaining honesty under insufficient salaries.

## Promotion of Ethnicity and a lack of Nationalism

Societies such as Nigeria, characterized by multi-ethnicity, are at a higher risk of corruption due to inadequate management of ethnic conflicts in a fair manner. Prior to the 1914 amalgamation by Lord Lugard, Nigeria consisted of various ethnic groups, each with its own customs, laws, and leadership (CIA Factbook 2013). After the amalgamation, the merging of various ethnic groups in Nigeria resulted in ethnic tensions, leading individuals to identify more closely with their ethnicity than their nationality, which fosters conflict and undermines nationalism. (Shilgba 2010). Citizens prioritize the development of their regions over the nation, leading to underdevelopment in certain areas as public officials tend to allocate resources to their own families and local constituencies.

## Lack of a Proper Taxing System

There is an ineffective taxing system in the country, hindering the tracking of financial activities and fostering corruption. Public officials often do not file taxes, making it challenging to monitor their income. Politicians must hold officials accountable by enacting laws that require an effective tax system, mandating year-end income tax filings to enable audits and check for discrepancies in their earnings.

(Okoye 2005).

## Ineffective Policies that enhance Corruption

Public officials are misusing discretion in policy implementation, notably through a ban on importing used cars over five years old. This has led to increased corruption, as car business owners resort to bribery for legal imports. Without a review of this policy and the establishment of strict guidelines, the economy may suffer further, and legitimate businesses in this sector may collapse, exacerbating poverty among citizens unwilling to engage in corrupt practices (Okoye 2005). Such a policy can lead to significant negative outcomes, including loss of state tax revenue, decreased car imports, and diversion of business to neighboring countries, ultimately causing economic harm to Nigeria and creating opportunities for corruption if not well-planned (Okoye 2005).

## 2.6. Concept of whistle blower

Whistle blowing is the act of exposing wrongdoing within an organization, company, or institution (Gobert and Punch, 2000). It is crucial for preventing corruption and malpractice in governments, as it can save resources, protect rights, and prevent malfeasance in public services. Whistleblowing is a bottom-up oversight for ensuring accountability in government that gives public employees the opportunity to report wrongdoing in the organization (Klingner et al., 2010; Near & Miceli, 2008). Whistle blowing in Nigeria refers to the reporting of suspected misconduct or unethical practices, serving as a tool to combat corruption and enhance transparency. Defined by Nader (1972), it involves individuals prioritizing the public interest over organizational interests by exposing illegal or harmful activities. However, many federal employees hesitate to report wrongdoing due to fears of retaliation, including identity disclosure and job loss, as

indicated by surveys showing a significant reluctance among employees to disclose misconduct. (Caillier & Sa, 2017; Lavena, 2016), such as revealing the whistleblower's identity, blacklisting, transferring, demoting, or terminating (Bowman, 1980; Lee, 2020; Martin, 1996; Miethe, 1999; Schwellenbach, 2019).

The policy in Nigeria utilizes a practical approach to whistleblowing, considering the cultural and normative context of Nigerian society. It allows for whistleblowers to be any individuals with legitimate access to information regarding an organization's misconduct, which includes employees, suppliers, contractors, clients, or anyone who becomes aware of illegal activities. The Whistleblower Protection Bill 2019 protects individuals making disclosures and outlines eligibility for incentives and protection under the law. Primarily, whistleblowers are employees due to their access to internal information. Whistleblowing involves revealing illegal or unethical activities within an organization, often motivated by moral obligation or potential rewards. The term derives from referees signaling infractions in sports.

### 2.6.1 Whistle Blower in Nigeria

Nigeria does not have comprehensive whistleblowing legislation, relying instead on policies from individuals or private organizations, which differs from the existing fragmented laws such as the Independent Corrupt Practices and Related Offences Act 2000 (ICPC, 2000). Several attempts to establish whistleblowing legislation, including the Whistleblower Protection Bills of 2008, 2011, and 2015, gained Senate approval but did not become law. In response, the Federal Ministry of Finance implemented a stopgap strategy in 2016 that

incentivized whistleblowing to address issues of corruption, bribery, and fraud, aiming to encourage the reporting of mismanagement and theft of public funds and assets.

Since its implementation, the whistleblower policy has led to recoveries totaling USD 378 million, GBP 27,800, and NGN 7.8 billion (approximately GBP 13 million). However, only 918 of the 13,002 tips have been investigated, with 623 completed, yielding only four convictions and twelve prosecutions, reflecting low success rates. Corruption Anonymous noted in 2018 that individuals with political connections were not being effectively prosecuted (Nkanga, 2018).

#### 2.6.1 Protection of Whistle Blower in Nigeria

Since the 2016 stopgap policy in Nigeria, whistleblowers have encountered reprisals, exemplified by Aliyu Ibrahim and Ntia Thompson, who were fired for contract fraud and misappropriation, respectively. Although the Whistleblower Protection Bill of 2017 aimed to bolster protections for whistleblowers, it ultimately did not become law. In 2019, the Whistleblower Protection Bill 2019 was introduced to protect whistleblowers against victimization and job loss, likely in response to the victimization suffered by individuals who blew the whistle (Ojobo, 2023; Omojola, 2019).

A five-year report by AFRICMIL indicates that while the whistleblowing policy is well-known in Nigeria, there is significant reluctance among citizens to report corruption. The report notes that 75% of respondents have ceased to expose corrupt individuals, citing concerns about potential misuse of the policy by political actors and the perceived inaction of anti-graft agencies. Issues of reprisal attacks against whistleblowers ignored by the

government are also documented. The Whistleblower Protection Bill, although responding to 2016 policy issues, fails to ensure identity protection for whistleblowers, increasing their risk of retaliation. The 2019 bill broadens the scope of disclosures to include improper conduct by various entities and individuals, enhancing protections compared to the earlier policy.

The bill seeks to safeguard individuals from misconduct, covering economic crimes, corruption, environmental harm, property, health, and safety infringements, as well as violations related to terrorism and illegal firearms. It permits information disclosures based on a reasonable belief of truth, but provides penalties of up to one year in prison or a fine of NGN 100,000 for providing misleading information. Section 24(1) does not remove liability from individuals who participated in improper conduct but chose to disclose. Section 18 protects whistleblowers from victimization, placing a reverse burden on those who report the whistleblower.

Section 23 allows whistleblowers to request police protection in cases of reprisal attacks. Rewards for reprisals include reinstatement, transfer, and compensation, but the bill excludes interim reliefs. It continues the 2016 policy of offering monetary rewards for whistleblowing, albeit at reduced rates: 1.5% for recovered assets under NGN 1 billion and 1% for those over NGN 1 billion, reflecting prior recoveries in Nigeria (Kumolu. 2025).

The stopgap policy in Nigeria has resulted in higher rates of whistleblowing and compensation. However, the government's reluctance to enact a whistleblower protection law raises doubts about its commitment. Despite demands for the bill's passage, it remains

inactive. The proposed legislation highlights the legislative priorities while indicating necessary adjustments, especially concerning reporting processes and the protection of whistleblower identities.

#### 2.6.4 Effectiveness of whistleblower

Whistleblowing effectively exposes corruption in both public and private sectors, acting as a remedy against illicit activities (Luxford, 2019). In public administration, whistleblowers reveal past and ongoing wrongdoings, leveraging their insider knowledge and access to information typically unavailable to oversight systems or the public. Protecting whistleblowers enhances accountability, transparency, and public officials' freedom of speech (Rothschild, 2008). Whistle Blower Been Effectiveness in protecting the Edo State ministry of work against corruption.

Whistle blowing has proven effective in reducing corruption within the Edo State Ministry of Work, exposing wrongdoing despite the associated risks such as demotion and blacklisting. It plays a crucial role in promoting political accountability and public welfare, safeguarding the rule of law, human rights, and lives. However, the covert nature of corrupt activities means they often remain hidden until reported. Currently, there have only been four convictions and twelve prosecutions, highlighting the inadequacy of prosecution rates, as noted by Corruption Anonymous in 2018 regarding the lack of diligence in prosecuting politically connected individuals.

## 2.5 THEORETICAL FRAME WORK

### 2.5.1 Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Chapman, 2001) Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is a psychological theory that presents a five-tier model of human needs, represented as a pyramid. It asserts that individuals must meet basic survival needs first, as unmet needs like fair wages and job security can hinder motivation towards higher-order needs such as self-actualization. Consequently, poor conditions may confine employees to lower levels of motivation.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs consists of five levels: physiological needs (food, water, shelter), safety needs (security and health), love and belongingness needs (emotional relationships), esteem needs (respect and recognition), and self-actualization needs (personal growth and fulfillment). Each level must be satisfied sequentially, starting from basic survival through to achieving one's full potential.

Maslow posited that individuals must satisfy lower-level needs before they can address higher-level needs. However, he acknowledged that this progression is not always linear and can vary based on individual circumstances.

### 2.5.2 Kohlberg's Cognitive Moral Development

Kohlberg's Cognitive Moral Development (1969) theorizes that when one is faced with an ethical dilemma the actor falls into one of six categories that inform their moral decision-making. In level three (e.g., conformity and mutual expectations) of Kohlberg's (1969) model, actors try to live up to the behavior of those close to them (Trevino, 1986). This text discusses how affiliation can reduce the likelihood of

whistleblowing when wrongdoing is observed. Once the affiliation ceases, individuals may revert to a more self-serving perspective and are likely to report the wrongdoing for personal gain, as suggested by Kohlberg's (1969) model.

Recent whistleblowing cases indicate that individuals often perceive organizational wrongdoings as acceptable while still employed, opting to report these wrongdoings only after leaving to gain personal benefits. This suggests that whistleblowing may often be a tactical strategy rather than a purely ethical action, implying a lower likelihood of reporting misconduct while associated with an organization.

### 2.5.3 Theory of Planned Behavior

Theory of Planned Behavior by Ajzen (1991) theorized that, “as a general rule, the stronger the intention to engage in a behavior, the more likely should be its performance” (p. 181). Simply, intention is the amount of effort put in to performing a behavior. The Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1985, 1991), An extension to the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) by Ajzen introduces the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which includes perceived behavioral control as a crucial antecedent to intention. This framework emphasizes that even with favorable attitudes and social pressures, an individual may not perform a behavior if they feel unable to do so, as illustrated in the context of whistleblowing. Factors such as internal cost-benefit analyses may deter individuals from reporting unethical actions despite ethical obligations. Changes in the antecedents—attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control—can significantly influence behavioral intentions, which are further complicated by negative barriers like fear of retaliation. This dynamic is shown to vary across contexts, such as sports compared to mainstream business,

highlighting the importance of understanding these antecedents to better predict behaviors like whistleblowing.

Attitude toward the behavior (e.g., behavioral belief) is comprised of an individual's favorable or unfavorable assessment towards the behavior (Ajzen, 1991). This text discusses the moral and ethical considerations individuals face regarding perceived rule-breaking or unethical behavior in sports, emphasizing the role of subjective norms, which reflect the approval or disapproval of referent individuals or groups towards such behaviors. (Ajzen, 1991, p. 195). Loyalty or disdain towards an organization influences subjective norms, which in turn affect approval or disapproval of whistleblowing behavior and intention. Perceived behavioral control relates to the ease or difficulty one believes exists in deciding whether to perform a behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Perceived behavioral control in whistleblowing involves an internal cost-benefit analysis, evaluating expected gains against perceived costs. This analysis influences an actor's readiness to engage in prosocial behavior, where those facing fewer barriers or lower costs are more likely to whistleblow compared to those who perceive their costs as outweighing their gains. Ajzen (1991) Research indicates that the availability of resources, typically identified through second-hand information, significantly influences an individual's willingness to engage in whistleblowing. A reduction in obstacles and increased resources enhances perceived control. Additionally, the negative repercussions and social ramifications associated with whistleblowing play a critical role in shaping the intention to report concerns, as do perceived barriers like organizational support and the organization's past treatment of whistleblowers.

## SECTION III

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Research Design

The study used a descriptive survey research design, a non-experimental method aimed at accurately and clearly describing existing phenomena.

#### Population of the Study

The target population includes the employees at the Edo State Ministry of works which is 56.

### 3.3 Sampling Technique

The sampling technique used in this work is the simple random sampling which showed that all elements have the chance of being selected.

### 3.4 Sample Size

The sample size in this study is 50 drawn from all the units in the ministry.

### 3.5 Sources Data

The study utilized data from two primary sources: primary and secondary. Primary data was collected directly from bank employees through face-to-face interactions and structured questionnaires, aiming for original insights into their motivation levels. Secondary data was gathered from various published and unpublished materials, including textbooks, journals, and newspapers.

### 3.6 Research Instrument

The research employs a questionnaire for data collection, consisting of two sections. Section A gathers personal information from respondents, while Section B seeks the opinions of employees at the Edo State Ministry of Works.

### 3.7 Validity of the Instrument

To assess the face and content validity of the instrument, expert judgment was employed. A draft of the questionnaire was reviewed by the supervisor, who provided corrections and

suggestions that were incorporated. The final version of the instrument was constructed in accordance with the supervisor's advice.

### 3.8 Technique of Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using sample percentages, allowing for a fresh examination of the recorded facts. This approach aims to facilitate new applications and implementations, ultimately helping to achieve the objectives of the research.

## SECTION IV

### PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

#### 4.1 Presentation of Data

Research generates substantial raw statistical data requiring reduction for analysis. This chapter aims to manage such data. The project investigates "whistle blower protection and reduction of corruption in Edo State Ministry of Works," utilizing 50 questionnaires randomly administered to respondents over one week, all of which were retrieved. The responses are presented in tables and percentages to illustrate the findings..

#### 4.2 Demographic Information of Respondents

The demographic variables of respondents that were of interest in this study were age, sex, marital status, highest educational qualification, religion, income level and length of service.

Table 4.1 shows the demographic distribution of both workers

Table 4.1: Demographic Information of Respondents

Variable	Measurement	Staff	
		Frequency	Percentage
Age	18-25	15	30
	26-35 Years	16	32
	36-45 Years	14	28
	46-55 Years	10	20
	55 Years and above	5	10
	Total	50	100.00

Sex	Male	10	20
	Female	40	80
	Total	50	100.0
Marital status	Single	19	38
	Married	20	40
	Separated	11	22
	Total	50	100.0
Educational qualification	Diploma	16	32
	Bachelor's Degree	30	60
	Masters' Degree	4	8
	Doctorate	-	-
	Post doctorate degree	-	-
	Total	50	100.0
Religion	Christianity	40	80
	Islam	9	18
	African Traditional Religion	1	1
	Total	180	100.0
Length of service	0- 5 Years	15	30
	6-10 Years	20	40
	11 - 15 Years	9	18
	15-20 years		
	21 Years and above	6	12
	Total	50	100.0

Source: field work, 2025

In a survey of staff demographics, 30% of respondents were aged 18-25, 32% were 26-35, 28% were 36-45, 20% were 46-50, and 10% were over 55, with the majority in the 26-35 age range. The gender breakdown showed 20% male and 80% female respondents, indicating a predominantly female sample. Regarding education, 32% held diplomas, and 60% had bachelor's degrees, with no respondents having master's or doctoral degrees. Religious affiliation revealed 80% Christians, 16% Muslims, and 1% practicing African traditional religion. In terms of work experience, 30% had less than 5 years, 40% had 5-10 years, 18% had 11-20 years, and 12% had over 20 years, with the majority having 5-10 years of service.

Table 4.2. What is whistle blowing?

	Variable	Workers						
		Statement	N	SD	D	N	A	SA

			1	2	3	4	5	
	Worker know what whistle blowing is about	50	3 6%	10 20%	5 10%	2 4%	30 60%	
	Whistleblowing can provide solution to corruption	50	2 4%	3 6%	5 10%	15 30%	25 50%	4.25
	whistleblowers are among the few people who are able to effectively report cases of corruption or misconduct that has either occurred in the past or is ongoing	50	9 18%	5 10%	13 26%	3 6%	20 40.7%	3.96
	Whistleblowing is considered a risky business because of the dangers	50	4 8%	6 12%	24 40.1%	23 46%	3 6%	3.97
	Corruption thrives significantly in places where there is a culture of silence that allows such misconducts to go unreported	50	4 8%	6 12%	24 40.1%	23 46%	3 6%	

Source: Field Work. 2025

The table above shows that the Worker knows what whistle blowing is about. It indicates that majority of the respondents believed that know what is whistle blowing indicated by the index of 4.27.

Table 4.3. Does whistle blower enjoyed any protection in Nigeria and Edo state?

	N	SD	D	N	A	SA	Index
	1	2	3	4	5		
Whistle blower	50	4	20	9	6	11	3.70

	are protected by law in Nigeria		8%	40%	18.9%	12%	22%	
	Whistle blower are protected by law in Edo State	50	14 28%	16 32.9%	3 6%	7 14%	10 20%	3.91
	There is mechanism put in place by Edo state Ministry of work to protect whistle blower	50	6 12%	32 64%	2 4%	8 16%	2 4%	3.63
	There is an institutional arrangement to protect whistleblower in Edo state	50	10 20%	16 32%	14 28%	10 20%	10 20%	3.90
	Whistleblowing is an ethical or moral act	50	10 20%	15 30%	15 30%	4 8%	16 32%	
	Government should ensure protection of whistleblowers against reprisal attacks	50	13 26%	17 34%	2 4%	8 16%	20 40%	

Source: field work, 2025

The table above reveals that whether whistle blower enjoyed any protection in Nigeria and Edo state laws. As reflected by the index of 3.70, as regard to whistle blower does not enjoy any protection in Nigeria and Edo state. 40% of the respondents agree that the government should ensure protection of whistleblowers against reprisal attacks.

Table 4.4. Has whistle blowing protection been effective in reducing corruption in Edo state ministry of work?

		N	SD 1	D 2	N 3	A 4	SA 5	Perception Index
	Whistle blowing protection is available at the Edo state Ministry of work	50	24 29%	20 7.1%	5 10%	18 36%	5 10%	3.87
	Whistle blowing policy protection has not be instrumental in ensuring accountability in Edo state Ministry of work	50	12 24%	6 12%	14 28%	10 20%	8 16%	3.65
	Whistle blowing has be effective in reporting of corruption in Edo State Ministry of Work	50	10 20%	5 10%	15 30%	10 20%	10 20%	3.76
	The lack of protection means that whistle cannot be use to addressed corruption in Edo State Ministry of Work	50	6 12%	10 20%	14 28%	10 20%	10 20%	3.75
	Whistleblowers assist law enforcement agencies in	50	16 32%	12 24%	6 12%	14 55.4%	2 19.6%	3.74

uncovering corruption in Edo State Ministry of Work								
Using whistle blowing policy in the fight against corruption in Edo State Ministry of Work is pragmatic	50	3 6%	7 14%	10 20%	5 10%	25 50%	3.96	

Source: field work

The table indicates that whistleblowing protection has effectively reduced corruption in Edo State's Ministry of Works. It shows that a majority believe this protection can enhance financial transparency, evidenced by an index of 3.89, and 50% consider the use of whistleblowing policies practical in combating corruption within the ministry.

#### 4.6 Discussion of Findings

The study identifies whistleblowers as individuals who expose corruption within public and private sector institutions, a definition supported by Gobert and Punch (2000). Whistleblowing serves as a crucial mechanism for preventing corruption and ensuring accountability by allowing public employees to report wrongdoing. However, in Nigeria, and specifically Edo State, whistleblowers lack legal protection; only 40% of respondents believe the government should safeguard them from reprisals. The effectiveness of whistleblowing

protection in combating corruption in the Edo State Ministry of Work is questioned, with 29% rejecting its availability and 24% seeing no impact on accountability. Ethical considerations of whistleblowing, as described by De George, emphasize that it may be morally necessary to report significant wrongdoing, provided there is compelling evidence and respect for stakeholder dignity.

## SECTION V

### CONCLUSION

## 5.2 Summary

Whistleblowing is intrinsically linked to corruption, often emerging as a response to corrupt practices in government and organizations. Corruption, defined by the IMF as the misuse of power for personal gain, severely impacts developing nations, notably sub-Saharan Africa, as evidenced by Nigeria's poor ranking on Transparency International's index due to widespread public official misconduct. Whistleblowers play a vital role in enhancing transparency and accountability, particularly in Nigeria where reporting misconduct is crucial for economic development. Various levels of corruption affect daily life and public service efficacy. Although the government has enacted whistleblower protection laws, their effectiveness, especially in the Edo State Ministry of Works, is still under evaluation.

## 5.3 Conclusion

The study highlights whistleblowers as key individuals exposing corruption in both public and private sectors, supporting Gobert and Punch's definition. Whistleblowing is crucial for ensuring accountability and enabling public employees to report misconduct; however, legal protections in Nigeria, especially Edo state, are lacking. Survey results reveal that 40% of respondents feel government protections are needed, while 29% deny the existence of whistleblower protections, and 24% believe current policies fail to ensure accountability. The research also incorporates De George's ethical framework, stressing the importance of substantial evidence of wrongdoing to ethically justify whistleblowing actions.

## 5.4 Recommendations

Whistleblowing in the Edo State Ministry faces significant challenges, including political corruption, lack of integrity in anti-corruption efforts, and distrust in anti-corruption agencies, which discourages participation. To address these issues, it is recommended that the Edo State government and Nigerian parliament enact legislation to protect and regulate whistleblowing. Additionally, existing proposals for the whistleblowing law should be refined,

particularly concerning reporting mechanisms and identity protection. Furthermore, the government should reassess its exclusions for private contracts in cases of fraud and misconduct, ensuring timely compensation for whistleblowers who provide crucial information.

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