

**EVALUATION OF SOUTH EAST RESIDENTS’
PERCEPTION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF MEDIA
CAMPAIGN ON THE WHISTLE BLOWING POLICY OF
PRESIDENT MUHAMMADU BUHARI’S ADMINISTRATION
IN NIGERIA**

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Abstract

This paper examined the knowledge level and perception of respondents on the whistle blowing policy based on media reportage. Due to some confusion about the implications of the policy in Nigeria and feeling of alienation attached to whistle blowers, the practice has unfairly attracted criticism, and bad reputation. What could be responsible for this variations in perception? Could it be that the mass media are not doing enough to sell this policy to the public? It is based on this premise that this study sought to: ascertain the level of awareness created by the mass media on the policy amongst Southeast residents’ in Nigeria and examine the effectiveness of media campaigns of the policy. The paper was anchored on the agenda setting and selective perception theories. The mixed method design was used

including survey and indepth interview. Multi stage sampling technique was adopted with a sample size of 400 derived using Taro Yamene. Findings revealed that there was a gradual death of the policy and that this death was due to insufficient media coverage and poor implementation by the authorities. Conclusively, the media should campaign more on the policy so as to educate the populace on its merits and the need to tackle corruption strategically. Hence, the paper recommends that the media should work with the authorities or ministries in charge of the policy towards improving and diversifying their campaign strategies, to achieve the maximum co-operation of the masses on implementation of the policy.

Keywords: Media, Influence, Whistle Blowing Policy, Southeast Residents', Perception

INTRODUCTION

Corruption is a global problem and no country of the world is totally free of its menacing grip (Chimakonam, 2011). It has been seen as a structural problem of political, economic, cultural and an individual malaise (Akor, 2014). Although corruption remains a global challenge to the quest for development and welfare, it is a recurring theme in the African discourse. It has affected many countries all over the world especially the developing countries (Ibraheem, Umar & Ajoke, 2013). According to Transparency International index cited by Sahara International 2018, global anti-corruption Watchdog Transparency International (TI) ranked Nigeria low in its 2017 Corruption Perception Index (CPI). The latest ranking has Nigeria in the 148th position out of 180. The country, according to the Corruption Perception Index, scored 28 out of 100, a figure lower than the average in the sub-Saharan region.

However, the Nigerian government cannot afford to keep quiet and watch corruption destroy the institutions of the state, moreover it is believed that “one of the characteristics of good governance (of a nation) is control of corruption in the society. Other characteristics are accountability, political stability and absence of violence, government’s effectiveness and efficiency, regulatory quality and rule of law” (The World Bank, 2007 as cited in Inyanga & Iheanacho 2017, p.117). The implication of this is that arbitrary government, unchecked by law, makes corruption extremely difficult to eradicate” (Inyanga & Iheanacho 2017, p.117).

Past Nigerian leaders and government knew this and swung into action by promulgating laws and formulating policies to abate corruption. For instance, in 1970 the Gowon administration announced, “The Eradication of Corruption from the Society” as one of its nine point programme. The Mohammed/Obasanjo administration fought corruption through “The Investigation Bureau”. The subsequent administration of Alhaji Shehu Shagari, fought corruption through “Public Services Ethical Revolution” The Buhari’s military regime, in the bid to clean the society of pervasive corruption, inaugurated “War Against Indiscipline”. The Babangida administration introduced the “National Orientation Movement” but corruption became the dominant social norms during the regime (Olopoenia, 1996 as cited in Ikubaja, 2007). The Abacha regime re-invented War Against Indiscipline and Corruption. The democratic regime of Obasanjo and Yardua promised Nigeria to fight corruption and reduce it to its barest minimum (Fakoya, 2001).

More so, the introduction of Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) to checkmate corruption in the country, and other agencies such as; Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) were some efforts and different strategies to curb corruption in the country by the Nigerian

government. Recently, the Nigerian government has also set up a strategy to fight against corruption under the leadership of Buhari with stringent penalties put in place for offenders. Bearing this in mind, the present administration swung into action by formulating the “Whistle-Blower policy”. The formulation of this policy buttressed the commitment of President Buhari’s administration in the fight against corruption. In one of their comments, *Punch* (2016) recorded that, “the Federal Government of Nigeria has finally taken a major step in the right direction by initiating a whistle blowing policy.” It is the conspiracy behind corruptions that makes the “whistle blowing policy” a potent strategy in the fight against corruption. However, to understand whistle blowing, one has to understand who a whistle-blower is. Doing justice to this, *Punch, 2016* noted that:

You are a whistle-blower if you are a worker and you report certain types of wrongdoing. This will usually be something you’ve seen at work—though not always. The wrongdoing you disclose must be in public interest. This means it must affect others, e.g. the general public. As a whistle-blower, you’re protected by law—you shouldn’t be treated unfairly or lose your job because you ‘blow the whistle’. You can raise your concern at any time about an incident that happened in the past, is happening now or you believe will happen in the near future (Excerpt from the British Government’s Whistle-blower Policy).

The confusion about the meaning of the term and a probable feeling of alienation attached to it is rife. Whistle blowers and the practice have unfairly acquired a bad reputation as being troublemakers and disloyal employees. This perception has

unfortunately allowed the stigmatization of whistle blowing as an activity to be despised rather than to be encouraged (Mbatha, 2015). As noted by Sowunmi, Raufu, Raufu, Oketokun, Salake and Usifoh (2010), the role of the media is critical in promoting good governance and controlling corruption. It does not only raise public awareness about corruption, it not only exposes the causes, consequences and possible remedies, but also investigates and reported incidences of corruption.

According to Orewere (2012), the mass media, through its agenda setting function, has the ability to influence the level of the public awareness of issues as opposed to their knowledge about those issues. Most people understand events based on media reportage of the event in question, with these reports, opinions about policies are formed and this includes the whistle blowing policy. The implication is that the mass media, through focusing on an issue, influences public perception of the said issue. It therefore lies on the mass media to sell the policy of whistle blowing to the public.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Corruption has been prevalent in both public and private sector of Nigeria (Transparency International index cited by Sahara International 2018, global anti-corruption Watchdog Transparency International (TI) ranked Nigeria low in its 2017 Corruption Perception Index (CPI).). In a democratic state, the mismanagement of state money, or the money of the taxpayer is a serious crime against the society, it has a devastating effect on the citizens and socio-economic development of a government (Mbatha, 2005). However, due to some confusion about the meaning and implication of the Whistle Blowing policy in Nigeria and the perceived feeling of alienation attached to it, whistle-blowers and the practice have unfairly attracted criticism. This has succeeded in the whistle blowers

acquiring bad reputation as being busybodies, troublemakers and disloyal employees, colleagues and friends (Anya & Iwanger, 2019; Mbatha, 2015). What could be responsible for these variations in perceptions? Could it be that the government through the media is not doing enough to sell this policy to the public? It is based on this premise that this study seeks to evaluate the South East Residents' Perception of the Effectiveness of Media Campaign on the Whistle Blowing Policy of President Muhammadu Buhari's administration in Nigeria.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study was aimed at achieving the following:

1. ascertain the level of awareness created by the mass media on the Whistle Blowing Policy of President Muhammadu Buhari's administration amongst Southeast Residents' in Nigeria;
2. find out if the level of knowledge of Southeast residents' on the Whistle Blowing Policy of President Muhammadu Buhari's administration is as a result of the media campaign of the policy;
3. examine the extent to which the media campaigns influence the awareness of the Whistle Blowing Policy of President Buhari's administration;
4. ascertain whether Southeast residents' perception of the Whistle Blowing Policy of President Muhammadu Buhari's administration is as a result of media campaign of the policy
5. What factors affect the effectiveness of mediacampaign on the Whistle Blowing Policy?

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Grey (2004), the term "whistle-blower" refers primarily to an employee who, in good faith, attempts to have the

employer stop conduct that the employee reasonably believes to be injurious to the public and a violation of the law either through internal efforts or by disclosing the illegal conduct externally to the press or law enforcement agencies. Eaton and Akers (2007), say whistle blowing in its simplest form involves the act of reporting wrongdoing within an organization to internal and/ or external parties. Concurring, Daft (2006), Whistle blowing is the employee's disclosure of illegal, immoral, or illegitimate practices on the employer's part.

Similarly, Nadler and Schulman (2018) define, "whistle blowing means calling attention to wrongdoing that is occurring within an organization". Brown, Lewis, Moberly and Vandekerckhove (2014), also defines whistle blowing as "the reporting by employees or former employees of illegal, irregular, dangerous or unethical practices by employers". Dehn (2018), refer whistle blowing as the options available to an employee to raise concerns about workplace wrongdoing. It refers to the disclosure of wrongdoing that threatens others, rather than a personal grievance. When employees discover unethical, immoral, illegal transactions or potentially damaging information for the well-being of the workplace in which they are employed, they are expected to disclose this sensitive information to an authority in the hierarchy through a formal/informal mechanism, which in common parlance is called "Whistle-blowing" (Ranasinghe, 2007). From the above definitions given by different persons and authority it is clear that whistle blowing simply means reporting by employees about wrongdoing by their employers in the organizations, seeking for corrective action to curb the unethical practices which majorly affects the public interest.

Whistle blowing is generally associated with sporting activities in which the referee blows the whistle when there is foul play, rules have been broken in the game or the players need to be alerted to something. When someone hears the whistle during a sports game, it

is thus to effectively stop any foul play. Miller, Roberts and Spence (2005) present an interesting analogy; these authors note that “in the coal mining field, miners used to take a canary with them into a mine to smell trouble and raise the alarm. (p.157). The canary can be compared to a whistle blower because the latter play the role of alerting the community to danger and, in so doing, may sacrifice themselves in light of danger.

Furthermore, Banisar (2011) opined that whistle blowing is not the same as sounding complaints or personal grievances, despite the fact that these may be protecting the public interest. The “whistle blowers” and “informants” are often used interchangeably, whereas these individuals have different motives and morals. Informants are, in most cases, involved in unethical activities and their disclosure of information is usually through coercion or due to a desire to avoid prosecution. Most informants also receive some remuneration, whereas whistle blowers do not expect anything for their troubles. Therefore, the whistle blower goes beyond personal grievances and complaints because he/ she is convinced that an illegal act is being conducted.

Global View of Whistle Blowing Policy

Tsahuridu and Vandekerckhove, (2008), in Zipparo, (1999) stated that “In the last two decades, there has been growing global awareness on whistleblowing legislation and many countries have enacted legislation” (p.83). These laws vary from country to country, but they do have a common basis for protecting whistle-blowers from retaliation. There are few countries namely South Africa, UK and New Zealand with comprehensive laws on whistle blowing that covers both the private and public sectors, Civil society plays a crucial role in advocating for whistle blowing protection. In some countries that have legislation that protects whistle-blowers, there are various

organisations that assist the government in drafting such laws. In South Africa, the ODAC, for example, is actively involved in advising the South African government in the drafting of whistle blowing legislation. The same can be said about other countries such as the UK, which has an organisation called the Public Concern at Work, and the USA, with its Government Accountability Project. Banisar, (2011) opined that Transparency International plays a dynamic role on an international platform by also ensuring that the United Nations adopts whistle blowing laws in its conventions.

Globally, there has been mounting support for whistle blowing strategies because these are the cornerstone of good governance. Vaughn, (2012) stated that “international treaties and conventions on whistle blowing issues have been put in place, and international organizations have assumed whistle-blower protection within their framework” (p.239).

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

There have been some studies on whistle blowing policy and this paper reviewed some of those studies. For instance, Ogbu (2017) agreed that the whistle blowing policy is an effective tool for fighting corruption in many parts of the world. In the first six months of the official launch of the whistle blowing policy in Nigeria by the Federal Ministry of Finance on Dec 22 2016, thousands of tips were received, some of which led to opening of over 3000 investigations and the recovery of several billions of naira. However, while the Minister of Information of the Buhari administration, Alhaji Lai Mohammed, applauded the gains from the policy in different forums as evidence of the progress being made in the ‘war against corruption’, controversy has continued to trail the conceptual, ethical and implementation frameworks of the policy so far. Adetula, S & Amupitan, M (2018) defines whistle blowing as a tool for combating fraud, forgery and

corruption in Nigeria. Although the culture of whistle blowing has been accepted and recognized globally as one of the tools for combating the menace of fraud, crime, forgery and corruption, it has remained at infancy in Nigeria.

Chamunorwa (2015) Corruption in South Africa has become a topical issue, especially in the public sector. Public officials are expected to uphold the public interest, but corrupt officials abuse public office for personal gain. The South African government has enacted legislation, in particular the Protected Disclosures Act (2000), which protects whistle-blowers from retaliation; however, in itself this may not be sufficient to encourage employees to blow the whistle. Organisations therefore need to devise effective whistle blowing mechanisms and create a culture of transparency that encourages employees to blow the whistle. Dauda (2017) contends that whistle blowing policy is no doubt a laudable mechanism adopted by world countries to fight corruption head-on, but may end up a failure in Nigeria. If adequate measures are not put in place to eradicate poverty, provide employment opportunities, adequate security and social amenities as well as revamping the economy.

Akani (2017) posited that the media represents a collective channel of communication in the society and no government can objectively sensitize the society without a profound involvement of the media. Further reveal showed that as whistle blowers, the fight against corruption in Nigeria cannot be successfully won without the active participation of the media. Ndebugri and Senzu (2018) opined that some instances of whistle blowing are dealt with internally in order not to dent the image of the institution. Siti, N.A.A.R (2015) revealed that while recognizing that whistle blowing is a powerful tool for preventing and detecting malpractices, very few decided to blow the whistle due to the fear of retaliation, legal liabilities and cultural oppositions. These barriers should be removed in order to internalize

whistle blowing as a positive means of improving transparency in the organization over and above the government as a whole. This is an extension to the findings of Holtzhausen, N (2007) who found that the ethical determinants of the work environment, the determinants influencing the individual whistle blower and the organizational determinants influencing effective whistle blowing, can fulfill, in order to serve as a mechanism to combat corruption.

Conclusively, Onuora, J.K and Uzoka, P.U (2018) agreed in line with the above finding that according to the analysis, the factors that affect whistle blowing policy are slow judicial process, the political nature of corruption, lack of integrity amongst others, which discourage wider participation.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The paper is anchored on Agenda setting theory and selective perception theories. Izuogu (2009) referred to it as the “media’s capacity to cause an issue to be elevated in importance in the mind of the public through repeated focus or coverage”(p.1). The theory has its roots in the age long belief that the media possess the power to set the agenda and raise issues of public importance such as whistle blowing.

Supporting the above statements, Anyadike (2009) opines that “the basic principle in the agenda setting theory is the ability of the mass media to restructure the audience thinking and perception of events (p.37). The relevance of this theory lies in the fact that the media can focus on the Whistle blowing policy of President Muhammadu Buhari’s administration with the aim of demystifying the policy and making it understandable to the Nigerian citizens. Given the negativity shrouding the policy and the spate of corruption bedeviling the country, the mass media is thought to prioritize the success of the whistle blowing policy constant reportage of news

stories on the policy. For the basic tenets of agenda setting theory behold that the media tell us what to think about but not what to think.

Futhermore, the second theory for this paper is selective perception theory which explains the process by which the public make sense or meaning out of media messages on whistle blowing and therefore pay attention to them as opposed to other views. Selective perception theory as propounded by Seymour Smith in the early 1960s posits that people let in, or screen out, advertising material they have an opportunity to see or hear. In the words of Steven (2009), selective perception is the process by which individuals perceive what they want to in media messages while ignoring opposing viewpoints. It is a broad term to identify the behaviour all people exhibit to tend to “see things” based on their particular frame of reference. Supporting Smith’s stance, Ricky (2013) opines that selective perception is the tendency not to notice and more quickly forget stimuli that cause emotional discomfort and contradict our prior beliefs

This theory is relevant to this study due to the fact that, it helps to explain how the people perceive messages especially as it pertains whistle blowing policy and then disregard opposing views concerning the policy. In other words, it helps to pinpoint a prefer message from the media which in most cases has to do with messages revolving on the policy. People whose frame of reference is against corruption will appreciate messages from the media that talks about the policy than those whose frame of reference is not.

METHOD

This study adopted Mixed Method design (comprising of Survey and In-depth Interview Methods).A Mixed methodology uses the strengths of the two approaches to deliver a broader perspective on the overall subject.The reason for this approach is to enable the researcher to generate both quantitative and qualitative data of the

findings on the entire population. Population was made up of South East residents within the ages of 18yrs and above. According to the National Bureau of Statistics [NBC], (2017), population of the study was 21,955,414 and then using the Taro Yamani formula, 400 was derived as the sample size for the quantitative aspect of the study, while that of the qualitative study was 20 interviewees.

Multi stage sampling technique was adopted. According to Ukonu (2006) multi stage sampling techniques often deals with geographical regions, which instead of one attempting to choose a random sample from the whole vast area; it is advisable to separate the various regions under study into clusters before selecting specific elements to be studied. The population for each state under study is thus: Abia state has 3,727,347, Anambra has 5,527,809, Ebonyi state has 2,880,383, Enugu has 4,411,119 and Imo has 5,408,756. Proportionate sampling technique was used to distribute questionnaire to respondents in the respective states that is 69 persons were allocated to Abia state, 102 to Anambra, 53 to Ebonyi, 80 to Enugu and 96 to Imo. This shows that 17.2%, 25.5%, 13.3%, 20% and 24% were allocated to various states in line with the population of the state. The researcher purposively selected the state capitals, the basis for the selection was in line with the population of the states and the fact that the respondents were educated and literate enough to provide relevant information for the questionnaire and were residents in the state capitals. Educated people were purposively selected because of their readership/listenership of newspaper, television and radio.

Using purposive sampling technique for the in-depth interview section of the study, the researcher concentrated on the state civil servants and state chapter of Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) in the South-Eastern states of the country. This is due to the fact that civil servants are familiar with trends and issues of media reportage. Four interviewees were purposively selected from each state, which were

two senior civil servants and two journalists. The internal validity used in the study consist of the face validity and the sampling validity.

A pilot study approach was used in testing for reliability, a sample of 20 copies of the questionnaire were administered, though 10 copies of the questionnaire were given at first to the National Union of Journalist(NUJ)'s secretariate and 10 copies of the questionnaire were also distributed at the State secretariate in the ministry of civil service commission, Owerri in Imo State. Results obtain from the exercise was recorded and kept, this is a pre-test of measuring the instrument .The post- test of measuring the instrument was conducted two weeks later to the same office with another 20 copies of questionnaire. Both results were recorded and analyzes using the Cronbach's Alpha model to determine the reliability score. This is in an attempt to determine the consistency or the reliabilty of the measuriong instrument. The Cronbach's Alpha was found to be 0.824 (82.4 percent) from the analysis between the first and the second responses of the respondents which show a high reliability of the questionnaire. Moreover, the entire instruments were examined to ensure that the major issues were adequately covered. Therefore the instrument of questionnaire that was adopted for this study was estimated reliable.

The copies of questionnaire were used to elicit relevant responses from the sample from South East residents' purposively selected because of their readership / listenership of newspaper, television and radio. The demographic data was represented as follows:

Age: 18-25 years (6.4%), 26-35 (37.6%), 36-45 (32.0%), 46-65 (24.0%)

Gender: male (70.9%), female (29.1%)

Educational background: FLSC (16.8%), WASC/GCE (19.2%), BA/BSc/HND (37.3%), MA/MSc (16.0%), Ph.D (10.7%)

Occupation: farming (5.3%), civil servant (60.5%), trading (19.2%), artisan (14.9%)

Marital status: married (45.9%), single (49.1%), widowed (1.1%), divorced (4.0%)

DATA PRESENTATION ANALYSIS

Data collected from respondents through research instrument (questionnaire and interview guide). About 400 copies of questionnaire were distributed to the residents in South East Nigeria. Out of 400 copies distributed 375 copies were returned and found usable and this gave a return rate of 93.75% and mortality of 6.25%. The following research questions formed the questionnaire:

1. What is the level of awareness created by the mass media on the whistle blowing policy of President Muhammadu Buhari's administration amongst Southeast Residents?

In response to this research question, findings from data analysis revealed that, 78.4% of the respondents are aware of whistle blowing policy of President Buhari. However, about 56% of the respondents were sufficiently aware of the whistle blowing policy of the President. It is also interesting to note that 50% of the respondents got to know about the whistle blowing policy through the mass media.

2. What is the level of Knowledge of Southeast Residents on the Whistle Blowing Policy of President Buhari's Administration based on media reportage?

In response to this research question, results revealed that on the average, over 50% of the respondents have high level of knowledge on the whistle blowing policy. Findings got from analysis showed that majority (48.3%) of the respondents agree that whistle blowing exposes people who stole from the government, 41.1% which constitute majority of the respondents agree that whistle blowing gives 5 percent of the money recovered, 37.9% which constitute majority of the respondents are undecided that whistle blowing makes provision for Identity, 36.8% which constitute majority of the respondent are undecided that the money the whistle blower reveals whether recovered or not, that the (whistle Blower) is been paid.

3. What is the influence of the media on the whistle blowing policy of President Muhammadu Buhari?

In response to this research question, findings show that, an average (for those who disagree and strongly disagree respectively) about 45% of the respondents indicated that the media has little or no influence on the whistle blowing policy of President Buhari. Findings revealed that 42.7% (majority) of the respondents disagrees that the media creates awareness on whistle blowing policy, 33.6% (majority) of the respondents disagrees that the media encourages the populace to embrace whistle blowing policy, 30.7% were undecided whether the media reports the intimidation of whistle blowers and prevents others from intimidating them, 30.9% disagree, while 29.9% Agree that the media reports cases of Success in Whistle Blowing to create confidence in Government, 47.2% which constitute majority of the respondents were undecided whether the media has advised the Government on ways to record success in whistle blowing policy,

37.9% (majority) of the respondent disagree that the media has done enough awareness on whistle blowing policy, 29.9% (majority) of the respondents agreed that the media promotes whistle blowing by calling the masses to blow more whistles.

4. What is the Perception of Southeast Residents on the Whistle Blowing Policy of President Buhari based on Media Reportage?

In response to this research question, findings show that, of analysis in respect to research question four, revealed that, on the average, 45% of the respondents were of the opinion that President Buhari's whistle blowing policy is not satisfactory as media reports have shown government insincerity to tackle corruption. Findings got from analysis revealed that 35.2% (majority) of the respondents disagree, while 29.3% are undecided whether media reports are explanatory on President Muhammadu Buhari's whistle blowing policy, 30.9% (majority) of the respondents disagree that the media have shown sincerity of the government to tackle corruption, 34.7% (majority) of the respondents are undecided whether the media supports the Buhari's led administration in fighting Corruption, 46.9% (majority) of the respondents Disagree that President Buhari's Whistle blowing is satisfactory, while 36% (majority) of the respondents disagree that the media has induced whistle blowing wider cooperation.

5. What Factors affect the effectiveness of mediacampaign on the Whistle Blowing Policy?

In response to this research question, findings show that, fear of losing one's job, delay in the payment of 5percent, inadequate

information in media content, inadequate knowledge on the part of the respondents and corruption are factors affecting the success of the whistle blowing policy of President Buhari's administration.

Findings from this study revealed that 37.1% which constitute majority of the respondents strongly disagree that fear of losing one's job is a major hindrance to the success of whistle blowing policy, 38.1% which constitute majority of the respondents strongly agree that delayed payment of 5percent hinders the success of whistle blowing policy, 42.9% which constitute majority of the respondents agree that Inadequate knowledge of journalist affects the quality of their reportage, 42.1% which constitute majority of the respondents agrees that Inadequate knowledge of whistle blowing policy is a factor affecting it, 44.3% which constitute majority of the respondents strongly agree that Not knowing where to go and how to go about it when trying to whistle blow affects it, 45.9% which constitute majority of the respondents strongly agree that the level of corruption in institutions fighting whistle blowing is a problem affecting it.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study show that majority of the respondents are aware of the policy and they got aware through the media. Although findings gotten from in-depth interview were in contrast with those from the questionnaire where only 1 interviewee, out of 20 got aware through the media, others gained their awareness of the policy through peer-to-peer interactions, Hearsay (words of mouth), social gatherings amongst others. This finding is in line with Ogbu (2017) who agreed that "within the first six months, of the official launch of the Whistle Blowing Policy in Nigeria, by the Federal Ministry of Finance on December 22, 2016, thousands of tips were recorded, some of which led to the opening of over 3000 investigations and recovery of several billions of naira". Akani (2017)

reveal that “ no government can objectively sensitize the society without a profound involvement of the media”.

Thirty-seven percent of the respondents, disagree that the media encourages the populace to embrace whistle blowing policy. However, majority of the respondents were undecided whether the media has advised the government on ways to record success in whistle blowing policy. This is in line with the findings of Adetula, S.L & Amupitan, M.D (2018) who found out that “though the culture of whistle blowing has been accepted and recognized globally as one of the tools for combating the menace of fraud, forgery and corruption, it has remained at infancy in Nigeria”. But, these findings are at the same time not in agreement with the findings of Siti, N.A.A.R (2015) which revealed that “while recognizing that whistle blowing is a powerful tool to prevent and detect malpractice, very few decided to blow the whistle for fear of retaliation, legal liabilities and cultural oppositions”.

Majority of the respondents disagree that the media has shown government sincerity to tackle corruption. This finding corroborates Akani (2017) who posited that “the media represents a collective channel of communication in the society”. In a democratic polity, the role of the media cannot be overemphasized because of its indispensability, with the revolution in the communication industry, citizen journalism has emerged within the prism that the media is often referred to as whistle blowers and watchdog. While 36% of the respondents disagree that the media has induced whistle blowing wider co-operation.

This is in line with Chamunorwa’s (2015) findings that “the majority of respondents view the term Whistle Blowing negatively which might contribute to why individuals are reluctant to blow the whistle”. Supporting this, the paper of Dauda,K.O (2017) contends

that “whistle blowing policy is no doubt a laudable mechanism adopted by world countries to fight corruption head-on, but may end up a failure in Nigeria. If adequate measures are not put in place to eradicate poverty, provide employment opportunities, adequate securities and social amenities, as well as revamping the economy. Furthermore, employees agreed unanimously that they lacked confidence in their manager / supervisors to deal with disclosures of corruption.

Further findings show that majority of the respondents strongly disagree that fear of losing one’s job is a major hinderance to the success of whistle blowing policy. This finding is at odds with the findings of Siti, N.A.A.R (2015) which revealed that due to the fear of retaliation, legal liabilities and cultural oppositions. Less than forty percent of the respondents agree that delayed payment of 5 percent also hinders the success of the policy.

This is an extension to the finding of Holtzhausen, N (2007) who found that the ethical determinants of the work environment, the determinants influencing the individual whistle blower and organisational determinants influencing effective whistle blowing, can fulfill, in order to serve as a mechanism to combat corruption. This is also in line with the findings of Onuora, J.K.J & Uzoka P.U (2018) which also revealed that according to the analysis, the factors that affect the policy are slow judicial processes, the political nature of corruption, lack of integrity in the anti-corruption crusades, lack of trust in anti corruption agencies and that the risk of whistle blowing will discourage wide participation.

CONCLUSION

We conclude that the study shows that the media have not significantly influenced the acceptability of the whistle blowing

policy. Also we found out that the respondents opined that the media reportage of the policy is not satisfactory. It can be concluded that the reason for the gradual death of the policy is because of insufficient media campaign by the government. This shows that for government policies to be consciously engaged to pilot the awareness and value re-orientation of the people. In this way the media would have succeeded in setting positive agenda.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. That the whistle blowing policy should be campaigned more through other means, so that its information will get to the public with the media as its primary means of circulation.
2. The media should campaign more on the policy, and create more awareness to educate the populace on the merits or benefits of the policy and the need to tackle corruption strategically. The populace should be enlightened on the implications and importance of revealing these monies stolen from the government and allowing the culprits to be punished as a deterrent to others.
3. The media should work closely with the government and be objective in their reportage, consistently report the extent the government has gone in tackling corruption and advise them on how to get the masses to co-operate on the policy.
4. The government should stand with the media in tackling those factors that hinders the media from reporting rightly, the media should stick to their professional ethics to ensure an objective and well balanced report on the protection of the right of the

public, assuring them of their five percent (5%) payment, should they blow the whistle.

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