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INFLUENCE OF WHISTLEBLOWING PRACTICES ON TEACHERS' ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT IN PUBLIC SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS, EDUCATION DISTRICT V, LAGOS, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT
This research investigates the influence of whistleblowing practices on teachers' organisational commitment in public senior secondary schools in Education District V, Lagos State. Survey research design was used in conducting the research. The study population consists of all teachers in public senior secondary schools in Education District V, Lagos State. A sample of 315 respondents were selected through Yaro Yemani sampling technique. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistical method was used to analyse the formulated hypotheses. Findings from this study revealed that there is a significant relationship between internal whistleblowing practice and teachers' organisational commitment in public senior secondary schools in Education District V, Lagos State, with (r = .742; N=315; p< .05), also results obtained from hypothesis two indicates that there is a significant relationship between external whistleblowing practice and teachers' organisational commitment in public senior secondary schools in Education District V, Lagos State with (r = .768; N=315; p< .05).This study concluded that whistleblowing is a preventive tool against the risk of fraud and abuse. It is consciously used to counteract the occurrence of an undesirable event. Finally, the study recommended that school organisations should support organisational ethics by implementing an ethical code (a set of values), promoting those values in a sphere of knowledge and practices as well as developing ethics programme.

Keywords: Whistleblowing, Individual whistleblowing, Organisation whistleblowing, Teachers job commitment.

Introduction

Research has been done on the issue of unethical behaviour, corruption, and misconduct since it is a major concern for organisations. Some of those research focus on preventative strategies, while others look at the data to pinpoint these issues. Simultaneously, in order to prevent or minimize the negative effects on organisations caused by unethical and illegal employee behaviour, these issues need to be identified and brought to light as soon as feasible. The organisation's workers are the ideal people to verify this as they are the ones who first notice the issue and are most aware of the unethical behaviour that takes place inside the organisation. These kinds of unethical and illegal incidents that take place inside the organisation are sometimes revealed by them. Whistleblowers are those who work for an organisation and disclose unethical or illegal activities there.

When they see infractions, public sector workers in Nigeria often choose to keep quiet. The idea that there is nothing to be gained by disclosing the infractions that are seen is one of the causes of this silence. Another reason is that, even if the individual wanted to confess, doing so would be seen as shrieking, and he would end himself in danger (Toker Gökçe, 2014).

The phrase "whistleblowing" first surfaced in American papers pertaining to internal security threats before a Senate committee in 1963. In a nutshell, it refers to a police officer reporting a criminal to stop another crime from happening (Hersh, 2002). It is described as providing information on a person or organisation involved in unethical or unlawful activities in the Oxford English online dictionary. The deliberate and voluntary public revelation of information about wrongdoing or criminal activity taking place inside an organisation with the goal of ending such practices.

At least four components make up this phenomenon: the organisation being complained about, the person with authority receiving the information or complaint, the misbehaviour or wrongdoing, and the whistleblower. There are five phases in this process: The employee seeing misbehaviour or wrongdoing; the employee choosing to report it; the employee determining the extent to which this falls under his purview; the employee choosing the suitable course of action; additionally Source disclosure (Abbas, 2016).

Classification of whistleblower behaviour according to its mode of operation. This categorization takes into account the source of the information (internal vs external to the organisation), the route taken by the informant (formal vs informal), and the manner in which the information is disclosed (anonymous vs open). Informing internal management of any unlawful or immoral behaviour seen inside the organisation is known as "internal whistleblowing." One example of internal whistleblowing would be a teacher alerting the principle to an unlawful or unethical conduct committed by a fellow teacher or the school accountant, or the principal reporting the authorities in the district, province, or ministry of such an act.

An external whistleblower might be a teacher alerting the media to a criminal or unethical conduct committed by another teacher, the school accountant, or the administrator.

Because this kind of whistleblowing includes disclosing information about the organisation and damages its reputation, it is not supported by our society. Nonetheless, there are reasons for workers choosing this course of action. These include the fact that authorities do not encourage or take seriously whistleblowing, and that employee communication is evaluated rather than direct (Abass, 2018).

Organisational commitment is important and necessary for the organisations. It is a person's internalization of a certain organisation and the degree of his or her dedication to the organisation. It is said that instructors show more dedication to the school in a healthy and stable learning environment. Furthermore, it is said that educators who have a strong sense of commitment to both their chosen field and their educational institutions will work harder to ensure that their pupils succeed and will adhere more closely to the goals and ideals of their establishments (Sezgin, 2010). It is anticipated that when teachers' levels of organisational commitment develop in tandem with their professional performance, issues pertaining to quality in educational institutions would be addressed. According to Turkhan and Taş Akarsu (2015), workers' faith in the organisation will decline when they perceive that they are subjected to unfair management, which would then result in a fall in their commitment to the organisation. The low degree of organisational commitment among workers may be the cause of the system's inefficient utilization of human resources. Whistleblowing tactics thus undermine the confidence that students and administrators have in them.

In a setting like a school, where collaboration is crucial to achieving organisational goals, administrators' actions and whistleblowing undermine workplace communication, interaction, and cooperation, which in turn fuels hostile acts and conflicts. In addition, these behaviours lower employee morale and performance, diminish organisational commitment, and erode trust (Argon, 2016). Furthermore, unfair competition brought about by whistleblowing negatively impacts workers' intentions to leave their jobs by eroding the work environment, employee job satisfaction, and organisational loyalty. Therefore, administrators in schools should refrain from acting in a whistleblower manner. In order to do this, it is necessary to first assess the state of education, with a particular focus on whistleblowing practices as a significant factor influencing teachers' organisational commitment.

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

H01: There is no significant relationship between internal whistleblowing practice and teachers' organisational commitment in public senior secondary schools in Education District V, Lagos State.

H02: There is no significant relationship between external whistleblowing practice and teachers' organisational commitment in public senior secondary schools in Education District V, Lagos State.

Literature Review

Concept of Whistleblowing

An employee of the organisation voluntarily chooses to disclose information that has a significant risk and ethical consideration. When an employee of an organisation learns about unethical behaviour or even a crime occurring inside the organisation, this is known as whistleblowing. It is now the employee's responsibility to identify the unfavorable circumstance. The act of an employee notifying the authorities of organisational information is known as whistleblowing (Ali & Ali, 2017). These authority might be found either inside or outside the organisation. Someone in the workforce who is the target of a whistleblowing investigation is known as the whistleblower. One individual or a group of persons may be the whistleblower.

Susmanschi (2012) defines a whistleblower as someone who alerts the public or employees of the organisation they work for of any corporate misconduct or unlawful activity taking place in that organisation, whether it is a public or private entity. The "whistle-blowing phenomenon" may also occur when someone makes the conscious decision to safeguard the public interest by disclosing alleged wrongdoings to the public. The trait of a whistleblower, according to Greenwood (2011), is being employed by the organisation that they want to expose; it makes no difference whether the person is a current or past employee. Employees are also required to report any corporate misconduct that takes place inside their organisation.

There are two categories for whistleblowing: internal and external. Insiders having the authority to take action and a higher position are the ones who are alerted to events via internal whistleblowing. Conversely, external whistleblowing brings attention to the happenings to those outside the organisation who can take action. Knowing that one of the best ways to find corruption is by whistleblowing, all public institutions—police included—should encourage and practice this honorable act. In fact, in any country, the development of reasonable and equitable laws would be guaranteed by a clean police force. It is crucial to research and anticipate the fascinating variables that will contribute to the development of this great action in order to design strategies, efforts, and plans.

Both external and internal intentions for whistleblowing. There are two categories of whistleblowing: internal and external (Near & Micelli, 1995). The term "internal whistleblowing intention" (IWI) describes the desire to inform insiders with the authority to take action and who are higher up the organisational hierarchy about wrongdoings. However, external whistleblowing intention (EWI) denotes the desire to inform others outside the situation who are able to take legal action against wrongdoings. In fact, employees are urged to report suspicious activity internally rather than publicly, since this approach carries less risk and is less harmful to the organisation (Miceli et al., 2008; Richardson et al., 2012; Zakaria et al., 2016). (Sutyono, 2018). Internal whistleblowing, however, is frowned upon by many (Richardson et al., 2012), since management may not want their implicating knowledge to be made public. In the meanwhile, external whistleblowing exposes not just internal wrongdoings but also an institution that is unable to put a stop

to and remedy the wrongdoings on its own, which will result in government inspections, litigation, and public humiliation (Berry, 2004). Employees are more likely to come out externally if they find out that insiders are working with the wrongdoers, claim Zakaria et al. (2016). As a result, they will look for outsiders who can step in and help.

Reasons for Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing may be the result of many things. Any place where humans coexist is certain to have issues. Whistleblowing occurs for a variety of causes in settings with such a wide range of issues. Early research that can be found in the literature disputed the motivations for whistleblowing in relation to profit-taking and benefit-making (Ajzen, 1991; Banja, 1985; DeGeorge, 1990; Near & Miceli, 1985). In later debates that have been enhanced by various types of research, whistleblowing has been connected to psychological, social, and philosophical foundations (Alford, 2001; Castagnera, 2003; Hersh, 2002; Hunt, 1998). Recent talks on the motivations for whistleblowing have looked at the context of societal, organisational, and individual values (Kaptein, 2011; Lee, 2011; Modesitt, 2013; Moore, 2012).

Individual Reasons: It is well recognized that the primary motivation for whistleblowing in an organisation is the natural tendency toward avoidance or protection (Elliston, 1982). The purpose of whistleblowing is to safeguard both the individual and other parties. Psychological requirements are often recognized as individual causes (Moore, 2012). Furthermore, whistleblowing may be used to get personal benefits of diverse types, including but not limited to confidence, bravery, status, and self-discipline (Greenberg, 2012). Workers may use whistleblow to exert control over others or to represent the diverse views and behaviours that have been ingrained in their character (Jubb, 1999; Kaptein, 2011).

Organisational Factors: Workers may describe a wide range of organisational circumstances. According to reports, the employee's desire for celebrity may be the primary motivator for them to act in this way (Vinten, 1999). A person's interests might be monetary, spiritual, or both. An employee could notify in the hopes of receiving a reward or a promotion, for instance, if they do so in the hopes of making money. Whistleblowing is often attributed to interest-based intra-organisational disputes (Nasu, 2015). A whistleblower might improve their standing inside the organisation and win the respect of their coworkers by reporting instances that could be advantageous to it (Kaptein, 2011). Whistleblowing may also be done to further a purpose to harm the organisation. One of the other recognized reasons for whistleblowing is the conviction that by disclosing irregularities inside the organisation in certain circumstances, things can get better (Tran, 2011). For instance, a worker revealed prejudice and expressed a desire to hold the organisation accountable by going public with the information. Employee disputes and a lack of communication are two other organisational factors that are thought to contribute to whistleblowing (Dorasamy, 2012).

Social Motives: Whistleblowers often have a high level of ethical consciousness and prioritize the needs of the community; they disclose information in order to safeguard

society's welfare. A scenario that arises in the organisation that interacts with the public is often reported. (Bjørkelo, 2013). Edward Snowden, for example, was believed to have been a whistleblower because to his patriotic instinct; whistleblowing, which is generally done in the public good, is often carried out with a pattern of privileged behaviour such as patriotism, sacrifice, generosity, and commitment (Poitras, 2014). To be viable, organisations need a framework that is open and responsible. It is critical to stop workers from engaging in activities related to wrongdoing inside the organisation (Kaptein, 2011). Whistleblowing will occur less often if organisations internalize ethical standards (Jubb, 1999). In addition, it is necessary to guarantee the promotion of whistleblower visibility inside organisations. Research is necessary to examine whistleblowing, which occurs in all types of organisations. Numerous research that can be found in the literature have typically been carried out to ascertain if whistleblowing occurs and what challenges whistleblowers face (Bjørkelo, 2013; Lee, 2011; Modesitt, 2013; Moore, 2012; Poitras, 2014; Tran, 2011).

Internal Whistleblowing and Teachers' Organisational Commitment

When teachers witness misconduct or unethical behaviour within their school or educational institution, the decision to blow the whistle can have significant implications. On one hand, reporting such behaviour may align with teachers' ethical values and sense of duty to uphold professional standards. However, the act of whistleblowing can also lead to conflicts with colleagues or superiors, potentially fostering a negative work environment and impacting organisational commitment (Okçu, & Uçar, 2016).

Furthermore, the organisational response to internal whistleblowing plays a crucial role in shaping teachers' organisational commitment. Supportive and transparent handling of whistleblowing reports can enhance teachers' trust in the institution and its leadership, thereby strengthening their commitment. Conversely, a lack of action or reprisals against whistleblowers may erode trust and lead to decreased commitment and engagement among teachers.

The ethical climate within school organisation can significantly influence teachers' decisions regarding internal whistleblowing. A culture that prioritizes integrity, transparency, and accountability is more likely to encourage whistleblowing as a means of upholding ethical standards (Okçu, & Uçar, 2016). Conversely, a toxic or retaliatory climate may deter teachers from speaking out, fearing negative repercussions.

Moreover, teachers' perceived organisational support, which encompasses the belief that the institution values their contributions and cares about their well-being, can impact their willingness to engage in whistleblowing activities. When teachers feel supported and respected by their organisation, they are more likely to demonstrate higher levels of organisational commitment, even in the face of challenging ethical dilemmas.

Understanding the interplay between internal whistleblowing and teachers' organisational commitment has several implications for educational institutions. Firstly, fostering a culture of transparency, ethical leadership, and support for whistleblowers is essential in promoting teachers' commitment to the

organisation. Additionally, providing clear channels for reporting misconduct and implementing robust protection mechanisms for whistleblowers can contribute to a healthier and more ethical work environment.

External Whistleblowing on Teachers' Organisational Commitment

In the context of education, external whistleblowing refers to the act of teachers reporting misconduct or unethical behaviour within their educational institution to external authorities or regulatory bodies. This could include reporting issues such as academic fraud, mismanagement of funds, discrimination, or other forms of malpractice.

The influence of external whistleblowing on teachers' organisational commitment can be significant. On one hand, whistleblowing can lead to improved transparency, accountability, and ethical standards within educational institutions (Brown, et al., 2014). By reporting misconduct, teachers can contribute to creating a more positive and ethical work environment, which in turn can enhance their commitment to the organisation.

However, external whistleblowing can also have negative repercussions on teachers' organisational commitment. The act of whistleblowing may lead to strained relationships with colleagues and superiors, creating a hostile work environment (Okçu, & Uçar, 2016). This can result in decreased job satisfaction, trust issues, and a decline in organisational commitment among teachers.

When considering the influence of external whistleblowing on teachers' organisational commitment, it is essential to balance the ethical responsibility to report misconduct with the potential consequences of whistleblowing (Lewis, 2015). Teachers face the dilemma of upholding ethical standards while also safeguarding their own well-being within the organisation.

Educational institutions play a crucial role in shaping the dynamics of whistleblowing and its impact on teachers' organisational commitment. Establishing clear and supportive whistleblowing policies, ensuring confidentiality and protection for whistleblowers, and fostering a culture of transparency and accountability are essential steps for mitigating the negative impact of external whistleblowing on teachers' organisational commitment (Chen, & Lai, 2014).

The influence of external whistleblowing on teachers' organisational commitment is a complex issue that requires careful consideration. While whistleblowing can contribute to ethical improvement within educational institutions, it can also lead to adverse consequences for teachers. Striking a balance between ethical responsibility and the well-being of teachers is crucial, and school organisation must proactively address this issue to create a positive and supportive work environment for their teaching staff (Okçu, & Uçar, 2016). Ultimately, fostering a culture of transparency, accountability, and ethical conduct can positively influence teachers' organisational commitment and contribute to the overall improvement of the education sector.

Research Method

This study adopted the descriptive survey research design as this study aimed to analyze

data from a set of respondents at a specific point in time, and did not intend to manipulate the outcome of the research. Surveys refer to an investigation into certain things or events that exist or occur at the time of the research and connected with some problem situation that is felt over a wide area by a large population. Surveys therefore, could either be descriptive or analytical.

The population for this study consists of all teachers in the public secondary schools in Lagos State Education District V. The total population of teachers in senior secondary school Education District V, Lagos State are two thousand eight hundred and twenty five (Lagos State Education, 2023).

The sample size of teachers was deduced through the use of Yaro Yamen formula, thus it was utilised for this study and the reason for using this method is due to the credibility of the method which has been proven to be worth relying on according to experts in research methodology and the formula and solving is displayed below:

$$n = \frac{N}{I+N(e)^2}$$

where:
n = Sample size
N = Total population = 2825 e = error margin = 0.05 n = 2825

$$\frac{2825}{1+2825\ (0.05)^2} = \frac{2825}{8.0625} = 350$$

The total sample size utilised for this study is 350 and the sample technique that is used for this study is the simple random technique and the reason for proposing this technique is that it will give equal opportunity to the entire respondents to participate in the study without bias. A self-designated and administered instruments titled "Whistleblowing Practices Questionnaire (WPQ) and Teachers' Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (TOCQ)" was formulated for the study.

These items in the questionnaire was classified into a four point Likert Scale which the respondents are required to respond by indicating one option ranging from strongly agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree(SD).The choice of this instrument is because it serves as the best instrument to find out relevant results to this research.

The instruments was subjected to test-retest reliability so as to ascertain their internal consistency. The instruments was administered twice in a week intervals to a set of 25 participants comprising of five (5) teachers in each of the selected schools; who was part of the population but not part of the sample. The collated responses was then subjected to Pearson's Product Moment Correlation coefficient reliability test. Results of reliability was r = .085 for "Individual Whistleblowing Practice Scale (IWPS)", r = .078 for "Organisational Whistleblowing Practice Scale (OWPS)"

while r =.863 for Ethical Whistleblowing Practice Scale (EWPS)".

The researcher and two (2) research assistants visited the sampled public senior secondary schools in the Education District V, Lagos State meant to be sampled to seek the consent of the school authority to administer the instruments to the respondents. The researcher and his assistants ensured that the collection of the instrument latest the second day of the administration to ensure high percentage returns. Pearson Moment Correlation Co-efficient (PPMC) was used to test the three (3) hypotheses using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 23.0.

Presentation of Results
Testing of Hypotheses

Table 1: Correlation Showing Relationship between Internal Whistleblowing and Teachers' Organisation Commitment in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Education District V, Lagos State

		Internal Whistleblowing	Teachers' Organisational Commitment
Internal Whistleblowing	Pearson Correlation	1	.742**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	315	315
Teachers' Organisational Commitment	Pearson Correlation	.742**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	315	315

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The result of the Pearson's moment correlation shows that there is a strong correlation between internal whistleblowing and teachers' organisational commitment, that is there is a statistically significant relationship between internal whistleblowing and teachers' organisational commitment (r = .742, P<.000). Hence H_0 was rejected. This shows that there is a significant relationship between internal whistleblowing and teachers' organisational commitment.

Table 2: Correlation Showing Relationship between External Whistleblowing and Teachers' Organisational Commitment in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Education District V, Lagos State

		External Whistleblowing	Teachers' Organisational Commitment
External Whistleblowing	Pearson Correlation	1	.768**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	315	315
Teachers' Organisational Commitment	Pearson Correlation	.768**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	315	315

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The result of the Pearson's moment correlation shows that there is a strong correlation between external whistleblowing and teachers' organisational commitment,

thus, there is a statistically significant relationship between external whistleblowing and teachers' organisational commitment (r = .768, P<.000). Hence H_0 was rejected. This shows that there is a significant relationship between external whistleblowing and teachers' organisational commitment.

Discussion of Findings

Results obtained from the analysis carried out on data collected on hypothesis one revealed that there is a significant relationship between internal whistleblowing practice and teachers job commitment in public senior secondary schools in Education District V. When an employee prioritizes the interests of both himself and his colleagues, it can be seen that they exhibit strong teamwork, which is why they choose to report misconduct inside rather than outside. Numerous studies in the literature (Arastaman, 2013; Fidan & Öztürk, 2015; Tsahuridu & Vandekerckhove, 2008) also discuss whistleblowing for the safety of coworkers. Celep and Konaklı (2012) investigated educators' perspectives on reporting misconduct in educational institutions. According to their study, instructors have a propensity for internal whistleblowing and protect the goals of the school and their peers. Teachers refrain from acting in this way, according to Toker Gökçe (2014), because they think the administration would punish them for it. Teachers like to report misconduct in an internal manner. On the other side of the coin, when teachers report concerns internally, they may face retaliation, such as being excluded from decision-making processes or facing negative evaluations. This can lead to a toxic work environment, increased stress, and decreased job satisfaction among teachers. Furthermore, internal whistleblowing may not always result in effective resolution of the reported issues, leading to frustration and disillusionment among educators. As a result, teachers may become reluctant to speak up about misconduct or problems, ultimately impacting the overall integrity and quality of education within the institution.

Results obtained from the analysis carried out on data collected on hypothesis two revealed that there is a significant relationship between external whistleblowing practice and teachers commitment in public senior secondary schools in Education District V. When teachers resort to external whistleblowing, it can damage their relationships with colleagues and superiors, leading to isolation and potential retaliation. This can result in stress, anxiety, and a hostile work environment. Additionally, external whistleblowing may not always lead to effective solutions, as it can undermine the internal mechanisms for addressing issues within the educational institution. As a result, teachers may feel discouraged and unsupported, impacting their overall well-being and organisational commitment.

Also when teachers report wrongdoing to outside authorities, can have several positive effects. It can lead to investigations and interventions that address the reported issues, potentially improving the overall quality of education. Additionally, external whistleblowing can provide protection for the teachers themselves, as they may face less retaliation when reporting to external entities. This can create a safer and more transparent environment within schools, ultimately benefiting both the teachers and the students.

Finally, external whistleblowing can help hold educational institutions accountable for their actions, ensuring that they operate ethically and in the best interest of the students and the community.

Conclusion

A preventative measure against the possibility of misuse and fraud is whistleblowing. It is intentionally used to prevent an unfavorable outcome from happening. It has a notable track record of success in identifying bogus occurrences. However, the employment of it may have fewer positive benefits on interpersonal relationships even if it is advantageous to the organisation as a whole since it may swiftly eradicate any negative effects. Whistleblowing is not always welcomed because of the unfavorable impression it has as a reporting method. When someone takes the initiative to reveal suspected wrongdoings to the public in order to consciously safeguard the public interest, this is known as the "whistle-blowing phenomenon." The quality of a whistleblower as a teacher at the school where he or she plans to raise the alarm; it makes no difference whether the person is a current or past employee. Teachers are also required to report any corporate misconduct that takes place inside their organisation.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made

i. By putting in place an ethical code (a set of principles), advancing those values in a field of knowledge and practices, and creating ethics programmes, school organisations may promote organisational ethics.
ii. The concept of whistleblowing must be explained clearly, and internal whistleblowing must be described as positive behaviours in response to the principals' apparent wrongdoings.
iii. Organisational justice in all of its manifestations must be fostered by principals (organisational justice – all areas).
iv. Formal and informal internal communication should be developed by school organisations. Furthermore, while putting a whistleblower mechanism in place, the issue of silence has to be taken into account.

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