



Government Participation and Workplace Employment Regulations in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between government participation and employment regulation in Nigeria. The study adopted cross sectional research design. The population for this study includes 179 respondents from the Ministry of Labour and Employment (MLE), the Trade Union (TU) and employer's associations. The sample size of 124 was determined using Taro Yamene techniques. The hypotheses were tested using the Pearson Moment Product Correlation Coefficient with the aid of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 23.0. The result revealed that government participation positively affects and relates with employment regulations in Nigeria. Relying on this finding, this study concludes that government participation significantly influences workplace employment relations through wage determination, rulemaking and conflict resolutions in Nigeria. The study thus recommends that government participation in economic tripartite arrangement should be to set policies and regulate laws on wage determination, conflict resolution methods, and make rules that will engender harmonious workplace and good working condition in Nigeria. Also it recommends that that government participation should not be on setting policies and regulate laws on employment alone, rather government should participate to provide avenue for effective practice of tripartite arrangement by addressing the employment contract and regulation that affect workers properly and set parameters that will not harm the trade unions and the employer' associations in order to improve workplace employment relations in Nigeria.

Keywords: Government Participation, conflict resolutions, employers' associations, rulemaking, wage determination, trade union

INTRODUCTION

The experience of Nigeria has shown that over the years, the character of successive governments has become perhaps, the most important factor in determining the employment climate in the country through its unilateral actions that have come to bear on employment relations policies including wage determination (Yesufu, 1984; Ubeku, 1986). This is perhaps

why the IL0 (1992) reported that the Nigeria government had taken over unilaterally the job of regulating wages and conditions of work (in the Public Sector) on permanent basis, on the excuse of public interest and protecting the developing economy. The role of government in the Nigeria Industrial Relations System and in the functioning of the labour- management relationship can be better understood within the framework of its power and control in industrial relations (Fashoyin, 1980). Also, the state intervention largely depends on the philosophy of the doctrine of "Sovereignty", that is the absolute authority of the government. It follows therefore, that in adhering strictly to this doctrine the government necessarily becomes the sole determinant of wages and other conditions of service (Tajudeen & Kehinde, 2007). For instance, the government enacted the Productivity Prices and Incomes Board Act of 1977 which provided machinery for government intervention in wage determination through collective bargaining. Through yearly guidelines, government defines permissible increases, if any, in wages, salaries, and benefits, and restricting the freedom of the parties in the use of the collective bargaining process (Fashoyin, 2005). It is therefore important to investigate how government's role in wage determination influences the frequency of industrial unrest in the Public Service.

Unrest in the Public Service. According to Tajudeen and Kehinde (2007), all labour/ employment policies in Nigeria are to be seen as integral part of the national policies and objectives of the country as a whole. And the national policy and objectives of the country at a particular period in time is a function of the philosophy and ideological orientation of the nation's leadership at that time or period in question, be it colonial, military or civilian. Military rule in Nigeria was often characterized by flagrant violation of the tenets of the rule of law. Military regimes handled all labour- management issues including wage determination with arbitrariness that often engendered industrial unrest in the Public Service (Adesina, 1994). According to Olukoshi (1990), as an important actor in Nigeria's Industrial Relations System, military governments often engaged in unilateral actions without following due process on labour-management matters (Olukoshi, 1990; Babawale, 1991). Yusuf (2009) argues that the advent of democratic rule in Nigeria has left some impacts on the Industrial Relations System in the country. However, because the country had a longer period of military dictatorship than civil rule, the impact of the Military is still pronounced. More importantly, the country tends to be dominated by military culture even during civilian regimes (Yusuf, 2009). The implication of this trend to the nation's Industrial Relations System is that democratic regimes in Nigeria exhibit similar pattern of attitude to industrial relations.

Several factors tend to influence workplace employment relations and among those factors are: reduction of incentives, pay differentials for skill and responsibility. Attention has not been given to industrial relation parties' as a critical factor that can affect workplace employment relations. Workplace employment relations could be influenced by industrial relation parties' because in Nigeria, the relationship between employees, employers, labour unions and government is complex which required critical examination of the concept of industrial relation parties' in order to build an effective workplace employment relation. Industrial relation parties' is the economic tripartite arrangement involving dialogue between organized private sector/business interest group, government and trade union to establish economic policy (Slomp,2000).

Scholars have examined some composite of industrial relations parties' indicators which are widely used in foreign-environment quantitative research (Schmitter, 1981; Lehnbruch1984). These factors include trade union participation ; (the situation whereby trade union demand the welfare of their members through dialogue); Organized private sector participation (The situation whereby the private sector/ business interest group need take part in the decision that will affect the overall well-being of the workers); Government Participation (the ability of government to involve in the demand by the workers and promulgating the necessary laws to backup employees, employers workplace relations). Therefore, this study seeks to examine the relationship between government participation in economic tripartite arrangement and employment regulation in Nigeria

This study was guided by the following research question:

- i. What is the relationship between government participation in economic tripartite arrangement and contract formation in Nigeria?
- ii. What is the relationship between government participation in economic tripartite arrangement and contract performance in Nigeria?
- iii. What is the relationship between government participation in economic tripartite arrangement and contract termination in Nigeria?

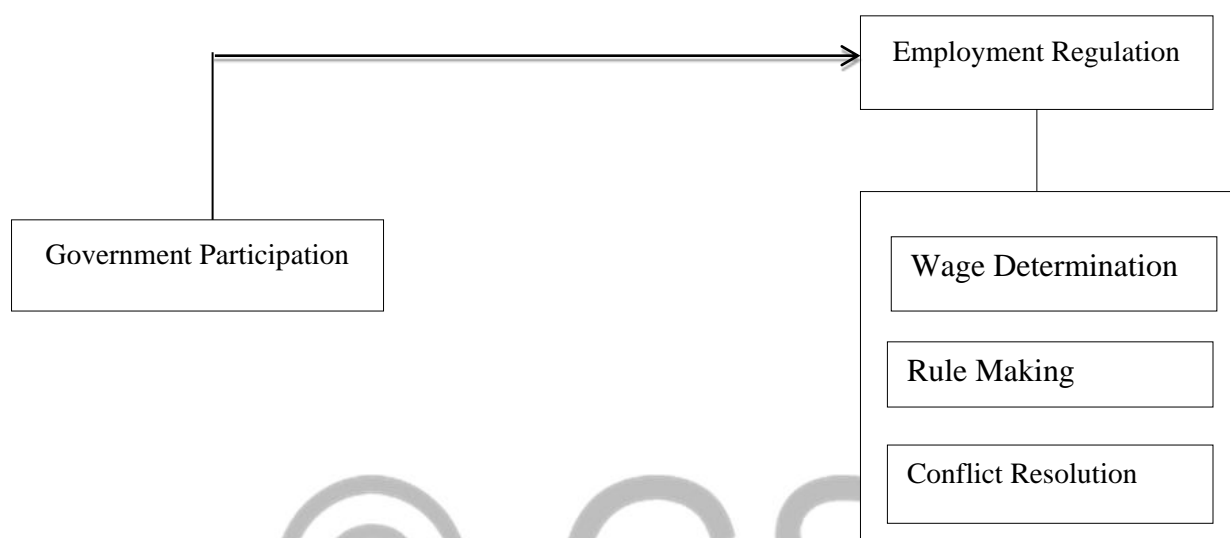


Fig.1 Conceptual framework for the relationship between government participation and employment contract

Source: Author's Desk Research, 2019

LITERATURE REVIEW

Government Participation

The problem of labour immigration led to concern shown by some persons who clamoured for the role of Government in the management of workplace employment relations. Government participation could be seen as regulatory actions taken by a government in order to affect or interfere with decisions made by individuals, groups, or organizations regarding social and economic matters (Biriowu,2017).This pressure and social conscience according to Lewin (2008) compelled governments to participate in the workplace employment relations system so as to

mitigate the harsh effects of labour exploitation by regulating such things as hours of work and working conditions of employees. For Lewin, (2008) therefore, over the years, the change from the laissez-faire ideology to the interventionist ethic led not only to government protecting workers in the factories, but, also to some instances of complete control of Industrial Relations system which was not the original idea which led to the clamour for participation.

The participation of Government in workplace employment relations is argued to have been necessitated by its three major roles in the socio-economic/political life of a nation (Schwartz, 2009). Government is seen as the single largest employer of labour in most developing and advanced economies like Nigeria. Government is seen as the state authority on whose shoulders lie the administration and protector of the economy. Government is also seen as peace maker, mediator and conciliator to disputing interest groups in the Nigeria. The major reason why government participates in employment relations is to reduce industrial dispute. Over the years, government has set up several agencies to assist it in the administration and control of the industrial relation system and these instruments are also called government machineries (Ojo, 1998). The main agency is the 'Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment and other sub agencies.

Workplace Employment Regulations

Regulation is seen as the controlling of an activity or process, usually by means of rules. Regulations are rules made by a government or other authority in order to control the way something is done or the way people behave. Employment law in Nigeria is generally employer friendly. Oyesola (2010) defined employment regulation as a process that revolves around a system of rules which deals with certain regulated institutionalized relationships in a workplace.

Nevertheless, there are federal and local employment and labour laws that regulates contracts, wage and hour, discrimination, terminations, lay-offs and privacy.

In this study, there are three key measures of workplace employment regulations and they are: wage determination, rulemaking and conflict resolutions.

Wage Determination in the Workplace

Biriowu (2017) contended that the advent of worker collectivities led to the evolution of wage determination through collective bargaining. This led to the agitation by worker collectivities for the co-authorship of wage determination machinery. Correspondingly, it also led to the promulgation of statutes to regulate procedures for wage determination and conflict management. This gave rise to the evolution of various theories of collective bargaining as a tool for wage determination (dialogue) at the workplace.

One of such theories is the traditional positional approach to collective bargaining. One of the key contributions to the traditional positional collective bargaining process was put forward by Walton and McKersie (1965) they highlighted four sub-processes in the collective bargaining main process. One of such processes is distributive bargaining where one side's gain is another side's loss (win-lose or zero-sum bargaining). The second sub process is Integrative bargaining where the need for a common solution is solicited so that both parties will jointly gain (joint gain or win-win bargaining). The third sub process is Intra organizational bargaining where attempts are made to bring deferring opinions within a party together. The fourth sub process is referred to as attitude structuring which involves trust development between the parties.

According to Biriowu (2017) the traditional positional bargaining which is associated with the old order of business is characterized by the dominance of distributive issues and tactics;

overstating of demands; tactical use of, and withholding of information; reinforcement of adversarial tendencies between the bargaining parties. In some cases, the absence of a real mandate may lead to shadow boxing or surface bargaining. As a reaction to the failure associated with the old bargaining order, researchers and practitioners (Bruno & Sachs 1985; Giovanis 2018) in the field of People Management have suggested the use of Interest-Based Bargaining. Discourses on this model was first published by Fisher and Ury (1983) this model applies a principle similar to Walton and McKersie(1965) principles of integrative bargaining to the overall dialogue process. In this model, the parties are encouraged to focus on their underlying interest; generate options for satisfying these interests; work together to gather data and share information needed to evaluate options; to evaluate options against criteria that reflect their interests; and to choose options that maximize their mutual interests.

In interest-based bargaining, each party separately produces a list of problems that needed to be jointly addressed in dialogue. In some cases, the parties may even frame the problem jointly by building on reports of labour-management committees set up to collect data and study vexing issues(Biriowu,2017). In other cases, sub committees may be formed to collect further information needed to generate options for consideration by the full negotiating teams. The goal is to choose options that do the best job of serving the interest of both parties. Experience has shown that some issues like clear trade-offs are harder to resolve through interest-based bargaining. In situations of intra organizational conflict relating to sell out allegations, the application of interest-based bargaining becomes difficult. Perceived power imbalance by Union representatives stands on the way of its success. Constituency pressures on party representatives affect the application of interest-based bargaining. Remedies such as pre-dialogue training

programmes for the parties may help to reduce the obstacles facing the application of interest-based bargaining.

Rule Making in the Workplace

Oyesola (2010) sees employment regulation as a process that revolves around a system of rules which deals with certain regulated institutionalized relationships in a workplace. This definition emphasizes a connection between those who hire and those who are hired. This is also dependent upon a web of rules of which collective bargaining is seen to be outstanding. For Oyesola (2010) therefore, the rules are of two types. The procedural rules that specifies the status of parties and employment relations process, including the wage determination process predominated by collective bargaining; grievance handling procedure; and conduct at meetings, and representations. There are also tangible or substantive rules which put in place the rights, privileges and obligations of the employees and employers, including compensation and other working conditions; participation of employees in decision-making, etcetera.

Different experts have put forward taxonomies on the institutions of job regulation in line with their academic convenience. These classifications are based on the domination of the inputs of each of the parties in workplace rule making and governance (Colvin, 2004). A review of the position of these experts on the domination of rule-making inputs for the regulation of workplace relations reveals the following classification types.

Type “A” classification:

- Union regulations where rules unilaterally authored by the union is dominant in the regulation of workplace relations.
- Joint consultation where the parties (employers and unions) consult or discuss issues and get feedbacks which may influence workplace rules formulation.
- Social conventions where long standing practices, Labour conventions of international standing tend to influence what forms the content of workplace regulations take.

Type “B” Classification (Colvin, 2004):

- Managerial regulation where rules unilaterally authored by the employer is dominant in the regulation of workplace relations.
- Joint regulation where workplace rules are co-authored by the parties (employers and unions) for the regulation of workplace relations.
- Social regulation where conventions workplace customs and workplace international standards and practices influence workplace rules and governance.

Type “C” Classification:

- Unilateral regulation where the rules governing the workplace is either predominantly union dominated or employer dominated.
- Joint consultation where workplace rules are authored through what may be referred to as industrial democracy, consisting of the various channels through which employees’ voices are heard.
- Statutory regulation consisting of the laws of the legislative arm of government and executive policies through sub-ordinate legislation.
- Social regulation consisting of conventions, customs and notorious practices associated with workplace governance.

- Industrial jurisprudence consisting of case laws made by the judicial arm of government for the regulation of industrial relations, social security and minimum standards of employment.

Zeb- Obipi (2016) summarized the taxonomy of workplace regulation highlighted above to the following:

- Union regulation
- Managerial regulation
- Joint regulation
- Statutory regulation
- Industrial jurisprudence
- Social regulation.

For the purpose of this paper therefore, our typology of workplace regulation and governance are:

- **Management Domination:** Management domination practices connote all Management influenced forms or practices involved in the determination of the roles workers and their Managements are to play in Industrial Relations at the workplace. This main category (Management domination) has sub-categories such as:
- **Management Prerogative:** This is an extreme type which spells out the exclusiveness of the authority of Management at workplace Industrial Relations, (Colvin, 2004). Labour Utilization Rules is a typical example of Management prerogative.
- **Management Determination (with some inputs from workers forum):** This is a mild type where contributions of workers put forward at forums held with them are included in the formulation of workplace Industrial Relations policies.

- **Joint Determination:** Joint determination practices are the well-known forms of workers participation with Management in Industrial Relations. These forms have been given different names in different Countries according to their peculiarities. The well-known forms or sub-categories in Nigeria are:
- **Joint Consultative Committees:** These are opened or created for interaction/discussion between selected workers' representatives and Management representatives. Discussions and understanding reached in such interactions are forwarded to Management as advice/input which may be utilized in the formulation of workplace Industrial Relations policies.
- **Joint Negotiating Committees:** These are Councils comprising of Union representatives and Management representatives. Representatives of the two parties obtain mandate from their principals to enable them negotiate terms and conditions of employment at the workplace (Biriowu,2017). Employment Contractual Rules is a typical example of an outcome of agreements reached by this Committee.
- **Legal Determination:** This is made up of the following sub-categories such as statutory regulation consisting of the laws of the legislative arm of government and executive policies through sub-ordinate legislation; and Industrial jurisprudence consisting of case laws made by the judicial arm of government for the regulation of industrial relations, social security and minimum standards of employment.
- **Social Convention Determination:** This is made up of the social regulation consisting of conventions, Customs and notorious practices associated with workplace governance.
- **Union Determination:** This is made up of Union regulations where rules unilaterally authored by the union are dominant in the regulation of workplace relations.

Conflict Resolution in the Workplace

In Nigeria, workplace regulations mechanisms seem to have elements of union regulation, managerial regulation, joint regulation, statutory regulation, industrial jurisprudence and social regulation. Ubeku (1983) for instance, observed a two-fold dispute settlement machinery in Nigeria. The first is referred to as the internal machinery that is collectively negotiated – an established practice that whenever a dispute arises, the disputing parties (Management and Union) must try to settle it internally through grievance procedure. The second is the external machinery or third-party intervention (mediation, conciliation, arbitration, the national industrial court and board of inquiry) which takes over the dispute settlement, should the internal machinery fail.

Clermont and Stewart (2004) also pointed out the existence of a two-fold dispute settlement machinery. Clermont & Stewart's two-fold machinery is made up of, first, the persuasive machinery (internal machinery, mediation and conciliation) through which the disputing parties settle their grievances through dialogue and persuasion. Second, is the compulsive machinery (Industrial Arbitration Panel, Board of Inquiry and the National Industrial Court) through which the disputing parties are settled compulsively – though objections at one level are referred to the highest level for final compulsive settlement.

Whatever categorizations may have been given to the trade disputes settlement machineries in Nigeria, it is important to look at the stages which trade disputes settlement follow. The first stage in the settlement of Trade Disputes is provided for statutorily in Section 3 of the Trade Disputes Act, 2004. This section provided for the parties to a dispute to utilize whatever machinery or procedure they provided, internally for the settlement of their dispute within 7 days. Section 2 of the same Act stipulates that 3 copies of any collective agreement for the

settlement of disputes be deposited with the Minister within 14 days of its commencement while Section 37 defines collective agreements as any agreement in writing for the settlement of disputes relating to physical conditions of work concluded between employers or their representative organizations or unions or their representative organizations. Section 37 also empowers the Minister of Labour to make an order which makes the terms of the agreement binding.

Where the first stage of dispute settlement machinery fails or is absent, the parties in dispute are enjoined to meet within 7 days of its failure or absence of settlement machinery and settle under the presidency of a mediator appointed by them or in their behalf. Should this fail after 7 days, either party must report its failure to the Minister in writing, stating the points of disagreement and steps taken within 3 days. Where the Minister is not satisfied with the steps already taken by the parties, he may in writing specify the steps they must take to satisfy the requirements. Should the dispute remain unsettled after 7 days, and whether the specified steps were taken or not, the Minister may exercise his powers as provided for in Section 6, 7, 12 and 23 of the Trade Disputes Act, 2004 as may appear appropriate for him. A second way by which disputes get to the Minister is when a dispute is apprehended by him and he may inform the parties in writing of his apprehension and the steps he proposes for its settlement.

The third stage relates to the Section of the Trade Disputes Act which provides for the Minister or a competent authority to appoint a proper and fit person as a conciliator where mediation fails to bring about settlement of the dispute. The conciliator is to inquire into the causes and circumstances of the dispute and through dialogue (as opposed to imposition of settlement) with the parties to bring about settlement within 7 days.

The fourth stage is the arbitration phase. Arbitration sets in with its role and contributions in the settlement of trade disputes in Nigeria at the failure of the conciliation stage at the expiration of 7 days. Section 8 of the Trade Disputes Act empowers the Minister to refer reports of unsettled cases from the conciliator to the Industrial Arbitration Panel (a quasi-judicial Court in Nigeria charged with the responsibility of trade disputes settlement) within 14 days of its receipt. The Minister of Labour makes all appointments of members of the Industrial Arbitration Panel (IAP). The IAP consists of a Chairman, a Vice Chairman and not less than ten (10) other members and two each must be nominees of the representatives of employers and employees. The Industrial Arbitration Panel plays its role and contributes to Trade disputes settlement in Nigeria as follows:

When a dispute is received, the Chairman constitutes an Arbitration Tribunal which may be in 3 forms: (a) Sole Arbitrator; (b) Single Arbitrator assisted by Assessors; (c) Equal number of Arbitrators nominated from the panel by or on behalf of the parties to the dispute and presided over by the Chairman or his vice.

The Industrial Arbitration Panel makes its award within 21 days after its constitution or any further days allowed by the Minister. The award is communicated directly to the Minister who may refer it back to the IAP for reconsideration. Awards made by a Tribunal assisted by Assessors are made by the Arbitrator while that made by more than one Arbitrator is made by majority decision. On final receipt of the award, the Minister of Labour publishes a notice to the parties giving them 7 days to make objections after which the award will be confirmed by a notice published in the gazette and such an award becomes legally binding and a breach which becomes an offence. Since the establishment of the Industrial Arbitration Panel by the Trade

Disputes Act of 2004, the role and contributions of arbitration in the settlement of Trade disputes in Nigeria need no over-emphasis.

Taking elements of equity, economic considerations and expediency into account in pondering an award, members of the IAP have been able to weigh pros and cons of grievances referred to it; make trade-offs and even settle cases that require a Yes or No answer thereby contributing to industrial harmony and consequent economic stability. But for certain wild-cat strikes occasioned by ignorance on the part of some union leaders, the mere hope that a body (IAP) exists to adjudicate with impartiality, disputes between the poor working masses in the organized labour market (without a strong bargaining power) and hostile employers tends to raise the aspirations of labour for better things to come and a reduction in strike and lockout tendencies.

The most popular award made in favor of organized labor today is that made in favor of Nurses and Midwives in 1988 against the Federal Ministry of Health, which is a Government agency. Another advantage of the IAP is that, though having judicial powers, its awards are not bound by common law principles nor do they have general guiding principles. This makes it easier for anybody without legal orientation to stand before it to testify. It has been suggested that the non-legalistic aspect of Industrial Relations practice may have given rise to the non-legal modus operandi of the IAP.

On the efficiency of the IAP as a trade disputes settlement system, Ubeku (1983) sees difficulty of assessment because the system of industrial dispute adjudication in Nigeria is new and therefore too early to assess! However, certain defects have been observed on the IAP as dispute settlement machinery. Eisenberg & Hill (2003) pointed out a procedural criticism against the IAP. For Eisenberg & Hill therefore, the reports of the Tribunal do not make explicit the reasons for their awards or decisions. There is therefore no accumulation of precedents to which

reference could be made for clarification or consistency. This leads to the absence of insight into appropriate or inappropriate reasoning in dispute settlement.

A second criticism levelled against the IAP is made by Lewin (2008) For at every stage of the procedure where a dispute is referred to the IAP, the civil service machinery works at a characteristically slow pace – some arbitrators take 3 to 4 months to make an award, and it then sometimes take almost as long again for the award to be published even though the length of time to be used in the determination of cases is specified statutorily. Situations such as this open door for suspicion, frustration and loss of confidence in arbitration as an effective instrument for resolving disputes.

The National Industrial Court is said to serve as the final Court of Appeal for all trade disputes and makes its awards not later than 30 days of receipt of dispute. Section 12 of the Trade Disputes Act, 2004 provides that the Minister of Labour should refer unsettled cases from the IAP to the National Industrial Court. The Minister however may also refer a case directly to the NIC where it involves employees of an essential service or where he feels that the circumstances of the case will not be appropriate for the IAP to handle e.g., right disputes involving a problem of interpretation.

The National Industrial Court (NIC) consists of a President and not less than 12 Judges, appointed by the President under the recommendations of the National Judicial Council. Section 1(2) (b) of the National Industrial Court Act of 2006 provided that one-third of the Judges so appointed shall be graduates of a recognized University of not less than ten years standing with considerable experience and knowledge in law and practice of Industrial Relations and employment conditions in Nigeria. The NIC plays its role and contributes to the settlement of industrial or trade disputes through its jurisdiction to make final awards for the purpose of

settling trade disputes to the exclusion of any Court. Section 15 of the Trade Disputes Act, 2004 provides that no appeal shall lie on any other body, i.e. the NIC is the final Court of Appeal for Trade Disputes.

There have been, however, doubts as to the legal status of this Court in respect of its being the final Court of Appeal for trade disputes. The major argument that raised this doubt is the fact that, for a Court to have a status similar to that on which the NIC is placed, it has to be listed in the Constitution of the Country as a High Court of record and that the NIC is not listed as such. Uvieghara (1985) in a Counter to this argument points out that Section 6 (3) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999, provided for such other Courts as may be authorized by law as High courts of record, and that the Trade Disputes Act of 2004 is a law establishing and authorizing the NIC to have the status of a final Court of Appeal for trade disputes.

Corollary therefore, the NIC is a High Court of record constitutionally. Uvieghara further argued that the High Court of a State has no jurisdiction over labour matters, and that it is only the High Court that is empowered by the Constitution to refer cases to the Court of Appeal. It is also only the Court of Appeal that is empowered to refer cases to the Supreme Court. Therefore, NIC cases cannot be referred to these Courts. However, where it is in the opinion of the NIC that the issues involved in a dispute are constitutional and of substantial question of law and if the parties so request, that question must be referred to the High Court which may do same to the Appeal Court and finally to the Supreme Court.

It should be noted further that even though Section 80(6) of the Labour Act 2004 empowers magistrate and District Courts to entertain cases of individual disputes, collectively presented disputes fall within the jurisdiction of the NIC. Any award of the NIC is binding and final on the

parties. Prior to the promulgation of the National Industrial Court Act, the major criticism against the NIC is that it lacked the power to enforce its decisions or awards, which other High Courts of records possess. Following the promulgation of the National Industrial Court Act and the amendment made to the Nigerian Constitution which has placed the NIC as a Court of record, it has been accorded “exclusive Jurisdiction”. This has however been challenged in 2017 by a Supreme Court decision in a landmark case (*Afribank Plc V Kunle Osisanya*). Ananaba (1969) also observed a defect in the composition of the NIC as there was no provision for labour representation or an expert in industrial relations. This has also been corrected. It is argued that it takes a long time to settle a dispute. This point is however in defiance of a possible length of period that may be given to it statutorily to determine a case.

Government Participation and Workplace Employment Relations

According to Biriwu (2017) in his study discovered that Government participates in the workplace to regulate actions for the better of individuals, groups, or organizations choice making in social and economic matters. Lewin, (2008) posits that these issues mount pressure and social conscience that compelled governments to participate in the workplace employment relations system so as to mitigate the harsh effects of labour exploitation by regulating such things as hours of work and working conditions of employees. Lewin, (2008) also found that over the years, the change from the laissez-faire ideology to the interventionist ethic led not only to government protecting workers in the factories, but, also to some instances of complete control of industrial relations system which was not the original idea which led to the clamor for participation. Schwartz (2009) added that the participation of Government in workplace employment relations is argued to have been necessitated by its major roles in the socio-economic/political life of Nation (Schwartz, 2009).

These findings place acceptable limitations on the relationship between the variables therefore the following hypothesized statements are made.

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between government participation and workplace wage determination.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between government participation and workplace rule making.

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between government participation and workplace conflict resolution.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted cross sectional research design. the target population of this study includes the Ministry of Labour and Employment (MLE), the Trade Union (Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), and Trade Union Congress (TUC)) and Employers' Associations. The leaders and their assistants in these establishments constitute the population size of 179 that responded to the research questions.

Table 3.1: Representatives of the Study

S/NO	Organizations	Affiliates/Depts Representatives	Average number of Representatives	Total Accessible number of Representatives
1	Ministry of Labour and Employment (MLE)	4	5	20
2	Trade Union (TU)	67	2	134
3	Employers' Associations (NECA)	5	5	25
	Total	76		179

The sample size for the study was determined using Taro Yamene’s model and Bowley’s (1964) allocation formula each for strata sampling for each association and ministry. 124 respondents were determined as sample size through Taro Yamen’s techniques. The hypotheses were tested using the Pearson Moment Product Correlation Coefficient with the aid of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 23.0.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Bivariate Analysis

In this section, the secondary data analyses from the outcomes of the hypotheses were presented with test conducted using the Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Coefficient at 95% confidence level which was accepted as a criteria for the probability for either accepting the null hypotheses at ($p > 0.05$) or rejecting the null hypotheses formulated at ($p < 0.01$). In clear terms, the test covers the hypotheses postulated for the study which were bivariate and stated in null form. According to Irving (2005) r value that is less than 0.20 ($r < 0.20$) is the benchmark for accepting the null hypotheses and r value that is greater than or equal to 0.20 ($r \geq 0.20$) is the benchmark for rejecting the null hypotheses.

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between government participation and workplace wage determination.

Table 1: Government Participation and Workplace Wage Determination

		GOPA6	WAD6
GOPA6	Pearson Correlation	1	.633**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	113	113
WAD6	Pearson Correlation	.633**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	113	113

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

As indicated in the upshot above, it is very glaring that a very high positive relationship exists between government participation and workplace wage determination. The *correlation* value 0.633 indicates this relationship and it is significant at $p < 0.000 < 0.05$. Thus, based on empirical

findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected. Since,there is a significant relationship between government participation and workplace wage determination.

Test of Research Hypothesis Two

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between government participation and workplace rule making.

Table 2: Government Participation and Workplace Rule Making

		GOPA6	WRM6
GOPA6	Pearson Correlation	1	.528**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	113	113
WRM6	Pearson Correlation	.528**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	113	113

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

Source: Source: SPSS Output

As indicated in the upshot above, it is very glaring that a very high positive relationship exists between government participation and workplace rule making. The *correlation* value 0.528 indicates this relationship and it is significant at $p\ 0.000 < 0.05$. Thus, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected. Since,there is a significant relationship between government participation and workplace rule making.

Test of Research Hypothesis Three

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between government participation and workplace conflict resolution.

Table 3: Government Participation and Workplace Conflict Resolution

		GOPA6	WCR7
GOPA6	Pearson Correlation	1	.368**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000

	N	113	113
	Pearson Correlation	.368**	1
WCR7	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	113	113

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

Source: SPSS Output

As indicated in the upshot above, it is very glaring that a moderate positive relationship exists between government participation and workplace conflict resolution. The *correlation* value 0.368 indicates this relationship and it is significant at $p\ 0.000 < 0.05$. Thus, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected. Since, there is a significant relationship between government participation and workplace conflict resolution.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The finding reveals that participation provides Government with the opportunity to influence and take part in decision making processes affecting workplace. According to Biriowu (2017), Government participation could be seen as regulatory actions taken by a government in order to affect or interfere with decisions made by individuals, groups, or organizations regarding social and economic matters. This pressure and social conscience compelled governments to participate in the workplace employment relations system so as to mitigate the harsh effects of labour exploitation by regulating such things as hours of work and working conditions of employees (Lewin, 2008). Lewin, (2008) over the years, the change from the laissez-faire ideology to the interventionist ethic led not only to government protecting workers in the factories, but, also to some instances of complete control of Industrial Relations system which was not the original idea which led to the clamour for participation. The participation of Government in workplace employment relations is argued to have been necessitated by its three major roles in the socio-

economic/political life of Nation (Schwartz, 2009). Government is seen as the single largest employer of labour in most developing and advanced economies like Nigeria. Government is seen as the state authority on whose shoulders lie the administration and protector of the economy. Government is also seen as peace maker, mediator and conciliator to disputing interest groups in the Nigeria. The major reason why government participates in employment relations is to reduce industrial dispute.

National Labour Advisory Council, which according to Ojo (1998) is established to advise the government on labour matters. The composition of the Advisory council consists of one representative from each state government of the federation of Nigeria and two representatives from the Nigerian Employers Consultative Association (NECA) and two representatives from each of the labour centres, while the Permanent Secretary of the Federal ministry of, labour and employment serve as its chairman. According to the Trade Dispute Decree No. 7 of 1976, section 90 empowers the Industrial Arbitration Tribunal to make an award within forty-two days from when it was constituted. The only exception to this provision is when the federal minister of labour and employment extends the time frame for the Tribunal. At the end of the seating of the Tribunal, it is mandated to make award and both parties have twenty-one days to react to the award. Katz and Kochan (2000), noted that industrial relations is a broad interdisciplinary field of study that encompasses all aspects of the employment relationship. It is concerned with how the policies that govern employment relations and the work itself affect workers and their interests, as well as the interests of the organization and the larger society. Ratnam (2006) says that industrial relations focus on relations between employers or managers and workers and their unions in the production/service process.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This concluded that Government participation significantly influences workplace employment relations through wage determination, rulemaking and conflict resolutions in Nigeria. Wage determination should be Government top most priority since wage is a determining force in the workplace.

It recommends that government participation in economic tripartite arrangement should be to set policies and regulate laws on wage determination, conflict resolution methods, and make rules that will engender harmonious workplace and good working condition in Nigeria.

Also, that government participation should not be on setting policies and regulate laws on employment alone, rather government should participate to provide avenue for effective practice of tripartite arrangement by addressing the employment regulations that affect workers, and set parameters that will not harm the trade unions and the employers' associations in order to improve workplace employment relations in Nigeria.

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