

# Evaluation of University workers Perspective on role of Government in collective Bargaining, administration of Salaries in Nigerian public sector

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**Abstract**— *Collective Bargaining is a key activity of industrial relations for Administration of salaries and allowances in Nigeria public sector. Government, employers and employees or their representative have been identified as active participants in collective bargaining. However, the role of Government has been a contemptuous issue. This study was evaluated using a survey the perspective of employees of Michael Okpara University of Agriculture Umudike, on importance of collective bargaining and role of Government in salaries and allowances administration in Nigeria public sector. Data collected were analysed using percentiles, regression, chi-square and T-test. The result showed that 57 - 67.31% affirmed the importance of collective bargaining for industrial harmony, salaries, allowances and productivity of workers. Workers were of the view that Government plays a significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) role ( $p = 0.0121$ ) in labour policies and in administration of salaries and allowances in Nigeria public sector. Workers were also of the view ( $17.34 >$ ) that Government should not play a major role. The dominance of Government was significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ) opposed ( $t_{cal} 4.321 >$   $t_{crit} 3.184$ ) by workers on moral and ethical grounds instead of prominence. Government should be an umpire in the spirit of true industrial democracy.*

**Keywords**— *Government, collective bargain, Salaries, Workers.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 BACKGROUND OF STUDY

In a holistic sense industrial relations refer to the relationship between employers, employees or their representatives and government within the private and public sectors (Tongo and Osabuohiem, 2007). A good working relationship is important for maximization of economic gains, productivity and national growth.

Among the objectives of industrial relation are continuity of production, curtailing of industrial disputes, reduction of labour turnover and wastages in outputs and man hours (Fajana, 2005). Under these conditions the goals are to eliminate conditions that will impact negatively on productivity through strikes, lockouts, pickets, work to rule etc. Industrial harmony results in well-motivated employees. These well motivated employees do not happen in a vacuum but through efforts of collective bargaining to better wages and salaries, improved working condition, good human resource policies, capacity building and better relationship between employers and employees (Otobo, 2000; Borjas, 2005).

It is also to the benefit of governments of nations that safe work environment be instituted through laws and legislations, that will promote cordial employer and employee relationship. This harmonious relations help to increase Gross National Products and citizens welfare ([www.danshaw.co.za](http://www.danshaw.co.za)). Among the roles of government in industrial relations are formulation and implementation of relevant laws, policies and regulations for adjudication of disputes

In Nigeria employment indices are related to government and host of other factors. Among all active actors in industrial relations, government has assumed the position of unilateralism in industrial relations in making laws and regulations guiding employment (ILO, 1992). Within the group, government determines minimum wage, fringe benefits, machinery for collective bargain and adjudication in industrial conflicts (Fashoyin, 1992).

As expected industrial relations have come to reflect the prevailing democracy (Adesina, 2003). Depending on type of government these reflections showcase extremism, unilateral decisions, restrictions, witch

hunting and trade union and labour restiveness. Under military dictatorship employees intimidation and non-consultation approaches to issues such as basic pay, incentives, allowances etc. are the order of the day. Unlike military dictatorship civilian democracy uses subtle coercion and lobbying to achieve its interest in national productivity under industrial relations.

### 1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In Nigeria, employment of workers, their salaries and condition of service are related to government and a host of other factors. Among the active participants in industrial relations, governments at the federal and state levels have assumed the position of unilateralism and sole actor in making laws and regulations guiding employment (Okoedion, 1992). These governments have strong hold in industrial relations by fixing minimum wage, fringe benefits, control over collective bargaining and presiding as judges over industrial disputes (Fashoyin, 1992). As expected industrial relations have come to reflect the type of government in place (Yusuf, 1982). These types of government in place result in extremism, unilateral decisions, restrictions, witch hunting of labour unions and employees and arrogance. While military governments employ intimidation and non-consultation in dealing with issues of basic pay, incentives, the civil democracy uses subtle force, lobbying, and uprising against union leaders to achieve their interest in promoting industrial conditions to favour their national agenda.

In Nigeria, government is the largest employer of labour and at the same time is responsible for making laws that control industrial relations. It is a serious condition that does not allow for voluntary participation equity and fairness in collective bargaining. As the government with strong position of strength and power, industrial relations as it concerns wages and conditions of service well definitely be against the desires of the employees. The assertion that "He who pays the piper, dictates the tune" becomes an undisputed reality. The study focuses its view on what should be the role of government in fixing of minimum wage in the private sector.

There is a dearth of information in literature outlining workers perspective in what should be the role of government in fixing minimum wages and fringe benefits.

### 1.3 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

These were the specific objectives of the study

1. To ascertain the opinions of employees about role of industrial relations and collective bargaining in workplaces.
2. To ascertain the importance of collective bargaining in salaries, allowances and productivity.

3. To identify the actors of collective bargaining as it concerns fixing of salaries and allowances.
4. To examine the role of government in labour matters i.e. collective bargaining, wages and allowances and labour policies.
5. To make recommendations.

### 1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were raised to address the objectives of the study.

1. What are the opinions of workers about Industrial Relations and Collective Bargaining in Nigeria?
2. Who should play the major role in fixing salaries and allowances in Nigeria labour sector?
3. What should be the role of Government in labour matters i.e. collective bargaining, salaries and allowances and policies in Nigeria.
4. Why should Government not play a major role in labour issues in Nigeria?

### 1.5 HYPOTHESES

Hypotheses tested were

1. Ho: There is no significant relationship between the role of Government and the results of collective bargaining in Nigeria.
2. Ho: Government should not play a major role in the labour sector of Nigeria.

### 1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

As a mini survey for negotiation the study focused only on the staff of Michael Okpara University of Agriculture Umudike, and involved the academic and non-academic staff. Respondents were both junior and senior staff of the University. There was no comparative study with any other institution because of the limitations of funds.

## II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

### 2.1 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

#### 2.1.1 DEFINITION OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS:

Industrial relations refers to the pattern of interactions or relationships between employers and employees or their representatives such as unions and the activities of government in supervising and controlling of the industrial relations system. This definition leans towards industrial relations as behavioural activity as opposed to the Marxist approach. Under the Marxist approach, Government aims to satisfy Employers and the interest of Government to the detriment of workers.

### 2.2 HISTORY OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS PRACTICE IN NIGERIA

#### 2.2.1 FOUNDATIONS OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS IN NIGERIA

Our colonial master was Britain. The British concept of industrial relation was based on voluntarism. Whereby the

workers and their employers were deemed to be in the best position to handle conflicts arising from work, issues of conflicts from employment conditions and others. Here the government or state acts as the umpire during conflicts between employers and employees based on appropriate legal frame works for conflicts resolution. The pre-independence British or Anglo-Saxon model of industrial relations was abandoned with the changing socio-political factors of Nigeria. In time the Government assumed autocratic approach based on the fact that Government employed more workers into public sector and faced with increased agitation by Nigerians who through education and socialization found the need for labour and democratic reforms (Adesina, 2003).

After independence in 1960 by error of fate the Prime Minister – Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa invited the military into labour conflicts as practised by British rulers in Nigeria. Mention must be made of the Aba women riots of 1929, coal miners’ strike of 1940 and the Tiv riots where the military was used to suppress agitations. Following the fall of the First Republic in 1966 and the military takeover of governance in Nigeria, autocratic intervention of Government in labour matters became the order of the day. Leading to Government intimidation of labour activists, workers, work conditions, with absolute powers to promulgate labour laws (Trade Unions Acts and their Amendments 1973 – to date). Governments in Nigeria both at the federal and state levels have used these laws to emphasize their roles in collective bargaining.

## **2.3 INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS IN NIGERIA**

### **2.3.1 MINISTRY OF LABOUR**

It was established to enforce labour legislation, advice government on trade union development. Federal Government Gazette Notice No. 1205 of 1979, states some of the functions of the Ministry as follows:-

1. Condition of employment
2. Industrial Relations
3. Factory Inspection
4. Trade Unions, including registration of Trade Unions
5. Central Labour Organisation on Cooperative Matters.
6. Supervising of the following bodies:-
  - i. Industrial Arbitration Panel
  - ii. National Industrial Court
  - iii. National Institutes for Labour Studies (Established in 1987 and located in Ilorin)
7. Maintenance of Relations with the following bodies:-

- i. Organisation of African Trade Union Unity (ATUU)
- ii. International Labour Organisation (ILO)
- iii. Nigeria Labour Congress
- iv. Nigeria Employers Consultative Association

The departments in the Industrial Relations are saddled with the responsibility to promote industrial harmony, through the encouragement of voluntary collective bargaining between workers and employees.

The department of wages and productivity ensure that proper wages are paid and employees are not enslaved. Labour inspection and training, inspecting factories to ensure that best practices are followed to handle disputes.

### **2.3.2 THE NATIONAL LABOUR ADVISORY COUNCIL**

The National Labour Advisory Council was established to advise the Government on labour matters. One representative from each state government of the federation of Nigeria and two representatives from Nigeria Employers Consultative Association (NECA) and two representatives from each of the Labour Centres, while the Permanent Secretary of the Federal Ministry of Employment, Labour and Productivity serve as its Chairman. The functions of this council include review of labour laws and working conditions of employees.

### **2.3.3 INDUSTRIAL ARBITRATION PANEL.**

The Industrial Arbitration Panel consists of a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman and not less than twelve members who are appointed by the minister and representing the interest of employers and workers.

The selected arbitrator and nominated assessors constitute the Industrial Arbitration Tribunal (IAT) to settle the dispute.

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 consulted.

It was mandated to make award and both parties have twenty one days to react to the award.

### **2.3.4 NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL COURT.**

The Trade Dispute act 1976 established the National Industrial Court.

The National Industrial Court comprises of a President and four other members appointed by the Federal Executive Council (FCE). The President of the court must have been a judge of the high court or must have been a practicing lawyer for at least ten years.

The National Industrial court has exclusive jurisdiction over the following:-

1. To make awards for the purpose of settling trade disputes

2. To determine questions relating to the interpretation of any collective agreement and any award made by the Industrial Arbitration Panel or the court itself
3. The terms of settlement of any memorandum following reconciliation.

The practice and procedure of the court are governed by the National Industrial Court Rules 1979.

## **2.4 RELEVANT EMPIRICAL STUDIES AND RESEARCH GAP.**

### **2.4.1 OVERVIEW OF EMPIRICAL STUDIES**

The Nigerian industrial system has always been besieged by woes (Akhilomen, 2010). It has been a history of conflicts, crises and violence at the conciliation. About sixty percent of all industrial disputes end up in strikes, whereas disputes are supposed to be settled.

The delays in handling matters take up to two years or more before awards are made, resulting in mutual suspicion of the collective bargaining machinery

The Federal Ministry of Labour Employment and Productivity is ineffective in discharge of her responsibility. The Government roles in industrial relations have not achieved the much desired results, in equity and fair distribution of rewards. Nigerian government focuses more on settlement in the interest of the government. This implies that government cannot act as an impartial umpire without taking sides. The incessant strike actions, picketing and work to rule in those past years have tended to erode the Gaius of industrial industrialization and democracy in Nigeria. Hardly does any year pass without strike by ASUU, Doctors, NUPENG, Teachers or other essential services staff. Most literatures in these issues point to the fact that government in most cases is exploitative, undemocratic, prejudiced with the critical issues remaining unsolved.

Industrial disputes refer to the total range of behaviour and attitudes that express opposition and divergent orientations between employers, employees, their representatives and their organisations or between employers, employees and government on the other hand (Kornhauser et al, 1985; Fashakin 2005) Industrial disputes arise in the process of control over work relations by major actors e.g. employers, employees and governmental agencies. Which must be resolved within the institutional and legal arrangements in place for conflict resolution through collective bargaining.

Collective bargaining was established by International Labour Organization (ILO) on the framework of voluntary participation between employers and employees. These conserved parties are expected to fashion out their employment agreements under the atmosphere of mutual trust. Within their voluntary

participation, government intervenes only to achieve harmonious relationship of employers and employees for national growth, employment and productivity (Ubeku, 1983). However the participate of voluntary participation has not been effectively supported by statutory framework or bodies created by government. About 70% of the bodies such as productivity, prices and income boards, negotiating councils at federal and state, wage commissions, etc. were created for centralization of industrial relations within the control of federal government of Nigeria (Otobo, 2000).

The prominent role of government in industrial relations in Nigeria are contained in official documents on labour such as labour laws, bills, acts and other legislations (CAP 437 of 1990). A close look at government role in industrial relations in Nigeria emphasises the prominent role of government in wage and salary determination, fringe benefits and to lesser extent control of condition of service at organisation levels (Fashakin, 2005). These undemocratic interventions had been condemned by industrial and labour scholars, who see such roles of government as abuse of freedom of association and responsible for incessant industrial disputes in Nigeria (Fajana, 2000). For government to perform these undemocratic roles, the military employed suppression, intimidation, muscling of the freedom of expression, press and imprisonment of union leaders and activist (Yusuf, 1983). These strategies of oppression by government are not exclusive to the military government only (Fashakin, 2005). Democratic government unlike the military use police and other para-military agencies to achieve their labour objectives. In most instances refuse to honour agreements with employees or outright manipulation of the legal process or institution (Ubeku, 1983).

### **2.4.2 THE RESEARCH GAP**

There is a dearth of information in literature on the opinion of the University Employees on the role of Government in Collective Bargaining and Administration of Salaries and Allowances. Previous research studies as found in literature are mostly general in perspective.

This dearth of information is an important set back to understanding the opinion of highly skilled workers and impact of the role of Government and other actors of Collective Bargaining. This study was conceptualized to fill this research gap.

### **2.5 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.**

This study used the Pluralist theory as its foundation. In pluralism, the organisation is seen as a system comprising of sub-groups that are powerful with their own set of objectives and loyal members. The two most important sub-groups within an organisation are the management and trade unions (Moja, 2007). Within pluralism conflicts

are managed by these two main actors, who derive their legitimacy and powers from operational laws and powers from labour laws and institutional frameworks. Since the sub-groups are aware of their legitimacy, conflicts are dealt with through collective bargaining. The plurality of an organisation makes conflicts between management and labour inevitable. It offers an opportunity for the goals and objectives of sub-groups to be accommodated for harmony in the workplace.

Pluralism is a political theory implemented in organisations to address the negativities of pure capitalisms (Kim and Kim 2003). In Nigeria the work organisations is made up of employers, workers and their unions under the Government as an environment. Conflicts are bound to occur for which some labour laws and institutional frameworks are put in place to resolve (Otuturu, 2007). Within these labour arrangements, it is expected that the spirit of co-operation, voluntarism and participation should determine the outcome of collective bargain and labour policies for industrial harmony. When these do not happen or Government chooses to enforce executive powers, the outcomes are usually industrial disputes.

**III. METHODOLOGY**

The study used a descriptive survey method as its research design. Structured questionnaires were administer on 55 respondents chosen randomly among the staff of Michael Okpara University of Umudike. Michael Okpara University of Agriculture Umudike is a federal specialized university situated in Umudike Ikwuano a local government of Abia state with the mission of training well qualified graduates in Agriculture and related disciplines. The University operates a collegiate system with important contributions to learning, research and human resource development if Nigeria. The staff

strength is about 3500 employees in academic and non-academic duties. The sample size comprised of both academic and non-academic staff. Out of the 55 respondents’ questionnaires, 52 questionnaires were properly filled. Three (3) questionnaires only were invalidated. All questionnaires were completed and collected on the same day to avoid bias.

The questions were designed to provide information on importance of industrial relations, workers opinions about role of industrial relations on industrial harmony, collective bargaining, productivity, salaries and allowances. Also the expected roles of the major actors and on what should be the role of Government (Federal and State) in Nigeria labour sector were tested.

Validation of questionnaire used Test and Pre-test method with the assistance of human resource lecturers of MOUAU

Secondary sources such as publications, books and gazettes were consulted. Results are presented in tables using descriptive statistics regression, chi-square and T-test statistic.

The proposed hypothesis were

- a) Hypothesis One – Chi-square statistic.
- b) Hypothesis Two – T-test statistic.

The hypothesis tested using Chi-square (X<sup>2</sup>) statistic and T-test at 95% level of confidence.

**IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**4.1 THE IMPORTANCE OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS/COLLECTIVE BARGAINING FOR TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE.**

Results of this study are presented in Tables 1-6, figure 1, and were used to explain the findings on workers opinions and role of Federal Government of Nigeria in Industrial relations with particular focus on collective bargaining for salaries and allowances of Nigerian workers.

*Table 1: Summary of Respondents Statistics on Collective Bargaining.*

P e r s p e c t i v e	N = 52							Weighed Mean			S E	
	xw (Responses/3 point scale)											
	A g r e e	N e u t r a l		D i s a g r e e								
Importance of Industrial Relations to Industrial Harmony	1	6	5	3	0	1	1	4	.	0	1	0.8148
Importance of Collective Bargaining to Productivity	1	3	5	3	9	1	4	4	.	2	0	0.71161
Role of Collective Bargaining in Salaries and Allowances.	1	2	3	2	4	1	8	3	.	8	6	0.82746

Kep:

N= Sample Size

xw = Score x Frequency

SE = Standard error of mean

The importance of Industrial Relations to Industrial Harmony was affirmed by 67.31% response (Table 1). Positive affirmation (57.70%) was the observed opinion for productivity by workers (Table 2). About 25% of the respondents felt indifferent to the importance of Industrial Relations and workers productivity. Collective bargaining is used to negotiate terms and conditions of employment between employers and employees (Borjas, 2005). It is through collective bargaining that employees offer their knowledge and skills to their employers and are hired and compensated according to the relative work of their skills. Without collective bargaining it is expected that unfair practice in salary and allowances would result, leading to disputes and how productivity of employees

Workers join organisations with some goals. They expect that their efforts and rewards will help to achieve such goals. These goals are highlighted in Abraham Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. To employers the major goals of their organisations are productivity and profit (Kanfam, 2000). In order to maximize productivity and profit, astute attention is paid to resource utilization including human and material resources (Mas, 2004). In order to arrive at a win-win situation between employers and employees certain machineries are put in place. Among which is a collective bargaining of industrial relations activities. During collective bargaining demands and expectations are brought to the negotiating table for bargaining. At the end of any successful collective bargaining, salaries, allowances, hours of work, work ethics, other social benefits for workers are fixed (Borjas, 2005). Where negotiations fail, it could lead to industrial disputes such as strikes, pickets, violence, low productivity, labour turnover

and loss of revenue due to downtime of production. (Akhilomen, 2010). Workers right to strike is recognised under Trade Union Act 1990/2005 as amended in Act 2015. Results as presented on Table 1 indicated that MOUAU staff are aware of the importance of collective bargaining to industrial peace and productivity. The weighed means for Agreed were (4.01, 4.02) positive for industrial harmony and productivity.

The workers right is in recognition of the relative worth of efforts and the need to demand appropriate compensation for contribution to organisational growth (Akhilomen, 2010).

There were no doubts (Mean Score 3.86) that collective bargaining is important for fixing of salaries, allowances and terms and conditions of work for workers. At a mean score of 3.86, it would be argued that MOUAU staff do not entirely believe that collective bargaining is solely responsible for their salaries and allowances.

**4.2 ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING IN NIGERIAN PUBLIC SECTOR.**

The active participants of collective bargaining in Nigeria are Federal and State Governments, Employers, Employers Representatives or Union (e.g. Nigeria Employers Consultative Association NECA), Workers or Workers Union and Non-Governmental Organisations. The general consensus is that each participant has an important role to play in collective bargaining for fixing of salaries, allowances and other conditions of work. However, opinions (Figure 1) are divided as to who should be solely responsible for fixing of salaries and conditions of service. This result agreed with the perception of the workers as reported by Okaka (2010).

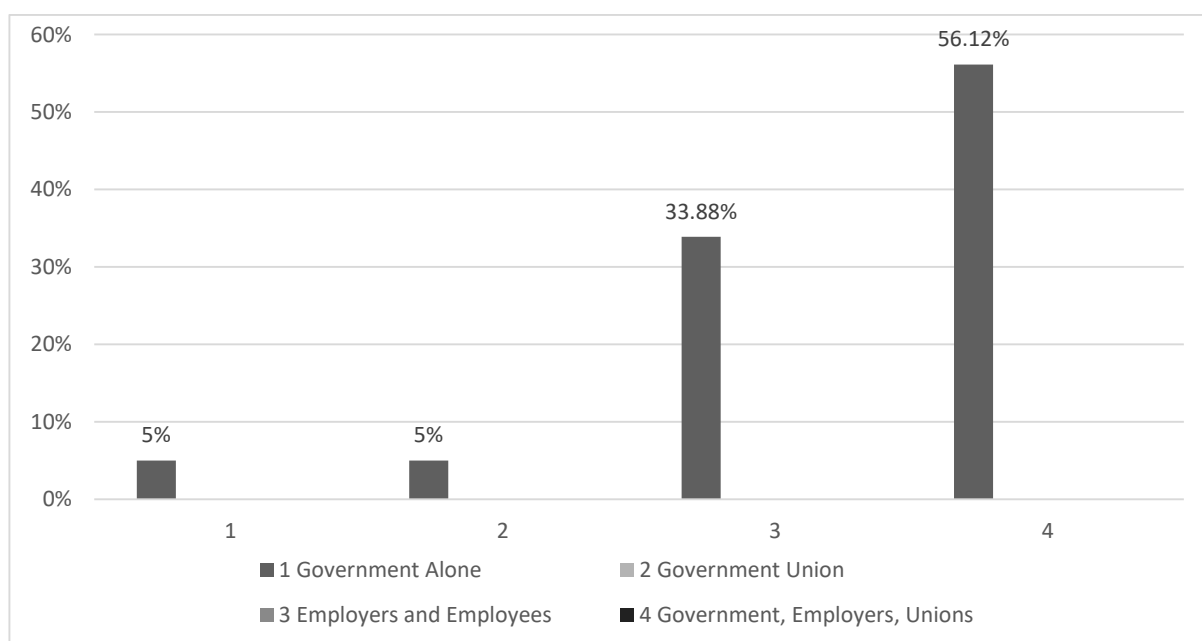


Fig.1: Opinion on Roles of Actors in fixing Salaries and Allowances

While 56.12% of MOUAU staff believed that salaries and allowances determination should be a tripartite activity between government, employer and workers union as checks and balance on participants, about 33.88% considered salaries and allowances as falling within the jurisdiction of employers and employees unions only. The idea of government and workers union or government alone fixing salaries and allowances was unacceptable

(Figure 1). Only tripartite action will guide against unethical practice in fixing salaries and allowances. About which organ plays the most prominent role in collective bargaining in Nigeria, result (Table 2) shows some important parameters as to the roles of some active participants in the outcome of collective bargaining. There are positive correlations between Actors and Outcomes of collective bargaining.

Table.2: Regression Analysis of Actors of Collective Bargaining.

	C o e f f i c i e n t s	P r o b
C o n s t a n t	0 . 2 1 2 0 0 5	
G o v e r n m e n t	0 . 9 1 0 5 5 1	0 . 0 1 2 1
E m p l o y e e r	0 . 9 0 0 4 3	0 . 0 1 3 1
E m p l o y e e s U n i o n	- 0 . 5 2 1 1 2 5	0 . 0 5 0
R <sup>2</sup>	0 . 9 0	
A d j u s t e d R <sup>2</sup>	0 . 8 3	
S E o f R e g r e s s i o n	0 . 7 3 3 1	
F V a l u e	1 2 . 5 1 0	
F S t a t i s t i c	0 . 0 0 4	

It is evident from the result that Government (Federal and State) and Employers are positive factors that determine the result of collective bargaining in Nigeria. While independent variables (Government, Employers and Workers Union) influence the results of collective bargaining, the role of Government and Employers in labour policies and salary determination are significant as attested by the P values. However the role of Government is highly significant (p<0.05), which implies that when unrestricted Government alone and Employers alone acting on fixing of salaries and conditions of service will favour government and employers and probably impact negatively on workers.

**4.3 ROLE OF GOVERNMENT IN COLLECTIVE BARGAINING**

Many divergent view were observed concerning the prominence of government in matters of collective bargaining and industrial relations. Support and against Government were based on moral grounds, government position of strength, abuse of power and intimidation and

the expected intervention role of Government (Table 4). The result of T-test was significant (p<0.05) indication strong opinion against Government role. The overwhelming view is that Government should concern itself with intervention and mediations in industrial relations and collective bargaining. The report of Dauda (2006) underscored the importance of independence of employers and employees in resolution of conflicts. Many respondents were of the opinion that Government being the major employer in Nigeria, it is morally wrong for the Government to be a major actor. Governments position of strength means wielding of enormous powers in matters of labour policies and collective bargaining as seen with ASUU negotiations with the federal government of Nigeria. In support of the government major role, views cited exploitation of employees by employers, the need for planning, checks and balances for a growing economy. Government role is important for effective planning of national productivity and development.

Table 4: T-test on Government Role.

O p t i o n s	I n S u p p o r t	A g a i n s t
M o r a l G r o u n d s	2	1 7 9
G o v e r n m e n t P o s i t i o n o f S t r e n g t h	2	7 7 3
I n t e r v e n t i o n R o l e	1	6 8 4
N a t i o n a l I n t e r e s t	4	9 5 1
t - v a l u e	4 . 3 2 1	
t - c r i t	3 . 1 8 4	

According to Ubeku (1983) Government intervention in industrial relations does not bear only on resolution of industrial disputes but extends to formulation of labour policies that favour government. In earnest, government is more interested in actions that suit the interest of government. Even if it means intimidation of labour activists by organs of the state.

**4.4 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOVERNMENT ROLE AND OUTCOMES OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING**

**TEST OF HYPOTHESES**

The relationship between government role and outcomes of collective bargaining sessions was described through the test of the developed hypotheses (Table 3)

The expected role of government in industrial relations as it concerns policies, salaries and conditions of service is shown on Table 3. The response distributed was used to calculate the chi-square statistic.

Table 3: Response Distributions of Response on Government as Major Actors

Respondents	Response			Row Total
	Yes	No	Neutral	
Male	O = 6	O = 18	O = 2	26
	E = 10	E = 10	E = 6	
Female	O = 10	O = 10	O = 6	26
	E = 6	E = 18	E = 2	
Column Total	16	28	8	52

df = (R - 1) (-1) = 2

At df = 2 and 5% level of significance, the calculated chi-square (X<sup>2</sup>) value as 17.34, which is greater than 5.991 critical value. Hence the hypothesis is accepted. Government should not play prominent role in industrial relations policies.

**V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION. CONCLUSION**

Collective bargaining for negotiating terms and conditions of service involves mutual respect and co-operative participation primarily for the employers and workers union in reading conducive working conditions for general good of employees, employers and national economy. As a process which enshrines win-win results, government position of strength and possible abuse of power are important concerns for successful resolution of contending issues. The position of Government in Nigeria as major employer of labour and controller on national resources contradicts moral justification of her prominent role on labour policies, salaries and allowances.

Oftentimes, due to government role, employers are forced to pay salaries far beyond their resources or workers exploited by their employers through non-payment of commensurate salaries and allowance while hiding under the umbrella of minimum wage policy of federal government of Nigeria. Leaving the determination of salaries and allowances to employers and labour unions will not yield the expected dividends. Workers fear of probable compromise and unethical alliance could derail their goals for better condition of employment. Employers ever desirous of minimizing cost of production will be ever willing to align with a compromised labour union to offer low salaries.

The generally accepted position is that government should concern herself with the role of intervention as mediator and conciliator while allowing employers and employees to fix conditions of service based on revenue, ability to pay and prevailing economic situations in Nigeria. Government with all of her institutional framework should act as an umpire in labour matters.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following recommendations were made.

1. It is recommended that since Nigeria now has labour laws and institutional framework, Government role should be that of an umpire in collective bargaining.
2. Government at federal and state should not dictate the outcome of collective bargaining. Since Nigeria is now a purely capitalistic economy, employers and workers should be left to manage salaries and allowances based on prevailing the socio-economic factors of Nigeria.
3. Government role in collective bargaining and labour issues runs against the spirit of true Democracy and should be discouraged for healthy industrial relations in Nigeria.



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