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Nigerian National Minimum Wage and Labour Rights;

An Evaluation of Policy Implementation and its Impact on Workers.

Supervisor

Professor Vania Brino

Graduand

Ogunjobi Oluwaseun Gbenga

898587

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Abstract

This study carefully investigated the impacts of labour rights: fair remunerations, safe working conditions, non-discrimination, and freedom of association on the implementation of the new national minimum wage policy among employees in Nigeria. Utilizing a mixed-method approach, quantitative data were gathered through a structured questionnaire (INNNMWILRQ) administered to 412 employees from both public and private sectors across Oyo State, Nigeria employing simple random sampling, while qualitative data were collected via semi-structured interviews with four key labour unions stakeholders. The instrument's reliability was confirmed using the Cronbach method ($\alpha = 0.810$). Data analysis utilized descriptive statistics, regression, and thematic analysis.

Findings indicated that fair remunerations, non-discrimination, and freedom of association significantly impact the implementation of minimum wage policy, however, safe working conditions did not show a significant effect. The study concluded that labour rights are essential mechanisms for improving wage policy outcomes. It recommends that government and relevant agencies incorporate all labour rights indices in wage determinations, guarantee regular wage reviews that aligned with inflation trends, monitor compliance, and promote transparency in the wage-determination process. These measures are vital for improving employee motivation, fostering industrial harmony, and supporting national economic development.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to Study

Welfarism, being the strongest ideology behind minimum wage discuss seem not to be relevant in the conversation any more as increment of the minimum wage in reality depicts fall in the standard of living of workers as a result of high cost of living for an average Nigerian worker (Amoye, 2019, Ugwu and Ukpabi 2020). The poverty government intended to alleviate with the imposition of minimum wage which any recognized employer must pay their employees is on the rise as inflation rate keeps soaring and many are losing their jobs (Mankiw, 2011, Okolo and Kasikoro, 2021). Nigerian economy at the moment is faced with myriads of issues such as brain drain, low productivity in government parastatals, payment of salaries to ghost workers, unmet demands from labour and trade unions, poor service conditions for the employees, unemployment, underemployment, dilapidated infrastructures, corruption etc. Many of these unresolved crises in the economy are responsible for the uneasiness an average Nigerian labour goes through in the strive to pursue minimum living standards amidst high cost of living.

As described by Ellie (2015) a minimum wage for labour is the least cost of services provided by workers, usually fix by the executive council and approved by the legislative arm of government to protect un-skilled/semi-skilled workers and ensure they can achieve a minimum standard of consumption. It is an application of government policy on a minimum price in the labour market. According to National Minimum Wage bill, (2019) minimum wage is the amount of money paid to the lowest workers in the organisation. It was further expatiated by Law Crest (2019) that the National minimum wage policy does not apply to all categories of wokers and employers especially those who employ workers on contract, commission, part-time/seasonal and those who employed less than twenty-five workers. However, the focus of this study is about the impact of national minimum wage on workers in formal and non-formal sectors of the economy, especially those that are government workers and the workers in the private sector in Nigeria.

As reported by Onyeche and Edet (2017), since 1954, six years before Nigeria attained independence, there has been agitation about minimum wage payment of 5 pounds for Nigerian workers. The move was championed by the then premier of western region, Chief Obafemi

Awolowo. His original plan was to implement this in western region and then make it a national agenda if elected as the Prime Minister of Nigeria in 1959 election. Unfortunately, he lost to Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa who had no intention whatsoever to implement minimum wage for Nigerian workers. Awolowo succeeded in implementing minimum wage for workers in the then western region. The minimum wage western region labour got paid under Awolowo regime was more than twice what their counterparts in Northern region were paid. Later, in 1981, Nigerian National Minimum Wage Act was introduced for the first time under the regime of Alhaji Shehu Shagari who was the first executive president of Nigeria (1979 - 1983). According to the bill (National minimum wage bill 1981) full time employees shall be paid minimum wage of ₦125.00 per month, with exceptions of workers who are on commission, part-time, contract or seasonal arrangement and employers who have less than 50 employees in his or her establishment.

This minimum wage was reviewed upwards in 1990 under the regime of General Badamonsi Babangida to ₦250.00. In 1998, it was increased to ₦5,500.00, 1999 it was ₦7,500.00, and in 2011 it got upward reviewed to ₦18,000.00. In 2019, the labour union succeeded in their agitation for wage increment to ₦30,000.00 minimum which was agreed to be reviewed again in another five years interval. This was fulfilled in year 2024 as the newest national minimum wage bill was signed into law that lowest paid full time worker should earn not less than ₦70,000.00 per month. Also, this law will be due for another review in three years' time and no longer five years. It was equally added that the new minimum wage still exempts workers who work on contract, part-time, seasonal or commission base, also exempted employer who has less than twenty five workers on his payroll.

Table 1.0: Nigerian National Minimum Wage Progression from 1981-2024

Year	**National Minimum Wage per month**	**US ($1) Exchange Rate**	**Inflation Rates**
1981	₦125. 00	₦0.61	20.81%
1990	₦250.00	₦7.39	7.36%

1998	₦5,500.00	₦84.70	10.00%
1999	₦7,500.00	₦99.26	6.62%
2011	₦18,000.00	₦155.87	10.84%
2019	₦30,000.00	₦361.51	11.40%
2024	₦70,000.00	₦1,664.70	32.70%

***Sources**: The National Minimum Wage (Amendment) Bill, 1981- 2024. Data basis: International Monetary Fund, World Bank and OECD Inflation CPI indicator (doi:10.1787/eee82e6e-en)*

Haliru, (2021), having observed recurrent review and increment of minimum wage for Nigerian workers and its consequential rise in cost of living as shown in the table above is worried about the future of the Nigerian economy and the hope of eventual survival of an average Nigerian labour, most especially the unskilled and semi-skilled workers in both formal and non-formal sectors of the economy. The main goal of reviewing minimum wage from time to time is for employees to meet up with the inflation rate that increases consistently. An average employee earning minimum wage is expected to be able to feed himself, clothe and provide affordable shelter for himself and family, hence, it is called living wage. The International Labour organization, 1970 as cited in Amoye, 2019 recommended that minimum wage should never be less than enough amount of money to cater for the basic needs of the employees. Hence, the need for government across levels to work towards economy policy that will lower the cost of living for an average Nigerian to survive within the minimum standard of living.

In the discuss about minimum wage, especially at the national level, there are three principal players whose roles form strong determinants of what becomes agreed minimum wage for the national workers. They are **the government** (the executive and legislative arms) **the employers of Labour** (both formal and informal sectors of the economy) and **the Labour unions** (Nigerian Labour Congress and Trade Union Congress) who are official representatives of the employees in the both formal and informal sectors of the economy (Armstrong, 2009). Despite the general understanding of the key roles that these stakeholders play in determining minimum wage otherwise known as living wage which is meant to enable an average Nigerian worker earn decent standard of living, the survey of different commission and committees usually set up by

government to determine appropriate wage based on existing economic reality in the country usually portray weak purchasing power of employees to procure basic needs. This happens due to identified hyperinflation in the economy. Amee, 2021 now recommended that rather than increasing minimum wage in every three or five years as the case may, it would be better to work on policy that will boost the value of the national currency known as Naira (₦).

In the opinion of Abu (2016), creation of better and safe working conditions for employees is the sole responsibility of the employer of labour to improve their lives and motivate them for improved productivity. Working conditions of many workers in Nigeria is quite demoralising as government at some quarters pay lip service to putting offices in good shape for the comfort and safety of labour. Nyakwara, Shiundu and Gongera, 2014, and *ILO, 1970*) enumerated specific features of a typical safe and conducive working environment in categories such as internal facilities which are but not limited to the following: latrines and urinals separate for both genders, portable water, washing and bathing facilities, crèches for staff babies, resting facilities, shelters and canteen, arrangements for recreational facilities, health services including occupational safety, uniform and protective clothing and shift allowances.

External facilities on the other hand are those outside the physical workplace environment such as maternity benefits for nursing mothers, social insurance measures in the like of gratuity, pension, provident fund and rehabilitation, physical fitness and efficiency, family planning and child welfare, education facilities, housing facilities, recreational facilities including sports, cultural activities, transportation to and from the place of work etc. Nyakwara et al.(2014) in their study found out that for any employer seeking an increase in the productivity of his employees must pay attention to staff welfare and working conditions as stated above.

According to Soni, 2019 and Olaitan 2021, in their studies, they found out that the new minimum wage may not be fully implemented because some state governments do find it difficult to pay the minimum wage with the excuse of weak financial capacity. However, a reference to 2019 when there was an increase in minimum wage, and many state governments lamented how challenging it would be for them to implement such policy with the amount of allocation they received, hence, the decision of the federal government to jack up by about 50% the value added tax rate from 5% to 7.25%. This was considered as an effective means to generate substantial revenue to meet the demands of the new minimum wage then (Agbakwuru, 2019d, p.). Such is

expected now that a new minimum wage has just been passed into law. Unfortunately, increment in VAT is one of the factors that cause hyperinflation, especially on goods or services that are generally inelastic in demand.

From the forgoing, the issues with the implementation of minimum wage for Nigerian workers which is a direct violation of labour rights as stated in International Labour organization laws and convention (ILO, 2008), is the main concern and has been identified as lack of political will of Nigerian government to genuinely make life better for the citizenry (Otuya and Okolo, 2019, Opone and Kelikwuma, 2021). As duty demands, Labour union has always express dissatisfaction for states who are reluctant to pay the minimum wage signed into law by the Federal Government and just of recent, the union chairman gave order to her union members across the states to embark on indefinite strike until the state governments concern decide to act accordingly and as expected to alleviate the suffering the members of labour union are going through in the face of hash economic reality. Having identified national minimum wage policy implementation as a gap from the above discuss, hence, the decision to study implementation rate of the recent minimum wage for Nigerian workers and its impacts on Nigerian workers, especially in one of the states in the South-western geopolitical zone, in Nigeria.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

For over two decades, Nigerian labour union has always had to struggle with states and federal government over delayed payment of national minimum wage and refusal of some states in the federation to comply with the directive to implement new minimum wage across the states. Some of these defiant states have always given excuses of being incapable financially to implement a new minimum wage policy while some have just decided to subject labour to inhuman treatment despite being faced with hash economic reality. This is an absolute violation of labour rights, and it is unacceptable! Some states governments while owning salaries of labour would still go ahead and fund campaign for re-election at the expense of poor masses, living large when the nation's economy is in dire straits. This problem persists as less than 40% of the 36 states of the federation are usually found to have complied while the rest of the states continue to give poor remuneration to workers who are genuinely responsible for the generation of the national wealth.

Various reports of previous researchers have been studied, yet the certainty of maximum compliance to the recent national minimum wage bill signed into law in 2024, is rather doubtful. This is why this study is set to investigate the rate of compliance in terms of implementation of new national minimum wage policy and its impacts on Nigerian workers in one of the states in SouthWestern geopolitical zone, in Nigeria.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study is to investigate the level of implementation of new national minimum wage policy and its Impacts on labour in both formal and informal sectors of economy within the Southwestern states in Nigeria.

In the quest to comprehend the impacts and implications of new national minimum wage policy implementation in Nigeria, this study sets out to evaluate the level of compliance with the minimum wage law across different sectors of the economy, focusing specifically on differences between the formal and informal sectors. This will reveal areas where there are challenges and compliance deficiencies inhibiting effectiveness of the policy.

More specifically, the research assesses the effects of new national minimum wage implementation on workers' standard of living, studying how the policy influences workers' access to basic but essential needs such as housing, education, and healthcare. This will enable the study to authenticate the significant impact of new minimum wage policy on the social-economic wellbeing of labour in Nigeria.

Having established the presence of institutional actors in minimum wage policy discussion, the study seeks to investigate the contributions of government-owned institutions, labour and other trade unions and civil societies in guaranteeing the effectiveness of minimum wage policy implementation and its enforcement. This will then establish the level of effectiveness of these organizations in either promoting or preventing the expected compliance.

Furthermore, the study will analyze the relationship between the minimum wage law and the protection of workers' labor rights, including fair treatment, wage equity, and safe working conditions across various organizations in Nigeria.

In the end, the research will provide policy recommendations for improving wage policies and enhancing the protection of labor rights in Nigeria. This will be a contribution to the discourse targeting reforms of labour rights and promotion of social justice for labour.

1.4 Research Questions

Given the persistent agitation of especially the labour unions about unfair treatment of some employees and other illegal labour practices in Nigeria, debates surrounding fair labor practices in Nigeria, this research seeks to examine the implementation, impact, and challenges of the Nigerian National Minimum Wage Law across different sectors of the economy.

Specifically, it investigates how effectively the minimum wage law is enforced in various sectors, shedding light on compliance patterns within both the formal and informal economies.

Furthermore, the study explores the impact of the minimum wage law on workers' living standards, aiming to understand whether the policy has tangibly improved workers' socio-economic conditions.

In addressing enforcement barriers, the research interrogates the challenges faced in implementing the law and how these challenges affect labor rights protection in Nigeria.

Recognizing the importance of advocacy and collective bargaining, the study also seeks to investigate the role of trade unions and civil society organizations in promoting compliance with minimum wage laws and advancing labor rights.

Finally, the research aims to generate recommendations on how the minimum wage policy can be reformed to better protect workers' rights and improve their socio-economic wellbeing, contributing to ongoing policy discourse in Nigeria.

1.5 Hypotheses, Significance and Scope of the Study

Given the focus on understanding factors influencing the implementation of the new national minimum wage in Nigeria, this study examines whether key dimensions of labor rights and workplace practices contribute meaningfully to the effective enforcement oreflects policy or noemployee.

To begin with, the research explores whether fair remuneration of employees significantly impacts the implementation of the new national minimum wage policy or not. Also, whether its role in influencing compliance across sectors is limited. Additionally, the study interrogates the role of non-discrimination among employees, considering whether principle of equity in the treatment of workers within workplaces has any significant impact on the successful enforcement of the minimum wage policy or not.

The research equally considers the influence of safe working conditions, questioning whether workplace safety standards significantly affect compliance with the minimum wage law in Nigeria. In a similar version, the study examines the role of employees' freedom of association, assessing whether the ability of workers to organize and advocate for their rights contributes to or has any effect on the implementation of the minimum wage policy.

Finally, the study evaluates whether indices of labor rights among employees collectively have relative contributions to the implementation of the new national minimum wage in Nigeria, probing the extent to which broader labor rights frameworks impact the effectiveness of minimum wage policy across sectors.

This study is significant because of its possible benefits to other researchers, government (i.e. Federal and State) and other stakeholders in Nigerian economic system. It is important in providing a better understanding of the relationship between National Minimum Wage and Labour Rights.

Specifically, the university administrators would benefit from the findings of this research as the findings would provide an appropriate framework to identify the variables that are capable of ensuring adequate compliance to the implementation of the new national minimum wage policy and guarantee its positive impacts on labour's welfare. Educational researchers are not left out of the benefits of the findings of this research. This research would contribute to the existing body of knowledge in the research field, as background information for similar research in the future and also serve as useful reference material and guide for further research.
To the government, especially at Federal and State levels, who are directly responsible for implementing and monitoring compliance to the directive and agreement of stakeholders on the implementation of new national minimum wage policy, this research will recommend viable

means to avoid incessant Industrial action against unwelcome attitude and unpopular decision of government across all levels directly violating labour rights and welfare.

The geographical scope of this study will be limited to all the labour union members in the Southwestern states in Nigeria. The contextual scope therefore will review relevant literature on national indicators setting minimum wage and viable implementation strategies to ensure maximum compliance among stakeholders. It will be delimited to the use of the combination of qualitative and quantitative data to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the minimum wage policy's implementation and impact.

1.6 Operational Definition of Terms

In this study, the following key terms: Living wage, Minimum wages, National minimum wage, and Labour rights were comprehensively studied and consistently utilised to provide clarity, structure, and direction to the discourse on wage standards and labour welfare, particularly within the Nigerian context.

a. Living wage: a wage that is high enough to maintain a normal standard of living for the employees and their families, within the context of the country economic situation with due regard to work done using agreed work hours, estimated in tandem to global standards for a committed employee, (ILO, 2022).

b. Minimum wages: are the lowest amount of payment an employer of labour is mandated by law to pay workers for the services rendered during an agreed period which cannot be further reduced via individual or collective bargaining (ILO, 2014) However, in the context of Nigeria, minimum wage is basically the least amount of salary an employer is expected to pay workers per month (an average of thirty days). Such an employee is required to work for an average of eight hours per day and five working days per week

c. National Minimum Wage: the lowest amount of money that employers in a country are legally required to pay their employees. However, in Nigerian context being the case study, National minimum wage does not apply to some categories of employee such as those who Work in organization where employees are less than twenty five (25), employed on seasonal (agriculture sector) or contract bases, domestic workers, part-time staff, those who get

commission upon sale of commodities, those who work in a piece rate system, etc. These are not paid in line with minimum wage law but at the rate agreed with their employers (ILC, session 2024)

d. Labour rights: entitlements that protect workers from unjust or hazardous working conditions. According to International Labour Conference, 1998, as amended in 2022, labour fundamental rights include freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining with the employer, the elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour; the effective abolition of child labour; the elimination of sex, age, race or religious discrimination in respect of employment and occupation; and provision of a safe and healthy working environment etc.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 Wage

Wage as a concept describes individual earnings which based on agreed terms could be paid hourly, daily, week or annually (Sule, Amuni, Obasan and Banjo, 2015). It has been equally referred to as compensation given in returns for service rendered. It could also be regarded as remuneration paid directly in cash or in terms of non-monetary substances for the employees in accordance to the initial arrangements and agreements between employers and employees. As stated by Esien (2002), wage and salary though maintain certain distinctions yet, they could mean the same thing as salary is paid monthly with a total estimated annually while wages are either paid daily, weekly or hourly depending on the prevailing terms in a particular economic environment. In determining the appropriate wages for employees, stakeholders such as employers, government representatives and labour union are usually involved in negotiations to determine the most appropriate wages due to appreciate human efforts in contributing to increase in productivity level of the country.

Employees' wages are expected to be consistently reviewed to ascertain the survival and wellbeing of the people in line with economic situation in the state. This review according to the Nigerian Labour code, act of 1946, State mandatory form of payment acceptable according to the laws which is via legal tender approved by the government of the country. As employees render services responsible for the growth of industry and development of the country, wage is a compensation received to drive them to be more productive in terms of being dutiful and contributing ideas viable for the process of the organization. A firm that finds it difficult to pay adequate wages to the employees as motivation to be more productive may go into extinction. When human efforts required to drive the economy of nation keep declining due to poor remuneration, such a country may remain backward among the comity of nations in the world.

However, in a competitive economic situation high and attractive wages plus other fringe benefits are proven efficient ways to win loyalty and retain adequate workers. In line with this

view, Agburu (2012) as cited in Sule, Amuni, Obasan and Banjo, (2015) posited that "institutions or companies that seek to attract and retain highly productive and efficient employees cannot shy away from facing the challenges posed by the need to pay wages adequately in a competitive environment". This explain reasons behind high rate of unemployment, poor economic development and increase in number of unskilled workers in many African countries as number of companies and institutions willing to offer competitive wages is very few when compared with population in those countries.

Another clog in the wheel of economic progress of many 3rd world countries in Africa is the high cost of production inclusive of workers' wages. Many institutions involved in manufacturing and production of other consumables have been lamenting infrastructural decay, high cost of living and unstable economic policies of government and others factors as responsible for their inability to demonstrate adequate care in remuneration and other benefits for the labour. Some of them have estimated more than 50% of cost of production as allocated to settle wages of workers while the rest of the capital is used for other production processes as observed by (Nwachukwu 2000 and Atchison, 2003). This explained another justification for inadequate wages paid in some of those organizations so as to keep their organization in existence. However, as posited by Esien (2002), companies/institutions that do not prioritize its labour welfare cannot last, as its productivity is bound to dwindle due to insufficient or lack of motivated, loyal and dedicated workers. Therefore, appropriate wages and attractive fringe benefits are being vehemently advocated for employees across the globe to guarantee adequate standard of living for them and their families.

Going forward, adequate remuneration for employees has been found to depend largely on some vital economic, technological and political factors ranging from high demand for labor with latest and most desirable skills by the employers of labour, financial buoyancy of the organization/company, and level of productivity of the organization. Also, consistent update and upgrades in remuneration of employees as technological innovations aids increase in productivity level of workers, government decisions on economic policies that affect exchange rate, tax and interest rates from bank loan, the bargaining skills and prowess of the labour unions where they exist and recognized, increase in the cost of living which is usually strong factor for upward review of workers salary/wages, etc.

It is highly imperative that employees make themselves competitive and attractive by learning skills that are in high demand for high/adequate remunerations. It has been confirmed by Esien (2002) that the employers of labour are ready to take adequate care of any employee whose skills are in high demand and required for the organization to dominate market and make huge profits. Employees must update their skills to make themselves relevant in the era of unprecedented change that is happening so very fast. Skills that are in short supply but are desperately being demanded for will attract handsome pay that can adequately cater for workers' needs while those employees with the skills that are very low in demand may suffer neglect if they fail to improve their skills relevant to trends in vogue.

Employers of labour are known not to be philanthropist but as businessmen and women who have put their organization out to render essential services for sole aim of profits making. The ability for an organization to pay its workers handsomely depends largely on the rate of returns to the entrepreneur. The organization that earns bountifully may pay adequately compared with those who do not. Workers' welfare must be paramount, which to a great extent depends on financial buoyancy of the organization to meet sufficiently its financial obligations.

Rise in cost of living has also been noted for its determinants of rise in the workers' wages. This is to enable them to survive in the economic situation by meeting basic essential needs for their survival and that of their families. This, however, does not circulate fast. As cost of living rises, the attention is usually paid to workers covered by the discuss of minimum wage while other categories of employees will then be at the mercy of their individual private employers to consider them for pay rise so as to meet up in the economy saturated by inflation which is the persistent increase in the general price levels of commodities in the market. The bargaining power of the trade union will also contribute to a rise in pay of employees in inflation period as many employers could be more focused on the increase in productivity and profits at the expense of dedicated workers. The trade union becomes the voice for the employees in negotiating adequate remunerations for the labour who are brain and efforts behind the organization's progress. In the defense of their members, the labour unions must be strong and tactical enough to win the hearts of the employers in favour of the employees' benefits in terms of increased wages and other statutory bonuses/benefits.

Certain statutory government decisions on taxation, bank loan interest rates and exchange rates have also been identified as major in determining sufficient wages for the employees. The government policy on exchange rates, bank loan, interest rates and tax could be factors that generate inflation in the economy and thereby warranted modified structure of remuneration in favour of workers welfare and general economic progress of the country.

Another legitimate justification for adequate remunerations of workers are adoption and exploration of technological innovations applicable to different industries and increase productivity level of the organizations. It is an obvious fact to say that without human knowledge, technological innovations will not exist, therefore human efforts are responsible for the introduction and operations of technological gadgets and machineries responsible for high turnover rate of companies. It will then become very expedient for companies to review the wages paid to employees as they are the responsible factors for the increase in turnover of the industry, firm or companies.

Summarily, for the companies to attract and retain committed, motivated and productive employees, the wages to be paid to them must be very attractive, meet their needs and within the legal limit set by the government of the country. Institutions that pay attractive wages to employees will not only stand out among other industries within the sector but also become competitive among other industries in the country. The organized labour unions must advocate commensurate remunerations for all employees in various sectors of the country's economy. In the same vein, organizations and companies should motivate their employees well enough to gain their long-term loyalty and dedication, reward their professional and productive conducts and prioritize their welfare and that of their families.

2.1.2 Minimum wage

Minimum wage is defined as the least amount of payment an employer is required by law of the country to pay the employee for job done or service rendered during an agreed period. The employer is expected not to reduce or alter the agreed amount either via collective bargaining or individual settlement. The idea of fixing minimum wage using legal approach stems out of need to protect employees that are defenseless against exploitative tendencies or rather low wage pay by the employers. The employees are responsible for productivity of an organization, if such a

company is increasing in profits, the employees should be motivated with wages good enough to live a meaningful life with family. This legal coverage of minimum wages is expected to benefit all employees regardless of sector they work in, their genders and color or disabilities. It is meant to empower employees to live meaningful lives above poverty and eradicate prevalent inequalities among employees according to the definition of their employers.

In a broader scope, minimum wages are not limited to monetary reward but also other working conditions and terms of engagement with the employers which must be very considerate of human rights and dignity of every employee regardless of their status either citizens or foreigners (Fapohunda, 2012). In 2015, the United Nations met to deliberate over 2030 Sustainable Development Goals where the issue of inequality in access to work and treatments at workplace between male and female categories of employees were discussed as the prime focus. They stressed the need to advocate for equal remunerations for work with equal values regardless of gender difference and secure adequate protection for labor rights. Poor remunerations of certain categories of employees have been responsible for their poor wellbeing as they are forced to live below the minimum standards of payment for employees. Some have even reduced their level of commitment to the job while paying more attention to their 'side hustle' (private business) as a way to augment their income in order to meet up with required financial demand to earn minimum living standard, since the so called minimum wage is not enough to meet their basic needs due to high rate of inflation and weak purchasing power of an average Nigerian employee income.

According to Fajana (2002) fixing of minimum wage in Nigeria is more of political exercise than economic consideration and this is why each time minimum wage is fixed and there is increase in the salaries of workers across various sectors of the economy, the joy of it does not last as inflation rates, tax rates and electricity tariffs etc. would have increased far more than what an average employee can deal with. This implies that those in charge of fixing minimum wage are doing so to make the government appear sensitive and responsive to the demands of the labour unions whereas the economic realities will even be worse than it was before the declaration of new minimum wage. Fashoyin (1997) cited in Elegbede, Gbajumo-Sheriff and Oni (2024) stated his view that the national minimum wage over the last seven decades has always been fixed below the demands of the labour unions and what an average employee needed to survive. In the

same vein, Elegbede (2016) also posited that sometimes, the federal government either manipulates the terms and agreements with the labour unions or unilaterally fix wage increase without due consultation with crucial stakeholders in the determination of wage for employees in the nation. This action is done most times to weaken and dampen the comrade zeal of the organized labour unions.

From the global perspectives, according to Nwude (2013), national minimum wage is fixed by government with the sole aim to protect vulnerable workers who may have been exploited by their employers, getting paid lesser than value of their contributions to the businesses of their employers. Fixing minimum wage is a global practice first observed in New Zealand in 1894 by the New Zealand government and two years later in 1896 the government of the Victorian state of Australia fixed national minimum wage (ILO, 2020). Thereafter, many other countries in the world adopted this policy of fixing national minimum wage legally to protect workers from any form of inhuman treatment and maintain dignity of human person in service delivery. In Nigeria, during colonial era in 1934, Hunt committee were set up to submit recommendations on appropriate minimum wage for employees under colonial powers. This was followed by the Bridges committee 1941. From then till date, wage review is always preceded by labour unions agitation and threat to shut down the country by embarking on nationwide strike action (Ubeku, 1986).

2.1.3 National Minimum wage

In the general views, the National Minimum Wage is the least total amount of money which according to the Act of the parliament stipulates and requires an employer of labour to pay to the least in rank among his paid workers or employees monthly in his organization. According to the law of the country, every employer, be it private or public organization is bound to pay national minimum wages which has become statutory, as stipulated in the constitution. However, national minimum wage in Nigerian context being the case study, does not apply to some categories of employee such as those who Work in organization where numbers of employees are less than twenty five (25) persons, employed on seasonal (agriculture sector) or contract bases, domestic workers, part-time staff, those who get commission upon sale of commodities, those who work in a piece rate system, etc. These are not paid in line with minimum wage law but at the rate agreed with their employers (ILC, session 2024).

National Minimum wage application in international contexts

As reported by Adema, Giesing, Schönauer and Stitteneder (2019), in the history of minimum wage law among the countries in the world, New Zealand was the first country to introduce and implemented minimum wage law in 1894. Within the space of two years, Australia joined the league and the vision of the two countries were similar which was basically to alleviate poor working conditions of some low income earners among workers in some selected industries in the countries. This stressed the relationship between minimum wage policy implementation and living conditions of the employees. Later in Europe, around 1950s, the members of European union embrace the idea with Germany, for example, adopted minimum wage policy in 2015 (Adema, Giesing, Schönauer and Stitteneder, 2019).

From the general overview, it was discovered that minimum wage law applies but not to all categories of workers. Different countries set different yardsticks (such as age of the worker, sector where the worker belongs, disability conditions, workers skills and prevailing economic realities of the country) to determine who get paid within the provision of minimum wage law in the country. A comprehensive information is provided by Adema, Giesing, Schönauer and Stitteneder (2019), stating that Australia as one of the foremost countries to have adopted minimum wage policy based its recommendations for minimum wage on age of the workers. Many workers were teenagers and as they advanced in age at work, the percentage of their minimum wage increases until it reaches the maximum for a 20 year old worker. Morealso, disability conditions was another consideration for minimum wage in Australia as well as New Zealand. High skilled and experienced workers earned better within the provision for minimum wage law in Luxembourg and Malta. In the United States, sector of work determines the rate of minimum wage one may be considered for within the states. In Hungary, government employees and those employed under government recognized platforms access minimum wage implementation. As against what one would have thought, that increase in the minimum wage policy will lead to job loss, on the contrary, employees still retain their job but with more level of efficiency (Manning, 2021).

National Minimum wage application in European context.

In the European context, minimum wages are set by national legislation, such as in France and Germany, or through collective bargaining agreements, in countries like Denmark, Netherlands and Italy. The 2022 EU directive required member states with statutory minimum wages to establish a procedural framework for setting and updating them, and also ensuring that they are adequately linked to reasonable standard of living, while member states without statutory minimums are encouraged to promote collective bargaining. The EU Directive on Adequate Minimum Wages (2022) had the clear goal of ensuring all EU workers have access to a "reasonable standard of living" and a fair minimum wage. Moreover, requirements for countries with statutory minimum wages included (i) To establish a clear procedure for setting and updating minimum wage (ii) ensure minimum wages are linked to economic indicators like the general wage level, productivity, and purchasing power. (iii) adhere to a recommended benchmark, with minimum wages set at least at 60% of the country's median wage or 30% of the gross average wage, a level which is often associated with increased risk of in-work poverty. (iv) implement a monitoring and inspection system to improve working conditions and combat illegal subcontracting or unregistered overtime.

Also, the directive encouraged and supports the role of collective bargaining in wage setting. Countries where less than 80% of the workforce is covered by collective are required to take steps in promoting it. Italy for instance as a member state without a statutory minimum wage, is expected to promote collective bargaining and ensure workers' rights to a decent income through sectoral agreements.

National Minimum Wage During Colonial Era in Nigeria

As reported by Fashoyin (1980); Yesufu, (1984), the public administrators who are mainly Europeans were the set of people involved in negotiations on the wages increments for workers during colonial era. This was preceded by agitation and protests in favour of wage increments and better working conditions for workers. As it was then, so it is now that labour unions must protest before getting attention of government on national minimum wage review/increments. Several committees were set up to review minimum wage for employees under colonial powers from Hunt Committee of 1934 to the Bridges committee of 1941, Sir Walter Harragin

commission of 1946, Tudor Davis Commission 1945 etc. Ogunna (1999) reported unfair discrimination between government employees who are Africans and those Europeans working for colonial powers in Nigeria then prior to 1946 commission of Sir Walter Harragin. The Europeans enjoyed better working conditions plus higher wages than their African counterparts. Sir Walter Harragin then recommended change in structure of workers from European and African services to junior and senior services. He then introduced fairness and equity to the civil service, which then made both African and European workers to be collecting same basic salary (Okafor and Aniche, 2015).

In 1955, it was reported that Gorsuch commission changed junior and senior civil service dichotomy to a structure of five grades, divided civil servants into different cadres and levels and reviewed the minimum wage policy in line with grade level of each staff. In 1959, Mbanefo wages review commission ensure implementation of salary increase across five grading scale system that existed (Ogunna, 1999; Okafor and Aniche, 2015).

National Minimum Wage after Independence in 1960

During first republic, after Independence, Nigeria practiced regionalism under federal government structure. This enabled each region to decide how much to pay workers from different sectors and cadres. This led to disparities in wage payment among workers across the nation which negated the principle of equity and fairness in salary payment for all categories of employees. It was adjusted back to uniform pay prior to the second republic under Udoji commission of 1973. This commission also succeeded in changing the grade level position of civil servants from 5 grade levels to grade level 17 further divided to different salary steps. This commission ensured that wages pay to workers commensurate with the work done or services rendered (ogunna 1999; Asodike and Jaja 2012; okafor & Aniche, 2015).

In May 1981, during the second republic, it was the first time after Independence that government legislated the national minimum wage policy for workers across various sectors in both public and private organizations. The minimum wage then was fixed for ₦125.00k. In 1991, the National Minimum wage was reviewed upward to ₦250.00. The Allison Ayida panel recommend national minimum wage review from 1993-1998. It was implemented as ₦3000.00 for civil servants in state and local governments while workers at federal level was collecting

₦3,500.00 as monthly pay (ogunna 1999; Asodike and Jaja, 2012). However, on May 1st, 2000, federal government introduced new minimum wage policy of ₦7,500.00 for federal government civil servants and civil servants from oil producing states while the federal government approved ₦5,500.00 for workers at state level. Nigeria Labour Congress frowned at the amount approved for state workers and it was reviewed upward to ₦6,500.00 (National Minimum Wage Amendment Act 2000; Arizona-ogwu, 2007).

A new era that marked the end of dual salary structure (different salary structure for federal and state governments workers) happened in 2011 under the regime of President Goodluck E. Jonathan who signed into law new national minimum wage of ₦18,000.00. and mandated all employers across all sectors be it private or public organizations to pay least of their employees nothing less than the new national minimum wage of ₦18,000.00. Six years later, when hyperinflation had already started making mess of minimum wage of ₦18,000.00, the joint labour unions proposed ₦56,000.00 (Akintayo, Oyaromade, Ayantunji and Ajibola, 2020). After many deliberations, in 2019 the federal government approved ₦30,000.00 new national minimum wage. At the moment, ₦70,000.00 is the new national minimum wage for as approved by the federal government in the year 2024. The major justification for this regular review of national minimum wage is the rate of inflation in the country's economy and currency devaluation.

2.1.4 Living wage

According to the Global Living Wage Coalition, a living wage is the payment received for a standard work week by a worker in a given location, sufficient to provide a decent standard of living for the worker and his or her family. They further highlighted the basics of a decent standard of living such as food, water, housing, education, health care, transportation, clothing, and other essential needs, including provision for the unexpected. Since 1919, living wage has attracted and enjoyed the attention of the International Labour Organization (ILO) as part of fundamental human rights (ILO, 2008). Within the scope of decent work and dignity of human person, living wage has been considered to cover creation of safe work environment for workers, freedom, equity and dignity of labour.

Again in 1948, the universal declaration of human rights made by the United Nations Organization reemphasized the necessity for every worker to earn a living wage. However, it is expedient to know that living wage is not synonymous with national minimum wage. National Minimum Wage is fixed by government, it has legal status as it becomes legal rights of employees to earn it and compulsory responsibility of the employers to pay or else face litigation. On the other hand, living wages is not fixed by law and therefore cannot be enforced on any employer. Also, living wage does not enjoy constancy for a long period rather it changes alongside with cost of living which are goods and services that must be purchased for well-being of employees and their family. Guzi, Kabina, and Tijdens, (2016) reported that richer countries set their minimum wage about living wage thereby ensure that no family lives in poverty while poorer countries set their minimum wage below cost of living for an average family resulted in making many employees living below the poverty line.

2.1.5 Labour Rights

In the study conducted by Children and Young People Living for Peace and International Society for Peace and Safety (2023) it was observed that many employees in Nigeria are suffering from multidimensional poverty, unemployment/disguise employment and underemployment. Some employers tactically engage the service of recruitment agencies to hire contract staff for them in a bid to escape the reality of the payment of compulsory pension, health benefits, housing allowance and other benefits for the employees if only he or she had been employed with the status of full-time staff of the organization. However, in an ideal situation, contract staff are not meant to serve beyond six months before their appointments should be converted to full-time status. This implies that any employee as contract staff whose status in the organization did not change to full time after six months and he or she is still retained in such an organization is only being exploited. This is one of the several ways labour rights are being violated in Nigeria and other places across the globe.

This problem of labour right violation is further compounded by level of ignorance of many employees in Nigeria about Nigerian Labour Laws. Some other employees who are aware of their labour rights are also not courageous enough to challenge their employers when things go wrong about their rights as citizens of Nigeria. Every organization is expected to have its own policy that guides all members of their organization to behave orderly and protect the

organization's interests even if such policy is a gross violation of the labour rights. Some organizations are found to be hiring and firing staff at will for strategic reasons ranging from casualization of staff, failure to provide a written statement of their contract which is meant to contain information about benefits that employees are entitled to in the organization, year of promotion and retirement benefits etc. Refusal of the employer to hand this document over to the employee will render such worker handicap in the face of some decisive legal battles.

As a way of legalizing the labour right about rule of engagement in the organization and also criminalize the illegality of the some organizations found of violating legal rights, the parliamentary arm of Nigeria government attempted the amendment process of the labour Act to stop and criminalize the act of casualization of Nigerian Labour and stated that employers of labour should regularize their casual workers after six months of engagement in the organization or face 2 years jail term or pay 2 million naira fine. Sadly this is yet to be adopted.

Fair Remunerations

Fair remunerations otherwise known as living wage is one of the core rights of employees across the globe. An employee will be regarded as being treated fairly by the employers if his/her daily, weekly or biweekly, monthly pay is reasonable in terms of meeting the needs of the employee and enables him to live with his family with their dignity of human intact (Von der Leyen, 2019). Such employees must enjoy the liberty of choosing the preferred work to do and not being forced or coerced to work and that at the end of work done as agreed, the employee gets paid with the amount of remuneration that truly reflects the current economic realities going by the cost of living in the society. Von der Leyen (2019) as cited in Shahini, (2023) emphasized the need for the employers of labour to provide and guarantee adequate remuneration for the protection of employees working and Living conditions, not just for him or herself alone but also for the family inclusive and in consonance with the economic realities of the country or state concern.

Safe Working Conditions

Section 17 of Nigeria Labour Law, recommended for all employers to create work environment that are "just" and "humane". This also extended to provision of due compensation for workers who sustain injuries or even dies while working for the organization. According to the Employment Compensation Act, (2010), one percent of the worker's monthly salary is expected

to have been saved by the employers in preparation for such situations so that the worker will be able to receive required medical attention and take care of the family, the next of kin among the family members will be entitled to such compensation in case the employee dies in the process.

Health Insurance scheme is another factor an employee enjoys from the workplace as it is mandatory for both employers of labour with five or more employees and the employees to subscribe to it on a regular basis. This benefit is statutorily applicable to employees across various sectors, whether public or private organizations (The National Health Insurance Authority Act, 2021).

Employees thrive in an environment where mutual trust, love and cordiality prevail. The management of organizations are expected to make adequate and formal provision for the promotion of well-deserved staff. This is expected to be merit based so as to discourage rancor and disharmony in the organization. The employees must understand clearly the terms and conditions of their promotion and benefits attached to motivating their commitments and loyalty to the organization. Work environment where favoritism and nepotism rules, infidelity and insubordination are bound to thrive, and this will make the environment of such organization unsafe for the employees to work. The usual known basis of promotion are competence and seniority and other peculiar factors for each institution.

Upon engagement in a particular workplace, the employees are expected to within their first three months get their employment letter bearing the details of the organization, the owner, name of the employee, terms of service and benefits attached. This is expected to justify working hours, rest, leisure, holidays where the employees still get fully paid in terms of the agreed salary. A safe work environment guarantees not only the security of the employees but also their family. Hazardous work environment requires provision of protective apparatus that can guarantee safety of the employees. Of equal importance is setting rules and policy in favor of the female gender especially the nursing mothers to go on maternity leave with pay within the period permitted to stay out of work temporarily.

Non-discrimination

The anti-discrimination law against employees on the ground of sex, health status, race, age etc. has global application and to all categories of employees whether full time, part-time or casual

workers (ILO, 1958). The employer of labour is expected to give attention to all categories of employees, in terms of their workplace safety and health as demanded by International Labour Laws (Accountability Framework Initiative, 2021). Wage discrimination is another prohibited policy as some organization tend to discriminate between male and female workers, permanent and casual workers, etc. Workers are expected to be paid according to the value of their contributions to the organization and this is expected to be uniform among workers of the same levels of experience and skills (European Union, 2000). Gender discrimination as a factor that influences promotion at work should not override seniority and competence which are ideal yardsticks for determining the best deserving candidate for promotion not based on gender, employment status, race or nationality. This is in accordance with section 17 of the Nigeria Constitution as amended which demanded "equal wages for equal service rendered" and forbid employment discrimination on account of race, sex, age, arbitrary classification of employment (part time, full time, casual workers etc.) citizenship status etc.

The Anti-discrimination Act (2014), went further to stop all manners of social stigmatization and discrimination against person living with HIV/AIDS at workplaces. As it is a common practice of many organizations to order their prospective employees to go for HIV test to know their status before they will be employed or refuse to employ them based on the result of their test (HIV/AIDS), the decision is prohibited; instead, the organization is expected to make adequate provision for employees in such unfortunate categories. This provision equally extends to customers (suffering from HIV/AIDS or related illnesses) who may require access to the services provided by the organization. This must be done in line with popular campaigns prohibiting stigmatization of People Living with HIV/AIDS or related sicknesses in society.

The Discrimination Against Person with Disabilities prohibition Act, (2018), made substantial provision for accommodating persons living with one form of disability or the other. It is a common saying that ‘disability does not necessarily mean inability’. Therefore, for an employee who is willing and able to render one service or the other, his or her state of disability should not be a hindrance for his or her to earn a living. To further stress the importance of this Act, section 28, of Nigeria Constitution already imposed penalties (monetary) on defaulting organization against people living with disabilities. This is to ensure everyone who is willing and able to work

is given a fair opportunity to compete with others, given fair remunerations and not discriminated against.

Some other forms of discrimination have been discovered and are equally being prohibited, subject to sanctions. These are cases of dismissal of women on the ground of pregnancy or taking maternity leave as required by law, denying employment based on marital status (single or married with certain number of children), preferring single workers above married staff with numerous responsibilities and commitments (Schneider, 2025; McCann and Tomaskovic-Devey, 2021; Borrowman et al., 2023). Women taking in and subsequently going for maternity leave is non-negotiable and as such adequate provision must be made by the organization to guarantee security of their job, payment of their entitled allowances, salary, promotion etc. (Cheung et al., 2022; Harvard Law Review, 2023; Borrowman et al., 2023). Gender based sexual harassment must also be prohibited as some men or women take advantage of their vantage position in organization to harass fellow workers who may be seeking their favor in one capacity or the other (Uggen and Blackstone, 2004; Cortina and Areguin, 2021). The organization must ensure transparency in their various activities ranging from recruitment, placement, promotion, dismissal and retirement benefits packages (McDonald, 2012; Dobbin and Kalev, 2019). They must also adopt equal taxation laws for both genders and payment of allowances, salary and other benefits should not be distorted by the feelings of gender inequality in any form.

Having established various indicators of discrimination among employees in various sectors and organizations, it is essential to justify the link between minimum wage policy implementation and wage discrimination. Oka and Yamada (2019) reported an attempt by the United States minimum wage policy to close wage differential gaps among employees on the basis of gender, academic qualifications and work experience over time. It further explained how workers who earn low wages especially women, younger employees and those with low level of education usually become beneficiary of change or rise in minimum wage which is basically with the focus to close inequality gaps in wage differentiation, especially among employees in the same category, sector or groups. This confirmed inherent benefits of minimum wage policy implementation for low-income earners among employees and reason for government to pay adequate attention to the welfare of workers regardless of their status. Minimum wage policy implementation protects workers who earn below the minimum and equally improves the income

of those workers already earning above the minimum. Håkansta et al. (2024), further reveal the extended benefits and link between minimum wage policy implementation and non-discrimination as its effects spread across formal and informal sectors of the economy. They further posited that categories of employees that are more vulnerable in minimum wage policy implementation discuss are in the informal sectors, e g. Women, casual workers and migrants. However, If governments across level intensify efforts in the implementation of minimum wage law, both formal and informal sectors workers will become beneficiary of minimum wage law and level of inequalities in earnings will be minimal (Leckcivilize, 2015; Bhorat et al., 2000).

Freedom of Association

As rightly opined by Aristotle that human beings are social animals, it strongly implies the inability of man to survive in isolation hence the need for association. Section 40 of the Nigerian constitution stated one of the major fundamental human rights which is the right to freedom of association. More specifically, the Trade Unions Act, Cap. T14 as amended, guarantees the right of every employee to form and join a trade union as well as to encourage solidarity, bargaining and the provision of necessary support for individual members of the union. Studies also indicated the nexus between minimum wage law and freedom of association as in some context membership of labour unions offer protection of workers' rights and ensures direct benefits for employees in the outcome of collective bargaining agreement where minimum wage policy are being negotiated (Clemens and Strain, 2022; Eurofound, 2025; Omolabi et al., 2022).

In Nigerian context, there are two powerful unions which serve as umbrella bodies for all other unions protecting the right of their fellow employees which are Trade Union Congress (TUC) and Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC). There are other associations meant for employers of labour as well. Labour unions protect the rights of all categories of employees whether permanent staff or temporary/casual staff and that across all sectors be it private or public, even the domestic servants that serve in private individuals' homes. As numerous as the number of trade unions are, their activities are guided by the Trade Unions Act union which government instrument of regulating their activities such as collective bargaining, work to rule, strike action, mass protests, rally etc. The convention of the International Labour Organization equally emphasizes the liberty of labour to freely associate with a union of their profession, also stress the need to eradicate all forms of compulsory/forced labour. Academic studies also reveal the roles of labour unions in

guaranteeing Labour Rights to association, participate in the discuss and receive the benefits of collective bargaining on the minimum wage law by both employees already earning above minimum wage and those earning below it (Omolabi, Salman, Ishola, and Abdulkareem, 2022).

2.2 Empirical Review

2.2.1 Implementation of new national minimum wage and its impact on labour rights in public and private sectors

As reported by Kuddo, Robalino, and Weber (2015), the implementation of national minimum wage has far reached effects on the salaries of workers who originally were earning above minimum wage. According to their findings, the new national minimum wage policy implementation will generate spillover effects on the salaries of senior officers and highly skilled labour in the public sector. However, with the rate of inflation in the country's economy and value of country currency, the effects of spillover of salaries of senior civil servants may not be obvious or very significant. The only noticeable benefits workers can get here is the attempt to bridge gaps in wage inequalities among employees. Belma and Wolfson (2014) also reported their finding in similar vein that in their review of United States and other developed economy, there are myriad of evidences corroborating the fact that increase in minimum wage will not only attempt to bridge wages inequalities among employees but bring about general increase in wages for all employees at either uniform rate or different rates based on agreed categorization of employees. Lemos (2010) equally reported that among developing countries implementation of new minimum wage has been found capable of reducing wage inequalities among employees, a good example of these developing economies is Brazil.

However, Grimshaw and Miozzo (2003), Rubery (2003) noticed and reported that minimum wage implementation does not bring about a reduction in wage inequalities automatically, especially with the consideration of countries where compliance level of industries to payment of minimum wage may be very low. This clearly implies that minimum wage will only be enabled to bridge wages inequality gap when and where level of compliance in the country is high enough. The compliance level may be guaranteed in formal sectors of the economy, while workers at the informal sector may be at disadvantage especially if in the country, there are no

effective monitoring groups to enforce compliance and report industries that fail to comply for appropriate sanctions.

Wage inequality is prominent among migrants (legal or illegal), domestic servants, those that work in the agricultural sector, restaurants, companies as low skilled labour etc. Another observed and reported reason for wage inequalities among employees where minimum wage is introduced and implemented is the scope of its application. In some countries, application of minimum wage policy is exclusive of domestic workers, employees in the agricultural sector, organizations that employ less than certain number of employees etc. This limitation in the scope of the minimum wage policy application may succeed in making some workers to be at great disadvantage, especially if they do not belong to any recognized labour union that can speak for them.

Doucouliagos and Stanley, 2009, Leonard, Stanley, Doucouliagos, 2014, World Bank, 2015, reported the insignificant effect of minimum wage on employment. In fact, it reported a positive effect on employment. Belma and Wolfson (2014) are of the opinion that minimum wage policy which is meant to protect the low income earning employees to increase their income and improve their standard of living is not expected to be another reason why some people in this categories will be affected by being retrenched by their employers who may not able to afford to retain them as employees, as a result of the cost of labour. Another opinion rested on the economic realities of the impact of increased minimum wage as it will boost the purchasing power of an average employee, thereby increasing demands and encouraging possibility of creating more jobs and hire more employees (Kuddo, Robalino, and Weber, 2015). Minimum Wage increment will only result in scarce job opportunities if it rises above marginal productivity of an average employee and thereby shift the burden on the employers who are also interested in making profits and maximizing productivity of the employees. Such employers will prefer to lay off some employees and retain the number of employees the available resources can adequately cater for while the unemployed are forced into the informal sector of the economy to make ends meet where compliance level to minimum wage policy is rather not applicable or too low to notice. Implementation of minimum wages could make low wages earners in the economy as employees become very expensive there by making the employers think of ways to substitute

such employees with advanced and available technology. This will also increase the cost of living and reduce individuals and family consumption level.

Di Nardo, Fortin, and Lemieux (1996) reported over representation of women in low paying jobs, which is one of the reasons for gender based paying gaps between male and female categories of employees. They therefore suggested possibility of the introduction and implementation of minimum wage to close this identified pay gaps between male and female genders in the workforce, citing the instances of United States and Indonesia. Other findings by Hallward-Driemeier, Rijkers, and Waxman, (2015) also reported from the study conducted by International Labour Organization (ILO) that minimum wage introduction in former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia between 2011-2014 succeeded in reducing gender-based pay gap.

However, some factors have been discovered to be strong clogs in the wheels of bridging gender-based pay gap. These factors are attempts by labour market institutions to fix low wages policy for some occupations primarily dominated by women or minimum wage policy that does not favour the migrants in terms of its coverage of implementation. To solve this wage inequality issue, government must ensure to deliver a very comprehensive minimum wage policy that will cover all categories of employees without gender or descent (as in migrants) discrimination. Also, the government must equally ensure and empower the judicial system for the defense of those whose right to equal remuneration may be unjustly violated. Furthermore, the system that ascribe some occupations to female gender must be checked in a bid to promote gender equality and amended policies that allocate more privileges to one gender above the other.

2.3 Theoretical Review

2.3.1 Labor Rights Theory

Labour Rights Theory forms a crucial component of human rights, it explains the legal relationship between employees and employers, emphasizes the legal obligation of the key players in the labour market to guarantee justice, equity, protection and equal treatment of employees by their employers, also explains the social responsibility of employees with the goal of creating a balance of interests between the workers and their respective employers. Labour Rights are human rights that protect all categories of employees from unjust treatment from their

employers, working in a hazardous environment, affecting not only the social well-being of the employees but others as well such as their families, employers and members of the society.

The theory of labour rights is built on the basis (core principles) of need to establish legal provisions for protecting the interest of the employees from being dehumanized by their employers who may be greedy of gains at the expense of the workers' well-being and ensure that they are being fairly treated. It ensures balance of interest between the employers and employees by creating a system to protect the rights of not only the employees but also the employer of labour. As the well-being of the employees is considered paramount, the employers as well deserve appropriate returns on their investment by hiring productive labour and firing any staff that is not ready to contribute maximally to the growth of the organization.

Payment of minimum wage policy is the legitimate right of productive employees, contributing consistently to the growth and development of the organization. However, there is an opportunity of bargaining where employers will also be allowed to count the cost of implementing such a policy in the interest of the employees as the cost of labour is also part of the cost of production which will depend on the available resources the organization has at its disposal. This is where the principle of equity in the theory of labour rights comes to play between the employers and the employees who will have to reach an agreeable compromise to be able to work together without infringing or violating the legal privileges of each other.

Among the key labour rights are the following as entrenched in the constitution namely: right to fair remunerations and safe (healthy) working conditions, protection and prohibition of every discriminatory tendency against employees, liberty to associate with others in a union and enjoy the right to collective bargaining, and freedom from forced and child labour etc. These rights covered by the theory of labour rights are enforceable and any violation of them in any form may attract sanctions from appropriate authorities. This implies that based on the legal premises where the theory of labour rights is established, it has become a very serious obligation of the employers to ensure that their employees are well treated and protected.

Labour Rights Theory has enjoyed contributions of different scholars interpreting the theory from different perspectives. Classical theorists stress the importance of the theory as a legal instrument to normalize and regulate labour/employers relationships in protecting human rights.

Humanistic theorists emphasize humanity as the core focus of labour rights theory. They focus on the necessity of respecting, protecting and preserving the dignity of human person among the employees working in both formal and informal sectors of the economy. Neoclassical theorists express the need for collective bargaining with due consultation and consideration of market realities. They opined that labour/employers' relations should be guided by market mechanism which is about price determination by the interactions of forces of demand and supply. Minimum Wage is ideal to protect workers, however, due consultation with appropriate stakeholders will ensure equity between employers of labour and employees. As much as employees do not want to be cheated, employers do not want to run their businesses at lost as a result of implementing minimum wage policy that will increase cost of labour at the expense of productivity. On the other hand, Marxist theorists exposed the evil of capitalist economy to seek to increase productivity of labour who are responsible for the value of commodity at the expense of labour wellbeing. The capitalists do not pay enough attention to the employees' wellbeing, rather on the maximization of profits. This is simply a gross violation of human rights and an exploitation of human resources.

Labour right theory gained global relevance with the involvement of International Labour Organization (ILO) and other international human rights agencies holding conferences, conventions, symposiums etc. on the need to advance and protect labour rights from the grassroots to global levels. Their focus is basically to ensure that human beings are accorded with the respect and dignity they deserve to work and earn living according to the prevailing standard of living in the environment employees choose to work. They frown at any form of inhuman treatment on the basis of gender, races, marital status etc., especially against migrants. For any country seeking economic growth and development, understanding the imperative of ensuring fair labour policies formulation and implementation is not negotiable. This is no doubt important to secure social justice, fair treatment and decent living standards for the people.

2.3.2 Labor Market Segmentation Theory

Labour market segmentation theory explains the inequalities that prevail in the labour market, as a result of institutional perception of labour qualities and values which in turn affect their classification and treatment by the employers. It is a common practice that employers perceived some employees to be more valuable, educated, skilled, productive and profitable than others.

This perception of employers explains differences in salary structure, fringe benefits, condition of service and prospects of employees at workplaces. The demand for labor by the employers happened, depending on the needs of the organization, workers that are employed same day could receive different placements at work and different job description that may or may not be determined by employees qualifications, skills they possess and their potential contributions to the organization. This theory justified conditions for perceiving one employee more important than the others. It provides an important framework to comprehend certain premises for inequalities, discrimination, disparities in salary structure and other issues faced by employees in the labour market.

Labour market segmentation theory presents possible yardsticks that justify demarcation among the employees in the labour market. These factors are mostly beyond the employees' control because they are determined by the principles of operation by the employers, institutional operation standards and market posture the organization has which justifies her rating and the expected values they contribute to the society. The segmentation of workers otherwise known as categorization of employees occurs in different working conditions, wages/salaries, job security, opportunities for advancement of career etc.

This is better explained by theory of dual labour market theory which is a subset of segmentation theory, developed a framework that categorizes employees in labour market to primary sector employees who are into more stable jobs that pay very attractive/high salaries and secondary sector employees who are into unstable jobs with meager salary that can barely sustain them.

The segmentation theorists posited that every institution has unique arrangements, discrimination and power structure that shape placement of individual employees rather than just the employees' skills and abilities. They further offer explanation on why categories of employees such as women, migrants and minorities usually get lower salary/wages, lack of job security, limited possibility for growth in the organization even when they obviously possess similar training, skills and experience as others.

Segmentation theory is equally explained by agreements of contract between employees and employers which could either be temporary or permanent nature of employment, labour laws that apply to certain categories of employees, collective bargaining with limited scope of application.

Size of organization is another instance of segmentation theory application. Some organizations are referred to as big industry that offer very attractive salary structure and other fringe benefits while there are organizations that pay low salary to employees with poor conditions of service.

Another consideration in segmentation theory of labour market is social hierarchy which explains why only the rich or those connected with the influencial members of society can get certain high paying jobs e.g. working in oil and gas industry, Central Banks, top ranking manufacturing industries etc. while those who are poor, middle or lower social classes) get jobs in the low paying firms, institutions etc. Some employees are employed in formal sector e.g. bankers, engineers, teachers, medical personnels etc. and enjoy better conditions of service while others are recruited into the low paying informal employment such as guards, janitors etc. Domestic servants equally belong to this category of employees in informal employment. Other forms of segmentation of employees' design by the institution that employ them are core workforce and peripheral employees. The core or main workers are usually on permanent jobs with attractive benefits while those referred to as peripheral are part-time or contract employees. There are other forms of segmentation of employees, that is skills based. Some workers are considered highly skilled and respected while others possess low skills with little or no prospects.

An obvious implication of segmentation theory of labour market, if not addressed, is that it will widen the gap of inequalities among employees and create an unhealthy and imbalanced situation for the workers. This therefore requires reforms that is guided by policy to effectively guarantee equal treatment against prevailing inequalities and promotion growth of everyone in the organization and not just the privileged few. Creation of necessary labour market reforms is necessary to improve the working conditions of employees, after all, they are all human beings entitled to fair treatment as part of their fundamental human rights. These reforms are expected to affect labour law, collective bargaining, job and social securities in the interest of all workers. Failure to effect necessary reforms in the theory will stagnate some employees and limit their chances of career progress and promotion. It can equally affect the general growth and development of a nation's economy.

2.3.3 Institutional Theory

John Meyer and Brain Rowan (1970s) introduced institutional theory which explains how organization or workplace environments fit into government policies, rules and regulations. Government across various levels form institutions that are responsible for regulating the operations of organization, in terms of their compliance with the laid down policies of government. Institutional theory explains how government institutions have succeeded in introducing uniformity in level of compliance with the government policies on protection of labour rights, maintaining safe and hygienic environment, payment of minimum wage to workers and fair treatment of employees in general. Organizations in society operate within the provisions of rules, norms, instituted by the society, state government, National assembly and federal government and global institutions empower to monitor and sanction any form of sacrilege committed by employers against humanity.

Policies of government that are obtainable in one state or environment may be forbidden in another environment; this is why organization behaviours are largely formed and structured by the guide provided by the institution set up by the government in such environment, societal norms, structure, cultural environments. According to institutional theory social realities are dynamic and require structure determined by human interaction and commonly shared values. Institutional environment as interpreted in this theory represents general rules and regulations, government policies, societal norms and shared values in the society where organizations operate. The operational effects of institutional guidance policies and rules is the similarities in the operations of organizations, e.g. new minimum wage policy has been introduced by the government, many organizations are now adjusting to government policies making them to now have almost uniform salary structure for the employees and abide by other policies of government (institution) that prohibits inequalities and discrimination while encouraging fair remunerations and freedom to benefits from the bargaining functions of the labour unions etc. Since government has threatened sanctions for any organization that fail to comply, many are now left with no option than to conform with government policies that guide the operation of organizations.

As constituted authorities represented by various institutions explain guiding policies for operation of organizations, there are various strategies adopted to monitor and ensure compliance

which are coercion as some organizations may not willing agree to comply with institutional policies, mimetic which is the adoption of common standard practices within similar organizations to guarantee their acceptability in the society where they operate and last strategy is normative which implies adoption of professional and ethical code of conduct in their field of operation.

Institutional theory is the reason behind many similar organizations adopting the same structure and practices e.g. the educational system is being operated by both government and private individuals guided by education policy, academic calendar, structure and system of operations formulated by the ministry of education as minimum standards for all schools. This uniform standard policy, rules and regulations, introduced by the government institutions are shaping uniformity in operation among organizations.

2.3.4 Living Wage Theory

The living wage theory emphasizes the need for employees to earn sufficient income to cater for basic needs within a reasonable standard of living. These basic needs are food, shelter, clothes, healthcare, qualitative education and moderate participation in social and cultural activities. It is different from the minimum wage which is the least amount approved by the government that employers can pay the least of their employees. Minimum Wage is legally mandated by the government to ensure a decent standard of living for employees and their family. Living Wage on the other hand is not mandated by government but a product of collective bargaining between the employers and employees.

Living Wage theory focuses on the needs of the employee and how his or her income will be sufficient to meet them so as to enjoy minimum standard of living, living a decent life with the family. Living wage theory advocates for wage that is socially acceptable and adequate for one to live a standard life within the current inflation level and economic reality in the society. It is usually determined at the local environmental level where the cost of living can be determined to know what the living wage should look like and based on the physical, social and cultural needs of the employees. Living wage cannot measure at the national level like minimum wage, due to environmental peculiarities where cost of items will determine quality of life an individual

person or family can live based on what the purchasing power is up to in that particular society/ environment.

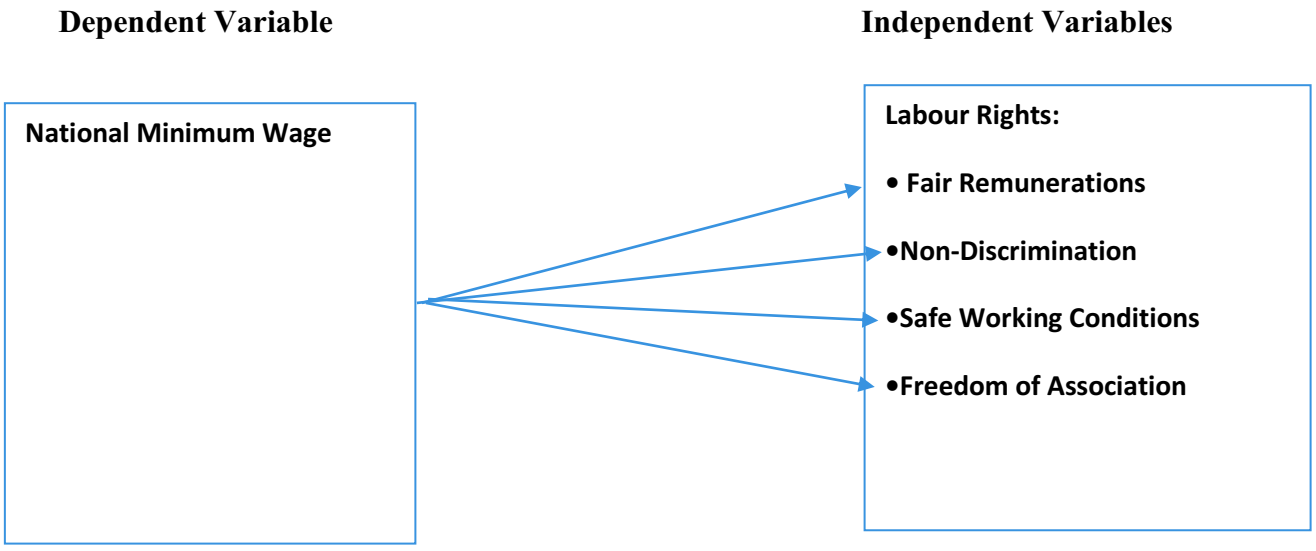
As required, living wage must be updated on regular basis in line with the movement of cost of living, inflation rate and government policies. Minimum wages are usually set by the government through the act of parliament however, it may not reflect the true economic needs of the individuals. At the moment in Nigeria, minimum wage fixed by federal government is far below the estimated living wage. This is why earning living wage may be considered fine appropriate than minimum wage.

As the proponents of living wage for employees explain its benefits such as serving as morale booster, encourage increase in productivity and reduces the turnover of employees at workplaces, the critics have equally explained how living wage may lead to increase in cost of production, and possibly suggests reducing the number of workforce. However, while considering both arguments, it would be realized that living wage will definitely increase the purchasing power of the employees which will in turn result in excess demand that will motivate an increase in supply. At the point where organizations begin to experience excess demand, they will see the need for more hands to work rather than laying off their staff.

Living wage theory proponents explains another distinction between minimum wage and living wage. For minimum wage, it is statutory, legal and must be complied with, failure to comply may attract serious sanctions from the government. Living wage on the other hand is non statutory but required voluntary commitment of employers to pay above the minimum wage set by the government, considering the fact that wellbeing of employees determines to a large extent their level of productivity and continuous contributions to the organization's growth and development. The deliberations on living wage required voluntary attendance of all necessary stakeholders such as employees, labour unions representatives, shareholders of the organization, the employer of labour. Governments across various levels may not necessarily be involved since it is not about minimum wage but living wage which is usually a product of collective bargaining, compromise between the employers and employees, especially in countries with liberal market.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

Minimum wage law plays significant roles in protecting labour rights and regulating economy. It safeguards fair remuneration especially for low wage earners among the employees in various sectors (Eyraud and Saget, 2005). Grimshaw and Rubery (2015) in their study, suggests promotion of non-discretionary policy in the discuss and implementation of minimum wage in order to bridge existing gaps among male and female, single and married employees. This therefore implies that employers of labour must guarantee compliance to minimum wage law, avoid employees exploitative tendencies and promote safe working conditions (Anker, 2011). More so, participation in labour unions activities by the employees keeps them abreast about development surrounding their welfare. This makes their freedom of association non-negotiable as it enables them to be involved in the process of collective bargaining meant to guarantee fair and equitable remuneration for employees. Therefore, minimum wage policy implementation is a clear indication of state commitment to securing workers rights and overall economic development.



Conceptual Framework

The above conceptual framework explains the relationship between minimum wage policy implementation and labour rights. Many scholars have consistently emphasized the unbreakable link that connects minimum wage policy and the adequate protection of labour rights. As

reported by various studies, minimum wage law are more than just economic tools but also a process of guaranteeing labour entitlements to be fairly remunerated and that in a decent approach (ILO, 2014). The International Labour Organization (ILO) equally asserts that minimum wage laws are very important for promoting social justice and preventing the exploitation of low-income workers, especially in developing economies such as Nigeria (ILO Convention No. 131).

As reported by Anyanwu (2016), Okafor and Chukwuemeka (2018), the role of payment of statutory wage in reinforcing fundamental labour rights, such as the right to an adequate standard of living, equal pay for equal work, and protection from forced or underpaid labour cannot be overemphasized. These rights are fundamental to both Nigerian national labour laws and international human rights conventions in the United Nations. In the same vein, Aiyede (2020) in his studies suggests that the implementation of a national minimum wage law helps to reducing income inequality, mitigating poverty, and enhancing the bargaining power of workers, especially those in the informal and low-skilled sectors.

The emergence of national minimum wage policy, especially in Nigeria situation, reveal long time struggles by the labour unions for equal treatment and improvements in socio-economic conditions of workers. As reported by Fashoyin (2011), Ocheni and Nwankwo (2012), there is need to tenaciously sustain the campaigns by national labor unions leaders and civil societies for improvements in labour working conditions and standard of operation, hence, the necessity to formulate and implement labour-centric economic policies and law that will legalize fight for labour rights in particular minimum wage law design to protect all categories of workers within the country. Many other literature also reaffirm the need to implement new minimum wage law and consistently amend it to cater for core labour rights and promoting the wellbeing of employees while improving on their work condition.

2.5 Appraisal of Literature Reviewed

Several literatures have been presented from conceptual, empirical and theoretical perspectives. From the conceptual perspective, the review presented conceptual definitions and clarification of concepts like: Wages, Minimum Wage, National Minimum Wage, Living wages and Labour

Rights (fair remunerations, non-discrimination, safe working conditions and freedom of association).

The theoretical review focused on the theories that relate to the problem under study. The theories reviewed are Labour Rights Theory, Labour market segmentation theory, institutional theory and living wage theory. These theories explain variables under consideration in detail. The labour rights theory summarizes the core rights of every employee that must be protected to guarantee maximum productivity and growth of the organization. It explains why human beings engaged to work must be physically and psychologically fit as a result of the assurance that his rights are being respected by the employer and fellow employees. Labour market segmentation theory explains certain indices that segregate one employee from another within the same organization. In this theory, there appears to be certain justification for discrimination among employees, but the employer must know that all employees are human beings that deserve to be treated fairly no matter how valuable some employees can prove to be compared to others. The sense of justice, fairness, equity and dignity of humanity must be upheld in every organization. Institutional theory explains how government institutions formulated policies, rules, regulations and social norms shape organizations behavior and regulate their activities in the best interest of the employees, organization, and society where the organization operates. Living wages theory explains the need for employers to implement living wage for employees to live a decent standard life with their family. All these theories are relevant to the current study as they explain the relationship between the variables under consideration, making it clear that beyond minimum wage, employers that want maximum productivity and profits must motivate the employees beyond minimum wage policy by implementing living wage sufficient to live decent standard life with family. They also made it clear that in every organization, all fingers are not just equal, but the employer must be fair to all employees to attract needed cooperation to boost growth and development of the organization. It was equally pointed out that the relevance of instrument of state regulations cannot be overemphasized to guarantee peaceful and orderly economic, social and political advancement.

The researcher reviewed several empirical studies which relate to the sub-variables (indices) under the present study. In most of the studies, the findings revealed that the implementation of national minimum wage has relationship with protection and respect for labour rights. It reveals

that noncompliance with the implementation of national minimum wage will result in gross violation of human/labour rights. While organization that goes beyond minimum wage to implement living wage with due consideration of inflation rate and other economic indicators, will not only be protecting and promoting labour rights but also boost their morale to offer more and be very committed to the growth and development of the organization which will surely translate to the economy growth and development of the country, as well as strengthen the international trade relationship in the global arena.

A lot of empirical works appear to have been done in relation to the present study, however, the extent to which the specific indices (fair remunerations, non-discrimination, Safe Working conditions and freedom of association) under consideration are being respected or otherwise and their respective impact on national economy is yet unclear. As such, this study aims to explore this gap.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH INSTRUMENT AND RESULTS

This chapter deals with the method adopted for this study which includes research design, study population, Sample and sampling technique, Research instrument, validity and reliability of instrument, method of data collection and analysis. The design employed a combination of qualitative and quantitative data collection methods to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the minimum wage policy's implementation and its impact on labour rights. From the existing population of employees, a sample size of 412 employees in Nigeria, West Africa from public and private organizations participated in survey conducted to elicit quantitative data for the purpose of this research. The study adopted simple random sampling techniques to select the proportion of the sample. Also, key stakeholders in the Nigeria Labour unions were purposively targeted to participate in the structured Interview conducted to elicit qualitative data for the purpose of this study.

The instrument tagged: Implementation of New Nigerian National Minimum Wage and Its Impacts on Labour Rights Questionnaire (INNNMWILRQ) was used for data collection. The instrument was divided into two major sections: A and B. Section A seeks demographic information of the respondents (Nigerian employees from both public and private organizations) while Section B sought information on the variables under consideration which are National Minimum Wage and Labour Rights. Section B contained (21) items grouped into 5 sub-sections that covered items under minimum wage policy implementation and indices of labour rights sub-divided into another four sections. Sub section 1 sought the perception of respondents on implementation of national minimum wage, sub-section 2 sought the perception of respondents on fair remunerations, sub-section 3 sought the perception of respondents on creation of safe Working conditions by the employers, sub-section 4 sought the perception of respondents on Non-discriminating actions from the employers and sub-section 5 sought the perception of respondents on how well they enjoy freedom of association.

In the instrument, for section B, the data supplied by the respondents were graded on a five – point Likert rating scale to rate responses to the items in the questionnaire and a point was assigned to the degree of responses as follows; Strongly Agree (SA)- 5points, Agree (A)- 4points,

Undecided (U)- 3points, Disagree (D)-2point, Strongly Disagree (SD)- 1point and vice versa for negative skewed items. For the qualitative data, structured interviews were conducted with key stakeholders, including labor union representatives, government officials, and workers. These interviews explored the challenges of compliance, enforcement mechanisms, and the role of advocacy groups in promoting labor rights.

Feasibility Study

The face validity of Implementation of New Nigerian National Minimum Wage and Its Impacts on Labour Rights Questionnaire (INNNMWILRQ) was subjected to trial testing. A total of 50 Nigerian employees from both public and private organizations was used. The scores obtained on the administration of the instrument were recorded and Cronbach method was used to determine its reliability giving a result of 0.796. This result shows that the instrument is reliable for this study. A total of 550 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to all the randomly sampled organizations. 75% of the questionnaires administered were returned while 74.5% were completely filled and used for analysis. Structured interview was conducted with Labor union leaders and other key stakeholders (4 participants). Quantitative Analysis: Descriptive statistics and regression analysis were used to analyze survey data and examine relationships between implementation of new national minimum wage and indices of labour rights (fair remunerations, non-discrimination, safe working conditions and freedom of association). Qualitative Analysis: Thematic analysis were used to identify patterns and insights from interviews.

Finally, participants were informed about the purpose of the research, and their consent was obtained before data collection and all responses were anonymized, and data securely stored to protect participants' privacy.

This section presents the result and discusses major findings of the research carried out on the impact of the new national minimum wage policy on the indices of labour rights such as: fair remunerations, safe working conditions, nondiscrimination and freedom of association among

employees in Nigeria. Five research questions and five hypotheses were formulated and tested. The data were analyzed using Frequency and percentage distribution (%) for demographic data, while Percentage distribution, mean score and standard deviation were used to present perception of respondents on indices of labour rights and minimum wage policy implementation. The null hypotheses one to five were tested using Linear Regression at 0.05 levels of significance while transcribed qualitative data collected via key Informant In-depth Interview were analysed to answer research questions one to five.

The summary of data analysis shall be discussed under three sub-headings.

(a) Analysis of the respondents' demographic data {Nigerian Employees' Demographic Data}

(b) Testing of hypotheses (via quantitative data analysis)

(c) Answering research questions (via qualitative data analysis)

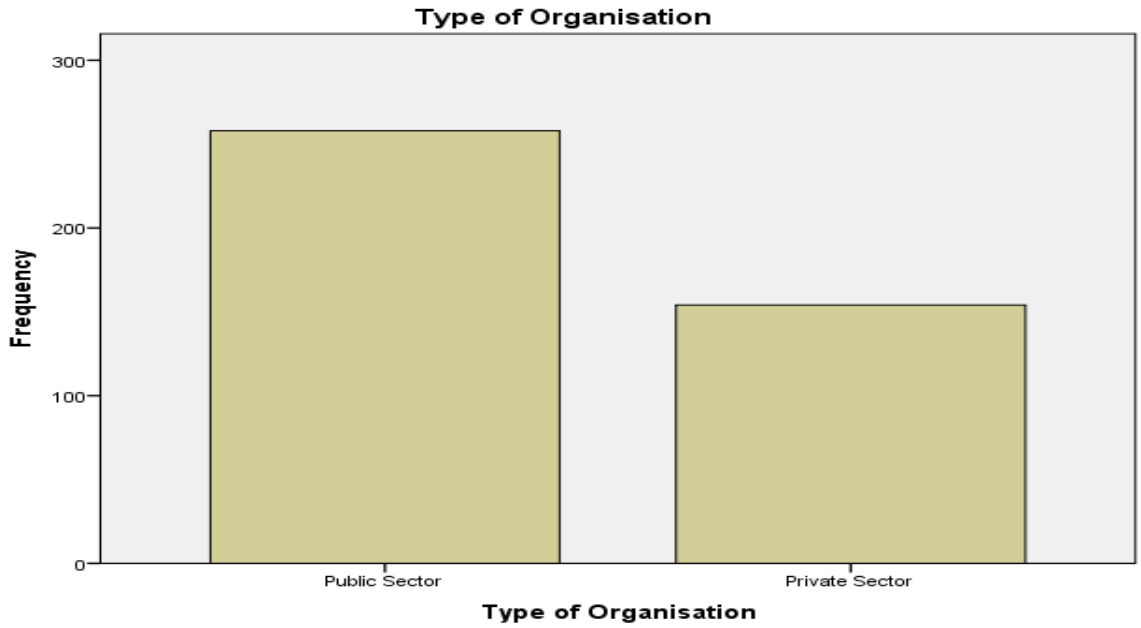
(d) Discussion of findings

4.1 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (Nigerian Employees)

Table 4.1.1: Frequency Distribution of respondents from public and private sectors

Types of Organization	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Public Sector	258	62.6
Private Sector	154	37.4
Total	412	100.0

Table 4.1.1 reveals frequency distribution of respondents (Nigerian Employees) organizations and their percentages. The result shows that employees from the public sector have higher percentage which is 62.6%.

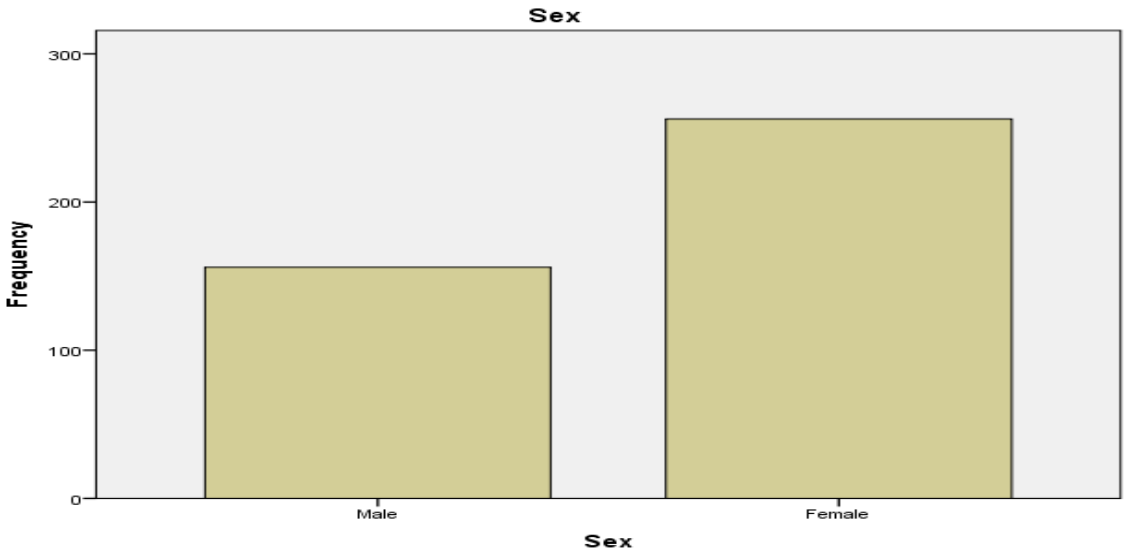


Here is the graphical representation of frequency distribution of respondents (Nigerian Employees) and organizations. The result shows that employees from the public sector have higher percentage which is 62.6%.

Table 4.1.2: Frequency Distribution of respondents based on gender (Sex)

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	156	37.9
Female	256	62.1
Total	412	100.0

Table 4.1.2 reveals frequency distribution of respondents (Nigerian employees) on sex and their percentages. The result shows that female respondents have higher percentage which is 62.1%.

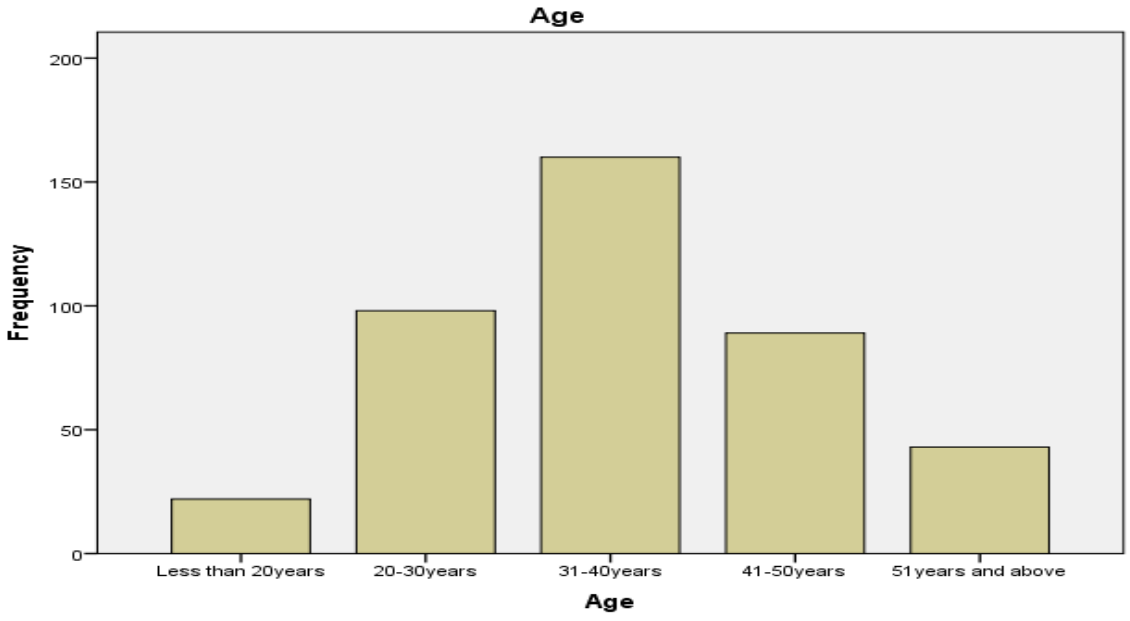


Here is the graphical representation of frequency distribution of respondents (Nigerian employees) and sex. The result shows that female respondents have higher percentage which is 62.1%.

Table 4.1.3: Frequency Distribution of respondents based on Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than 20 years	22	5.3
20-30 years	98	23.8
31-40 years	160	38.8
41-50 years	89	21.6
51 years and above	43	10.4
Total	412	100.0

Table 4.1.3 reveals frequency distribution of respondents (Nigerian employees) on age and their percentages. The result shows that respondents that are within the ages 31-40 years have the highest percentage which is 38.8%.

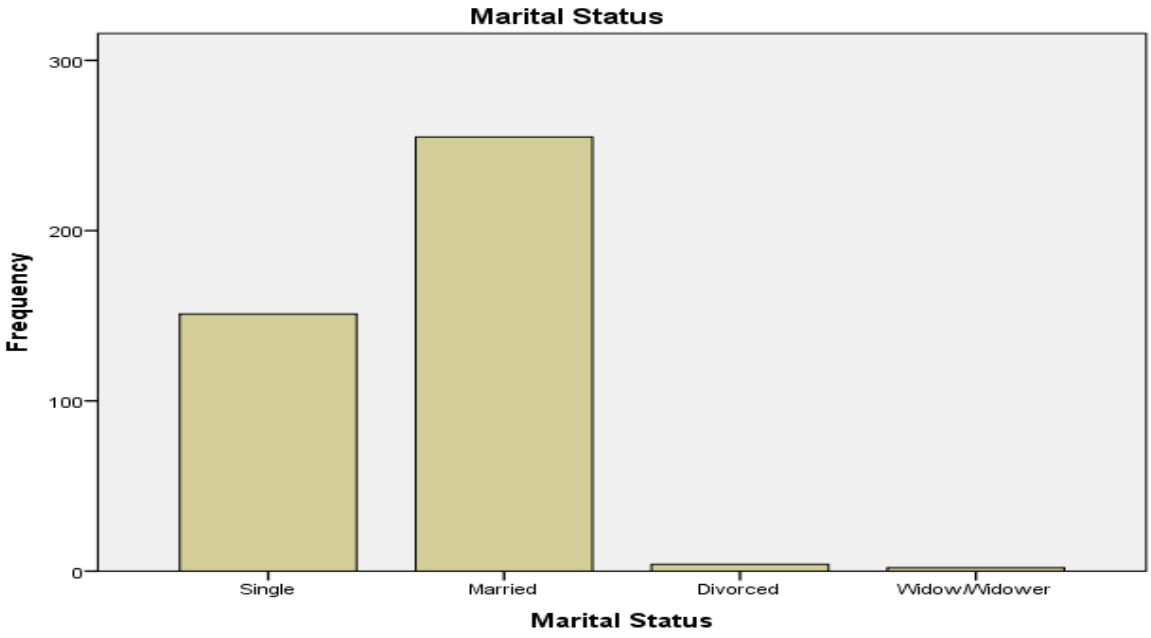


Here is the graphical representation of frequency distribution of respondents (Nigerian employees) and their ages. The result shows that respondents that are within the ages 31-40 years have the highest percentage which is 38.8%.

Table 4.1.4: Frequency Distribution of respondents based on marital status

Marital status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Single	151	36.7
Married	255	61.8
Divorced	4	1.0
Widow/Widower	2	0.5
Total	412	100.0

Table 4.1.4 reveals frequency distribution of respondents (Nigerian employees) on marital status and their percentages. The result shows that respondents that are married have the highest percentage which is 61.8%.

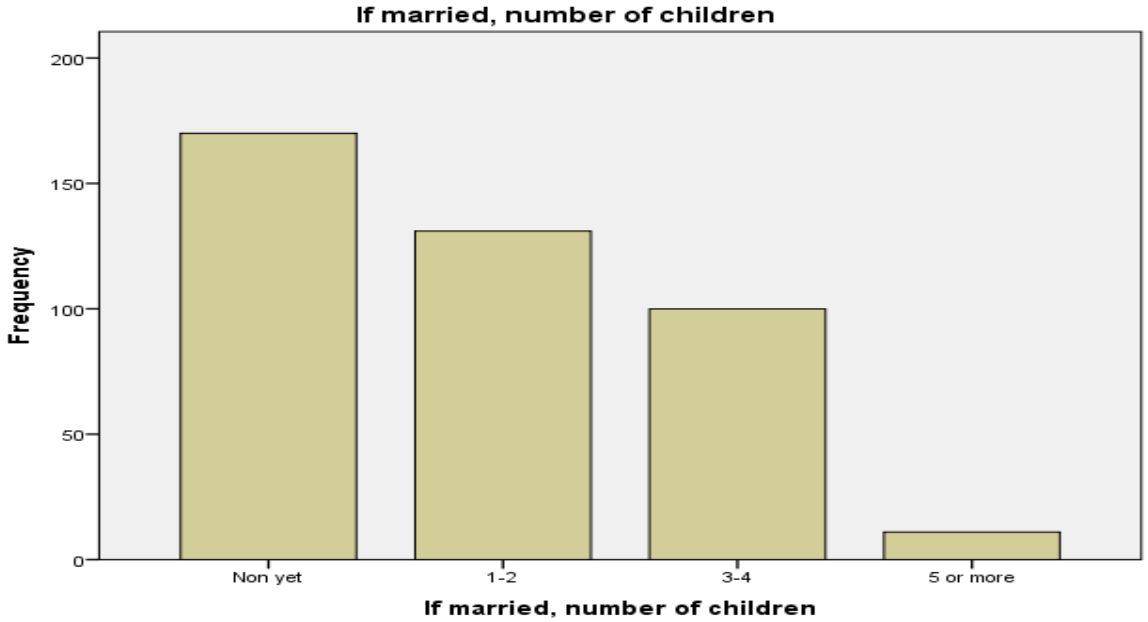


Here is the graphical representation of frequency distribution of respondents (Nigerian employees) and marital status. The result shows that respondents that are married have the highest percentage which is 61.8%.

Table 4.1.5: Frequency Distribution of respondents based on number of children they have

Number of Children	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Non yet	170	41.3
1-2	131	31.8
3-4	100	24.3
5 or more	11	2.7
Total	412	100.0

Table 4.1.5 reveals frequency distribution of respondents based on the number of children they have and their percentages. The result shows that respondents that do not a child yet have highest percentage which is 41.3%.

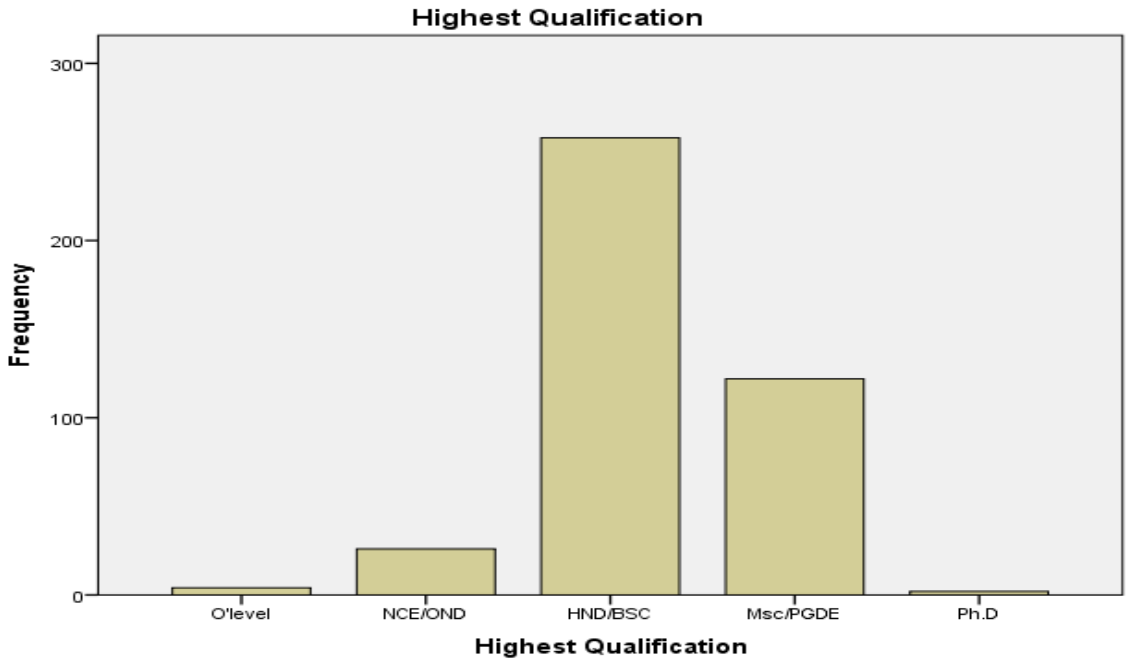


Here is the graphical representation of frequency distribution of respondents based on the number of children they have. The result shows that respondents that do not a child yet have highest percentage which is 41.3%.

Table 4.1.6: Frequency Distribution of respondents based on highest qualification they have

Highest qualification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
O'Level	4	1.0
NCE/OND	26	6.3
HND/BSc	258	62.6
MSc/PGDE	122	29.6
Ph.D	2	0.5
Total	412	100.0

Table 4.1.6 reveals frequency distribution of respondents based on the highest qualification they have and their percentages. The result shows that respondents with HND/BSc. as their highest qualification have highest percentage which is 62.6%.

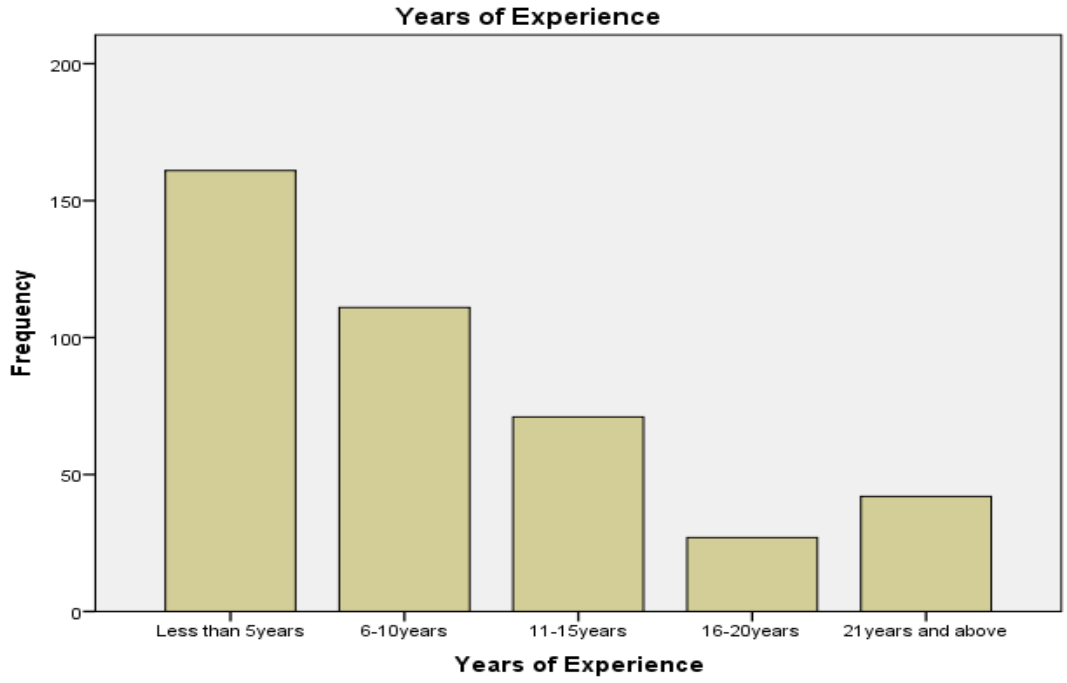


Here is the graphical representation of frequency distribution of respondents based on their highest qualification. The result shows that respondents with HND/BSc. as their highest qualification have highest percentage which is 62.6%.

Table 4.1.7: Frequency Distribution of respondents based on their years of experience

Years of Experience	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than 5 years	161	39.1
6-10 years	111	26.9
11-15 years	71	17.2
16-20 years	27	6.6
21 years and above	42	10.2
Total	412	100.0

Table 4.1.7 reveals frequency distribution of respondents based on their years of experience on the job and their percentages. The result shows that respondents that have less than 5 years of experience have highest percentage which is 39.1%.



Here is the graphical representation of frequency distribution of respondents based on their years of experience on the job. The respondents that have less than 5 years of experience have highest percentage which is 39.1%.

Table 4.1.8: Frequency Distribution of respondents based on the nature of their job

Nature of Job/work	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Full time	387	93.9
Part time	11	2.7
Contract staff	9	2.2
Others	5	1.2
Total	412	100.0

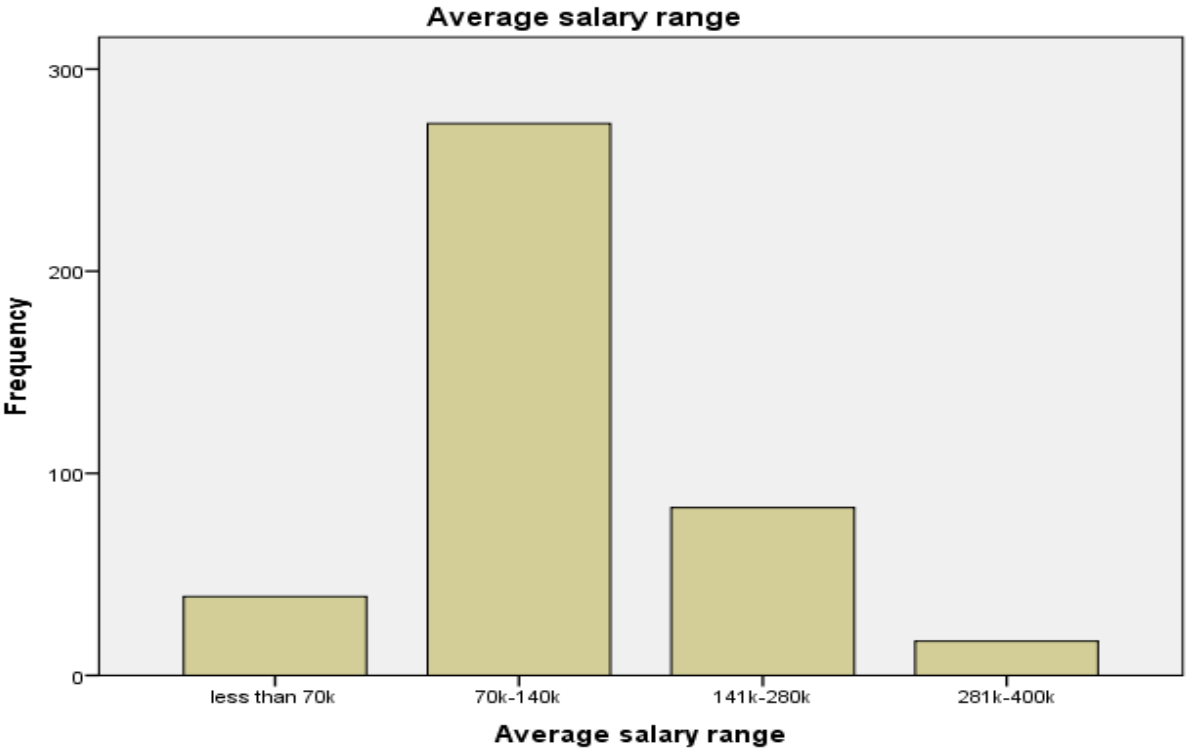
Table 4.1.8 reveals frequency distribution of respondents based on the nature of their jobs and their percentages. The result shows that respondents that are full-time staff have highest percentage which is 93.9%.

Here is the graphical representation of frequency distribution of respondents based on the nature of their jobs. The result shows that respondents that are full-time staff have highest percentage which is 93.9%.

Table 4.1.9: Frequency Distribution of respondents based on their average salary

Average salary range	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than 70k	39	9.5
70k-140k	273	66.3
141k-280k	83	20.1
281k-400k	17	4.1
Total	412	100.0

Table 4.1.9 reveals frequency distribution of respondents based on the average salary range and their percentages. The result shows that respondents whose average salary range is between 70k-140k have highest percentage which is 66.3%.



Here is the graphical representation of frequency distribution of respondents based on the average salary range. The result shows that respondents whose average salary range is between 70k-140k have highest percentage which is 66.3%

4.2 Testing of hypotheses (via quantitative data analysis)

The perception of respondents on the implementation of minimum wage and the indices of Labour Rights among employees from both public and private organizations in Nigeria

Table 4.2.1: the general perception of respondents on the implementation of the new national minimum wage policy and indices of Labour Rights

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remarks
1.	Implementation of national minimum wage	4.28	0.95	High Perception
2.	Indices of labour rights 1: Fair remunerations	2.57	1.254	Low Perception
3.	2: Safe working conditions	3.58	1.082	Low Perception
4.	3: Non-Discrimination	4.15	0.912	High Perception
5.	4: Freedom of association	3.58	1.057	Low Perception
	Weighted Average	3.63	1.051	

In table 4.2.1, the findings showed that variables under consideration are important in measuring perceptions of respondents on implementation of new national minimum wage and guaranteed protection of labour rights. Majority of the respondents affirmed that the new national minimum wage policy is well implemented (mean 4.28, SD=0.95). This implies high perception of respondents about implementation of new national minimum wage in Nigeria. Also, most respondents strongly agreed that discrimination among employees is not common (mean=4.15, SD=0.912). This implies high perception of respondents about Non-discrimination among employees in Nigeria public and private organizations. However, there seems to be a perceived low perception among the respondents about fair remunerations (mean=2.57, SD=1.254), safe working conditions (mean=3.58, SD=1.082), and freedom of association (mean=3.58, SD=1.057). These low perceptions may be as a result of the fact that many respondents believe

the new national minimum wage policy is not fair enough, the working conditions are not safe enough and right to freedom of association among employees make not so much impact.

From the foregoing, the respondents studied agreed that the new national minimum wage is being implemented and labour rights are being protected except the fact that new national minimum wage policy is not considered fair enough remuneration (weighted average=3.63, SD=1.051). The mean score implies that respondents have generally high perception about the indices of labour rights and implementation of minimum wage, as well as the standard deviation showed that the data are well spread out and properly distributed.

Table 4.2.2: The perception of respondents on **implementation of new minimum wage**

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total (%)	Mean $\bar{x}$	SD	Remarks
1.	I am aware of the new national minimum wage	305 (74.0)	102 (24.8)	1 (0.2)	1 (0.2)	3 (0.7)	412 (100)	4.71	0.559	High Perception
2.	The new minimum wage policy has been implemented in my work place	215 (52.2)	113 (27.4)	41 (10.0)	27 (6.6)	16 (3.9)	412 (100)	4.17	1.098	Low Perception
3.	New minimum wage is being enforced across all levels of employees in my work place	184 (44.7)	100 (24.3)	70 (17.0)	38 (9.2)	20 (4.9)	412 (100)	3.95	1.193	Low Perception
Weighted Average: 12.83/3=4.28								4.28	0.95	

Note: SA: Strongly Agree (5), A: Agree (4), U: Undecided (3), D: Disagree (2) and SD: Strongly Disagree (1).

Table 4.2.2 shows the perception of the respondents about the implementation of new national minimum wage policy in Nigeria. Majority of the respondents seems to have high perception about the fact that they are aware of the new national minimum wage policy in Nigeria (Mean 4.71>4.28). However, majority of the respondents have low perception about the implementation

of new national minimum wage in their workplaces (Mean 4.17<4.28) and that minimum wage is being enforced across all levels of employees in their workplaces (Mean 3.95<4.28).

Table 4.2.3: The perception of respondents on **fair remunerations** as one of the indices of labour rights

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	**U**	D	SD	Total (%)	Mean $\bar{x}$	SD	Remarks
1.	New minimum wage meets my personal basic needs (feeding, clothing and accomodations, etc.)	43 (10.4)	72 (17.5)	56 (13.6)	124 (30.1)	117 (28.4)	412 (100)	2.51	1.341	Low Perception
2.	New minimum wage can cater for my family needs	20 (4.9)	50 (12.1)	52 (12.6)	149 (36.2)	141 (34.2)	412 (100)	2.17	1.168	Low Perception
3.	I believe my salary commensurate duties I perform in my organization	21 (5.1)	82 (19.9)	65 (15.8)	138 (33.5)	106 (25.7)	412 (100)	2.45	1.212	Low Perception
4.	My employer has never paid me lesser than my deserved	66 (16.0)	120 (29.1)	85 (20.6)	84 (20.4	57 (13.8)	412 (100)	3.13	1.295	High Perception

	amount									
Weighted Average: 10.26/4=2.57								2.57	1.254	

Note: SA: Strongly Agree (5), A: Agree (4), U: Undecided (3), D: Disagree (2) and SD: Strongly Disagree (1).

Table 4.2.3 shows the perception of the respondents about fair remunerations being received by the employees in Nigeria. Majority of the respondents seem to have high perception about the fact that their employers never paid them lesser than their deserved amount (Mean 3.13>2.57). However, majority of the respondents seem to have a low perception about the fact that new minimum wage meets their personal basic needs i.e. feeding, clothing and accomodations, etc. (Mean 2.51<2.57), the new minimum wage can cater for their family needs (Mean 2.17<2.57), they believe their salary commensurate duties they perform in their organizations (Mean 2.45<2.57)

Table 4.2.4: The perception of respondents on **safe working conditions** as one of the indices of labour rights

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	**U**	D	SD	Total (%)	Mean $\bar{x}$	SD	Remarks
1.	My organization is totally safe to work in	141 (34.2)	193 (46.8)	48 (11.7	20 (4.9)	10 (2.4)	412 (100)	4.06	0.933	High Perception
2.	I have access to health insurance provided for employees	96 (23.3)	172 (41.7)	83 (20.1)	42 (10.2)	19 (4.6)	412 (100)	3.69	1.079	High Perception
3.	My organization	95	168	66	64	19	412	3.62	1.134	High

	has health & safety measures for all staff e.g first aid etc.	(23.1)	(40.8)	(16.0)	(15.5)	(4.6)	(100)			Perception
4.	My employer complies with ILO safety & health regulations for all staff	77 (18.7)	138 (33.5)	115 (27.9)	60 (14.6)	22 (5.3)	412 (100)	3.46	1.112	Low Perception
5.	My employer provides me with adequate protective working equipment for my job	42 (10.2)	161 (39.1)	104 (25.2)	74 (18.0)	31 (7.5)	412 (100)	3.26	1.101	Low Perception
6.	My organization provided me with adequate preventive and safety trainings before the commencement of my job	59 (14.3)	168 (40.8)	78 (18.9)	82 (19.9)	25 (6.1)	412 (100)	3.37	1.134	Low Perception
Weighted Average: 21.46/6=3.58								3.58	1.082	

Note: SA: Strongly Agree (5), A: Agree (4), U: Undecided (3), D: Disagree (2) and SD: Strongly Disagree (1).

Table 4.2.4 shows the perception of the respondents about safe working conditions being experienced by the employees in Nigeria. Majority of the respondents seem to have high perception about the fact that their organizations are totally safe to work in (Mean 4.06>3.58), they have access to health insurance provided for employees (Mean 3.69>3.58), their organizations have health and safety measures for all staff e.g first aid etc. (Mean 3.62>3.58). However, majority of the respondents seem to have low perception about the fact that their employers comply with ILO safety and health regulations for all staff (Mean 3.46<3.58), their employers provide them with adequate protective working equipment for their jobs (Mean 3.26<3.58), their organizations provided them with adequate preventive and safety trainings before the commencement of their jobs (Mean 3.37<3.58).

Table 4.2.5: The perception of respondents on **non-discrimination** as one of the indices of labour rights

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	**U**	D	SD	Total (%)	Mean $\bar{x}$	SD	Remarks
1.	My organization provides equal opportunities irrespective of gender	171 (41.5)	184 (44.7)	25 (6.1)	24 (5.8)	8 (1.9)	412 (100)	4.18	0.924	High Perception
2.	People with Disabilities are entitled to equal remuneration for service rendered as their able bodied	136 (33.0)	198 (48.1)	56 (13.6)	16 (3.9)	6 (1.5)	412 (100)	4.07	0.865	Low Perception

	colleagues									
3.	Indigenes and non-indigenes enjoy equal/fair job opportunities/treatments at my workplace	178 (43.2)	181 (43.9)	31 (7.5)	17 (4.1)	5 (1.2)	412 (100)	4.24	0.852	High Perception
4.	My organization does not place preference on certain religion above others	166 (40.3)	169 (41.0)	33 (8.0)	35 (8.5)	9 (2.2)	412 (100)	4.09	1.007	Low Perception
Weighted Average: 16.58/4=4.15								4.15	0.912	

Note: SA: Strongly Agree (5), A: Agree (4), U: Undecided (3), D: Disagree (2) and SD: Strongly Disagree (1).

Table 4.2.5 shows the perception of the respondents on non-discrimination among the employees in Nigeria. Majority of respondents seem to have high perception about the fact that their organizations provide equal opportunities irrespective of gender (Mean 4.18>4.15) and that indigenes and non-indigenes enjoy equal/fair job opportunities/treatments at their workplaces (Mean 4.24>4.15). However, majority of the respondents seem to have a low perception about the fact that people with disabilities are entitled to equal remuneration for service rendered as their able bodied colleagues (Mean 4.07<4.15) and that their organization does not place preference on certain religion above others (Mean 4.09<4.15)

Table 4.2.6: The perception of respondents on **freedom of association** as one of the indices of labour rights

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	**U**	D	SD	Total (%)	Mean $\bar{x}$	SD	Remarks
1.	I have the liberty to join labour unions activities as applicable to my job	100 (24.3)	193 (46.8)	66 (16.0)	25 (6.1)	28 (6.8)	412 (100)	3.76	1.096	High Perception
2.	I am entitled to the benefits of collective bargaining by the labour unions from my employer	66 (16.0)	169 (41.0)	97 (23.5)	61 (14.8)	19 (4.6)	412 (100)	3.49	1.070	Low Perception
3.	My employer complies with labor union bargainings	64 (15.5)	161 (39.1)	117 (28.4)	55 (13.3)	15 (3.6)	412 (100)	3.50	1.024	Low Perception
4.	Labour union activities in my state are effective	77 (18.7)	166 (40.3)	110 (26.7)	41 (10.0)	18 (4.4)	412 (100)	3.59	1.039	High Perception
Weighted Average: 14.34/4=3.58								3.58	1.057	

Note: SA: Strongly Agree (5), A: Agree (4), U: Undecided (3), D: Disagree (2) and SD: Strongly Disagree (1).

Table 4.2.6 shows the perception of the respondents on freedom of association among the employees in Nigeria. Majority of the respondents seem to have high perception about the fact that they have liberty to join labour unions activities as applicable to their jobs (Mean 3.76>3.58) and that Labour union activities in state are effective (Mean 3.59>3.58). However, majority of the respondents seem to have low perception about the fact that they are entitled to the benefits of collective bargaining by the labour unions from their employer (Mean 3.49<3.58) and that employers comply with labor union bargainings (Mean 3.50<3.58).

Hypothesis 1: Fair remunerations of the employees does not have significant impact on implementation of new national minimum wage in Nigeria

Table 4.2.7: Summary of Regression Analysis of the Independent Variable **(the fair remunerations)** on the Dependent Variable **(implementation of new minimum wage)**

Hypothesis	**Regression Weight**	**β**	**R^2**	F	**P^{value}**	Hypothesis Supported?
H_1	Fair_Rem →Minimum Wage	.132[a]	.017	7.244	0.007[b]	No

Significant at *P<0.05 level

Table 4.2.7 shows hypothesis test of fair remunerations of the employees significantly impacting implementation of new national minimum wage in Nigeria. The dependent variable 'implementation of new minimum wage' was regressed on the predicting variable 'fair remunerations' to test hypothesis one. Fair remunerations significantly predicated implementation of new national minimum wage F(1, 410)=7.244, p<0.001 which indicates that the fair remunerations can play a significant role in shaping minimum wage policy implementation (β=0.132a, p<0.001). The results clearly indicate positive impact of fair remunerations on implementation of new national minimum wage policy. Moreover, the R^2 = 0.017 depicts that the model explains 1.7% of the variance in implementation of new national minimum wage. Therefore, the null hypothesis one is hereby rejected as it is clearly stated in the table above that fair remunerations significantly impact minimum wage policy implementation in Nigeria.

This result is similar to the findings of Haapanala, Marx, and Parolin (2022) about "Decent Wage Floors in Europe", found out that implementation of decent minimum wage floor for workers in Europe will help in achieving adequate and fair minimum wage. However, Schulten and Muller (2021) argued that the implementation of the minimum wage policy should rather be flexible as each nation in Europe will have to bargain as convenient for their national Economy, considering the employers opinions and different state ability to comply with the minimum wage policy implementation that will not jeopardize fair treatment of employees in terms of wage payment among other benefits. Ceemet (2021) is equally in support of the nationalization of minimum wage policy implementation discussion as each state peculiarities will form a strong determining factor in the debate over increase in the minimum wage to ensure adequate and fair remunerations for all employees.

Hypothesis 2: Safe working conditions of the employees does not have significant impact on implementation of new national minimum wage in Nigeria

Table 4.2.8: Summary of Regression Analysis of the Independent Variable **(safe working conditions)** on the Dependent Variable **(implementation of new minimum wage)**

Hypothesis	**Regression Weight**	**β**	**R^2**	F	**P^{value}**	Hypothesis Supported?
H_2	Safe_Work→Minimum Wage	**-.048a**	.002	**0.949**	0.330^b	**Yes**

Significant at *P<0.05 level

Table 4.2.8 shows hypothesis test if safe working conditions of the employees significantly impact implementation of new national minimum wage in Nigeria. The dependent variable implementation of new minimum wage was regressed on the predicting variable safe working conditions of the employees to test hypothesis two. Safe working conditions of the employees does not significantly predict implementation of new national minimum wage F(1, 410)=0.949, p>0.05 which indicates that the safe working conditions of the employees cannot play a significant role in shaping minimum wage policy implementation (β=-.048a, p>0.05). The results clearly indicate negative impact of safe working conditions on implementation of new national minimum wage policy. Moreover, the R^2 = 0.002 depicts that the model explains 0.2% of the

variance in implementation of new national minimum wage. Therefore, the null hypothesis two is hereby accepted as it is clearly stated in the table above that safe working conditions does not significantly impact minimum wage policy implementation in Nigeria.

This result is consistent with the findings of Merrill-Francis, Porterk, and Vernick (2020) who equally found a (negative) insignificant relationship between workplace fatalities and minimum wage. However, several literatures are at variance with this result e.g. Hradil (2018) in his study observed that an increase in the minimum wage leads to an increase in injuries. This may be as a result of the fact that in the process of complying with the minimum wage policy, the firm may decide to retrench some workers thereby making the retained staff to overwork and, in the process, sustain injuries, have accident that can make work place unsafe for them to work. Caskey and Ozel (2017) reported similar findings about workers safety and minimum wage policy implementation. Low or minimum wage earners among employees is reported to be at risk of most workplace hazard (Michaels 2015; Leigh, Leigh, and Du 2019). Bernstein and Gittleman (2003) further justified this claim by explaining that lower of minimum wage paid jobs are more risky as they involved in physical labour in most firms and industries. On a positive note, Leigh, Leigh, and Du (2019) reported that an increase in minimum wage is capable of improving employees' physical and mental health generally.

Hypothesis 3: Nondiscrimination among the employees does not have significant impact on implementation of new national minimum wage in Nigeria

Table 4.2.9: Summary of Regression Analysis of the Independent Variable **(Nondiscrimination)** on the Dependent Variable **(implementation of new minimum wage)**

Hypothesis	**Regression Weight**	**β**	**R^2**	F	**P^{value}**	Hypothesis Supported
H_3	Non_Discrim→Minimum Wage	.172[a]	.030	12.530	0.000[b]	No

Significant at *P<0.001 level

Table 4.2.9 shows hypothesis test if nondiscrimination among the employees significantly impact implementation of new national minimum wage in Nigeria. The dependent variable implementation of new minimum wage was regressed on the predicting variable

nondiscrimination among the employees to test hypothesis three. Nondiscrimination among the employees does significantly predicts implementation of new national minimum wage F(1, 410)=12.530, p<0.001, which indicates that the nondiscrimination among the employees can play a significant role in shaping minimum wage policy implementation (β=.172[a], p<0.001). The results clearly indicate positive impact of nondiscrimination among the employees on implementation of new national minimum wage policy. Moreover, the $R^2 = 0.030$ depicts that the model explains 3% of the variance in implementation of new national minimum wage. Therefore, the null hypothesis three is hereby rejected as it is clearly stated in the table above that nondiscrimination among the employees does significantly impact minimum wage policy implementation in Nigeria.

This result is in consonance with the report of Smythe and Hsu, (2023) who posited that an increase in minimum wage is meant to be done with the aim to provide equity and economic justice among employees with the goal of implementing it to redistribute income. However, Machin and Manning (1996) recounts the attempt of the government of United Kingdom who abolished wage council and established minimum wage policy for workers in selected sectors. In similar vein, Rubery (1994, 1997), Edwards and Gilman (1999), reported that females in low paid job are more in number, loyal and very reliable due to the fact that they have very limited job opportunities unlike their male counterparts who are believed to be more productive and skillful. This belief that males are breadwinner of the family therefore are required to be in high paying jobs are now being eroded in United States as women now compete favorably with their male counterparts in high paying jobs (Salverda, Bazen and Gregory 2001)

Hypothesis 4: Freedom of association of the employees does not have significant impact on implementation of new national minimum wage in Nigeria

Table 4.2.10: Summary of Regression Analysis of the Independent Variable (**freedom of association of the employees in Nigeria**) on the Dependent Variable **(implementation of new minimum wage)**

Hypothesis	**Regression Weight**	**β**	**R^2**	F	**P^{value}**	Hypothesis Supported?

H_4	Free_Ass →Minimum Wage	.228[a]	.052	22.420	0.000[b]	No

Significant at *P<0.001 level

Table 4.2.10 shows hypothesis test if freedom of association of the employees significantly impacts implementation of new national minimum wage in Nigeria. The dependent variable implementation of new minimum wage was regressed on the predicting variable freedom of association of the employees to test hypothesis four. Freedom of association of the employees does significantly predict implementation of new national minimum wage F(1, 410)=22.420, p<0.001, which indicates that the freedom of association of the employees can play a significant role in shaping minimum wage policy implementation (β=.228[a] p<0.001). The results clearly indicate positive impact of the freedom of association on implementation of new national minimum wage policy. Moreover, the R^2 = 0.052 depicts that the model explains 5.2% of the variance in implementation of new national minimum wage. Therefore, the null hypothesis four is hereby rejected as it is clearly stated in the table above that the freedom of association of employees does significantly impact minimum wage policy implementation in Nigeria.

This result is in tandem with the findings of Martin and Maskus, (2001); Buchele and Christensen, (1995), Lewis, (1963), Freeman and Medoff, (1984); Blanchflower and Freeman, (1992); Freeman, (1994); Blanchflower and Bryson, (2003); Hara and Kawaguchi, (2008) that collective bargaining freedom of employees enforced through unionization lead to higher wages and equally boost productivity of labour. Kucera (2001) on the other hand examined the impact of freedom of association and collective bargaining on behalf of the employees. He found out that better labour rights are positively associated with pay in the manufacturing sector though the relationship is not generally significant.

Hypothesis 5: the indices of labour rights among employees do not have relative contribution to the implementation of new national minimum wage in Nigeria.

Table 4.2.11: Summary of Regression Analysis of the Independent Variable **(indices of labour rights: fair remunerations, safe working conditions, Nondiscrimination and freedom of association of the employees in Nigeria)** on the Dependent Variable **(implementation of new minimum wage).**

Test of significance of the regression co-efficient

Variables Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t^{value}	P^{value}	Remarks
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
(Constant)	3.346	.277	-	12.063	.000	-
Fair_Rem	.132	.045	.156	2.943	.003	Significant
Safe_Work	-.216	.058	-.202	-3.733	.000	Significant
Non_Discr	.169	.063	.139	2.695	.007	Significant
Free_Ass	.185	.050	.192	3.713	.000	Significant

Table 4.3.11 reveals the relative contributions of the independent variables to the dependent variable, using the standardized regression coefficient to determine the relative contributions of the independent variables to the explanation of the dependent variables. Fair remunerations (β = 0.132, t = 2.943, $p< 0.05$), Non-discrimination (β= 0.169, t = 2.695, $p< 0.05$), Freedom of association (β = 0.185, t = 3.713, $p< 0.001$) are the potent contributors to the prediction, while Safe working conditions (β = -0.216, t =-3.733, $p< 0.001$) has relative but negative contribution to the predictors. It implies that indices of labour rights: fair remunerations, safe working conditions, Nondiscrimination and freedom of association have relative contributions to the implementation of new national minimum wage in Nigeria. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

This result is similar to the findings of Ahmata, Arendtb, and Russellc (2019) who reported that increase in minimum wage motivate employees while decrease in minimum wage dissatisfy workers. This emphasizes the significant effect of fair remunerations on minimum wage policy. This is also similar to the findings of Malaysia Association of Hotel (2013). Also, Martin and Maskus, (2001), Buchele and Christensen (1995) reported that collective bargaining rights which is enjoyed by employees who have access to form of join labour unions make significant impact in boosting minimum wage which will in turn increase the productivity of the employees. Heintz (2003) however, stated that minimum wage increase may cause an increase in cost of production

for employers of labor and thereby results in unemployment for some workers who might have been retrenched due to higher wages. It has also been established that collective bargaining via labour union has contributed to bridging the wage gap among the employees Fairris (2003). It has been proven that implementation of minimum wage policy reduces poverty and ensures the safety of workers who will be instrumental to the growth and development of the society (Saget, 2001; Lustig and McLeod 1997)

4.3 Answering of research questions (via qualitative data analysis)

Table 4.3.1: Analysis of Qualitative data collected via interview with four key stakeholders in new minimum wage policy deliberations and implementation in Nigeria

1. How effective is the Nigerian National Minimum Wage law implemented across different sectors of the economy?			
S/N	Theme	Codes	Quotes/Extracts from Transcribed Interview Data set
1.	Effective implementation of minimum wage	Minimum wage is implemented	'So, in Oyo State we have the minimum wage to be 80000 naira, meaning the least worker in the state earns 80000 naira.'
		Workers are relieved and Purchasing power increased	'The effect so far is that it has relieved the inflation and empowered the workers purchasing ability to some level, though it has not solved the entire problem. But we are relieved to some level.'
		Federal government yet to implement minimum wage	when the Federal government said they're going to pay so so and so amount of money – 70000 naira, they refused to pay it.
		Dignity of labour	I learnt that dignity of labor as explained in the International Labor Organization Convention suggests that workers should be paid living wages and that is wages that would make them maintain their respect as human beings.
2. What is the impact of the minimum wage law on workers' living standards, particularly in the informal sector?			

S/N	Theme	Codes	Quotes/Extracts from Transcribed Interview Data set
2.	Impacts of minimum wage on living standards of labour	Inflation pre-exists minimum wage	' It wasn't the minimum wage that brought about inflation.' 'Inflation has been existing.' 'Minimum wage was reviewed to cushion the effect of inflation that has already been on ground.'
		Increased purchasing power	'To enhance the purchasing power of the workers.' 'Their purchasing power increased compared to what it used to be from May 29, 2023, up until the implementation of that 80000naira minimum wage in Oyo State in January 25th, 2025.'
		Positive impacts	'So, there's no way it would not have positive effects on their lives after January 2025 when they started collecting 80000naira minimum wage.'
		166% increments	'That is difference of 50000 naira, that represents over 166% increment in their wage.'
		More money in circulation	'That means more money in circulation, more money in their pockets, ability to purchase more.' 'One of the ways to reduce poverty in any society and redistribute wealth in any state is to increase minimum wage.'
		Increased GDP	'They would have to use the money to do one or two things, to purchase goods and items, and that is how the money is going to go into the economy of the state. Thereby increasing the GDP of the state.'
		Not adequate to meet basic needs due to	Though it is not what we can say is totally adequate to meet up with what is the basic needs that they need.
			There's no difference.
			When you get to the market, there's nothing you can do about it.
			This is the period where people will trek 5 - 6 miles when they're coming to work,

		inflation workers are a little bit relieved	they'll trek when they're going back. And when they get to their offices, you see people drinking garri. 'Honestly, it's nothing to write home about.' The people that are collecting the 70000 naira, they were a little bit relieved compared to what it used to be. 'It is a far better situation to be collecting 80000 naira compared to collecting 30000 naira., 'I think minimum wage has positive effects.' 'So, it has positive effects because you have something to look forward to.'
3. What challenges exist in enforcing the minimum wage law, and how do these affect labor rights protection in Nigeria?			
S/N	Theme	Codes	Quotes/Extracts from Transcribed Interview Data set
3.	Challenges of minimum wage implementation	Frequency of Minimum Wage Review Increased fuel pump price Hitting workers below the belt. Government takes advantage of workers. High cost of	'They would tell you that you signed an agreement of five years, and you have to wait till those five years lapse.' 'Ordinarily, the agreement is supposed to be at a stipulated number of years maybe five years or whenever the need arises.' 'But thereafter, government has not ceased increasing the PMS price.' 'They always hit the masses and workers below the belt.' 'They take advantage of the workers.' 'Because if you look at it, even if we put into consideration, a man that is not married, that has no children at all, 80000 naira is far away from what is able to

		transportation	sustain himself for 30 days. ' 'The cost of transportation alone from Point A to Point B no matter how close you are to your place of work has increased.' It is totally inadequate to cater for one man talk less of a family man that has a wife and one or two children.
		inadequate to meet basic needs	'But because the government was saying that moving from 30000 naira to 70000 naira too is a massive jump on their own part.' 'That is more than 100% increment on salaries.' 'I think the argument that we tried to relate with among their arguments is the capacity and ability to pay.'
		Salary payment burden on the government	The moment the Federal Government said they're increasing the minimum wage, if Federal Government said they're adding 10 naira to your salary, do you know the Federal Government is going to take back 11 naira.
		inflation rate	'The inflation is caused by the government.' 'They increased the tax.' 'They increase the fuel pump price.'
		Government increased tax	Honestly, I won't deceive you, being a civil servant in Nigeria is like a modern-day slavery.
		Modern day slavery	
4. What role do trade/labour unions play in promoting compliance with minimum wage laws and advancing labor rights?			
S/N	Theme	Codes	Quotes/Extracts from Transcribed Interview Data set
4.	Roles of labour unions in	We follow up the implementation of	'Immediately it becomes a law, it's our sole responsibility to follow it up.' ' It's our

	implementation of minimum wage	minimum wage for all workers	responsibility, especially the labor leaders, to make sure, that all the organizations and companies that employed more than 25 number of workers as stipulated in the law pay minimum wage.'
		Protection of Workers' Rights	'But now as a NASU chairman and union leader, that is our primary assignment to protect our workers, our colleagues.'
		Educating workers about their rights	'We're there to educate our people.' 'We educate our people. We organize trainings.' 'We strive to enhance their socio-economic wellbeing.' 'And above all, we speak for them.'
		Casualization of workers is not allowed by the law.	'When I heard that, I approached them and asked that I heard you're engaged in casualization of workers, he said 'No, they're not casual workers, they're my real staff.' 'Meaning you cannot pay them below minimum wage. And these are the set of people that do the hazardous part of the work.' 'It's nothing but inhuman to employ someone working round the clock and paying them less than the minimum wage, whatever agreement they signed with you does not supersede the law that regulates the labor relationship in that particular environment and the law of the country.
		Negotiating and adjusting accordingly	'Immediately those things started happening since 2023, many of the private companies that are into collective bargaining agreement with their workers have gone into series of deliberations and negotiations and many of them have adjusted the salaries and wages of workers without having to push them or going into any form of rancor.'
			'But our primary objective is the welfare of our workers, but by extension, it extends to the welfare of all Nigerians.'
			'I would make sure that we protect their rights and make sure they are prevented from being intimidated.' 'Labor unions have to fight it until everything was reversed.'

			'we are always on standby to hear from our members whose companies are yet to comply.' 'we're taking them up on that so that those our members are not shortchanged.'
		The wellbeing of workers is our utmost priority	'We make sure they behave themselves as a civil servant, that they behave themselves as a responsible member of a responsible union.'
		Fight intimidation of workers	
		Ensure workers comport themselves decently in line with the code of conduct.	
5. How can the minimum wage policy be reformed to protect workers' rights/improve their socio-economic conditions?			
S/N	Theme	Codes	Quotes/Extracts from Transcribed Interview Data set
5.	Recommendations for minimum wage policy reforms	laws that favour the masses, not just the capitalists	'The government should make laws that favor the masses not those that would favor only the capitalists - those who are there to make profit at the expense of the workers.'
		more jobs available for citizens	'So, what we are really agitating for that would really boost this economy is all the factors that would make more jobs to come, that would make jobs to be stable, that would make the prices of goods and commodities to come down.'
			'There must be provision of energy, electricity etc. Look at the string of companies that have exited Nigeria because

			of unstable electricity.'
		Provision of electricity	'We need to put the government of the day on a spot that it is better for them to turn around the economy in such a way that there will be little inflation and prices of goods and commodities would come down.'
		turn around the economy of the country	'My advice to the government is that the government should be faithful, the government should be truthful, and the government should also pity the civil servant.'
		faithful to promises	'Every rise in price should automatically lead to an increase in wages and salaries'
		Labour wages should commensurate inflation rate	

Table 4.3.1 shows the report of analysed data from the data collected via interview with four key stakeholders (Labour unions leaders) in the deliberations and implementation of new minimum wage policy implementation in Nigeria. It is structured to provide adequate answers to the five research questions from which the themes for the analysis were developed.

4.4. Discussion of findings

B. **1. Effective implementation of minimum wage**

The interviewed participants reported that minimum wage policy has been implemented*:*

'So, in Oyo State we have the new minimum wage to be 80,000 naira, meaning the least worker in the state earns 80,000 naira.' 'The effect so far is that it has relieved the inflation and empowered the workers purchasing ability to some level, though it has not solved the entire problem. But we are relieved to some level.'

From the stated quote, it is clear enough that the new minimum wage policy by the government is now being implemented for workers and the effects are increase in the purchasing power of the employees and reductions of the impact of inflation. Although, the amount approved is still not

sufficient to cater adequately for workers' needs and meaningfully raise their standard of living, however, it is cushioning the effects of the recent rise in the cost of living. Therefore, the Government should endeavor to consider workers' welfare whenever they come up with policy that can possibly trigger inflation in the economy of the state. This study majorly focuses on workers in formal organization, for further study, it is recommended that there is a look into the impact of minimum wage policy on the informal sector of the economy of the country. This finding is in tandem with the findings of Neumark (2018), who agreed that implementation of new minimum wage policy for low wages earners especially will have some positive effect such as reduced poverty and boost their personal earnings. On the other hand, he stated the downside of the implementation of minimum wage which is lay off of some workers thereby causing unemployment among low wage earners while those workers that would be retained may have to work overtime or add more responsibility to fill the gap created by the retrenched staff. Baskaya and Rubinstein (2015), Clemens and Wither (2016), Powell (2016) found similar negative contributions of implementation of minimum wage policy for low skilled workers who may find it hard to secure job due to new minimum wage increase.

2. **Impacts of minimum wage on living standards of labour**

The interviewed participants reported that contrary to the popular believe that minimum wage increase would lead to inflation in the economy, it was clarified that it is as a result of inflation in the economy that government legislates on new minimum wage policy to cushion the effects of inflation on workers especially the low wage earners, also to have more money in circulation, increase gross domestic products, meet basic needs, etc.

'It wasn't minimum wage that brought about inflation.' 'Inflation has been existing.' 'Minimum wage was reviewed to cushion the effect of inflation that has already been on ground.' 'That means more money in circulation, more money in their pockets, ability to purchase more.' 'One of the ways to reduce poverty in any society and redistribute wealth in any state is to increase minimum wage.'

These imply the positive impacts of minimum wage policy on the living standards of labour. Zhang (2024) findings are consistent with this result as he stated that impacts of minimum wage policy implementation on living standards of employees include but not limited to providing

economic security for low wage earners, meeting employees basic needs and reduces poverty among the employees. It equally guaranteed financial stability. These above listed benefits or positive impacts of minimum wage does not totally exclude little job loses that may be experienced by some workers in some labour intensive industries. It is therefore recommended that the government and employers of labor should device an efficient means to mitigate the rate of job losses especially among those in low paying jobs.

3. **Challenges of minimum wage implementation**

The interviewed participants reported certain challenges that come with the implementation of minimum wage for employees such as: interval of minimum wage review which before was five years but now three years, government decision to increase personal income tax, hike in cost of goods and services, inadequate wages paid to workers, government inability to pay workers adequate salary etc. It is hereby recommended for the government to review minimum wage policy as consistently as when inflation rate increases beyond the present level for worker to be able to cope well with the rate of inflation.

'They would tell you that you signed an agreement of five years, and you have to wait till those five years lapse.' 'Ordinarily, the agreement is supposed to be at a stipulated number of years, maybe five years or whenever the need arises.' 'But thereafter, government has not ceased increasing the PMS price.' 'They always hit the masses and workers below the belt.' 'They take advantage of the workers.'

This finding is consistent with the report of Anakwuba and Nwogwugwu (2025) who reported that one of the main challenges of implementing minimum wage review is the interval of minimum wage policy. They stated that many a times inflation rate increase would have reduced drastically the value of wages low skilled workers earn before government will eventually agrees to review the minimum wage. This experience for workers is not pleasant as it could lead to traumatic experience for workers especially those in low paying jobs who might have been feeling neglected, cheated and undervalued by government and their Employers. It is therefore recommended for the government to constantly review minimum wage to ensure that an average employee is able to meet the basic personal and family needs. Other challenges noticed by researchers are inadequacy of data analysis to show accurate assessment of basic needs of

employees, lack of political will by the government to implement minimum wage, disparities in living costs for employees living either in rural or urban areas, persistent rise in cost of production, job losses, inability of workers in informal sector to benefit, lack of compliance among private organizations employers etc. (Umenweke and Anushiem, 2024). It is hereby recommended that for Small and Medium Scale Enterprises, government should provide financial aids and incentives to aid SMEs transition to the implementation new minimum wage, government should guarantee monitoring for thorough implementation of minimum wage policy, government should put inflation rate in check and ensure that workers can still meet up their personal and family basic needs.

4. Roles of labour unions in implementation of minimum wage

The interviewed participants reported specific roles of labour unions in the implementation of minimum wage which are following up the implementation of minimum wage for all categories of employees, protect workers rights, educates workers on their fundamental rights as Nigerian employees, engage in collective bargaining with the government and private organizations employers, seeking promote welfare of fellow employees, encourage self-discipline as adults.

'Immediately it becomes a law, it's our sole responsibility to follow it up.' 'It's our responsibility, especially the labor leaders to make sure, that all the organizations and companies that employed more than 25 workers as stipulated in the law pay minimum wage.' 'We're there to educate our people.' 'But our primary objective is the welfare of our workers, but by extension, it extends to the welfare of all Nigerians.' 'I would make sure that we protect their rights and make sure they are prevented from being intimidated.' 'we make sure they behave themselves as a civil servant, that they behave themselves as a responsible member of a responsible union.'

This implies that labour unions are mouthpieces for the civil servants and employees in private organizations. They on behalf of the government ensure adequate monitoring of payment of minimum for both workers in public and private organizations. This result is similar to the findings of Obiekwe and Obibhunun (2019) who reported that labour unions leaders speak for fellow employees, campaign for fair wages, ensure compliance, bargaining minimum wage policy implementation better workers. It is therefore understood that the roles of labour unions are quite enormous and indispensable if workers must benefits from implementation of minimum

wage. It is therefore recommended that government should pay adequate attention to the demands of labour union and motivate employees to work harder by paying attention to the demands and unspoken needs of the Nigerian workers.

5. **Recommendations for minimum wage policy reforms**

The interviewed participants reported the recommendations for minimum wage policy reforms such as: government should prioritize people's welfare above capitalist gains which sometimes may be at the expense of poor masses in the decision about minimum wage, also the government should possibly neutralize the effects of minimum wage policy on job security of low skilled workers who may suffer retrenchment. Government should create an enabling environment for economic activities to thrive in our society. Government should be faithful to the people and manage inflation not to affect Nigerian employees.

'Government should make laws that favor the masses not those that would favor only the capitalists - those who are there to make profit at the expense of the workers.' 'We need to put the government of the day on a spot that it is better for them to turn around the economy in such a way that there will be little inflation and prices of goods and commodities would come down.' 'My advice to the government is that the government should be faithful, the government should be truthful, and the government should also pity the civil servant.' 'Every rise in price should automatically lead to an increase in wages and salaries.'

From the results stated here it is clear that the government is in charge of whether to make life difficult for people or not. These recommendations are consistent with the summarized report for International Labour Organization that government should embark on thorough consultations with required stakeholders, adjust minimum wage on consistent basis to check effect of inflation, inspect and impose stiff punishment for any organization that will not comply (ILO, 2012)

CHAPTER FIVE
CONCLUSIONS

This study investigated the impacts of Labour Rights (fair remunerations, safe working conditions, Nondiscrimination and freedom of association) on new national minimum wage policy among employees in Nigeria. The researcher employed a combination of qualitative and quantitative data collection methods to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the minimum wage policy's implementation and its impact on labour rights. From the existing population of employees, a sample size of 412 employees in Nigeria, West Africa from public and private organizations participated in the survey conducted to elicit quantitative data for the purpose of this research, adopting the simple random sampling technique. Also, 4 key stakeholders in the Nigeria Labour unions participated in the key Informant Interview conducted to elicit qualitative data for the purpose of this study. The face validity of Implementation of New Nigerian National Minimum Wage and Its Impacts on Labour Rights Questionnaire (INNNMWILRQ) was subjected to trial testing. A total of 50 Nigerian employees from both public and private organizations was sampled. The scores obtained on the administration of the instrument were recorded and Cronbach method (which was calculated at 0.810) was used to determine its reliability showing that the instrument is very reliable for this study. The instrument tagged: Implementation of New Nigerian National Minimum Wage and Its Impacts on Labour Rights Questionnaire (INNNMWILRQ) was developed and used for data collection. The instrument was divided into two major sections: A and B. Section A seeks demographic information of the respondents (Nigerian employees from both public and private organizations) while Section B sought information on the variables under consideration which are National Minimum Wage and Labour Rights. Section B contained (21) items grouped into 5 sub-sections that covered items under minimum wage policy implementation and indices of labour rights sub-divided into another four sections. Sub section 1 sought the perception of respondents on implementation of national minimum wage, sub-section 2 sought the perception of respondents on fair remunerations, sub-section 3 sought the perception of respondents on creation of safe Working conditions by their employers, sub-section 4 sought the perception of respondents on Non-discriminating actions from the employers and sub-section 5 sought the perception of respondents on how well they enjoy freedom of association.

In the instrument, for section B, the data supplied by the respondents were graded on a five – point Likert rating scale to rate responses to the items in the questionnaire and a point was assigned to the degree of responses as follows; Strongly Agree (SA)- 5points, Agree (A)- 4points, Undecided (U)- 3points, Disagree (D)-2point, Strongly Disagree (SD)- 1point and vice versa for negative skewed items.

For the qualitative data, Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key stakeholders, including labor union representatives, government officials, and workers. These interviews explored the challenges of compliance.

A total of 412 completely filled responses from respondents were used for analysis. Semi structure interview was conducted with Labor union leaders and other key stakeholders (4 participants). Descriptive statistics and regression analysis were used to analyze survey data and examine relationships between implementation of new national minimum wage and indices of labour rights (fair remunerations, nondiscrimination, safe working conditions and freedom of association). Qualitative Analysis: Thematic analysis was done to identify patterns and insights from interviews.

The results obtained showed that fair remunerations significantly impact minimum wage policy implementation in Nigeria. Also, non-discrimination significantly impacts minimum wage policy implementation in Nigeria. The freedom of association of employees does significantly impact minimum wage policy implementation in Nigeria, as well as indices of labour rights: fair remunerations, safe working conditions, nondiscrimination and freedom of association have relative contributions to the implementation of new national minimum wage in Nigeria. However, safe working conditions does not significantly impact minimum wage policy implementation in Nigeria.

After analysis and interpretation of data with the use of appropriate statistical tools, the findings reveal that labour rights play important roles in determining and improving minimum wage policy implementation for the employees. From the findings, it was discovered that fair remunerations, nondiscrimination and freedom of association significantly impact minimum wage policy implementation. It must be equally noted that the main purpose of this study was to

investigate the impacts of labour rights on minimum wage policy implementation among employees in both public and private organizations in Nigeria.

This conclusively revealed that labour rights (fair remunerations, Nondiscrimination, Safe working conditions and freedom of association) can be used as a control strategy to adjusting and improving minimum wage for employees in Oyo State, Nigeria, Africa and the entire globe at large. All the indices of labour rights (fair remunerations, Nondiscrimination, Safe working conditions and freedom of association) should be harmonized to bring the about the desirable results which is motivation for the employees to give their best in service for the progress of the organization where they work.

Indices of labor rights (fair remunerations, Nondiscrimination, Safe working conditions and freedom of association) have been discovered strong contributors in determining appropriate minimum wage policy for employees, the government agencies in charge of minimum wage policy should therefore harmonize all the indices of labour rights and put them in consideration when working on determining appropriate minimum wage review for the employees, in order to maintain highly motivated and productive employees working to contribute maximally to the growth and development of nations economy and bring about economic prosperity for the nation.

In determining minimum wage, the government must embark on dutiful consultation of appropriate stakeholders who are primarily concerned about the wellbeing of the employees as it is indispensable for economic growth. It implies the involvement of labour unions who are official representatives and mouthpieces to communicate the necessary needs of employees to the government and employers of labor.

Minimum Wage is hereby recommended to be set at the level that covers basic needs of employees adequately such as food, shelter, clothing, health and other necessary social welfare and security, minimum standard of living. This will give the employees positive energy to be more dedicated, loyal and incorruptible in their various sectors of work.

Regular review and consequential adjustments of minimum wage is recommended to account for the impact of inflation and rise in cost of living e.g. Consumer Price Index (CPI). This will result in continued industrial harmony between the employers and employees and progress at work place.

Government should therefore be dutiful at monitoring level of compliance with the minimum wage law among the organizations that are employers of labor. The inspection should be tactically conducted to ensure that workers are not being shortchanged by employers of labor and stiff punishment should be imposed on the organizations that default for no justifiable reasons in paying his or her employees minimum wage amount approved by the tripartite body comprising of government agencies, employers of labor and labour unions representatives.

Government and other stakeholders in minimum wage determination are therefore enjoined to be very transparent for employees to trust the bargaining process and implication approach. This will forestall possible industrial actions, protests or possibly strike actions that may bring the economy of a nation to a standstill.

Ultimately, government should endeavor to be proactive enough in managing and prevent possible job losses especially among employees in low paying jobs in the situation of possible minimum wage increase. This is usually dreaded whenever the minimum wage is about to experience upward review for employee's wellbeing. Also, inflation should be put in check by the government, such that the minimum wage paid to workers can be impactful in meeting personal and family needs of the employees.

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APPENDIX

Cafoscari University of Venezia, Italy

Economic Campus

Department of Management

Implementation of New Nigerian National Minimum Wage and Its Impacts on Labour Rights Questionnaire (INNNMWILRQ)

Dear Respondent,

My name is Ogunjobi Oluwaseun Gbenga. I am running a master's program in International Management at Ca'foscari University of Venice. At the moment, I am writing my thesis on the topic "Implementation of New Nigerian National Minimum Wage and Its Impacts on Labour Rights". Thus, this questionnaire was designed to obtain needed information for the purpose of the research. Kindly provide adequate responses to the survey questions. Please be rest assured that the information provided will be treated with utmost confidentiality and used for research purposes only. Thanks for your anticipated cooperation.

Please, give your consent to participate Yes. { } No. { }

SECTION A: Demographic Section

Type of organization: Public Sector { } Private Sector { }

Sector of the organization: Education **{ }** Health **{ }** Financial **{ }** Agriculture **{ }** Manufacturing { } other**(**specify**):.....**

State where your workplace is located:.....

Sex: Male { } Female { }

Age: Less than 20 { } 20-30 { } 31-40 { } 41-50 { } 51 and above { }

Marital Status: Single { } Married { } Divorced { } Widow/Widower { }

If married, Number of Children: Non yet { } 1-2 { } 3-4 { } 5 or more { }

Highest Qualification: O'Level { } NCE/OND { } HND/B.Sc. { } M. Sc./PGDE { } Ph.D { } Others:..... (Specify)

Years of Experience: Less than 5years { } 6-10years { } 11-15years { } 16-20year { } 21years and above { }

Nature of work: Full time { } Part-time { } Contract staff { } Others.....

Average salary range: Less than 70k ( ) 70k-140k ( ) 141k-280k ( ) 281k-400k( ) more than 400k ( ). N.B.: **k** here represent '000 naira.

SECTION B: Impacts of New National Minimum Wage on Labour Rights

Indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statement using **SA: Strongly Agree, A: Agree, U: Undecided, D: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree (As applicable).**

S/N	Implementation of New National Minimum Wage	SA	A	U	D	SD
1.	I am aware of the new national minimum wage					
2.	The new minimum wage policy has been implemented in my state.					
3.	New minimum wage is being enforced across all levels of employees in public organizations in my state.					
4.	Private organizations were also enforced to implement new minimum wage for their employees in my state.					
	Labour Right: Fair remunerations	**SA**	**A**	**U**	**D**	**SD**
5.	New minimum wage meets my personal basic needs (feeding, clothing and accomodations, etc.)					
6.	New minimum wage can cater for my family needs					
7.	I believe my salary commensurate duties I perform in my organization					
8.	My employer never paid me lesser than my deserved amount					

	Labour Rights: Safe Working conditions	**SA**	**A**	**U**	**D**	**SD**
9.	My organization is totally safe to work					
10.	Have access to health insurance provided for employees					
11.	has health & safety measures for all staff e.g first aid etc					
12.	Employer comply with ILO (international Labour Organization) safety and health regulations for all staff					
13.	Employer provides me with adequate protective working equipment for my job					
14.	Organization provided me with adequate preventive and safety trainings before the commencement of my job					
	Labour Rights: Non-discrimination	**SA**	**A**	**U**	**D**	**SD**
15.	Provides equal opportunities irrespective of gender					
16.	People with Disabilities are entitled to equal remuneration for service rendered as their able bodied colleagues					
17.	Indigenes and non-indigenes enjoy equal and fair job opportunities and treatments at my workplace					
18.	Organization does not places preferences on certain religions above others					
	Labour Rights: Freedom of Association	**SA**	**A**	**U**	**D**	**SD**
19.	I have liberty to join labour unions activities as applicable to my job					
20.	I am entitled to the benefits of collective bargaining by the labour unions from my employer					
21.	My employer comply with labor union bargainings					
22.	Labour union activities in my state are effective					

Cafoscari University of Venezia, Italy

Economic Campus

Department of Management

Key Informant Interview Guide (KIIG) for Implementation of Minimum Wage and Protection of Labour Right

This interview guide is designed to collect qualitative information on the implementation of minimum wage in Nigeria and the protection of labour right. Your opinion is germane to the research and will be treated confidentially. Thanks for your cooperation.

1. a. My name is Ogunjobi Oluwaseun Gbenga, can you please introduce yourself?

   b. What is your opinion about Minimum Wage in Nigeria?

2. Do you think Nigeria minimum wage implementation is according to the law?

3. What effect do you think minimum wages has on workers across various levels or categories?

4. What do you think about the frequency of reviewing minimum wages for workers by government?

5. Do you think the amount agreed with the labour unions as minimum wage is appropriate to meet an average employee's basic need?

6. Do you think Implementation of minimum wage will results in inflation in National economy?

7. In your opinion, do you think the implementation of minimum wage will improve labour living conditions and protect their rights?

8. a. What role is the labour union playing to ensure the implementation of minimum wage and protection of labour rights?

   b. How do workers in the private sectors benefits from the minimum wage policy of the government?

   c. What roles are the trade union and labour union playing to guarantee this?

9. What challenges do you think are associated with the implementation of minimum wage as you experienced (probe for how it affects labour right such as fair remuneration, Safe Working conditions, non-discrimination and freedom of association)?

10. What recommendations can you provide for improving national minimum wage policies and enhancing the protection of labor rights in Nigeria?

INTERVIEW SESSION WITH NIGERIAN LABOUR CONGRESS (NLC) CHAIRMAN, OYO STATE CHAPTER

I am Seun Ogunjobi, a Masters' student in Cafoscari University of Venezia in Italy. I'm studying International Management. The focus of this interview is on Nigerian Minimum Wage and Labor Rights. That's why I seek your audience. Please can you introduce yourself briefly.

I'm Comrade Kayode Martins. The Chairman of Nigerian Labor Congress, Oyo State.

First, what's your view on the minimum wage currently in Nigeria and is it being implemented according to the law?

The minimum wage in Nigeria today is at 70000 naira. Minimum wage is the least amount any employer should pay. Anybody who employs not less than 25 number of people should not pay below 70000 naira. At the table when we were bargaining with the government, we concluded on minimum of five employees, but I am of the view that majority of our lawmakers in Nigeria, you know, they have hotels and the like, maybe they have between 1 - 24 workers, they are the ones that changed it to 25. The labor union in the country bargained for 5, that if you employ up to 5 employees you should not pay less than minimum wage, but when it got to the national assembly, they changed it to 25. Here in Oyo State where I happen to be the state chairman, the minimum wage is 80000 naira because we appealed to the state government. The Governor: Engineer Seyi Makinde was magnanimous enough. With the current economic situation, 70000 naira is nothing, especially, with the effect of subsidy removal on PMS (Premium Motor Spirit). In Nigeria whatever happens to fuel price affects every other thing. It shapes the socio-economic status of every individual. You hear the market women telling you, 'Fuel price has increased', so they have to increase the price of whatever they are selling. So, in Oyo State we have the minimum wage to be 80000 naira, meaning the least worker in the state earns 80000 naira. The effect so far is that it has relieved inflation and empowered the workers purchasing ability to some level, though it has not solved the entire problem. But we are relieved to some level.

But if I may ask, do you think this minimum wage as soon as it was effected, had some inflationary effects on the workers, or it helped in their purchasing power? Since we know how prices fluctuate in the market as soon as they hear that minimum wage has been increased for workers?

Inflation has been on ground. You can't believe it that all nations around the world, they increase minimum wage without any much noise. But in Nigeria, the politicians they turn it into something else. They set us up against the people. See the labor leaders, they're asking us to increase their salary. Within a year we have the salaries of political holders being increased on several occasions. But whenever it comes to the masses you begin to hear a lot of stories. It wasn't minimum wage that brought about inflation. Inflation has been on ground. Minimum wage was reviewed to cushion the effect of inflation that has already been on ground. To enhance the purchasing power of the workers. And whenever it is done, it is not only the workers that enjoy it, the market women, the artisans, everybody does. One of the ways to reduce poverty in any society and redistribute wealth in any state is to increase minimum wage. But politicians will not want to see it that way.

Thank you very much sir. Please I'll like to ask, do you think that the frequency of the minimum wage that has just been reviewed is sufficient? Because we realize that before, it used to be reviewed in four or five years but now it has been reduced to two or three years. Sir, what can you say about the frequency of review especially in Nigerian context?

Thank you. In a normal world, whenever the government notices high increase in inflation or any social financial issues affecting workers, they quickly review minimum wage. But whatever happens in Nigeria, government would not look at your side. They would tell you that you signed agreement of five years, and you have to wait till those five years' lapse. Ordinarily, the agreement is supposed to be at a stipulated number of years, maybe five years or whenever the need arises. In as much as they didn't agree with us on that, we said five years is too long for us. With what we experienced between 2018 and 2024, it was hell. So, we had to sit down, we pushed on two years, and they agreed for three years. As you can see, the inflation on ground even has called for review, because 70000 naira is nothing to write home all about. We demanded 250,000 naira. The president said he's ready to pay but he's going to increase the PMS price to 2000 or 2500 naira per litre. Meaning workers would be enjoying at the expense of the

masses. So, we paid the price, we played the hero by saying if 70000 naira is what you're ready to pay and you would not increase the PMS price we will pocket our interest and go for 70000 naira. But thereafter, government has not ceased increasing the PMS price. They always hit the masses and workers below the belt. They take advantage of the workers.

Sir, the next question is about the role of labor union in protecting the right of workers especially those in private institutions. Do workers who work in private institutions have the right to join the union and does the implementation cut across them. Because we know that for the state government (for example Oyo State), the government has implemented that for them. But to what extent has those working in private organizations enjoyed this implementation?

Thank you so much. Immediately it becomes a law, it's our sole responsibility to follow it up. Here in Oyo State, when you called me this morning, I was having a tete-à tete with the IBEDC etc. in respect of some workers in IBEDC (Ibadan Electricity Distribution Company) who are being paid below minimum wage. It's our responsibility, especially the labor leaders to make sure, that all the organizations and companies that employed more than 25 workers as stipulated in the law pay minimum wage. So, from my end here in Oyo State, we've been following that up. Although it's a bit tasking but we're really up to the task. Actually, we've been to about 3 or 4 companies in Oluyole, they implemented even before the government started doing it in Oyo State.

But sir, you know we have categories of workers, full time, part time, contract, casual workers and so on. Are these categories of workers entitled to these benefits or it's only for full time workers.? Because like the case of the IBEDC you mentioned, those staff that are said to be laid off were contract staff hired by a company. So, IBEDC stated that it was the company that hired them that was supposed to take care of them and that they were not full staff of IBEDC and so that's why they weren't entitled to the minimum wage.

When I heard that, I approached them and asked that I heard you're engaged in casualization of workers, he said 'No, they're not casual workers, they're my real staff'. Meaning you cannot pay them below minimum wage. And these are the set of people that do the hazardous part of the work. They do more than the people sitting in the office. Whatever name we call it; a spade

remains a spade. It's nothing but inhuman to employ someone working round the clock and paying them lesser than the minimum wage, whatever agreement they signed with you does not supersede the law that regulates the labor relationship in that particular environment and the law of the country. That's the law we have in Nigeria, and everybody must abide by it.

Thank you very much sir. I just want to ask, because we have discovered that it seems like it is the minimum wage that is taking preeminence among the labor congress. Meanwhile, labor rights supersede even minimum wage. There are other things that the labor union should be fighting for on behalf of the workers, such as, the safe working conditions of workers, non-discrimination, freedom of association, job security etc.

The reason for this is because government and employers, they give us much headache, when it comes to minimum wage. They make a lot of noise when it comes to minimum wage. We're there to educate our people. Take for instance, to the glory of God, in Oyo State here, we bought about an hour on a particular radio station here 11am – 12pm, we educate our people. We organize trainings. We strive to enhance their socio-economic wellbeing. And above all, we speak for them.

As we round off, what recommendations can you provide for improving National Minimum wage policies and enhancing the protection of workers in Nigeria especially to the government and employers of labor?

Thank you. Ordinarily, government is supposed to play the role of an umpire: the middleman between workers and employers. But in Nigeria, where government is the highest employer of labor, they make laws which are favorable to the employers at the expense of the employees. Government should make laws that favor the masses not those that would favor only the capitalists - those who are there to make profit at the expense of the workers. That is what we witness here.

Finally, we know that we have NLC and TUC, are these unions different in their operations?

Initially we had one Labor Union in the state, good enough it was in the days of Obasanjo, when he was the military officer, he said labor unions in the state are so many, they should come under one umbrella, that was in1978. So, they came under one umbrella, we spoke with one voice. It

was the same Obasanjo when he became the civilian President that said NLC is too powerful, he attempted to break NLC into four, but he succeeded in breaking it into two: NLC & TUC. So, we have two central movements just to weaken the voice of the workers. It was this same Obasanjo that was condemning the labor movement days ago. So that is what we're witnessing in Africa and Nigeria as a whole. Everything comes from their end and their sole aim is just to make profit at the expense of everybody. So, we're two central Labor movements in the country. Initially when Obasanjo created four, the agreement was that it's voluntary, let everybody go back to NLC, the other three will die automatically. So, majority of labor unions came under NLC.

Thank you for the answers and for your time.

It's a pleasure. All the best.

INTERVIEW SESSION WITH TRADE UNION CONGRESS (TUC) CHAIRMAN, OYO STATE CHAPTER

Good evening, sir. I am Seun Ogunjobi, a Masters' student in Cafoscari University of Venezia in Italy. I'm studying International Management. The focus of this interview is on Nigerian Minimum Wage and Labor Rights. That's why I seek your audience. Please can you introduce yourself briefly.

Okay. My name is Comrade Bosun Olabiyi. I am the Trade Union Congress Chairman for Oyo State.

Just as an introduction sir, what is your opinion on minimum wage in Nigeria and in your own perspective as a labor union stakeholder, is it implemented according to the Nigerian law?

Okay, minimum wage in Nigeria and also all across the world is the barest minimum that is expected for anybody working to collect on a periodical basis. But as the case is in Nigeria, monthly basis is the payment interval. So minimum wage is the amount of money that is expected to be paid for the least worker in the state or across the nation in the period of one month. And this amount is usually a law which is supposed to be bounded on all employees. It is to be in force for a period of five years, but this last one we were able to negotiate down to three years before we'll be able to negotiate another one because of the prevailing conditions in the country. Both employers and employees we were all involved, so it was after elaborate deliberations that we landed it on 70000 naira now for federal, but states are permitted to do more. Any state that is willing to do more than that, they are allowed to. The only thing they're not allowed to do is to do lesser than that. So, 70000 naira has been agreed but Oyo State here where we preside, the minimum wage is 80000 naira as pronounced by the government. It was after then we now delved into the issue of consequential adjustments that would determine what each grade level will take from grade level 1 - 16. And our own take to determine what minimum wage is the current reality that is obtainable as at that particular moment. All the indices as inflation, price of cogent and very important commodities such as fuel are the things which we put into consideration. Because minimum wage is not something that somebody is dashing somebody money. It is as a result of work done that you are supposed to be paid. It is not a gift.

It is a product of your work that you have done over a period of time that is minimum wage. So that is why it was elaborately discussed so we landed it at that. At the federal, 70000 naira but in Oyo State 80000 naira.

Thank you very much. But now that 80000naira minimum wage has been implemented in Oyo State, in your opinion do you think it has any positive effects on the life of workers or even the economy in Oyo State generally?

Definitely. If we look at it from May 29, 2023, when this new government came on board, the president of the federation, the president of the country - Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu, pronounced that fuel subsidy is gone and he has not even left the podium before prices of commodities, prices of goods and services skyrocketed. But workers were still on 30000 naira minimum wage between that May 29, 2023, up until January 1, 2025, when Oyo State implemented the minimum wage. That is up to almost 18 months, to be precise 19 months before the minimum wage was implemented in Oyo State. So, workers were still on 30000 naira between May 29, 2023 up until January 1st, 2025. And the salary of January was not paid January 1st, it was paid January 25th, 2025. So, workers endured 18 months even with the prices of goods, commodities and services that have skyrocketed. So, there's no way it would not have positive effects on their lives after January 2025 when they started collecting 80000naira minimum wage. That is difference of 50000 naira, that represents over 166% increment in their wage. That means more money in circulation, more money in their pockets, ability to purchase more. Their purchasing power increased compared to what it used to be from May 29, 2023, up until the implementation of that 80000naira minimum wage in Oyo State. And it is a ripple effect, because immediately the money comes into their pockets, they are not going to hoard the money, they don't have banks in their various homes, they would have to use the money to do one or two things, to purchase goods and items, and that is how the money is going to go into the economy of the state. Thereby increasing the GDP of the state. So, what they have endured for 18 months, they're able to at least meet up with little of it, though it is not what we can say is totally adequate to meet up with what is the basic needs that they need. It is a far better situation to be: collecting 80000 naira compared to collecting 30000 naira.

Thank you very much sir. That is a very cogent one. Actually, in my conversations here and there, especially with people in Nigeria, it's been proposed that even currently in Nigeria if people are being paid 500000 naira monthly, it's not even enough to cater for an average employee's need. I would like to know your stance about it.

That is not far from the truth at all. Because if you look at it, even if we put into consideration, a man that is not married, that has no children at all, 80000 naira is far away from what is able to sustain himself for 30 days. The cost of transportation alone from Point A to Point B no matter how close you are to your place of work; the only people that would not pay for transportation are those people that may be living in their place of work. And how many people can we see, or do we know in that category in Oyo State. Most people live in their various homes and then they come to work. The cost of transportation alone, no matter how close you are to your office is nothing less than 30000 naira now. And that is almost 40% of the money gone. Talk less, of you'll now feed yourself, you'll cloth yourself, you'll have to provide your own water and cater for basic needs. If you're now unlucky to be married, because it's now becoming a situation of being unlucky - something that should be an added advantage. If you're now married and have children, how do you now cater for them with 80000 naira? How do you cater for them? If you're now much more unlucky again, your wife is not working, then everything comes upon you. So, 80000 naira or 70000 naira, no matter how, the highest we have in Nigeria as per minimum wage is 85000 which is for Lagos, and I think Rivers state. It is totally inadequate to cater for one man talk less of a family man that has a wife and one or two children.

So, it means to say that your previous point was actually in comparison to the previous minimum wage not actually in satisfaction of employee needs?

Yes, when we started the debate, we went with data and figures putting how much a man is expected to eat on a minimum for 30 days. How much his accommodation should be for 30 days. How much is transportation from work to home? We're not even putting it into consideration that he may want to go to church or mosque or any function. We only calculated based on what would take him from home to work. We put all these into consideration, and we attached numbers and figures to them. And that is how we arrived at 656,000 naira that we asked for as the minimum wage. And so, you can now imagine 656000naira, side by side 70000 naira that we ended up getting. You could see that that is a massive gap between the two. But because the

government was saying that moving from 30000 naira to 70000 naira too is a massive jump on their own part. That is more than 100% increment on salaries. And they were saying that look at it, anywhere in the world, where would you have such increment at a go? An increment of almost 130%. Yes, on a normal ground, in a place where things are normal, that should be considered to be a success. But if we now look at the situation of things in Nigeria, it is not anywhere close to being successful at all, because of the current situations we're facing in Nigeria.

Thank you very much sir. Another question is that, as you rightly said that you approached government with facts and figures to justify the demand for increment in salary. Arguments from the side of government also suggested that if your demands have been met, then inflation massive and the value of naira would have become so useless, where people start earning so much and start throwing naira out and then inflation would become so hyper. Do you believe that argument is sound enough?

I think the argument that we tried to relate with among their arguments is the capacity and ability to pay. Not really the inflation. The inflation may be there, but it will even out at some point. How many people are actually workers working for government? Nigeria is a country of almost 200 million people. Put together, both state and federal workers, how many people are they altogether? So, we might say the inflation may there, but it would even out over a period of time. But the real argument we related with more with them is from 30000 naira, you're asking somebody to be paying 650000 naira. Do they have the ability to pay? And the income they're generating from crude oil and other goods and services, everything put together, that is giving the country money - would they be able to pay such an amount of money? Oyo State as an example, both our IGR (Internally Generated Revenue) put together would it be able to pay 300000 naira as minimum wage for the least worker? And if 300000 naira is the minimum wage, that means some other people would collect far more than that. People on higher grade and higher cadre would have to collect more than that. And it is how much they collect in salaries that their pension too would attract, all other things would go by it: Christmas bonus, 13th month salary, all those things would come into it. So, the only argument we related with more is the ability to pay. Because we too, we have to be realistic, we have to look at Nigeria as our own not just because we want to collect money. How much is the state making? Oyo State as an example,

how much is their IGR, put together? If they put all these things together, would they be able to pay us? We don't expect the people in authority to go to their house to add their own personal money to what they would use to run the state. It is those two things they would have to use, the IGR and the federal allocation that is coming to them from the Federal Government. And they were to a reasonable extent transparent to us. And it is not something that is even hidden. There is no amount of money that is coming to Oyo State today that is not known by everybody that has access to NBS and other platforms. They're always putting them on the social media almost on monthly basis. Also, the Internal Generated Revenue of Oyo State is not something that is a secret to many people. It is there in the public domain that we can relate with. So those were the reasons why we settled for what we settled for believing that in three years' time, things would be better, the inflation would not have skyrocketed. The price of goods and other commodities would be stable. So that what we would be asking for then is not something that is going to break the pockets of the government.

I'll also love to ask in relation to the private sector of the state or the nation, what role is Labor Union playing so that the private sectors can also benefit from this struggles that the union is making. Or are the private sectors excluded from benefiting from the activities of the TUC and Labor Unions?

Not at all. Personally, I'm from the private sector. I belong to PENGASAN (Petroleum and Natural Gas Senior Staff Association of Nigeria). And my company is a private sector. I don't work for government. Immediately those things started happening since 2023, many of the private companies that are into collective bargaining agreement with their workers have gone into series of deliberations and negotiations and many of them have adjusted the salaries and wages of workers even without having to push them or going into any form of rancor. Many of them, I must say have complied even more than what the Federal Government and state government are doing. And we are always on standby to hear from our members whose companies are yet to comply. There is one ongoing now with the Ibadan Electricity Distribution Company (IBEDC), we have issues with them because they are yet to implement the minimum wage for their so to say contract staff. They're saying they are not their direct staff; they're contract staff. But whether they are contract staff or whatever name you say it is; there's no worker in Nigeria that must collect less than 70000 naira. So, we're taking them up on that so

that those our members are not shortchanged. And that they own their own cut of the cake by implementation of the minimum wage. So, it cuts across both private and public sectors. Everybody that works in Nigeria, no matter the kind of work, no matter the kind of employment be it public service or private sector, all of us have the right to get a national Minimum Wage as agreed by government and labor organizations.

Thank you very much sir. Please I'll like to ask a question, we have TUC and NLC, is there any difference between these two bodies?

Of course, definitely. The Nigerian Labor Congress and TUC are the two umbrella bodies that are in Nigeria. With TUC we have about 18-20 member affiliates that are with TUC while NLC have up to 25-30 whereabout affiliate unions that are with NLC. But the little demarcation there is that most of the people that are with TUC are the Senior workers in companies while in TUC they are mostly the junior workers that are working in different private and public sectors. I'll use a very good example, the Association of Senior Staff Association of Nigeria, they are with TUC, those are workers from grade level 7-16, while the workers that are from Grade level 1-6, are with the NCSU (Nigeria Civil Servants Union) which are basically the junior workers working with government in all their parastatals and their offices. So, that is the major difference. Another one is PENGASSAN (Petroleum and Natural Gas Senior Staff Association of Nigeria). We are the senior staff in all the Oil and Gas companies. While NUPENG, they are the Junior workers in all the Oil and Gas companies in Nigeria. So NUPENG is with NLC while PENGASSAN is with TUC. So that is the broad demarcation between the TUC and the NLC.

How about the membership? Do they have to register or pay money? Because we realize that some members like the case of The Polytechnic of Ibadan, I'm sure you're aware that many contract staff in the Polytechnic of Ibadan, for years they have been using them to take Part Time lectures and all that and they refused to employ them. Is it because they have not recognized that they are under a particular union that can fight for them, or those ones are not registered under a particular union that could have fought for them and then make them to succeed in becoming a permanent staff?

You know it is not the duty of employers to make sure that employees are in a union. It is the employees that would organize themselves based on their needs and how much they attach

importance to them being in a union. Ordinarily, there's no employer that would want his employees to bargain collectively. They don't naturally want a union, no matter how they picture it or paint it and talk about it that they're friendly with the union. Most employers do not want union. So, it's totally left to the workers to organize themselves. It's not left to the employers to organize the employees into a union. So, when the workers know they are being shortchanged and they believe that collective bargaining would be better for them, they need to come together, and it is totally not within the right of any employer to say 'No'. Also, irrespective of the kind of contract that you have, be it partial contract, full contract, full employment, contract employment, all manner of contract employment are eligible to be in the union and to collectively bargain. Even workers that you put together on the road and you discussed with them on the road, and you called together to come and work for you, they have the right to collectively bargain. So, it is those people that need to pick up courage, organize themselves and introduce themselves to the management that we are now a member of a union. It is not the employer that would do that on behalf of the employees. It is the employees that would have to take up the task by themselves, pick up the courage and register themselves into a union for the purpose of collective bargaining.

Thank you so much sir. Apart from the current struggle on minimum wage, are there other things the TUC fight for on behalf of workers? Are there other things they're ensuring for workers and what ways are they doing it, especially in ensuring safe working conditions, non-discrimination, freedom of association, job security etc. Are there activities that the TUC is doing in this regard to secure and make sure that workers are treated well?

Yes. You've listed many. And I would also like to elaborate on it that it is not only the interest of workers alone that we fight for. We fight for the whole of Nigerians. But our primary objective is the welfare of our workers, but by extension, it extends to the welfare of all Nigerians. And I'll use a good example, during the time of the Naira note change that became an issue in Nigeria then that many lives were lost; it was until both TUC and NLC put our heads together and we stood our ground that enough was enough that it was resolved. Even some governors went to Supreme Court to get a favorable judgement that the old notes should still be in force. But the government of that day then, as led by President Muhammadu Buhari was still adamant that No, they have to go ahead and still continue with what they were doing. However, Labor unions has to fight it until everything was reversed. So many of those things. I'll tell you another one, the

refineries that are working in Nigeria today - it was due to the efforts of both the NUPENG and PENGASSAN putting the government of the day on the spot then. And we became part of the committee that was saddled with how to bring about the refineries then. And we were so much involved even with the financing, the release of funds and everything that made the refineries to be working today. So, it is not just minimum wage. There are several ongoing battles that we have been fighting. The issue of CNG (Compressed Natural Gas) today that we're enjoying in Nigeria was one of the 15-point agenda that we signed with the Federal Government then around October 2023 after President Bola Ahmed Tinubu came on board, that we saw to the issue of CNG and we have many repair centers, conversion centers all around Nigeria today. Those are several other things that we have done. Also, the issue of the state of emergency that is currently being on debate in Rivers state now, we have let out our voice to it. And we have called out the government of the day and we have made our opinion very clear on the issue of the state of emergency as Labor Force.

Thank you very much sir. Finally, I'll like you to please tell us what are your recommendations for the government in improving minimum wage in Nigeria and protecting interest of labor rights and the frequency of reviewing minimum wage?

Okay. Really, as Labor Union, our interest is not in the amount we're getting as minimum wage. It's not in the magnitude of the money we're getting. The real thing which we're agitating for is what the value of the money we're getting can do. And that is why our agitation is not taking from 70000 naira to 120000 naira. The 120000 naira of then may not be as powerful as the 80000 naira of today. And I'll use a vivid example. The 70000 naira we are collecting today now, is it as powerful as the 30000 naira we collected some six years ago? The answer is No. So, what we are really agitating for that would really boost this economy is all the factors that would make more jobs to come, that would make jobs to be stable, that would make the prices of goods and commodities to come down. And number one is energy. There must be provision of energy, electricity etc. All these things must be provided. Look at the string of companies that have exited Nigeria because of unstable electricity. Because of the price of petrol and diesel they are using to fuel production. So, these are the real issues. We are ready that if prices of commodities are so down, we're ready to go to the table where government will tell us that the 80000naira we're giving you is too much, we need to reduce it. We're ready for such discussion. So, it's not

the amount of money they're giving us that is important to us, but the condition of life and what that money can do to turn around the standard of living of an average Nigerian worker. That is the real thing we're asking for. If today, the cost of a litre of petrol is like 30 naira, or let's say even 100 naira - are we going to be having a discussion with the government that they should increase our minimum wage? The answer will be No. If house rent, the cost of moving from one spot to the other, there is train everywhere that can take people all around, you don't need to buy fuel into your car or buy petrol or diesel. If all the companies in Nigeria today can rely on the National grid that is provided by the government, and nobody is using diesel, nobody is using petrol - how do you think it'll be? So, the cost of production will go down and by that the selling price of goods and products will go down. We can see that even in the little reduction in the cost of fuel just in the last one or two months now. We can see little changes that we have experienced in Nigeria. So that is the real discussions, those are the real arguments and not that in three years to come we do our calculations again, and our calculations is giving us 1 million naira as minimum wage and we know already that government will not be able to pay it, based on their income. So, we need to put the government of the day on a spot that it is better for them to turn around the economy in such a way that there will be little inflation and prices of goods and commodities would come down.

INTERVIEW SESSION WITH NON-ACADEMIC STAFF UNION (NASU) CHAIRMAN, UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN CHAPTER.

I am Seun Ogunjobi, a Masters' student in Cafoscari University of Venezia in Italy. I'm studying International Management. The focus of this interview is on Nigerian Minimum Wage and Labor Rights. That's why I seek your audience. Please can you introduce yourself briefly.

I am Comrade Ogunlade Olufemi Michael. I am the NASU chairman, University of Ibadan, the Premier University Nigeria.

Thank you so much sir. If I may ask for a start, what is your opinion on what the minimum wage in Nigeria and do you think this is being implemented according to the law in Nigerian case currently?

Thank you. Thank God, you're also a Nigerian. And you know - we're so funny in Nigeria, both the Nigerian citizens and Nigerian government. What the Nigerian government or Nigerian citizens are calling minimum wage; I don't know what name I can give to it. Nigerian government, I mean the Federal government they signed an agreement with the Nigerian Labor Congress (NLC). The agreement they signed, they agreed to pay 70000 naira as minimum wage for every Nigerian, and you'll discover that the price of things, commodities in Nigeria, even if anybody, any civil servant in Nigeria is earning 300000 naira as minimum wage, it's not even enough to cater for the responsibility and expenses of average workers. But you see the Nigerian government they agreed. They signed 70000 naira. But I would not deceive you, as I am talking to you now, you'll not be surprised that Federal government they were paying 40000 naira. And you know this 40000 naira, they paid it 6 months or so. And as I'm talking to you, we've not received March Salary, but do you know even February Salary the 40000 naira is not even included. The 40000 naira that the Federal Government agreed and signed the MOU they did not pay it. It was not reflected in February salary. So, my question now is, I would not like to answer you with another question, I would have asked you is there anything called minimum wage in Nigeria? Because presently as I am talking to you, I am a Federal Civil Servant. I'm working with the Federal University. Do you know as I am talking to you, the salary of state workers is even better than the salary of Federal workers. Yes, because before now the state workers - for

instance our university is situated in Oyo State, our colleagues that are working in Oyo State as state civil servants, before now they used to look up unto us whenever we receive our salaries, but you'll not believe me now that Oyo State workers are far better than us the federal civil servants. So, when the Federal government said they're going to pay so so and so amount of money – 70000 naira, they refused to pay it, and they were clamoring and mandating the state governments to make sure they pay the 70000 naira and the state government paid it but lo and behold we the Federal government workers were left behind. So, I'll tell you there's nothing as minimum wage as much as we're concerned in Nigeria.

Thank you so much sir. Because we could see from most of the news we were getting - since the Federal Government has mandated it, we saw that a lot of states have been mandated to fulfil that. So, it means this is not even implemented despite that it has been signed into the law?

Yes, capital YES.

Alright sir. I'll also like to ask, now that we know that some state government has started the implementation, and Federal Government is yet to, in your own opinions and in your views from what you heard from your colleagues at the state level, what effects do you think this minimum wage has on them in terms of their living standard, in terms of their welfare? Do you think this implementation of minimum wage is achieving and making any impact in their lives?

Thank you so much. Let me answer it this way, you know when you're in a slavery farm where everybody are slaves. You know slave is a slave. But there are some people they call them senior slaves, there are some people they call them director's slaves, but slave is slave. I tell you; I said it that if anybody in Nigeria of today is receiving 300000 naira as minimum wage, there's no way you can meet up. With the economic situation of Nigeria, 300000 naira as minimum wage. Let me tell you as I'm talking to you now, if the Federal Government is giving me 1million naira as my salary every month, let me tell you, it cannot cater for my responsibilities. Just of recent like 30 minutes ago I was discussing with some of my colleagues, you know this is the country whereby you collect your salary, three days your salary is gone. So, the state workers that are collecting the 70000 naira - they're not different from us the Federal workers. The only

difference is that we hear them - you're in level 1 in the state civil servant, level 1 in the federal civil servant. Level 1 you're collecting 2 naira and level 1 in Federal you're collecting 1Naira. Both the 2 naira and the 1 naira, you're still slaves. There's no difference. When you get to the market, there's nothing you can do about it. This is the period where people will trek 5 - 6 miles when they're coming to work, they'll trek when they're going back. And when they get to their offices, you see people drinking garri. Honestly, it's nothing to write home about.

So, there's no difference between them at all...?

There's no difference. But the little difference is that for example, as I'm talking to you now, a bag of rice is about 80000/85000 naira. Above the minimum wage. So, if someone is earning 70000 naira and they're selling a bag of rice for 80000 naira. The only thing he'll do is to buy a quarter of a bag of rice. You'll buy rice, you'll buy pepper and all those kinds of things. So, the only difference is that the state workers can say let me buy one-third whereby the federal worker will say let me buy one-quarter. And when you're buying it, you're almost the same thing. You earn your salary three or four days it's gone. So, the only thing is if you're collecting 70000 naira they're giving me 50000 naira, so when we get to where we're going to take our food on credit, we take both take it on credit. The only difference is that if you're holding 10000 naira and I'm holding 10000 naira when at the end of the month if you pay 6000 naira, I'll be able to pay 5000 naira. So, we're still debtors, we're still slaves, we're still the same thing. It's not as if even the 70000 naira is anything to write home about. So, we're all slaves. The people that are collecting the 70000 naira, they were a little bit relieved compared to what it used to be. For example, as I'm talking to you now, in front of my house as the union leader, the union has about six vehicles I won't deceive you, the six vehicles there's no 10000naira fuel in them. Yes. We cannot afford it. When you get to our offices, the car parks, before now when you get there, you'll be looking for where to park your car. But as I am talking to you every day, you'll not see cars parked. In fact, when you get to campus, you'll be asking is there any public holiday or there's strike? People cannot afford fueling their cars.

Permit me to ask this question, according to the law minimum wage is expected to be reviewed every five years. But now they have reduced it to three years. But in your opinion, we're also concerned about the frequency of review in the minimum wage. Do you think that three years is okay.

Even if they are reviewing it every week, it's not even okay, unless the needful is done. Imagine when you invite all the labor leaders, and you asked them how much you can take as your take home? And the labor labor leaders started from 500,000 naira, and government said this and that and they arrived at 70000 naira. Nobody will believe that the government will still not pay the 70000 naira. The government said 'okay, if you don't want us to be owing you money, if you want your salary to be going frequently without any disturbances, we'll not be able to afford more than 70000 naira.' We said okay, this is our country, we cannot open our eyes and destroy our country. And we all agreed and said okay. Let's take 70000 naira from them since in another 2 or 3 years there's going to be a review. But the 70000 naira, we discover that the government is not paying it.

Thank you, sir. When you were talking about this minimum wage, there's this argument about those who were on the side of the government, that implementing 500000 naira that the Labor union is asking for is going to result in inflation. And inflation is going to affect the economy. What is your take on this. Is it the inflation that causing a rise in the minimum wage or the minimum wage is the one causing the inflation?

The inflation is caused by the government. In fact, let me tell you this, I'll not manage the truth on this issue. The government itself is the problem of this inflation. Yes. You know, the moment the Federal Government said they're increasing the minimum wage, if Federal Government said they're adding 10 naira to your salary, do you know the Federal Government is going to take back 11 naira. When they increase your salary by 10%, they're going to take back 11% out of your salary. It is even better if they didn't increase it. Because when the Federal Government says 'Okay, we're going to give you 70000 naira', before the 70000 naira sees the light of the day everything in the market has skyrocketed. Even the government itself will increase the tax. It would start from the government. They increased the tax. They increase the fuel pump price. Those two things belong to the government. For example, if I am earning 20000 naira before they said they're reviewing their minimum wage and after that the minimum wage has been agreed upon my 20000 naira became 25000. When I was earning 20000 naira, my tax was just 2000 naira, but the moment they increased it to 25000 naira, my tax became 5000 naira. Do you get what I'm saying? They added 5000 naira into my salary, they removed 3000 naira as tax. And immediately they increased the fuel pump price. So, my 20000 naira that I was earning that I

want government to increase it, when they increased it to 25000 naira, by the time I pay all the increments my salary has come down from 20000 naira to 14000 naira. And the government will be telling you it has increased the minimum wage. The market women they will increase their own. Transporters will increase their own. Because the moment the price of fuel is increased, transportation will be increased. The price of everything will be increased. Because we know it is this fuel that serves as chain that connects everybody together. Go to the market, market women use taxi. Honestly, I would not deceive you, it is not the market women that are increase and inflating the prices, it is the government. It is a pity that the government will want to add 2000 naira to your salary, and you'll see propaganda everywhere, they'll blow the trumpet. The whole world will know they're increasing it with 2000 naira. Alas, when the money will come, they're not going to give you the 2000 naira, they're going to give you 300 naira. And the market women have increased it to the percentage of that 2000 naira. So, when you get the 300 naira it's like, they exposed us to danger, to suffering. Honestly, I won't deceive you, being a civil servant in Nigeria is like a modern-day slavery.

Sir, if I may ask, as the NASU chairman which is also a Labor leader, I don't know how frequent it is to lay demands on these kinds of things. Because most times, we don't see the labor coming out almost immediately to talk to the government in this regard. Is it a deliberate act not to appear to be too burdensome on the federal government or just to sign to fate on the part of the Labor Union and wait for some time before clamoring again?

You know, like I told you at the beginning of our conversation, it's like the Federal government is not even ready to do anything. Like when the federal government said, when we negotiated, and the federal government is refusing to do the needful and it's only the state government that is doing it. Now as a Labor leader there's a lot of efforts you have put into place - negotiating, wooing, lobbying, writing a lot of letters, begging etc. And at the end of the day the Federal Government agreed that they're going to pay this amount of money and let me tell you something, I am here in University of Ibadan as the NASU chairman. I have my children here as students. We are staff. We are civil servants working here on campus. We are fathers, we are mothers, we are parents. And when we lock the university, not only the Nigerians will suffer it. We also we are Nigerians. But let me tell you, our consequence is double. Our children will be at home. Most times we'll not be able to shut down the university because the more we shut down the university,

indirectly we are shutting the life and the career and the future of our children and the future of Nigerians. So, we'll have no option than after some time, as people are calling us, we'll have no option than to open the university again. So, Government is banking on this one to manipulate us. Honestly, it's frustrating.

Thank you very much sir. I'll like to ask, I'll like to ask, which of the categories of staff does this minimum wage apply. And what is the efforts of labor unions like NASU in protecting the rights of the rest categories of workers if there's no cover for all of them.

Let me say this one categorically. We don't have casual, part time, we only have permanent workers. The only thing we may have is, we only have workers who are on sabbatical. And that they are on sabbatical does not make them partial or casual workers. For example, now like myself. I can for to another university in another state, in another federal University in another state to go there for sabbatical. You know I have been a staff in the University here. The only thing which will happen is the UI where I am working, they may stop my salary for the period I am away for sabbatical. Then the university where I am away on sabbatical will take up my salary from where UI stopped it. The moment I finish my sabbatical there, and I come back to UI, the salary would be stopped there and then UI will take it up. So, we don't have casual or all these workers as you have said it. But now as a NASU chairman and union leader, that is our primary assignment to protect our workers, our colleagues. Like the slogan of our union says, 'An injury to one is an injury to all.' So, if anybody is having issue, I am the one that is having issues. If any of my members is facing trials, I am the one that is facing trials. I would make sure that we protect their rights and make sure they are prevented from being intimidated. And not only that, we make sure they behave themselves as a civil servant, that they behave themselves as a responsible member of a responsible union. And because of that, when you behave yourself, you get to office on time, you leave the office at the appropriate time, you do the needful, you do everything the law commands to do, then nobody can intimidate you. And if intimidation is coming from anywhere, I bet it with you, Union is 100% ready on ground to defend and to protect you.

Thank you very much sir. But please are you saying that this minimum wage and other labor rights for non-academic members, it is only under government? What about those who are Non-Academic Staff under private universities, do they also enjoy this too?

Yes. Not only in university. Every company. Every private sector. When I say NASU, NASU is a union. It's just one of the units under the Nigeria Labor Congress. You know we have the Nigerian Labor Congress as the mother of all unions. So NASU is affiliated to Nigerian Labor Congress. But in the law, in the act of Nigerian Labor Congress, every Nigerian worker is under the act, under the rule of Nigerian Labor Congress. So, the private sector and the government sector is under this act. So, the private sectors are mandated to pay the minimum wage. So, it's not only limited to the government parastatals.

You know why I asked this question. I'm sure you must have heard the case of IBEDC workers that they said some workers were retrenched and they were protesting. And the information we heard was that a particular company hired them as contract staff and that they're not full staff of IBEDC. And for that reason, IBEDC did not take responsibility over them.

You know there's different between contract staff and staff. Contract staff are not staff. They can hire them and fire them. They don't have concrete agreements. When you see contract staff In their employment letter, you'll see the clause there, they're contract staff, not staff. So NASU is for main staff not contract staff.

What recommendations do you think you can provide for improving National Minimum wage policies especially to the government in Nigeria?

What I can suggest to the government is that they should be faithful. Another thing is to sign an MOU and MOA, sign an agreement. Another thing is to fulfil it. We know where Nigeria is coming from, but where Nigeria is going, it's only God that knows it. And we're all Nigerians and we're all praying for the betterment of this country. But in a situation whereby we're hearing billions and billions, and some sets of people are collecting billions and millions and some people, we that are really working for this money, to give us just 70000 naira and they're saying it’s too much. My advice to the government is that the government should be faithful, the government should be truthful, and the government should also pity the civil servant.

INTERVIEW SESSION WITH FORMER SECRETARY OF ACADEMIC STAFF UNION OF UNIVERSITIES (ASUU), UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN CHAPTER.

Good day, sir. I am Seun Ogunjobi, a Masters' student in Cafoscari University of Venezia in Italy. I'm studying International Management. The focus of this interview is on Nigerian Minimum Wage and Labor Rights. That's why I seek your audience. Please can you introduce yourself briefly.

I am Christopher Olusola Omoregie. I am a Reader, and I have been teaching Philosophy of Adult Education at University of Ibadan for 12 years. I am the immediate secretary of Academic Staff Union of University (ASUU), University of Ibadan branch. I served between year 2020 and 2022.

What is your opinion about minimum wage in Nigeria?

Minimum wage is a continuing agitation of Nigerian Labor Congress (NLC) to persuade or enforce suppliers of labor to adjust salaries and wages in response to economic realities of a country. The economic reality of a country consists of increasing hyperinflation and a very high cost of living. So, what NLC has done over the years is to persuade or enforce or campaign that the employers of labor especially the government institutions should have minimum wages and salaries that would respond to the high increase of prices or cost of living

Do you think Nigerian minimum wage implementation is according to the law?

I am not a lawyer, so I don't know if the minimum wage is according to law. However, I learnt that dignity of labor as explained in the International Labor Organization Convention suggests that workers should be paid living wages and that is wages that would make them maintain their respect as human beings. So, if you keep human beings in a place for 30 days or for a whole day, it is expected that you pay that person what would make that person survive before coming back to work. So, if you don't pay that person the kind of money that would make that person to be able to live as a human being, what you do is that you deny the dignity of that person. And that is why ILO usually talk about dignity of labor. And one of the ways workers, employers of labor, workers organizations should ensure that the dignity of human beings are maintained by the kind of money workers are earning. That is why you have some employers of labor who take care of

the medicals for their workers, some take care of health of the children of the workers. They provide catering services. They provide places for them to relax. So, all these you do as a way of ensuring that you protect the dignity of human labor.

What effect do you think minimum wage has on workers across various levels or cadres?

I think minimum wage has positive effects. Because those of us who work with government have this hope that if our Labor unions can achieve their agitations, then there is hope for us to get enhanced salaries, which apparently in our developing countries especially Nigeria is the only thing you have. Because the gratuity is not sure, pension is no longer sure. So, what is yours is what you take home at the end of the month or at the end of the week as the case maybe. So, it has positive effects because you have something to look forward to. So, if a government in Nigeria says it will not allow agitation of minimum wages again, that it's a thing of the past, then it's like you don't want people to live for anything.

What do you think about the frequency of reviewing minimum wages for workers by government?

Government and employers of labor should not wait for workers' agitations. Wages and salaries should be reviewed, I want to say yearly but as the case maybe, we could even make it quarterly, every three months, because if you check the rate of inflation in Nigeria, what I think government should do is to reflect wages and salaries and make these wages and salaries to reflect the high cost of living. Practical example is you're paid today, and before the end of the day runs out depending on what you buy, you have no money with you again even for transportation. So, the present way it is, I think wages and salaries should be more scientific rather than the way it is presently in Nigeria. Because at a time, they said it was 18000 naira, at a time they said it was 35000 naira, now it is 70000 naira. But the economic reality that Nigerian workers face is much more than 70000 naira. So, based on what? The question I would ask, what are we basing these minimum wages on? As it is in Nigeria, I think it is more like left to chances. It's left to the power of the employers of labor to pay. Because employers of labor will never feel they have enough money to pay workers. So, what do we do? There are some prices, all of us go to the supermarkets and we go to some shops where the prices are there, there is no need for negotiation in those shops. If they write 50 naira there, you cannot say can you pay 30 naira? So,

I think that is the way we should do. If not, we continue to have the kind of agitations we're having in Nigeria. Presently, I think it should be more scientific, there is 10% increase on fuel, there should be 10% increase on wages. If not, it means you're denying the workers their livelihood. If 300 naira can buy me a bottle of water today and tomorrow, it's 500 naira; that means with 300 hundred naira I can no longer buy a bottle of water. It's purchasing power, because money is nothing except what it can buy. So, I think it should be more scientific.

Do you think implementation of minimum wage will result in inflation in national economy?

The implementation of minimum wage can bring about inflation. That is if employers should allow labor to agitate, that is, to stage protest and strike, then it means everybody is informed of what is happening. So, the implementation is bringing inflation presently because of the way employers of labor are addressing minimum wage issues. If minimum wage issues are done scientifically without the knowledge of the public, then it will not bring any inflation in any way.

In your opinion, do you think the implementation of minimum wage will improve labor living condition and protect their rights?

Yes.

What role is the labor union playing to ensure the implementation of minimum wage and protection of labor rights?

Individual workers in government employment are not the ones who negotiate for their salaries. So, labor union has a role to play because it is through their collective bargaining that they can negotiate on behalf of all workers. But I'm saying that even labor should be more emphatic and specific because the way it is, you say 35000 naira, government would say they are able to pay 30000 naira. What happens? So how did they come about the 35000 naira in the first instance? So, that's why I said initially it should be more scientific. Presently, it is not scientific. But the truth of it is that except for some private sectors or contract jobs, individuals are not the ones who negotiate their salaries. In fact, the law of the land says it's the labor unions that negotiate the salaries for workers. So, the wages and salaries in the private sector is not as regulated as those in the public sectors. Some private sectors use the salaries of the public sector as baseline. The private sector is not as regulated; and what I mean by that - the scenario that we have in

Nigeria is that we have very high rate of unemployment that makes graduates or those who are out of school or those who are ready to work do any kind of job. Many people even do the kind of jobs that they are overqualified for. So, some private sectors they don't regulate. They just tell you; this is how much they're going to pay and that's how much they'll pay. But I know that there are some private sectors because they want to keep their staff, they pay at times a little above what the private sector is paying or a little below what the public sector is paying. So, at times, they allow it to be marginal so that they use that to check the migration of workers from their organization to another. Because it will not be good for the image of the organization if workers keep moving every day. So, they check how much are they paying in the public organization before they agree to have their own salary structure. But I think the right thing to do is for the government to standardize or regulate, to be fair in the regulation of wages and salary. So, everybody who has this qualification should earn this. If you have a School Cert this is how much you're paid, if you have a degree or you're from any higher institution this is how much you're paid. That is the way I think it should be done, not the way it is haphazardly done.

What roles are the trade and labor unions playing to guarantee this?

I don't think the labor union has succeeded much in guaranteeing minimum wages in Nigeria for the past 10 years. They have done nothing, given the prices of goods and services that are going up every day. In fact, in the University sector, public universities in Nigeria, there's no success. We don't talk about minimum wage in universities in Nigeria. What we talk about is negotiation and collective bargain. Even at that, the salary I collect as a university lecturer was dated to 2009 - that is about 16 years ago, that is, the salary I'm collecting presently, that I collected last month was negotiated. So, in the University sector, we do not talk about minimum wages, we talk about negotiated salary. But the unions have not achieved much as far as I'm concerned for the past 10 years

What challenges do you think are associated with the implementation of minimum wage as you experienced?

As regarding if there's any challenges as touching Implementation of minimum wages, I won't give any employer of labor any excuse and I don't think there's any employer of labor in Nigeria that has any excuse not to pay what the unions are demanding for. What I think the government

and employers of labor lack is the political, psychological and social will to implement it. Because if you should place the wages and salaries of Nigerians side by side with what the political class or some arms of government are collecting, then you'll be embarrassed. The question will be why is one set of workers favored than the others?

Finally, what recommendations can you provide for improving national minimum wage policies and enhancing the protection of labor rights in Nigeria?

Every rise in price should automatically lead to increase in wages and salaries. So, we don't wait for employers of labor to agitate at all. Well, what people argue for is privatization of organizations, and whenever they do so I laugh - especially in a developing economy like that of Nigeria and most African countries. You cannot do so presently in the private sectors in these developing countries. Those who are in the private sectors have a very huge patronage or what I call a very strong patronage with government. So many at times, because the business environment is hostile, those that it favors are those who are known to the political class. So, if we talk about privatization in this kind of economy, what it means is you're asking for more money for those who already have it because there is no level playing ground for anybody to enter those sectors without any hindrance. There's a class and if you don't belong to that class, it's impossible. So, what is means is that goods and services are not accessible to the common people. So, you increase poverty in the country, you increase penury. And what that means is the fact that you have social misfit, you have a lot of crimes in the kind of environment you are. Because our political class are so favored that they are given money that they don't request for, while some people keep agitating for their wages and salaries to be improved and there's no improvement. So, everybody keeps looking forward to holding political position; and political positions cannot go round. That is the truth. What can go round is what government standardizes as minimum wage for every worker that has any qualification. That can go to everyone - which will make everyone to be able to afford a good house, a good meal, to pay school fees for his children. So, government is interested in the goods and services for the society in order to make people have access. But the way we have it now, when we place privatization over public enterprises, what that tells us is that people can go to places, they can be poor, they can live wretched lives; if they don't belong, they don't belong. And if we do that, it means we're going back to the monarchical age where some few people are seen as the privileged and education

may not be a leveler again that would make those who are hardworking and of course have talents to excel in that society

Thank you very much for your time and availability.

Thank you for this opportunity.