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Chapter

Crisis Management in Nigeria's Public Sector and the Impact of the Organised Labour Union: Interrogating the Nexus between Industrial Harmony and Political Stability

Daniel Taye Medoye

Abstract

This study sought to explore the dynamics in managing crisis in the Nigerian public sector and its engagement with the organised labour, with a view to determining the interface between industrial harmony and political stability in the country. This study is predicated on the fact that crisis management is essentially embedded in humanity. Additionally, the study was informed by the established and widely held view by scholars, that social groups by their nature and context, are in fact characterised by conflicts. Consequently, the study established that the public sector in every society is not immune against conflict or crisis, and this will naturally arise as long as there is interaction between and among human elements in the two sectors. The author used the terms—crisis and conflict—interchangeably in the study, and pointed out that the methodology adopted was a descriptive and analytical approach. This is informed by the sources of information accessed which are essentially secondary. The study concluded by asserting that given the humanity-linked nature of conflict, its management in the public sector, particularly in Nigeria, will continue to be an unavoidable responsibility of the government. This is to ensure that the right environment is created to guarantee smooth governance.

Keywords: crisis/conflict management, organised labour union, industrial harmony, political stability, strikes and collective bargaining

1. Introduction

This study seeks to interrogate the nexus between industrial harmony and political stability as a potential determinant or otherwise, in crisis management, and this will be undertaken within the context of the Nigeria's public sector and its interface with the organised labour. This study further seeks to provoke insightful discussions around the commonplace crisis management mechanisms such as mediation, conciliation and arbitration, otherwise described as alternative disputes resolution (ADR), with view to determining and attaining more strategic and proactive ways

of ensuring a harmonious working relationships between the government and its workers on one hand, and between organisations in the private sector and their employees. This study is predicated on the fact that crisis management is essentially embedded in humanity. In the opinion of some writers, social groups by their nature and context, are in fact characterised by conflicts. This is so because aims, objectives and interests of the social units or individuals that constitute any social groups (including labour unions) differ.

According to Dontigney [1], any situation involving more than one person, conflict can arise. In his view, the causes of conflict range from philosophical differences and divergent goals to power imbalances. Dontigney [1] however warns that unmanaged or poorly managed conflicts has the tendency to generate a breakdown in trust and lost productivity. By extrapolation, this viewpoint can equally be validated in the context of public sector crisis management in relation to the impact of the organised labour unionism. This is unavoidable given the fact that both the government and the labour organisation are structurally antithetical in terms of objectives and functions. However, both will not operate in isolation but will continue to engage and synergise to create and advance industrial harmony which is a sine qua non to stability.

In doing this, it will be worthwhile to contextualise the scope of the study by providing a description of the variables associated with the focus of the study.

The public-sector is a combination of two words which can generically, be described as comprising the exclusive administrative space where the government serves as the employer at the federal; state (provincial or regional) and local (municipal or county) government levels, depending on the nomenclatures adopted by each sovereign country [2]. It also comprises state-owned companies and parastatals, so created to carry out assigned responsibilities for the purpose of serving the entire citizens of the country by the provision of basic services constitutionally guaranteed. These levels of government and the agencies are manned by different cadres of personnel, and who engage in discharging their respective assignments. On the other hand, the organised labour organisations represent exclusively, representatives of a defined group of employees which are concerned with the negotiation, administration, interpretation and enforcement of written agreements covering joint understanding as to wages/salaries, rates of pay, hours of work and other conditions of employment. Simply put, labour organisations The public service refers to the amalgamation of services provided by government to people living within its jurisdiction, either directly (through the public sector) or by financing provision of services. In other words, service provided or supported by government or its agencies as embedded in the constitution of the state or country. The partial provision of such or total neglect has resulted in series of socio-economic and political upheavals in countries thereby disrupting governance and usually accompanied by instability.

2. Study research questions

Against the author's concerns and interest as expressed in the introductory section above, this study seeks to provide objective, but somewhat provocative responses to the following questions which include:

- a. What is the nature of the public sector crisis in Nigeria, and what are the immediate and remote factors responsible for it?
- b. What is the nexus between industrial harmony and political stability in Nigeria?

- c. What mechanism(s) does the Nigerian government adopt in managing and resolving the crisis between the state and the organised labour?
- d. What policy option can be explored to strengthen the nexus between industrial harmony and political stability towards effective governance?

These questions will be responded to and addressed in the study.

3. Methodology

The study is literature based, and this involves engaging relevant sources from which to draw a basis and strength for its eventual outcomes, particularly from previous related publications and write-ups. This is inevitable since the information to be deployed is essentially from secondary sources, but will be critically examined. In doing this, the author will consider a literature survey method to establish the relevant issues at stake in the context of this paper, and will accordingly do so in the course of the write-up. Furthermore, identified themes and findings therefrom will be critically examined with a view to arriving at fresh perspectives on how the creation of industrial harmony or otherwise, by the organised labour will conduce to a desirable political environment in Nigeria, on one hand, and to serve as a mechanism of crisis management in the public-sector in particular, and in the society in general. This paper proceeds by identifying the relevant theoretical framework for the study. This is followed with a rehash of the nature, evolution and the operations of the organised labour unionism in Nigeria and will attempt to point out its impact on governance dynamics in the country. The paper will provide insights into the character of the private sector where the government dictates the pace, thereby exposing the nature of the relationship that exists between the government and its employees, who are part of the organised labour.

4. Theoretical framework

The author seeks to apply the conflict theory as the theoretical framework, among the other relevant theories, to underpin the study which focuses on highlighting the nexus between industrial harmony and political stability in the context of crisis management in Nigeria's public sector. This is consequent upon the acute relevance of the theory to the focus of the study which has to do with management of crisis and the fact that conflict is recognised and acknowledged as a part of humanity. According to Chidi and Okpala [3], 'conflict theory is synonymous with the pluralist or the pluralistic frame of reference'. In their view, the conflict theory sees the organisation as a coalescence of sectional groups with different values, interests and objectives. Thus, employees have different values and aspirations from those of management, and these values and aspirations are always in conflict with those of management. The two scholars contend that Conflict theorists argue that conflict is inevitable, rational, functional and normal situation in organisations, which is resolved through compromise and agreement or collective bargaining. Conflict theorists view trade unions as legitimate challenges to managerial rule or prerogatives and emphasise competition and collaboration. This view recognises trade unions as legitimate representative organisations which enable groups of employees to influence management decisions [4] Rose.

Rose further states that the pluralist perspective would seem to be much more relevant than the unitary perspective in the analysis of industrial relations in many

large unionised organisations and congruent with developments in contemporary society. In the opinion of Wokoma [5], the conflict theory evolved from the works and ideas of Karl Marx, who contended that conflict is inevitable and stems from inequalities of power and economic wealth inherent in a capitalist economy or society. It should be noted that this study is not intended to view the issues associated with this study from any ideological perspective, but strictly from an academic and analytical prism.

The relevance of this theory derives from the role of theoretical construction in research which, in the view of Badejo [6], serves to observe, understand, explain, predict and control events or phenomena. For Fajana [7], theory 'helps in our understanding of events and problems in the practical world'. By application therefore, the fact of the conflict nature of social groups, such as the organised labour being a coalescence of individual group of people, suggest the inevitability of disagreement in the course of interactions that could lead to conflict or crisis from time to time. Therefore, the conflict theory would be most appropriate to underpin this study.

5. Crisis management in public-sector: Literature survey

As indicated earlier, this author reiterates that crisis will naturally exist in every given society of human beings in interactions. So also will there be conflict or crisis in every sector, unit or platform which consists of human beings in interactions. The Nigerian public sector is not immune from this phenomenon. What is important is that steps are taken to address any conflictual or crisis-ridden situation. Given the context of this study, it is relevant to highlight the place of government (the State), being the machinery upon which the entire governance responsibility for the country rests. This section will involve some literature survey of previous studies which have dealt with industrial or employee relations in Nigeria and how such has fared under the government.

5.1 The role of the state in public sector crisis management

According to Badejo [6], 'the state had traditionally played various roles in different countries, most especially in providing the institutional framework for the bilateral relationship between workers/Trade Union and Employers/their representatives to encourage a bipartite relationship'. This suggests that the government, whether at the national, provincial, regional or local level, serves to create and regulate the work environment in terms of legislations which prescribe how workers can conduct their affairs in their working relationship with government. Badejo [6] further mentioned about the government's publication of the National Labour Policy in 1975, which contained its direct intervention and the pursuance of guided democracy in labour matters, and this involved limited intervention in certain areas of labour activity in order to guarantee industrial harmony.

Expectedly, the government has not ceased from continuous intervention and interference in virtually every area of industrial relations. In the case of Nigeria, such interference has resulted into disruptive strike actions that have in most cases, caused socio-economic and political paralysis in the country. In such circumstances, governance has ultimately borne the brunt as the country would have been engulfed in disorderliness, thereby manifesting in grave security threats. However, scholars like Ubeku [8], believe that there are reasons for state intervention in trying to regulate activities of organised labour.

According to Ubeku [8] in particular, such reasons include among other things, the overwhelming position of government as an employer of labour; political and economic considerations; historical and international imperatives, etc. In the opinion of Otofo [9], whose analysis appears more specific than as highlighted by Ubeku [8], the state (government) unavoidably intervenes in industrial relations matters as a result of it being a huge employer of labour, hence, employment and manpower development structuring; regulations of wages and salaries; union government and administration; collective bargaining; and industrial conflict [9]. However, the position of Yesufu [10] in the classification of the role of government offers clearer perspectives, and will be deployed in this study.

According to Yesufu [10], the role of government in its dealings with the Nigerian labour movement consists of—leadership role; legislative and regulatory role; investigatory and advisory; education and training; and adjudicatory.

On leadership, Yesufu [10] observes that the responsibilities of the state involves economic development and improvement in the standard of living of the people. Consequently, the position of government as the major single largest of labour and as guardian of the social conscience, places the state in a peculiar position to provide leadership in industrial relations as in all other fields of economic and social endeavour. Yesufu [10] argues that this role should necessarily be concerned with the manifestation of policies and by setting the examples though the remuneration and compensation policies. From this vantage position, it could be said that the government exists to serve the interests of every citizen of the country, including that of labour.

At the level of legislative and regulatory responsibility, Yesufu [10] reveals that the role of the state is carried out mainly through the enactment and enforcement of labour and industrial relations legislation which ensures minimum basic and acceptable standards of employment, condition of work, welfare and security, and the institutional framework for the conduct of industrial relations. This suggests that the state, given its sovereign status, possesses the mandate to provide the rules and regulations by which citizens and institutions of government can and should conduct their affairs and relationships within defined confines.

At the level of investigatory and advisory responsibility, Yesufu [10] believes that these functions of the state are generally undertaken by the Federal Ministry of Labour. In the case of Nigeria, it is Ministry of Labour and Employment, and the mandate derives from the ministry's role in the enforcement of the various labour laws and policies. Operationally, the ministry is expected to constantly engage in touring employment establishments under its jurisdiction in order to ensure conformity with labour and industrial relations legislation, investigating breaches and grievances, and generally advising employers on improvements in working conditions and on management/employee relations.

On education and training responsibility, Yesufu [10] believes and argues that it is expected of the state to provide the environment which conduces to education and training of its employees on their duties and obligations as public servants. This way, it is believed that a thorough education will help solve most of the industrial relations problems in the developing countries.

On adjudicatory role of government, Yesufu [10] is of the opinion that, in spite of how much enlightened an industrial or employee relations system may be, there are constant labour grievances, misunderstandings and disputes which need to be settled. The state accordingly provides machinery for intervention and settlement in such cases, particularly in regard to collective disputes, through the appointment of conciliators, arbitrators, and the establishment of industrial relation courts.

From the foregoing, it is evident that the state does have clearly defined role to play to create the environment for a favourable industrial relations, where

employees can be assured of their welfare and the promotion of same. Viewed critically, it is the suggestion of this author that this position of the government could not have been avoided. This role cannot be undermined regardless of the nature of government. However, the scenarios under military regimes have proved otherwise, and this much was characteristic of the Nigeria's experience under the military dictatorship. The 1994 experience when the late dictator descended heavily on the labour organisations for daring to intrude into matters considered a 'no go area', and the consequences are better imagined. However, this paper will point out if the status can be rejigged for fairness, and that will be towards the conclusion of the write-up.

5.2 The nature and character of the organised labour in Nigeria

Historically, trade unionism is recorded and believed to have begun in Nigeria in 1912, when government employees in the public service (public sector) formed the Nigerian Civil Service Union (NCSU), an organisation of workers to promote the interest and welfare of its members in relation to conditions of service [11]. However, the passing of the Trades Union Ordinance in 1938 by the then colonial government provided the legal basis for the existence of labour organisations in the country. The ordinance stipulated the rights and privileges, and the conditions under which the union could safely operate. It is noteworthy that overtime, since the coming into effect of the ordinance, several labour organisations have sprung up in the country with virtually workers in every government department—from national to local—covered under one union or the other.

Perhaps, it is worthwhile to clarify from the onset that industrial harmony, in the context of this chapter, refers to the creation and sustenance of a conducive work environment which results from the deliberate efforts by both representatives of employers and employees. This view can be predicated on the position of Chidi and Okpala [3], who are of the opinion that the interactions between the employers and employees in relations to a work environment, are based upon the determination of substantive and procedural issues at industrial, organisational and workplace levels. It is also arguable that industrial harmony encompasses industrial relations or employee relations which consist of the relations that exist between individuals or groups of employees and employers who engage themselves in a way to maximise the productive activities.

According to Tar [12], the 'Nigeria labour movement is often described as the veteran of democratic struggle in the country'. By this description, it is believed that the Nigeria labour movement has come to be regarded as the triggers to the struggles and agitations against government, particularly the military rule which has held sway in the country more than democratic government. Labours' experience is such that the organised unions had to contend with stiff repression from the state under a military rule, which does not consider human rights violations as an aberration. Tar emphasised that, the history of Trade Union movement in Nigeria and elsewhere is closely knit with the struggles for democratic values such as human rights, welfare, wage, equal franchise. Tar however acknowledged that, because of its ideological stance as the defender of workers' right, the labour movement is often neglected when it comes to discourses on democratic struggles. This view about the vibrancy and potency of labour unionism in Nigeria and how the it has engaged with the government on issues of workers welfare in relation to the upholding and promotion of human rights is not far-fetched. This is despite the repressive tendencies of the government aimed at silencing the actions (such as demonstrations, protests and ultimately strikes) of the unions which are seen as irritable and capable of making governance impossible. Perhaps, it should be mentioned that

the role of labour goes beyond agitations for improved welfare for its members to include intensified advocacy for democracy and its associated values. This view can be predicated on the position of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), as can be seen in its report in 1998. According to the ILO, unions play important role in guiding and upholding democracy and as defenders of social justice, in particular, by encompassing women, minorities, consumer groups, the unemployed and the growing ranks of working poor in the sphere of action, ILO [13]. Ironically, this position seems to run counter to the interest of government, particularly the military regime, which considers that as a threat. Regardless of how labour movement is viewed, trade unions or labour organisations will continue to be in the forefront of the yearnings for industrial democracy, otherwise, known as workers participation in the management of their enterprise.

It might be necessary to mention and highlight the real interest of the organised labour as it seeks to represents its workers so as to be able to identify at what point such interest collides with the running of government, which is a significant element being considered in this study.

However, the question to be raised at this point is, – to what extent should the state be involved in Industrial Relations or Employee Relations in the context of the Nigerian public sector? According to Badejo [6], the role ascribed to the state in industrial relations depends on the ideological bent of the state. Badejo [6] observes that in communist countries, no separate role is envisaged for employers and trade unions, but that they operate on the basis of party directive and the state plan. This is in contrast to the capitalist countries, where the approach is to allow employers and unions reasonable latitude to determine their own affairs within the framework established by the state. The developing countries, as a result of their experience have had to intervene in industrial relations in the interest of the whole economy.

However, as the state is the prime mover of the total social system, there is no argument as to whether it has a role to play or not. The reason for state intervention under could be considered from the following perspectives—economic; historical and international imperatives; the states dominance as an employer of labour; political and social. Ootobo [9] noted five areas most frequently subjected to state regulations, namely employment and manpower development; wages and salaries; union government and administration; collective bargaining; and industrial conflict.

Against the background of the inevitability of conflict which results from discord that occurs when the goals, interest or values of different individuals or groups in an industrial setting are incompatible, it is relevant to identify in a strict sense, the immediate factors that often trigger labour union's resistance that most times turns out disruptive. For the purpose of this study, these factors will be pin-pointed and they include, among others—government' refusal or unwillingness to recognise labour or trade unions, public policies which are perceived anti-citizens, failure of collective bargaining as a result of hard stance positions, and outright repression of dissenting opinions.

In Nigeria, these issues have led to several strike actions and protests, and have resulted in government coming to a standstill in a lot of the occasions. For example, the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC), and the Trade Union Congress (TUC), had declared a strike in 2019, following months of failed discussions with the government on working conditions and minimum wage. The strike adversely affected the administrative and commercial capital of Abuja and Lagos respectively as government complexes were locked, thus crippling public and civil service across Africa's most populous nation. Similar strikes have taken place, particularly during the military rule which does not respect the fundamental human rights of the people and rule of law. While it is acknowledged that this study is not about strikes and protests, it is necessary to point out that they serve as a means

by which labour unions cause disruptions in the economy of a country thereby engendering an atmosphere of instability.

6. Mechanisms for resolving public sector crisis by government and labour

Conflict resolution mechanisms may differ from organisation to organisation but there are established strategies that have been in use. Whether in private or public sector, the following can be said to be the evolving methods of conflict resolution. These strategies include mediation, conciliation and arbitration. These are referred to as alternate disputes resolution (ADR) mechanisms deployed by disputants, and who are willing to abide by settlement terms. Experience has shown that disputing parties use these ADR methods because they are relatively expeditious, private, and generally much less expensive than resorting to the courts.

The use of any of these methods involves some form of bargaining, commonly referred to as collective bargaining (CB). As a concept, Rose [4] reports that the term was originated by Webb and Webb to describe the process of agreeing terms and conditions of employment when the representatives of employers, and that of the employees. Rose [4] explains that CB could also be defined as a process whereby representatives of employers and employees jointly determine and regulate decisions pertaining to both substantive and procedural matters within the employment relationship.

In the Nigerian public sector, crisis emanating from industrial disputes of serious magnitude, has been subjected to the collective bargaining process. For example, crisis triggered by national strikes that had the tendency to constitute security threats to the government, has had to be resolved through a collective bargaining process. The challenge in this is that the place and role of the state, in most cases, tend to vitiate the effectiveness of this process. This aligns with the view of Adebisi [14], who lamented the highhandedness of the Nigerian government in respect of labour matter for making a nonsense of these mechanisms or procedures for dispute settlement. More often than not, the Nigerian government fails to honour its own agreement with labour, thereby setting poor standards for employers in the private sector. Violations of agreements reached through collective bargaining process have occurred more during the military regime(s) in Nigeria. It is on record, and clearly too, that the military has violated more agreement reached out of collective bargaining than constitutional democracy in Nigeria or the world over. In this instance, Adebisi [14] has cited the failure or reluctance of government to honour a number of agreements with the Academic Staff Union of Universities, ASUU, and the Nigerian Labour Congress, NLC. The current federal government of Nigeria is in the midst of reaching agreement with the organised labour in respect of minimum wage over which there had been disruptive strike actions which had occasioned security nightmares all over the country.

The interesting thing about the adoption of the collective bargaining process as a mechanism for resolving labour issues in Nigeria appears to be the only means possible hitherto. This is not to prejudice the possibility of either improving on the process for more effective operation or exploring additional measures that will complement the process.

At this point, and by way of digression, it is necessary to mention that there are conflict resolution mechanisms peculiar to the private sector. This applies to small businesses, where success often depends or rests on the cohesion of a few people, the loss of trust and productivity can be a challenge to the continued existence and growth of the business. For such businesses, it will be helpful to rely on the prescriptions of Dontigney [1] who had identified the following conflict management

strategies that can be deployed in addressing conflictual relationships. These include—accommodating strategy which essentially entails giving the opposing side what it wants. The use of this strategy occurs when one of the parties wishes to keep the peace or perceives the issue as insignificant; the avoidance strategy, which seeks to put off conflict indefinitely. The mechanism hopes the problem resolves itself without a confrontation; the collaboration strategy works by integrating ideas set out by multiple people. This method is deployed to find a creative solution acceptable to everyone; the compromising strategy is used when parties to a conflict may have to give up elements of their position in order to establish an acceptable solution. This strategy applies in conflicts where the parties hold approximately equivalent power; and lastly, the competition strategy operates in a situation where one side to a conflict wins and other loses. This is also referred to as a zero-sum game. In politics, such is described as winner takes all.

7. Industrial harmony and political stability: Any nexus?

To be able to provide a rational and an objective response to this question, it is necessary to aggregate the elements that constitute industrial harmony and political stability by drawing from the insights on the terms as highlighted in the foregoing. As indicated earlier in this study, since the relationship between the government and the labour organisation are structurally antithetical in terms of objectives and functions it is therefore unavoidable that there will always be frictions from time to time as both sides seek to achieve their aims and objectives. But for the sake of peace and stability, it is expected that both sides will continue to engage and synergise to create and advance industrial harmony, a sine qua non to stability, to ultimately provide a conducive environment for governance. Ensuring peace and stability will facilitate the discharge of the world-wide constitutional responsibility to governments in terms of provision of security and welfare for the citizens.

Consequently, the following themes can be identified and posited:

- That crisis/conflict in human interactions is inevitable;
- That industrial harmony and political stability are two inseparable phenomena;
- That the former (industrial harmony) is a sine qua non for the latter political stability;
- That both conditions can be facilitated by the state (government) and labour organisations;
- That there exists a link (nexus) between industrial harmony and political stability.

This study is inclined to observe that industrial disputes, if poorly managed or not addressed, will ultimately lead to protests, demonstrations and strikes. Workers, worldwide have always resorted to strike actions when the sides to disputes fail to reach mutual agreement. In the case of the public sector crisis, where the Nigerian industrial relations system today to be replete with cases of violations of negotiated agreements as a result of executive lawlessness, the resort to strike actions by workers, usually organised and called by the organised (central) labour organisation seems to have been institutionalised.

8. Matching of themes to research questions (discussion of findings)

In this section, the author proceeds to relate the identified themes which emerged in the course of literature survey on what constitutes industrial harmony and political stability and to answer the question if there is a nexus between the former and the latter in the context of the Nigerian public sector crisis management.

In response to the research question a, of this study which is concerned about the nature of public sector crisis in Nigeria, and what constitutes the immediate and remote factors responsible for it, the author argues that crisis management is essentially embedded in humanity. This is so because social groups by their nature and context are characterised by conflicts. In addition, it is arguable that because aims, objectives and interests of the social units or individuals that constitute any social groups (including labour unions) differ, conflict or crisis will inevitably occur. This view has not been emphasised by authors, some of whose works were cited in this study, but has remained valid at all material time.

On research question b, which is concerned with the nexus between industrial harmony and political stability in Nigeria, it is the opinion of the author that, given the fact of the inevitability of frictions between labour unions and the state as has been established and acknowledged by scholars cited in this study on one hand, and the aftermath of the disruptions which result therefrom on the other hand, it is no longer far-fetched that there exists a connection between industrial harmony and political stability. As noted earlier in the study, the author believes that for the sake of peace and stability, it is expected that both sides (the State and Labour) will continue to engage and synergise to create and advance industrial harmony, which will ultimately lead to a conducive environment for governance.

On study research question c, which relates to what mechanism(s) the Nigerian government can adopt in managing and resolving the crisis between the state and the organised labour, the author believes in the efficacy of the collective bargaining process, but will argue that these can be complemented with the alternative disputes (conflict/crisis) resolution mechanisms, which include mediation, conciliation and arbitration, be deployed exhaustively, coupled with the readiness of parties to disputes to accept resolutions adjudged to be fair and just.

In relation to the study research question d, which relates to the policy option that can be explored to strengthen the nexus between industrial harmony and political stability towards effective governance, the author will make reference to the existing method of engagement between government and labour in terms of the term collective bargaining process to resolve disputes, and suggest the following policy directions which include, that –

- The mechanism of collective bargaining mechanism be retained;
- Stakeholders involved in collective bargaining demonstrate greater transparency and willingness for tolerable compromises;
- The government should be conscious of its responsibility to the entire citizens of the country in terms of security and welfare, by ensuring good governance and responsible leadership;
- The government, being the largest employer of public servants and its role of regulation and adjudication, does show unbiased commitment to respecting terms of agreements reached during negotiations.

9. Conclusion and recommendations

So far, attempts have been made in this study to reflect on crisis management in the Nigeria public sector in relation to the link between industrial harmony and political stability. The study sought to determine if there exists a nexus in-between industrial harmony and political stability, and proceeded to describe the variables identifiable and as conceived for the study. The study prescribed the applicable theoretical framework deployed to underpin the research, and carried out considerable survey of relevant literature from which information needed to contextualise the focus envisaged.

In this study, the author found out that, given the humanity-linked nature of conflict, its management in the public sector, particularly in Nigeria will continue to be an unavoidable responsibility of the government. The author contends that this is not just a necessity, but a must-activity to ensure that the right environment is created to guarantee smooth governance. Consequently, the study conclusively remarks and recommends the following:

- That crisis or conflict as a phenomenon, will continue to exist in human society but that its management, in terms of resolution mechanisms, can be improved for positive impact;
- That the Nigerian public sector crisis management approach will improve and has been given the deepening of democratic institutions and practice which conduces to friendly employee and industrial relations;
- That all stakeholders to the mechanism of collective bargaining process should endeavour to be transparent and committed to terms of agreement to avoid the tendency to any form frictions that could spark crisis; and finally,
- That organised labour organisations should evolve, promote and implement sound policy on education and training of their members to imbibe the culture of tolerance and extreme understanding in responding to policy decisions of government, to guarantee positive interface.

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