



Public Complaint Commission and Fundamental Human Right Protection in Gombe State, Nigeria

Mubarak Saidu¹ Nnabuike O. OSADEBE Ph.D²

¹Department of Sociology & Anthropology
University of Nigeria, Nsukka

²Department of Sociology & Anthropology
University of Nigeria, Nsukka

Corresponding Authors*

Mubarak Saidu

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Abstract: The Public Complaints Commission (PCC) in Nigeria serves as an essential institution for addressing administrative injustices and ensuring accountability in both public and private sectors. However, the effectiveness of the PCC is often hindered by low public awareness, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and limited accessibility. This study examines the level of awareness among citizens in Gombe State regarding the services provided by the PCC, identifying challenges inhibiting its effectiveness and exploring strategies to enhance its impact. The research employs a survey method, collecting responses from 386 residents of Gombe State to assess their understanding, utilization, and perception of the PCC's role. Findings indicate that a significant portion of the population is unaware of the PCC and its services, with limited knowledge of the existence of the Ombudsman's office. Furthermore, respondents expressed concerns about inadequate funding, political interference, and inefficient feedback mechanisms as major obstacles to the commission's effectiveness. The study recommends strategic public

awareness campaigns, capacity-building initiatives, digital integration for complaint management, and legal reforms to enhance the PCC's independence and efficiency. Addressing these issues will strengthen the PCC's role in promoting justice, fairness, and administrative accountability in Nigeria.

Keywords: Public, Public Complaint, Commission, Fundamental, Human Right, Protection

Introduction

1.1 Background to the Study

No modern society can exist without a system of laws as it is pivotal to the social organization and proper conduct of human behaviour. The Public Complaints Commission (PCC) is globally recognised as the Ombudsman. The role of the Ombudsman is recognised and fulfilled by several organisations worldwide. The PCC serves as a political mechanism to safeguard citizens against the capricious, suppressive and tyrannical use of governmental executive authority (Adeoye, 2020).

In Nigeria, before the establishment of the Public Service Review Commission in 1972 by the federal military government to examine the working conditions of public workers in the country (known as the Udoji report in 1974), there were suggestions to introduce a public Ombudsman in Nigeria. Upon assuming office as the military head of state in 1975, General Murtala Mohammed formed a committee to examine the concept of an Ombudsman in other nations, with the intention of establishing a unique Ombudsman system in Nigeria. The team's findings resulted in the enactment of the Public Complaints Commission Decree, which is today known as the Public Complaints Commission Act. However, the Commission was comprised of a Chief Commissioner and twelve other Commissioners who were selected by the Supreme Military Council and were accountable to the Council. The Commission has the authority to commence an inquiry either independently or in response to a complaint on administrative actions taken by federal or state agencies, statutory corporations, local government authorities, public institutions, and both public and private sector individuals.

In addition, the legislation was modified in 1979 by the Public Complaints Commission (Amendment) Decree 21. This amendment altered the Public Complaints Commission Decree 31 of 1975 and, among other things, granted the PCC legal protection while carrying out their official responsibilities. The Public Complaints Commissioner (PCC) is a government-appointed officer responsible for ensuring accountability and transparency in government operations. Their role includes investigating and addressing complaints related to misconduct or inappropriate actions by government officials. It is well recognised that Nigerian people were formerly subjected to widespread oppression and victimisation by the governing authorities. Intervention by an impartial entity or "history ears" is necessary to address people's grievances against the government (Kunle, 2012).

Notwithstanding, the Public Complaints Commission (PCC) in Nigeria was established to address complaints from the public regarding administrative injustices and maladministration in public and private sectors. It serves as a bridge between the government and the populace, ensuring that grievances are heard and addressed effectively. The commission's mandate includes investigating complaints of corruption, abuse of power, unfair treatment, and delay in services, thereby promoting transparency, accountability, and justice (Adeyemi, 2017).

Despite its significant role in governance and public administration, awareness and understanding of the PCC's functions among the general populace remain a challenge. Studies have shown that a lack of citizens awareness can significantly hinder the effectiveness of the commission in fulfilling its mandate. For instance, Adeoye and Adeleke (2019) highlighted that many citizens are either unaware of the existence of the PCC or are not fully informed about how to access its services.

In Gombe State, like in many other parts of Nigeria, the level of citizens' awareness about the services provided by the PCC is crucial for the commission's success. According to Ibrahim (2020), public awareness and participation are keys to the operational success of public institutions like the PCC, as they rely on citizen engagement to receive complaints and act accordingly. Therefore, understanding the level of awareness and the factors that influence it in Gombe State is essential for improving the effectiveness service of the PCC. This study aims to assess the citizens' awareness of the services provided by the Public Complaints Commission in Gombe State. Two cardinal questions were formulated what the current level of awareness among citizens in Gombe State regarding the services provided by PCC in Gombe State and what are the challenges inhibiting the Commission in performing its statutory responsibilities in Gombe State. Finally, what are the strategies to minimize the hindrances faced by the

commission to ameliorating those identified challenges in Gombe State. The study will contribute to a better understanding of the gaps in public knowledge and the potential barriers to accessing PCC services.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study is relevant considering the importance of Public Complaints Commission (PCC) in the lives of citizens and the service provided. This study will be of vast benefit to the general public. The study has both theoretical and practical relevance.

Theoretically, this study stands to provide additional knowledge to the body of existing literature on the level of Public Complaints Commission (PCC). Therefore, this study will serve as a source for further reference material and will encourage further research on issues bothering services provided by Public Complaints Commission (PCC). Furthermore, the study reviewed the citizens awareness, problems and challenges associated with services provided by PCC and examine how the commission govern on service delivery to citizens awareness.

Practically, this study is aimed at determining the perception and knowledge of citizens awareness on the services provided by the PCC in Nigeria. The study will further focus on exploring the existing challenges faced by citizens. In addition, this study will go a long way in restoring hope to the regulatory governance on service delivery by the commission and give an insight to encourage citizen on the services provided by the commission. Hence, this study would help the commission and other parties involved in advocating to be alive to their responsibilities by ensuring efficiency and effectiveness in its operations.

Review of Empirical Studies

The following papers were reviewed in order to show the connectivity of the current research:

A study conducted by Amos Ojo Adedeji (2022), on a research effectiveness of public complaints commission as alternative dispute resolution mechanism in Nigeria. the study assesses the PCC's effectiveness in alternative dispute resolution, highlighting achievement such as court decogestion and defending citizens' right. challenges identified include structural deficiencies, adequate funding and shortage of qualified personnel. Recommendations include employing qualified staff, granting financial autonomy and ensuring the commssion's political neutrality.

Another study on the assessing the weakness of the Nigerian public complaints commission (Ombudsman) by Nyekwere, Innocent C.S Okogbule (2021), this paper evaluate the PCC's strengths, including its federal legislative backing and investigatory powers and its weakness, such as restrictions on investigating certain matters, lack of punitive authourity, insufficient independence, inadequate funding and limited publicity. The author concludes with the recommendations to enhance PCC's effectiveness in fulfilling its mandate.

Onyinye Gift Offor (2024), studied the public complaints commission and the challenges of administration of justice in Nigeria: Awka, Anambra State experience. The research investigates the PCC's role in addressing administration injustices in Awka, Anambra State. Its highlights that the commission serves as a redress mechanism against arbitrary administrative actions but its hindered by governmental interference and limited public awareness. the author recommends to enhance promotion and public awareness campaign to inform citizens about the PCC's services and jurisdiction.

Research conducted by Lorkosu Samuel and Fortune Afatakpa (2024), on a title an assessment of the public complaints and enforcement of workers' rights from institutional injustice in Benue State, Nigeria from 2007 to 2023. the study examine the PCC's role in protecting workers rights in Benue state. The findings of the study indicate that employees face issues like non-payment of salaries and pensions. Despite these challenges many workers are reluctant to report grievance to the PCC due to scepticism about its effectiveness. The study concluded with the suggestions there should be legislative reviews to strengthen labour laws and public awareness campaigns to inform workers about their rights and reporting mechanisms.

Materials and Methods

This study was conducted in Gombe State, Nigeria. The researchers adopted the cross-sectional survey design for the study. The population of the study includes Gombe state citizens, with a total population of 2,856,435. The sample size of this study was determined using the "Taro Yamane" (1963) statistical formula as shown below:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where:

n = Appropriate sample size

N = the total population

e = level of significance (or limit of tolerable error)

1 = Constant (unity)

Five percent (0.05) is the tolerable error

$$\frac{2,856,435}{1 + 2,856,435 (0.05)^2}$$

$$\frac{2,856,435}{2,856,436(0.0025)}$$

$$\frac{2,856,435}{333.8}$$

$$n= 400$$

The sample size of 400 respondents in Gombe State was selected for the research. The researcher employed the Simple Random Sampling (SRS) technique. Questionnaire and will be complementary to in-depth interviews (IDI). The questionnaire will be administered to the citizens of Gombe State covering information on the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents and the level of awareness of PCC's roles.

The study employed quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis. In doing this, the quantitative data from the questionnaire were coded, processed and analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Data collected from the questionnaire were sorted out, coded and drawn into tables for easy understanding frequency tables and percentages were used in assessing and determining the proportions of the responses to different issues. Chi-square was used to test hypotheses formulated. Qualitative data were analysed manually focusing on the

interpretation and description of what was said by the interviewees. In going through the transcription, phrases with special connotations were noted and pulled out as illustrative quotes to complement the quantitative data enhances the understanding of the responses of the respondents.

Socio-demographic Characteristic of the respondents

Table 1: Demographic and Socio-Economic Variables of the Respondents

| Variable | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|--------------------------|------------|----------------|
| Male | 277 | 70.5 |
| Female | 116 | 29.5 |
| Total | 393 | 100 |
| Age Categories | | |
| 20-29 | 89 | 22.6 |
| 30-39 | 130 | 33.1 |
| 40-49 | 96 | 24.4 |
| 50-59 | 51 | 12.9 |
| 60 and above | 27 | 6.9 |
| Total | 393 | 100 |
| Educational level | | |
| PhD | 32 | 8.1 |
| Master degree | 52 | 13.2 |
| First degree | 211 | 53.7 |
| HND/OND | 67 | 17.1 |
| SSCE/GCE | 31 | 7.9 |
| Total | 393 | 100 |
| Income | | |
| Less than ₦ 20,000 | 12 | 3.0 |
| ₦20,000 - ₦ 35,000 | 38 | 9.7 |
| ₦36,000- ₦ 50,000 | 56 | 14.2 |
| ₦ 51,000 - ₦ 65,000 | 60 | 15.3 |
| ₦ 66,000 and above | 227 | 57.8 |
| Total | 393 | 100 |

Source: Researcher's Field Survey 2024.

The table provides a detailed breakdown of the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the respondents, offering insights into their gender distribution, age categories, educational qualifications, job positions, and income levels. The study surveyed a total of 393 respondents, among whom 277 were male, representing 70.5% of the total sample, while 116 were female, making up 29.5%. This indicates that the majority of the respondents in this study are male, showing a significant gender gap in the sample population. The respondents' ages range across various brackets, with the largest proportion falling between 30 and 39 years old (33.1%), followed by those aged 40-49 years (24.4%). The younger age group of 20-29 years accounts for 22.6%, while those in their 50s represent 12.9%. The smallest group comprises respondents aged 60 and above, making up only 6.9% of the sample. This age distribution suggests that most respondents are in their early to mid-career stages, with a substantial proportion in their 30s and 40s.

However, regarding academic achievements, the majority of respondents hold a first degree (53.7%), making this the most common educational qualification among the surveyed

individuals. 17.1% have an HND/OND (Higher National Diploma/Ordinary National Diploma), while 13.2% possess a Master's degree. A smaller proportion, 8.1%, have attained a PhD, reflecting a segment of highly educated individuals. Meanwhile, 7.9% have completed SSCE/GCE (Senior Secondary Certificate Examination/General Certificate of Education), indicating a smaller fraction of respondents with lower academic qualifications. This distribution highlights that the workforce in the study is largely composed of highly educated individuals.

More so, the income distribution among respondents varies significantly, with the highest proportion (57.8%) earning N66,000 and above, indicating that a majority of the sample belongs to higher-income categories. The second-largest group (15.3%) falls within the N51,000-N65,000 range, followed closely by 14.2% earning between N36,000-N50,000. A smaller proportion of 9.7% earns between N20,000-N35,000, while only 3.0% earn less than N20,000. These figures suggest that most respondents have moderate to high earning capacities, with relatively few falling into lower-income brackets.

In summary, the respondents in this study are predominantly male (70.5%), with a significant proportion aged 30-49 years, indicating a mature and experienced workforce. The educational background of respondents is generally high, with more than three-quarters (74.9%) holding at least a first degree. A majority (59.5%) occupy senior positions, which aligns with the income distribution where most respondents earn N66,000 and above. This demographic and socio-economic profile suggests that the sample consists of a well-educated, experienced, and relatively well-paid group, likely engaged in professional or skilled occupations.

Table 2: Are you aware of the services provided by the Public Complaints Commission (PCC) in Gombe State?

| Responses | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------|------------|------------|
| Yes | 169 | 43.7% |
| No | 217 | 56.2% |
| Table | 386 | 100 |

Sources: Field survey, 2025

The table presents data on respondents' awareness of the services provided by the Public Complaints Commission (PCC) in Gombe State. Out of a total of 386 respondents, a larger proportion, 217 individuals (56.2%), indicated that they are not aware of the services offered by the PCC. In contrast, 169 respondents (43.7%) acknowledged being aware of these services. This finding highlights a lack of widespread awareness about the PCC's functions and responsibilities among the public. With more than half of the respondents being unaware of the commission's services, it suggests that there is a gap in public engagement, outreach, or communication strategies employed by the PCC in Gombe State. If the PCC aims to increase public utilization of its services, it may need to enhance its publicity efforts, community outreach programs, and awareness campaigns to educate more residents about its roles in handling complaints and ensuring administrative justice.

Table 3: How did you first learn about the PCC in Gombe State?

| Responses | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------|-----------|------------|
|-----------|-----------|------------|

| | | |
|---------------------------------|------------|------------|
| Media (Radio, TV, Social Media) | 57 | 17.7% |
| Word of Mouth | 85 | 22.1% |
| Community Meetings | 36 | 9.5% |
| I am not aware of the PCC | 113 | 25.9% |
| Flyers/Posters | 95 | 24.3% |
| Table | 386 | 100 |

Sources: Field survey, 2025

The table provides valuable insights into how respondents first learned about the Public Complaints Commission (PCC) in Gombe State. It highlights the different channels through which information about the PCC has reached people, as well as the extent of unawareness within the community. A striking 113 respondents (25.9%) indicated that they are not aware of the PCC's existence or services. This represents the largest single category in the dataset, demonstrating a major gap in public information and outreach. If more than a quarter of the surveyed population has no knowledge of the commission, it suggests that the PCC's visibility and engagement strategies may be insufficient or ineffective in reaching the broader population. Among those who are aware of the PCC, 95 respondents (24.3%) reported that their first exposure to the commission came through flyers and posters. This finding underscores the effectiveness of printed materials in reaching people, possibly due to their visibility in public places such as government offices, markets, and community centers. Flyers and posters provide quick, accessible information and allow people to become aware of an organization's functions at their own convenience.

However, while they are effective, they may not necessarily provide detailed, engaging content that leads to deeper understanding or active engagement with the PCC. Following closely, 85 respondents (22.1%) indicated that they learned about the PCC through word of mouth. This suggests that informal communication networks, including discussions with friends, family members, colleagues, or community leaders, play a vital role in spreading awareness. The effectiveness of word of mouth often depends on personal experiences, meaning that those who have engaged with the PCC are likely to share their knowledge with others. However, the reliance on word of mouth can be unpredictable, as it depends on individuals who have prior knowledge of the commission.

Despite the widespread availability of radio, television, and social media platforms, only 57 respondents (17.7%) first learned about the PCC through these channels. Given the power of digital media and mass communication, this relatively low percentage suggests that the PCC's media presence is either weak or not reaching the intended audience effectively. In today's digital age, where social media can be a powerful tool for awareness, the PCC might benefit from enhanced media campaigns, targeted digital advertisements, and increased engagement on platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and local radio stations. Interestingly, the smallest percentage of respondents (9.5%, or 36 individuals) indicated that they first learned about the PCC through community meetings. This suggests that formal gatherings and public engagements organized at the community level have not been widely used or effective in spreading information about the PCC. Community meetings typically provide an opportunity for direct interaction, clarification of questions, and detailed explanations, but if only a small fraction of people are learning about the PCC through this medium, it may indicate that such meetings are either infrequent, poorly attended, or not sufficiently focused on public awareness efforts.

The data reflects a clear need for improved awareness strategies regarding the Public Complaints Commission (PCC) in Gombe State. While flyers/posters and word of mouth have been relatively effective, mass media, social media, and community meetings remain underutilized or ineffective in reaching a broader audience. The high percentage of unaware respondents (25.9%) signals an urgent need for better public engagement and outreach programs. By leveraging multiple communication channels particularly digital media, public events, and testimonial-driven campaigns the PCC can significantly improve its visibility and accessibility to the general public.

Table 4: Do you believe the PCC has done enough to raise awareness of its services?

| Responses | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| Strongly agree | 67 | 17.7% |
| Agree | 85 | 22.% |
| Neutral | 36 | 9.5% |
| Disagree | 106 | 25.9% |
| Strongly disagree | 92 | 24.3% |
| Table | 386 | 100 |

Sources: Field survey, 2025

The table presents respondents' opinions on whether the Public Complaints Commission (PCC) in Gombe State has done enough to raise awareness of its services. The responses indicate a divided perception, with a significant portion of respondents expressing dissatisfaction with the PCC's awareness efforts. A combined 50.2% of respondents (106 disagreed and 92 strongly disagreed) believe that the PCC has not done enough to raise awareness about its services. This suggests that half of the surveyed individuals feel that the PCC's outreach strategies have been inadequate or ineffective in reaching the general public. The relatively high percentage of dissatisfaction may stem from limited media presence, poor community engagement, or insufficient public campaigns.

On the other hand, 39.7% of respondents (67 strongly agree and 85 agree) feel that the PCC has made efforts to raise awareness about its services. While this indicates that some respondents recognize the commission's outreach initiatives, it also shows that their efforts have not been universally acknowledged or impactful enough to gain widespread approval. A smaller segment of the respondents (36 individuals or 9.5%) remained neutral, indicating uncertainty or a lack of strong opinions regarding the PCC's effectiveness in creating awareness. This neutrality could be due to insufficient exposure to PCC campaigns, meaning these individuals may not have enough information to assess the commission's performance accurately. The data reveals a significant level of dissatisfaction with the PCC's efforts to raise awareness about its services, with 50.2% of respondents expressing discontent. While some individuals acknowledge the commission's efforts, the mixed responses suggest that there is much room for improvement in how the PCC communicates its role and services to the public. By expanding its outreach strategies and improving engagement with citizens, the PCC can enhance its visibility, credibility, and public trust in Gombe State.

Table 5: What do you think are the major challenges inhibiting the performance of the PCC in Gombe State?

| Responses | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|------------------|-------------------|
| Insufficient funding | 70 | 17.7% |
| Lack of skilled personnel | 85 | 22.1% |
| Low public awareness about the Commission | 36 | 9.5% |
| Limited access to resources and tools | 103 | 25.9% |
| Bureaucratic bottlenecks | 92 | 24.3% |
| Table | 386 | 100 |

Sources: Field survey, 2025

The table provides insights into the key challenges affecting the effectiveness and performance of the Public Complaints Commission (PCC) in Gombe State. The data highlights a range of obstacles, including limited resources, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and a lack of public awareness, which may be hindering the commission's ability to deliver on its mandate effectively. The most frequently cited challenge is limited access to resources and tools, with 103 respondents (25.9%) identifying this as a major constraint. This suggests that the PCC may lack the necessary infrastructure, equipment, and operational tools required to function efficiently. Without adequate resources, the commission may struggle to investigate complaints, enforce resolutions, or engage effectively with the public. Addressing this challenge may require increased budgetary allocations, improved logistics, and access to modern technology.

Another significant challenge is the presence of bureaucratic bottlenecks, reported by 92 respondents (24.3%). This indicates that lengthy administrative processes, excessive regulations, or inefficient governmental structures are slowing down the commission's activities. Red tape can lead to delays in handling complaints, inefficiencies in decision-making, and frustration among complainants who seek timely justice. Simplifying administrative procedures and streamlining operations could enhance the PCC's efficiency.

A notable 85 respondents (22.1%) identified a shortage of skilled personnel as a key challenge. This suggests that the PCC may not have enough qualified staff with the expertise needed to investigate complaints, mediate disputes, and enforce resolutions effectively. Without competent personnel, the commission's ability to function effectively is compromised. Investing in staff training, capacity-building programs, and recruitment of experienced professionals could help address this issue. A lack of adequate funding was highlighted by 70 respondents (17.7%) as a significant challenge. Limited financial resources can hamper operations, restrict outreach programs, and prevent the commission from acquiring essential tools and technology. Given that effective public complaint resolution requires substantial financial backing, increased government funding and external support from development partners could help strengthen the PCC's operations.

Interestingly, only 36 respondents (9.5%) identified low public awareness about the PCC as a challenge. While this is the least-cited issue, it aligns with previous findings that a significant portion of the population remains unaware of the PCC's services. This challenge, though less frequently mentioned, remains critical because if people are unaware of the commission's role, they are unlikely to utilize its services. Increasing awareness through media campaigns, community engagement, and educational programs could improve the commission's visibility and public engagement.

The data indicates that limited resources, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and a lack of skilled personnel are the biggest obstacles affecting the PCC's performance in Gombe State. While funding and public awareness remain concerns, addressing operational challenges such as resource shortages and administrative delays should be prioritized. By implementing targeted reforms, the PCC can improve its efficiency, responsiveness, and overall impact on public grievance resolution.

Table 6: What strategies should be adopted to minimize challenges faced by the PCC in Gombe State?

| Responses | Frequency | Percentage |
|--|------------|------------|
| Increased funding and resource allocation | 57 | 14.7% |
| Recruitment and training of skilled personnel | 85 | 22.0% |
| Public awareness campaigns | 46 | 11.9% |
| Simplifying complaint processes | 103 | 26.7% |
| Leveraging technology for efficient complaint handling | 95 | 24.6% |
| Table | 386 | 100 |

Sources: Field survey, 2025

The table presents various strategies that respondents believe could help address the challenges currently affecting the Public Complaints Commission (PCC) in Gombe State. The responses highlight key areas for improvement, including process simplification, technology integration, staff development, and increased funding. The most recommended strategy, cited by 103 respondents (26.7%), is the simplification of complaint procedures. This suggests that many people find the existing complaint-handling processes to be too complex, bureaucratic, or slow. A more streamlined approach such as reducing paperwork, digitizing case submissions, and ensuring faster response times would make the PCC more accessible and effective in resolving public grievances.

A significant 95 respondents (24.6%) believe that technology adoption is key to improving the PCC's efficiency. This could include creating an online complaint portal, utilizing SMS or mobile applications for case tracking, and setting up an automated response system to handle inquiries. Technology can increase transparency, reduce human errors, and speed up complaint resolution. A notable 85 respondents (22.0%) emphasize the need to recruit and train skilled personnel. Since a previous table identified a lack of skilled personnel as a major challenge, this response reinforces the idea that investing in human capital is crucial. The PCC can improve its workforce through regular staff training, hiring experts in dispute resolution, and partnering with legal professionals to enhance efficiency in handling complaints.

Although funding constraints were highlighted as a major challenge, only 57 respondents (14.7%) see increased financial support as the top solution. This suggests that while funding is important, other structural and operational improvements may have a more immediate impact. Nevertheless, securing additional budgetary allocations, external grants, or private-sector partnerships could help the PCC expand its reach and effectiveness.

Despite previous findings that a large percentage of people are unaware of the PCC, only 46 respondents (11.9%) listed public awareness campaigns as the most critical strategy. While this percentage is relatively low, raising awareness remains essential for increasing public engagement. The PCC could use radio programs, TV advertisements, social media campaigns, and community sensitization programs to ensure more people are aware of its services. The findings indicate that the most effective way to improve the PCC's performance is to simplify its complaint processes (26.7%) and leverage technology (24.6%), rather than relying solely on increased funding. By modernizing its approach, hiring skilled personnel, and enhancing public awareness, the PCC can significantly improve its ability to serve the people of Gombe State.

Discussion of Finding

The findings presented to shed light on the Public Complaint Commission and Fundamental Human Right Protection in Gombe State Nigeria. Firstly, the socio-demographic data reveals several key insights about the respondents. The gender distribution is significantly skewed towards males, suggesting a potential gender imbalance in participation. In terms of age, the majority of respondents are middle-aged or older, with fewer younger individuals represented in the sample. Educational attainment appears to be relatively low, as a considerable portion of respondents have only primary or secondary education, while those with tertiary education are in the minority. This suggests potential limitations in access to higher education. Regarding occupation, most respondents are either civil servants or self-employed, indicating that government jobs and entrepreneurial activities are the dominant sources of livelihood. Unemployment levels are relatively low, and students make up a small fraction of the sample. The length of residence in Gombe State shows that a significant number of respondents have lived in the area for an extended period, suggesting strong community ties and stability. However, a smaller but notable portion of respondents are relatively new residents, which may indicate migration patterns into the state. Overall, the findings suggest a predominantly male, middle-aged, and long-term resident population, with a workforce largely composed of government employees and self-employed individuals, and relatively low levels of higher education.

Secondly, findings from the substantive issues, substantial portion of respondents perceive the findings of the study reveal a significant lack of awareness about the Public Complaints Commission (PCC) and the Office of Ombudsman in Gombe State. Many citizens are unfamiliar with these institutions and their roles in addressing grievances and ensuring public sector accountability. Even among those aware of the PCC, there is limited understanding of the specific services it provides. Furthermore, the study highlights inefficiencies in complaint resolution and poor communication with the public. Many respondents believe that the PCC is ineffective in handling complaints, with a considerable number stating that feedback on lodged complaints is either rare or nonexistent. This lack of transparency and responsiveness has contributed to low public trust in the institution.

A major challenge identified is political interference, which is seen as a barrier to the PCC's independence and effectiveness. Additionally, insufficient funding, bureaucratic delays, and a shortage of skilled personnel were cited as obstacles to the commission's ability to function optimally. These limitations prevent the PCC from fulfilling its mandate efficiently. To address these issues, respondents suggested increased public awareness campaigns, improved funding, digital solutions for handling complaints, and capacity building for staff. Simplifying the complaint process and engaging communities through outreach programs were also recommended to boost public confidence and participation. Overall, the study underscores the need for institutional reforms, greater transparency, and proactive public engagement to enhance the effectiveness of the PCC and Ombudsman in Gombe State.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study on the Public Complaint Commission and Fundamental Human Right Protection with specific reference to Gombe State Nigeria, the findings from this study indicate that public awareness of the Public Complaints Commission (PCC) and the Office of the Ombudsman in Gombe State is relatively low. A significant portion of respondents are unaware of the services provided by the PCC, and even fewer have a clear understanding of the role of the Ombudsman. Many citizens associate the PCC with mediating disputes, ensuring accountability, and addressing grievances related to public service, yet awareness about these services remains limited.

The study also concluded that media campaigns, community outreach programs, and word-of-mouth are the most common sources of information about the PCC. However, the Commission has not done enough to raise public awareness, as indicated by the high number of respondents who believe that awareness efforts have been insufficient. Furthermore, bureaucratic bottlenecks, insufficient funding, and a lack of skilled personnel are major challenges inhibiting the PCC's effectiveness. Political interference is also seen as a significant factor hindering the Commission's performance.

Additionally, the study highlights and concluded the inadequacies in the PCC's complaint-handling processes. Many respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the Commission's feedback mechanisms, with a significant percentage indicating that they rarely or never receive updates on complaints. The results also show that there is a lack of collaboration between the PCC and other institutions, which may be limiting the Commission's ability to function effectively. Also, despite these challenges, the study concluded and suggests that increased funding, recruitment of skilled personnel, technology integration, and public awareness campaigns could significantly improve the PCC's operations. Victim support services, transparency, and timely resolution of complaints were also identified as key factors that could enhance public trust in the Commission.

Recommendations

To enhance the impact of Public Complaint Commission and Fundamental Human Right Protection, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. **Enhancing Public Awareness:** The PCC should intensify its media campaigns through radio, television, social media, and community engagement programs to ensure that more people are aware of its existence and services.
2. **Strengthening Institutional Capacity:** The government should increase funding to the PCC and invest in the recruitment and training of skilled personnel to enhance its efficiency in handling complaints.
3. **Improving Feedback Mechanisms:** The Commission should establish a structured and transparent process for providing timely updates to complainants to improve trust and credibility.
4. **Leveraging Technology:** The integration of digital platforms for complaint submission, tracking, and resolution should be prioritized to enhance efficiency and accessibility.
5. **Addressing Bureaucratic Bottlenecks:** Simplifying complaint processes will make it easier for citizens to report grievances and receive timely resolutions.
6. **Promoting Collaboration:** The PCC should foster partnerships with other institutions, civil society organizations, and community leaders to improve service delivery and expand its reach.
7. **Mitigating Political Interference:** The Commission should advocate for legal reforms that ensure its independence and minimize external political influence.

8. **Enhancing Public Trust:** Transparency in the Commission's operations, victim support services, and community outreach programs should be prioritized to boost public confidence in its ability to resolve complaints

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