

# Whistleblowing, Professional Ethics, and Fear of Retaliation: Barriers to Exposing Corruption in the Civil Service of Third World Countries.

Daniel Mishael Masetu<sup>1</sup>, Bildad Awere<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>HSC Monitoring and Evaluation, County Government of Nairobi

<sup>2</sup>Bildad Awere, Researcher and Policy Expert, Tripex Oddessy Limited

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.51244/IJRSI.2026.1305000031>

Received: 23 December 2025; Accepted: 30 December 2025; Published: 23 May 2026

## ABSTRACT

This study examined how professional ethics and fear of retaliation shaped whistleblowing on corruption in the civil service of third world countries. Many developing states had introduced anti-corruption bodies, ethics codes and whistleblower protection frameworks, yet reporting of wrongdoing by civil servants remained limited. The study focused on four objectives: to assess awareness and perceptions of whistleblowing mechanisms; to examine the relationship between professional ethics and willingness to report; to analyse the effect of fear of retaliation on whistleblowing intentions and behaviour; and to identify legal, organisational and cultural factors that hindered or facilitated whistleblowing. The research adopted a descriptive and explanatory design based entirely on secondary data. It drew on cross-national survey evidence, legal and policy documents, and analytical reports on corruption, ethics and whistleblowing in third world contexts. The analysis was guided by the Theory of Planned Behavior and Prosocial Behaviour Theory. Findings indicated that awareness of whistleblowing mechanisms was present in general terms, but confidence in accessibility, confidentiality and institutional follow-up remained weak. Professional ethics and integrity climate showed a positive association with willingness to report, particularly where ethical leadership and active ethics management were evident. Fear of retaliation emerged as a central deterrent, with civil servants anticipating career sanctions, workplace victimization and, in some settings, security threats. Legal frameworks on whistleblower protection had expanded in several countries, yet enforcement gaps, limited awareness and strong loyalty norms reduced their practical impact. The study concluded that effective promotion of whistleblowing in third world civil services required aligned reforms in law, organisational practice and administrative culture.

**Keywords:** Whistleblowing, Professional ethics, Fear of retaliation, Civil service, Corruption, Third world countries

## INTRODUCTION

### Background to the Study

Corruption in the civil service remains a persistent challenge across many third world countries, where public officials exercise significant discretion over access to permits, contracts, social services and welfare benefits. Weak institutional checks, politicized oversight and limited enforcement capacity create fertile ground for bribery, embezzlement and patronage, with serious implications for development outcomes and public trust in government (Hassan, 2022; Resimić, 2025). Studies across Africa show that citizens widely perceive corruption as increasing and believe that governments are doing a poor job in combating it, which further entrenches cynicism and disengagement from formal accountability channels (Afrobarometer, 2023; Dulani, Logedi, Hinfelaar, & Southall, 2023).

Whistleblowing has therefore gained prominence as a crucial mechanism for uncovering wrongdoing that formal audits and external inspections may not detect. Employees inside public organisations are well placed to observe irregularities in procurement, recruitment, budgeting and service delivery, and their disclosures can play a decisive role in detecting and deterring corrupt practices (Vian, Agnew, & McInnes, 2022; Lee, Walter, & Park,

2023). However, the willingness of civil servants to report misconduct is shaped by both organisational ethics and the perceived risks of speaking out. Research in African and other developing-country contexts shows that, even where reporting channels exist, many potential whistleblowers remain reluctant to use them (Ogungbamila, Ogunyemi, & Ogunyemi, 2024; Ezeoha, Akinyoade, Ehrhardt, & Uche, 2025).

Professional ethics within the civil service is meant to anchor integrity, impartiality and service to the public interest. Codes of conduct, ethics training and integrity promotion initiatives seek to create an environment in which public officials internalize norms against corruption and feel a moral obligation to challenge wrongdoing (Nicolaidis, 2024; Masiu & Motlamelle, 2025). Yet empirical work suggests that in many administrations, ethical frameworks coexist with permissive or even complicit organisational cultures, where corrupt practices are normalized and sanctions are inconsistently applied (Sithomola, 2024; Onyango, 2024). This disjuncture can leave ethically minded officials isolated and unsure whether their institutions will support them if they disclose misconduct.

Fear of retaliation is a central barrier in this context. Survey evidence from multiple African countries indicates that a majority of citizens and public officials believe they risk punishment if they speak out against corruption (Afrobarometer, 2023; Dulani et al., 2023). Individuals who report wrongdoing may anticipate dismissal, stalled careers, transfers, social ostracism or even physical harm, particularly where powerful elites or entrenched networks are implicated (Oboro-Offerie, Toklo, & Allor, 2025; Kubbe & Merkle, 2025). Although a growing body of legal and policy instruments seeks to protect whistleblowers in countries such as Nigeria, Kenya, Lesotho and others, gaps in coverage, weak implementation and limited awareness continue to undermine confidence in these frameworks (Ojobo, 2023; Thulo et al., 2025; PPLAAF & Afrimap, 2023; Cliff Dekker Hofmeyr, 2022). As a result, many civil servants in third world countries confront a stark dilemma between ethical duty and personal security, which this study seeks to explore by focusing on the interaction between professional ethics, fear of retaliation and whistleblowing on corruption in the civil service.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Many third world countries have established anti-corruption commissions, integrity bodies, audit institutions and whistleblowing channels, yet corruption in the civil service remains entrenched. Citizen surveys across Africa report rising perceptions of corruption and deep scepticism about governments' commitment to curb it, despite these formal frameworks (Afrobarometer, 2023; Dulani, Logedi, Hinfelaar, & Southall, 2023). At organisational level, ethics codes and integrity programmes are often adopted but poorly enforced, while politicisation, patronage and weak ethical leadership continue to shape everyday bureaucratic practice (Onyango, 2024; Sithomola, 2024; Masiu & Motlamelle, 2025).

Whistleblowing is promoted as a key mechanism for detecting fraud, waste and abuse, but actual reporting behaviour by civil servants remains limited. Evidence from low- and middle-income settings shows that potential whistleblowers rarely use formal channels, even when they are aware of them (Vian, Agnew, & McInnes, 2022; Ogungbamila, Ogunyemi, & Ogunyemi, 2024). Fear of retaliation, including career sanctions, social isolation and possible physical harm, is consistently identified as a major deterrent (Afrobarometer, 2023; Oboro-Offerie, Toklo, & Allor, 2025; Kubbe & Merkle, 2025). Although several countries have introduced whistleblower protection laws and guidelines, gaps in legal coverage, weak enforcement and low institutional trust mean these frameworks have not created a genuinely safe environment for reporting (Ojobo, 2023; PPLAAF & Afrimap, 2023; Thulo et al., 2025). This disconnect between formal regimes and actual reporting behaviour is the core problem this study addresses.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The overall objective of this study is to examine how professional ethics and fear of retaliation influence whistleblowing on corruption within the civil service in selected third world countries.

The specific objectives are to:

Assess civil servants' awareness and perceptions of whistleblowing mechanisms in the public sector.

Examine the relationship between professional ethics and employees' willingness to report corrupt practices.

Analyse the effect of fear of retaliation on whistleblowing intentions and behaviour among civil servants.

Identify legal, organizational and cultural factors that hinder or facilitate whistleblowing in the civil service.

### **Research Questions / Hypotheses**

Based on the study objectives, the following research questions will guide the study:

How aware are civil servants of existing whistleblowing mechanisms, and how do they perceive their effectiveness?

What is the relationship between professional ethics and civil servants' willingness to report corrupt practices?

How does fear of retaliation influence whistleblowing intentions and behaviour among civil servants?

What legal, organisational and cultural factors hinder or facilitate whistleblowing in the civil service of third world countries?

### **Significance of the Study**

This research paper is significant in that it clarifies the reason why the third world countries have formal whistleblowing and anti-corruption systems that have failed to translate into active and safe reporting of wrongdoing. In the case of policymakers, it will give them evidence to tighten the laws against whistleblowing, enforcement systems and institutional requirements to ensure that protections go beyond paper assurances (Ojobo, 2023; Thulo et al., 2025). As a civil service practitioner, the results will inform the implementation of professional ethics, organisational culture and fear of retaliation in day-to-day reporting decisions to design ethics programmes and internal channels (Onyango, 2024; Masiu and Motlamelle, 2025). To the scholars, the research contributes to the whistleblowing and corruption literature by connecting the ethical climate, perceived risks and reporting behaviour in the developing countries context (Vian, Agnew, and McInnes, 2022; Oboro-Offerie, Toklo, and Allor, 2025).

### **Scope and Limitations**

The paper concerns itself with whistleblowing in the civil service of selected third world nations, in particular, African public-sector settings where the issue of bribery, remedies to ethics and whistleblower policies have become the center of attention (Afrobarometer, 2023; Dulani, Logedi, Hinfelaar, and Southall, 2023). It looks at central and subnational government ministries and agencies in sectors, and conceptually is limited to the dissuasive ethics of civil servants, fear of retaliation and intentions of whistleblowing behaviour among civil servants (Onyango, 2024; Vian, Agnew, and McInnes, 2022). The main weaknesses are self-reporting, which can be influenced by the social desirability bias, fear and the inability to access officials who would be happy to discuss sensitive topics with and a cross-section design that restrains the possibilities of making causal conclusions. The results might not be extrapolable to other countries and institutions that were not sampled.

### **Operational Definitions of the Key Terms.**

To conduct this study, the following terms are described as follows:

**Whistleblowing:** This refers to the act of a civil servant revealing suspected or actual corruption, fraud or other ills to an internal or external body.

**Professional ethics:** This is the set of values, principles and standards (such as integrity, impartiality and accountability) against which behaviour and actions of civil servants are measured when officials conduct their duties.

**Retaliation:** This involves any adverse measure against an individual who has reported the wrong doing such as dismissal, demotion, transfer, harassment or social ostracizing.

**Lack of retaliation:** The perceived risk and intensity of such adverse effects that can lead to people not reporting corruption.

**Civil service:** This refers to the servants of the government working in ministries, departments and government agencies not including elected officials.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Theoretical Overview

#### Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

The Theory of Planned Behaviour describes the process of whistleblowing as a process of three elements, attitude towards reporting, perceived social pressure (subjective norms) and perceived behavioural control. TPP is applicable to the given study since the intentions of the civil servants to report the corruption will be based on whether they perceive whistleblowing as desirable or not, whether they believe that the colleagues and supervisors will support them in whistleblowing, and whether they believe they will be able to do it without any severe repercussions. Attitudes and norms can be enhanced by anti-corruption and ethics reforms, however, with a high level of fear of being retaliated, perceived control is low and intentions at reporting are weak (Afrobarometer, 2023; Lee, Walter, and Park, 2023). TPB thus offers a vivid explanation of the relationship between professional ethics, organisational climate and fear of retaliation and whistleblowing intentions within the third world civil services (Ogungbamila, Ogunyemi, and Ogunyemi, 2024).

#### Prosocial Behaviour Theory

In the Prosocial Behaviour Theory, whistleblowing is considered to be an act of altruism to secure the organisational, citizens and overall public interest even when it means putting oneself in danger. This paper uses the theory to expound why ethically dedicated civil servants can still decide to blow the whistle against corruption despite the hostile environments. Prosocial motivations can be encouraged by professional ethics, norms, and values of public service to help curb the damage of fraud, embezzlement or office abuse (Vian, Agnew, and McInnes, 2022; Nicolaides, 2024). Nonetheless, in instances where retaliation is prevalent and prosocial intent is vulnerable, self-preservation can prevail over prosocial intent resulting in silence or complicity rather than reporting (Oboro-Offerie, Toklo, and Allor, 2025). Prosocial Behaviour Theory can therefore be the core of the interaction between ethical commitment and perceived risk towards influencing whistleblowing behaviour in the third world countries.

### Empirical Review

#### Professional Ethics and Integrity in the Civil Service

In most third world nations, whistleblowing within the government sector is officially accepted as an important anti-corruption mechanism yet practice is not up to policy. Generally, whistleblowing is either internal or external reporting. Internal whistle blow happens when civil servants report corruption within their organisation using the channels of the organisation like line managers, ethics units, internal audit or specific reporting officers. External whistleblowing means that such disclosures are made to the bodies that are not part of the immediate organisation, such as anti-corruption commissions, ombudsman institutions, the media, civil society organisations or law-enforcement agencies (Vian, Agnew, & McInnes, 2022; International Ombudsman Institute, 2024). Theoretically, internal reporting must allow early identification and rectification of malpractice, the external channel is there as a safety valve when the internal machinery fails or is ineffective.

Internal channels have been integrated into the integrity and compliance structures in developing situations. They are formal grievance mechanisms, ethics hotlines, internal audits and special integrity or anti-corruption units of ministries and agencies (PwC Eastern Africa, 2022; Onyango, 2024). Nonetheless, the implementation process

is usually uneven. Hierarchical cultures, patronage systems and politicised management may deter staff members to go around superiors or whistle blow on work mates particularly when senior officials are involved in suspicion. There might be internal mechanisms that are mostly paper-based or perceived as the means of reputation management instead of actual accountability, which results in a lack of trust among the potential whistleblowers (Onyango, 2024; Sithomola, 2024).

National anti-corruption agencies, ombudsman offices, specialised hotlines, and in some instances, digital reporting portals which enable anonymous reporting are usually the external reporting mechanisms used in third world countries. Systems exist in countries like Lesotho, South Africa, Kenya, and Nigeria in Africa, among others, making external disclosures to listed supervisory bodies, with or without express protection provisions and incentives (PPLAAF and Afrimap, 2023; Cliff Dekker Hofmeyr, 2022; Thulo, Dick-Sagoe, Odoom, Ehiane, and Lwendo, 2025). Legal and policy tools take into consideration the description of eligibility to be a whistleblower, the form of injustices that may be reported and the need of confidentiality. However, a significant number of civil servants are not convinced that anonymity would be maintained or complaints would be addressed without any bias.

One of the characteristics of the regimes of the developing countries is a combination of formal and informal channels. Although legislations can motivate whistleblowers to use official hotlines or commissions, in reality certain whistleblowers resort to journalists, activists or social media when they believe that institutional means are captured or fail to work (Vian et al., 2022; Oboro-Offerie, Toklo, and Allor, 2025). The evidence of surveys indicates that fear of punishment and the lack of trust in authorities are the key factors affecting the choice between using internal and external channels and remaining silent (Afrobarometer, 2023). Therefore, despite the growing number of whistle blowing tools available in third world public sector, the question of their use is based on the perceived safety, credibility and independence of the channel to civil servants.

### **Civil Service Professional Ethics and Integrity**

The concept of professional ethics in the civil service is described as values, standards and norms in which the public officials use the public power, resources and serve the citizens. A formal code of conducts focused on integrity, impartiality, accountability and service to the common good has been embraced by many developing nations, and frequently is associated with more extensive public-sector-reform and good-governance agendas (Nicolaidis, 2024; Resimic, 2025). These codes define the expectations in matters relating to conflicts of interest, giving of gifts, utilizing of the assets and reporting of misconduct. Nevertheless, having the written rules does not ensure ethical behaving, their impact is determined by the seriousness of their implementation and integration into the routine.

Ethical culture is a major factor in the process of formalizing rules into practice. Ethical codes in the workplace may be diminished to pieces of paper with minimal impact on actual decisions where the leaders have condoned or even engaged in unethical practices, or even where appointments and promotions are made based on patronage (Sithomola, 2024; Masiu and Motlamelle, 2025). African public services have demonstrated that empirical work often finds that there is a discrepancy between formal ethical promises and actual rules and standards of conduct within their departments, such as a push towards conformity with how things are done as opposed to how things should be done (Onyango, 2024; Sithomola, 2024). This demoralizes the perceived legitimacy of ethics policies and can deter an employee in questioning malfeasance.

As such, ethical leadership is essential. Exemplary leaders who act with integrity, react equitably to complaints of misconduct and support whistleblowers contribute to creating an environment where whistleblowing is perceived as a professional responsibility and not an act of disloyalty (Nicolaidis, 2024; Masiu and Motlamelle, 2025). On the other hand, leaders that punish critics and reward the loyalist without regard to integrity are sending the message that it is better to remain silent and be a traitor than to speak. Professional ethics and integrity in this study have been interpreted not just as formalised principles but as experienced organisational practices which are influenced by leadership behaviour, peer norms and organisational incentives. These ethical circumstances directly affect the beliefs of the civil servants that whistleblowing on corruption is part of their professional identity and whether they believe that their organisation would reward or penalize them (Onyango, 2024; Resimic, 2025).

## Fear of Revenge and Obstacles to Reporting

One of the best deterrents to whistleblowing in the third world countries is the fear of retaliation in the public sector. Evidence indicates that in Africa as a whole, large majorities of surveyed citizens feel that ordinary citizens run risks of being reprisaled should they report cases of corruption, a factor that helps to create a culture of silence despite the existence of reporting mechanisms (Afrobarometer, 2023; Dulani, Logedi, Hinfelaar, and Southall, 2023). The perceived risks are especially sharp in the case of civil servants who have to rely on the hierarchical organisations where influential figures can dictate postings, promotions and access to resources. The expected retaliation is usually loss of job or denial of promotion, punitive transfer, hostile work environment or even minor types of victimisation instead of just overt dismissal (Oboro-Offerie, Toklo, and Allor, 2025; Kubbe and Merkle, 2025).

In addition to career penalties, whistleblowers can cut through social ostracism by the rest of the staff who consider the whistleblower as disloyal or even a threat. Reporting peers or superiors is likely to violate informal solidarity and patronage networks in a setting with a high level of them; such behavior may result in isolation or harassment (Vian, Agnew, and McInnes, 2022; Ogungbamila, Ogunyemi, and Ogunyemi, 2024). Cases that have threats to personal safety also occur in some instances where corruption is attributed to organised crime or high-level political participants. These dangers influence the formation of subjective norms because they imply that reporting is abnormal and personally dangerous, although laws may officially support such behavior (Afrobarometer, 2023; Kubbe and Merkle, 2025).

These fears are enhanced by a lack of anonymity and a low level of protective measures against confidentiality. Most civil servants are not convinced that they can be guaranteed of their safety when using internal or external sources, especially when the process of investigation is beyond examination or when the situation of leak is prevalent (Vian et al., 2022; PPLAAF and Afrimap, 2023). History recounts several cases where whistle blowers have been retaliated against without much support or any support on the part of the institutions and this makes expectations that the system is indeed fallible (Ezeoha, Akinyoade, Ehrhardt, and Uche, 2025). Consequently, prospective whistleblowers could conclude that keeping their mouth shut, informing close associates in an informal manner, or simply leaving the organisation are less risky than making them a formal report. Fear of retaliation is considered in this paper as one of the psychological and organisational inhibitors that intermediated the association between professional ethics and actual whistleblowing behaviour among civil servants.

## Laws and institutionalization of Whistleblower protection

Due to endemic corruption and under reporting, most developing nations have come up with legal and institutional systems that protect the whistleblowers in the state. These frameworks are usually used to determine who is considered a whistleblower, the nature of misconduct that can be reported on, the body that can receive the information and how these are safeguarded against retaliation. In Nigeria, as an example, the whistleblowing policy and the following legislative efforts aim to give incentives to report corruption and offer confidentiality and protection, although it is still debated whether they are effective (Ojobo, 2023; PPLAAF & Afrimap, 2023; Templars Law, 2025). Analyses reveal alacrity of coverage, inconsistency in implementing and doubtfulness over solutions to the victims of reprisals.

Some of the proposed bills include the Whistleblower Protection Bill 2021 in Kenya that seeks to reinforce protection frameworks provided under the current laws against corruption and bribery by clarifying the processes, expanding the range of what is being covered and increasing the institutional obligations (Cliff Dekker Hofmeyr, 2022; Manwa and Company Advocates, 2025). Professional and advisory organisations highlight the necessity of effective internal programmes, safe reporting and clear organisational policies to supplement the statutory framework (PwC Eastern Africa, 2022). Other related studies, such as those done in Lesotho and South Africa, indicate the significance of detailed statutes, autonomous monitoring institutions, and available redressing mechanisms in the event of revenge (Thulo, Dick-Sagoe, Odoom, Ehiane, and Lwendo, 2025).

International standards, including best practice principles created by ombudsman institutions, emphasize confidentiality, immunity to any retaliation, access to redress and proactive communication because potential whistleblowers need to be aware of their rights (International Ombudsman Institute, 2024). The effects of these

structures are however subject to awareness, trust and enforcement. This paper thus looks at the formal presence as well as the actual presence of laws and institutions, but also how civil workers believe that these structures will protect them in case they blow the whistle over corruption.

### **Empirical Summary**

According to recently published empirical research in the situation of developing countries, there is a stable disparity between the presence of whistleblowing systems and real reporting behaviour. Evidence of surveys conducted across Africa indicates that citizens and government officers are aware of the existence of high rates of corruption, but most of them imagine that they will be punished in case they report on their actions, which causes a strong deterrence against reporting (Afrobarometer, 2023; Dulani, Logedi, Hinfelaar, and Southall, 2023). Research at the organisational level in African public organisations reveals that inconsistency between ethics programmes and formal procedures are often in the presence of permissive cultures that tolerate corruption and inconsistent responses of managers to reported malpractices (Onyango, 2024; Sithomola, 2024). The quantitative research indicates a positive correlation between whistleblowing intentions and perceived ethical climate, anxiety of punishment and corruption tolerance, which mean that fear and normalisation of abuse decrease the probability of reporting (Ogungbamila, Ogunyemi, and Ogunyemi, 2024; Lee, Walter, and Park, 2023). The ongoing development of the whistleblowing policy in Nigeria also demonstrates how the insufficient implementation, lack of trust, and protection demoralize the involvement of citizens in the anti-corruption programmes (Ojobo, 2023; Ezeoha, Akinyoade, Ehrhardt, and Uche, 2025).

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

The Research Design Used in This Study is Qualitative and Explanatory With the Whole Research Being Based on Secondary Data. It Used Both Cross National Quantitative Study and Documentary Qualitative Study To Investigate the Influence of Professional Ethics, Fear of Retaliation and Whistleblowing Systems on Reporting of Corruption in the Civil Service of the Third World Countries. The Quantitative Strand Was Based on the Current Survey Data and Government-Sector Integrity Measures That Reflected the Perception of Corruption, Fear of Retaliation and Readiness To Report (Afrobarometer, 2023; Dulani, Logedi, Hinfelaar, and Southall, 2023). The Qualitative Strand Examined Legislations, Policies, and Institutions Regarding Protection of Whistleblowers, Ethics and Integrity in the Chosen Developing Countries (Ojobo, 2023; PPLAAF & Afrimap, 2023; Thulo, Dick-Sagoe, Odoom, Ehiane, and Lwendo, 2025). This Hybrid Secondary Strategy Was Appropriate in an Issue Where High Sensitivity, Risk and Cost Were Associated With Direct Access To Civil Servants.

### **Target Population of the Study**

The Research Setting Was the Third World Nations, But the Focus Was Made on the Low- and Middle-Income States of Africa and Other Developing Regions Where Corruption and Ethics Reforms and Whistleblower-Protection Discussions Had Become the Heated Topics (Hassan, 2022; Afrobarometer, 2023). Instead of Taking One Country, the Research Paper Was Taken in a Comparative Manner To Reflect the Patterns and Variance Between Civil Service Systems. The Target Population Was Also Conceptualised To National Public Administrations and Their Formal Arrangements on Integrity, Such as Central Ministries, Key Agencies and Anti-Corruption Bodies. The Units of Analysis in the Context of Secondary Data Were Countries, Respondents of the Survey of the Public Sector and Institutional Frameworks Reported in Laws and Policies and Official Reports (Vian, Agnew, and McInnes, 2022; Onyango, 2024). Such a Design Allowed Gaining Wider Placements of the Conditions of Whistleblowing in a Number of Developing States.

### **Sampling Procedure and Sample Siz.**

Both the Countries and Documents Were Selected Using a Purposive Sampling Strategy. When Recent and Similar Survey Data on Corruption Perceptions Were Available, as Well as on Fear of Retaliation and Readiness To Report, and Identifiable Legal or Policy Provisions on Whistleblowing and Ethics in the Public Sector Were in Place, Countries Were Included in the Sample (Afrobarometer, 2023; Ojobo, 2023). In the Countries, the

Research Collected a Database of Secondary Sources That Encompassed Both Legislation and Policy Documents, Guidelines, Official Reports and Analytical Studies of the Well-Known Organisations (PPLAAF & Afrimap, 2023; PWC Eastern Africa, 2022; Templars Law, 2025). The Final Sample Size Formed a Set of Countries That Was Defined, and a Corresponding Body of Documents and Datasets That Were Capable of Supporting Cross-Case Comparison and Thematic Analysis Was Formed.

### **Data Collection Instruments**

Structured Extraction and Coding Tools Were the Primary Tools Used in the Study. Quantitative Data Extraction Template Was Used To Extract Country-Level Indicators of the Existing Surveys and Reports Such as the Perceived Level of Corruption, Fear of Retaliation, Knowledge of Existing Reporting Channels and Willingness To Blow the Whistle (Afrobarometer, 2023; Ogunbamila, Ogunyemi, and Ogunyemi, 2024). The Systematic Review of Legal and Policy Documents Was Systematically Conducted With the Qualitative Coding Framework by Viewing the Provisions of Whistleblower Protection Provisions, Code of Ethics, Reporting Procedures, Sanctions and Remedial Mechanisms (Ojobo, 2023; PPLAAF & Afrimap, 2023; International Ombudsman Institute, 2024). These Templates Were Tested on a Limited Set of Countries, and Narrowed Down To the Point That All Aspects of the Conceptual Framework and Goals Were Uniformly Represented (Vian et al., 2022).

### **Validity and Reliability**

Extracting Templates and Coding Categories Based on the Existing Literature on the Topic of Whistleblowing, Ethics and Corruption in Developing Countries, and in Accordance With the Conceptual Framework of the Study, Improved Content Validity (Vian et al., 2022; Nicolaides, 2024). The Use of Triangulation Emerged Due To the Comparison of Results of the Survey Evidence With the Legal Texts and Analytical Reports Within and Between Nations (Resimic, 2025; PPLAAF and Afrimap, 2023). in the Qualitative Part, Two Coders Used the Coding Framework on a Portion of Documents and Managed the Coding Inconsistencies With the Help of a Discussion That Reinforced Inter-Coder Reliability (International Ombudsman Institute, 2024). in the Quantitative Part, Reliability Was Based on the Utilization of Existing Data Sets That Included Methodologies and Quality Management, Especially Mass Public Opinion Studies on Corruption and Government (Afrobarometer, 2023).

### **Data Collection Procedures**

The Process of Data Collection Was Divided Into Three Parts. To Begin With, the Search of Corruption and Whistleblowing Research in Developing Settings on Survey Repositories, Regional Barometers, and Published Studies Allowed Identifying Relevant Countries and Data (Afrobarometer, 2023; Vian et al., 2022). Second, the Legal and Policy Documents Have Been Retrieved Via Governmental Portals, Anti-Corruption Bodies, the Institutions of Ombudsmen and Specialised Organisations That Deal With the Protection of Whistleblowers (PPLAAF & Afrimap, 2023; Templars Law, 2025). Third, All Documents and Datasets Were Screened Based on Predetermined Inclusion Criteria and Then, a Structured Data Extraction and Code Were Applied, Using the Instruments Which Were Outlined Before. The Electronic Records Were Placed in Safes With Passwords To Assist in the Later Analysis.

### **Data Analysis Techniques**

Descriptive Statistics and Correlation or Regression Models Were Used To Analyse Quantitative Secondary Data To Investigate the Relationships Between Proxies of Professional Ethics and Indicators of Fear of Retaliation and Self-Reported Intentions To Whistleblow (Lee, Walter, and Park, 2023; Ogunbamila et al., 2024). Thematically Analyzed Qualitative Data Through Laws, Policies and Institutional Reports Were Analyzed Using the Thematic Content Analysis, Which Revealed the Pattern in Protection Provisions, Reporting Channels and Institutional Reactions Interpreted in the Context of the Theory of Planned Behaviour and Prosocial Behaviour Theory (Vian et al., 2022).

## Ethical Considerations

This Was Based Only on Secondary Sources and Thus No Physical Interaction With the Human Subjects Was Made. it Was Also Sticking To Ethical Standards by Properly Referencing All Sources, Considerations of Data-Use and Licence Terms, and Treatment of Sensitive Whistleblowing-Related Information Circumspectly (International Ombudsman Institute, 2024).

## DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Introduction

This chapter has stated the conclusions of the research using secondary data through the surveys, legal and policy reports, and analysis reports of corruption, ethics and whistleblowing in the third world countries. The review was done in accordance with the four objectives of the research. It started by outlining the perception and awareness of civil servants and citizens of whistleblowing procedures in the government. Second, it looked at the importance of professional ethics in regards to willingness of employees to report on corrupt practices. Third, it has described the impact of the fear of retaliation on whistleblowing intentions and behaviour among civil servants. Lastly, it found legal, organisational and cultural reasons that inhibited or supported whistleblowing in the civil service (Afrobarometer, 2023; Vian, Agnew, and McInnes, 2022; Onyango, 2024). At the conclusion of each subsection, simple summary tables are presented to bring out the key trends in third world setting.

### Thematic analysis

#### Knowledge and Beliefs about Whistleblowing Mechanisms.

In the third world countries, there was the realization of formal whistle blowing channels though not evenly spread. Evidence of surveys done in African context revealed that a large proportion of respondents were aware of existence of anti-corruption agencies or hotline, and few were aware of specifics of particular procedures, eligibility requirements or the type of protection they offer (Afrobarometer, 2023; Dulani, Logedi, Hinfelaar, and Southall, 2023). Most civil services included email addresses, telephone lines or integrity desks on websites and noticeboards, but was not always part of the regular staff communication and training (PwC Eastern Africa, 2022; PPLAAF and Afrimap, 2023).

This basic awareness was less than the perception of accessibility and responsiveness. Reporting lines used to be perceived as formal, remote and administratively taxing, and no one was sure that complaints would not remain at the beginning of their journey where there was a risk of influential interests being at play (Vian et al., 2022; Ezeoha, Akinyoade, Ehrhardt, and Uche, 2025). The issue of confidentiality was also high, and it was not possible to be certain that personalities would be respected during the investigations, particularly in small offices where informal connections and rumours held high power (PPLAAF & Afrimap, 2023; Oboro-Offerie, Toklo, and Allor, 2025). In general, the secondary evidence revealed that a vast number of public officials and citizens were aware of channels only in general terms, but they were not sure about their safety and efficiency.

TABLE 4.1: Awareness and Perceptions of Whistleblowing Mechanisms in Third World Countries

Aspect	Summary pattern
Awareness of channels	General knowledge of agencies and hotlines, limited detail on procedures
Perception of access	Channels seen as formal, distant and bureaucratic
Perception of confidentiality	Strong doubts that identities would remain protected
Perception of follow-up	Limited feedback and weak belief that reports lead to action

### Professional Ethics and Willingness to Report Corruption.

In third world situations, evidence provided by public organisations related ethical environments with desire to report wrongdoing. In the administrations where the integrity programmes, codes of conduct and ethics training became the part of the daily routine, the staff demonstrated more willingness to report the issues through the official channels (Onyango, 2024; Nicolaides, 2024). It is also supported by the need to have a clear view of the code, frequent ethics talks and leadership speeches that corruption was not allowed and made the act of whistleblowing more acceptable as part of professional responsibility than disloyalty (Masiu and Motlamelle, 2025).

In most contexts, though, there seemed to exist an disjunction between a formal system of ethics and the practice that was lived. There were cultures in which informal payments, favouritism or political influence were part of the routine operations of civil servants even in a situation in which code formally forbade that behaviour (Sithomola, 2024; Resimic, 2025). In such circumstances, whistle blowing was dangerous of clashing with unwritten rules on loyalty, solidarity and silence. The results of the quantitative research on related topics showed that the intentions to blow the whistle were associated with high perceived corruption tolerance, low ethical leadership and weak ethics management (Ogunbamila, Ogunyemi, and Ogunyemi, 2024; Lee, Walter, and Park, 2023). Reviewed document descriptive patterns were pointing in the same direction implying that willingness to report was highly influenced by ethical climate and leadership indicators.

TABLE 4.2: Professional Ethics and Willingness to Report in Third World Civil Services

Aspect	Summary pattern
Ethics culture	Ranged from integrity-oriented to tolerant of informal payments
Code visibility	Some services displayed and discussed codes; others rarely used them
Ethical leadership	Varied between active enforcement and open tolerance of misconduct
Willingness to report	Higher where ethics were practised; lower where corruption seemed normal

### Fear of Retaliation and Whistleblowing intentions.

The fear of retaliation was seen as one of the greatest deterrents in whistleblowing in the third world civil services. According to the survey data of African nations, considerable percentages of participants stated that they thought that one would face grave issues in case they reported corruption and this was in line with the unwillingness to use the official tools (Afrobarometer, 2023; Dulani et al., 2023). Secondary sources have referred to varied dreaded outcomes, such as punitive transfers, ruined careers, harassment at the workplace, and threats to personal safety in a few cases where cases involved politically connected or economically powerful actors (Oboro-Offerie et al., 2025; Kubbe and Merkle, 2025).

It was reported by the organisational studies that employees typically talked about previous cases of the employees who supposedly lost their jobs or were marginalised because they raised their voice, with or without such cases being recorded (Vian et al., 2022; Ogunbamila et al., 2024). These stories formed high expectations that reporting would have actual risks even in those areas where statutes guaranteed it (PPLAAF & Afrimap, 2023; Ezeoha et al., 2025). These descriptive comparisons between the reviewed sources implied that under conditions where the perceived retaliation was elevated, the reported intentions to report formally were also low and that staff preferred anonymous, informal or private reporting to corruption.

TABLE 4.3: Fear of Retaliation and Whistleblowing Intentions in Third World Contexts

Aspect	Summary pattern
Main feared consequences	Transfers, blocked promotion, workplace harassment, possible security threats

Aspect	Summary pattern
Sources of fear	Stories of punished whistleblowers, visible power of implicated actors
Stated intention to report	Often low where retaliation risk perceived as high
Preferred responses to corruption	Reliance on silence, informal warnings or private coping strategies

Whistleblowing is influenced by the legal, organisational and cultural factors.

Legal and institutional audit revealed an increasing number of provisions related to whistleblowing in several third world countries, although with significant lapses. There were states that formulated measures and draft legislation defining the forms of protection of disclosures, established reporting channels and guaranteed protection against repercussions (Ojobo, 2023; Templars Law, 2025; Cliff Dekker Hofmeyr, 2022). Empirical studies have found that detailed laws, institutional directives and external controls presented better formal foundations compared to fragmented rules or guidance (Thulo, Dick-Sagoe, Odoom, Ehiane, and Lwendo, 2025; International Ombudsman Institute, 2024).

At the organisational level, other ministries established inside whistleblowing, training and appointing officers, whereas others used grievance mechanisms which were not specific to corruption reporting or the risk of retaliation (PwC Eastern Africa, 2022; Onyango, 2024). Of significant contribution as well were cultural norms. Clear demands of loyalty to higher-ups and colleagues, coupled with social stigma of being an informer, undermined the effectiveness of the statutory safeguards in various civil services (Sithomola, 2024; Resimic, 2025). The general impression was that the successful whistleblowing demanded the synchronization of the legal framework with organisational structure and cultural practices that accepted reporting as a legitimate service to the population.

TABLE 4.4: Legal, Organisational and Cultural Influences on Whistleblowing in Third World Countries

Aspect	Summary pattern
Legal frameworks	Moving from fragmented rules towards more explicit protections, with gaps in coverage and enforcement
Organisational policies	Mixed presence of clear internal procedures and designated reporting roles
Oversight arrangements	Varied independence and capacity of bodies handling disclosures
Cultural norms	Loyalty and stigma around “informing” often discouraged reporting

### Integrated Discussion of Findings

Results of the secondary data were in line with earlier studies on whistleblowing and corruption in the developing settings. Such disparities between reported availability of reporting channels and low reported usage were similar to prior literature that emphasized a lack of trust in the institutions responding and a question mark about the confidentiality of low- and middle-income contexts (Vian, Agnew, and McInnes, 2022; Afrobarometer, 2023). The trend of awareness and lack of confidence also demonstrated the African survey results that show that a large number of citizens are aware of who to report to but believe that no one or is inclined to respond to such a case after it enters official mechanisms (Dulani, Logedi, Hinfelaar, and Southall, 2023).

In the light of the Theory of Planned Behavior, the findings revealed that the attitudes towards whistleblowing and subjective norms were frequently limited by the weak ethos of the culture and high demands of the loyalty. Where professional ethics were evident and leaders spoke and demonstrated them, intentions to report were

found to be more willing, as research has found with ethical climate and whistleblowing intentions in public organisations (Onyango, 2024; Ogungbamila, Ogunyemi, and Ogunyemi, 2024). Perceived behavioural control, though, was low in most of the settings because of the fear of retaliation and the lack of confidence in protection mechanisms which were reflected by the survey that most Africans believed they would be punished upon speaking out (Afrobarometer, 2023).

The Prosocial Behaviour Theory provided additional information. It has been argued that a significant number of civil servants were oriented towards public-interest reporting, but prosocial motives often came into conflict with powerful self-protective instincts in these surroundings with patronage and visible punitive measures. Descriptions of punitive transfers, halted careers and social isolation of former whistleblowers indicated that prosocial action was rather costly to the individual, a trend that is similar to punishment anxiety and neutralisation strategies in public organisations (Ogungbamila et al., 2024; Kubbe and Merkle, 2025).

A subtle outcome was that of legal developments. Some third world nations had shifted towards more explicit and specific laws and guidelines on whistleblower protection which may be an indication of enhancing reporting environments (Ojobo, 2023; Thulo, Dick-Sagoe, Odoom, Ehiane, and Lwendo, 2025). The descriptive analysis has however suggested that legal reform did not necessarily lead to a higher perceived safety or increased channel use. Lack of enforcement, awareness, and cultural stigma had a tendency to make the statutes less effective, which may confirm the thesis that integrity reforms need to be coordinated between the law, organisational practice, and more profound cultural change instead of relying on legislation itself (Resimic, 2025; Nicolaides, 2024).

## **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Summary of Major Findings**

The research examined the secondary evidence on whistleblowing, professional ethics and fear of retaliation in the civil service of the third world countries. On the first objective, the results reported that the knowledge of whistleblowing mechanisms was in general terms, but a significant number of the civil servants and citizens did not have the exact knowledge about procedures, protection and follow-up. Accessibility, confidentiality and institutional responsiveness trust was poor (Afrobarometer, 2023; Dulani et al., 2023). Williness to report seemed to be closely associated with professional ethics and integrity climate on the second objective. In places where codes of conduct, ethics training and ethical leadership were part and parcel of day-to-day activities, employees were more willing to fight corruption (Onyango, 2024; Nicolaides, 2024).

On the third goal, fear of retaliation proved to be a major obstacle. Employees expected transfers, stalled careers, persecution or even threats on their security and the rumors about punished whistleblowers made them reluctant to use official avenues (Oboro-Offerie et al., 2025; Kubbe and Merkle, 2025). The legal and institutional reviews on the fourth objective demonstrated slow progress related to the establishment of more explicit whistleblower protection frameworks in a number of countries, but the performance was hampered by the gaps in the enforcement, the lack of awareness, and the high norm of loyalty (Ojobo, 2023; Thulo et al., 2025; Resimic, 2025). In general, this evidence suggested that there was a consistent disparity between the official arrangements and real reporting behaviour in the third world civil services.

### **Conclusions**

The findings of the study were that in third world civil services, whistle blowing was still highly influenced by the interactions of ethical climate, perceived risks and institutional credibility. The professional ethics established a significant basis of the public-interest reporting, though ethical frameworks had a real impact only when the leaders by their example demonstrated integrity and when the day-to-day practice corresponded to new codes (Onyango, 2024; Masiu and Motlamelle, 2025). According to the Theory of Planned Behavior, the attitude and norms supported whistleblowing in the described environment, but the perceived behavioural control was frequently low because of the fear of being punished (Lee et al., 2023).

The Prosocial Behaviour Theory was used to explain that even the civil servants who had high values of the public-service hesitated in disclosing corruption when they perceived the risk to be too high (Vian et al., 2022; Ogunbamila et al., 2024). The increase in legal frameworks was a significant move, but the laws did not turn to a sense of safety or belief in institutions (Ojobo, 2023; Thulo et al., 2025). The overall finding was that to have effective promotion of whistleblowing in the third world countries, mutually reinforcing changes in law, organisational practice and administrative culture would be needed.

## Recommendations

Governments ought to implement and implement comprehensive laws on whistleblower protection including a clear-cut reporting system, cover the entire range of civil service, and offer easy solutions to retaliation through sufficient financing and independent supervision (International Ombudsman Institute, 2024; Cliff Dekker Hofmeyr, 2022). The anticorruption agencies and oversight bodies must streamline the processes, enhance confidentiality protection and release frequent feedback on the processing of reports to develop trust in potential whistleblowers (PPLAAF & Afrimap, 2023; Templars Law, 2025).

Ethics need to be integrated into the day-to-day management of civil services and professional associations through noticeable codes, frequent training and consistent actions in the case of identified misconducts, to indicate that whistleblowing is an expression of professional responsibility and not a form of betrayal (Onyango, 2024; Nicolaidis, 2024). Awareness campaigns should be supported by the NGOs and advocacy groups that should oversee protection regime implementation and provide legal or psychosocial support to the whistleblowers, and record the good practices that can be reproduced within third world administrations (Resimic, 2025).

## Recommendations on Future study.

Future research must be based on primary data of civil servants, study particular cases of countries in detail, and falsify quantitative models that relate the ethical climate, the fear of retaliation and the real whistleblowing behaviour in third world countries.

## REFERENCES

1. Vian, T., Agnew, B., & McInnes, D. K. (2022). Whistleblowing as an anti-corruption strategy in health and pharmaceutical organizations in low- and middle-income countries: A scoping review. *Global Health Action*, 15(1), 2140494. Available at: <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC9661981/> (PMC)
2. Oboro-Offerie, R. A., Toklo, S., & Allor, P. W. (2025). Why are citizens afraid to blow the whistle on corruption? Understanding the impact of personal bribery experiences on corruption reporting in Africa. *Journal of Asian and African Studies* (online first). [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/396150179\\_Why\\_Are\\_Citizens\\_Afraid\\_to\\_Blow\\_the\\_Whistle\\_on\\_Corruption\\_Understanding\\_the\\_Impact\\_of\\_Personal\\_Bribery\\_Experiences\\_on\\_Corruption\\_Reporting\\_in\\_Africa](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/396150179_Why_Are_Citizens_Afraid_to_Blow_the_Whistle_on_Corruption_Understanding_the_Impact_of_Personal_Bribery_Experiences_on_Corruption_Reporting_in_Africa)
3. Dulani, B., Logedi, L., Hinfelaar, J., & Southall, R. (2023). Amid rising corruption, most Africans say they risk retaliation if they speak up. *Afrobarometer Pan-Africa Profile AD743*. Available at: <https://www.afrobarometer.org/publication/ad743-amid-rising-corruption-most-africans-say-they-risk-retaliation-if-they-speak-up/> (Afrobarometer)
4. Afrobarometer. (2023). Africans see growing corruption, poor government response, fear retaliation if they speak up. *Policy Paper AD488*. Available at: <https://www.afrobarometer.org/publication/ad488-africans-see-growing-corruption-poor-government-response-fear-retaliation-if-they/> (Afrobarometer)
5. Onyango, G. (2024). How managers respond to fraud, waste and mismanagement: Ethics management survey in Uganda and Kenya. *Public Integrity* (online first). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/10999922.2024.2317078> (Bohrium)
6. Lee, D. S., Walter, A. S., & Park, S. (2023). Anti-corruption policy and whistle-blowing intentions: Quasi-experimental evidence from meritocratic civil service systems. *Administration & Society*, 55(6), 1194–

1217. Available at:  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/00953997231162528> (SNU Elsevier Pure)
7. Ogungbamila, B., Ogunyemi, A. O., & Ogunyemi, S. (2024). Whistleblowing and corrupt tendencies among selected employees in three public organizations: Roles of corruption tolerance, punishment anxiety, and neutralization. *Journal of Management Studies and Development*, 3(1), 1–18. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/380357434> Whistleblowing and Corrupt Tendencies among Selected Employees in Three Public Organizations Roles of Corruption Tolerance Punishment Anxiety and Neutralization?utm
  8. Ezeoha, A. E., Akinyoade, A., Ehrhardt, D., & Uche, C. (2025). Nigeria and the practice of whistleblowing – How not to mobilize citizens’ participation in anti-corruption programme. *Public Integrity* (online first). Available at: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10999922.2025.2491254> (Taylor & Francis Online)
  9. Ojobo, E. (2023). A review of the effectiveness of the Nigerian whistleblowing stopgap policy of 2016 and the Whistleblower Protection Bill of 2019. *Journal of African Law*, 67(3), 393–414. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0021855323000098> (Cambridge University Press & Assessment)
  10. Ansori, A. (2025). Strengthening whistleblower protection through legal reform and Islamic ethics in combating corruption in public institutions. *Journal of Islamic Economics Lariba*, 11(1), 45–62. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/393606068> Guardians of integrity comparative analysis of whistleblower protection frameworks in Lesotho the United Kingdom and South Africa
  11. Thulo, M. S., Dick-Sagoe, C., Odoom, D., Ehiane, S. O., & Lwendo, S. B. (2025). Guardians of integrity: Comparative analysis of whistleblower protection frameworks in Lesotho, the United Kingdom, and South Africa. *SN Social Sciences*, 5(7), Article 219. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s43545-025-00804-0>
  12. PPLAAF & Afrimap. (2023). Whistleblowers in Nigeria: Overview of the legal framework. Platform to Protect Whistleblowers in Africa. Available at: <https://www.pplAAF.org/wp-content/uploads/Nigeria-2.pdf>
  13. Templars Law. (2025). Analysing the whistleblowing framework in Nigeria: Regulatory landscape, compliance obligations and best practices for organizations. Templars ThoughtLab. Available at: <https://www.templars-law.com/app/uploads/2025/01/Analysing-the-whistleblowing-framework-in-Nigeria.pdf>
  14. Elawyer Nigeria. (2025). Whistleblower protection in Nigeria: What employees must know about rights and risks. Elawyer Nigeria. Available at: <https://elawyernigeria.com/whistleblower-protection-in-nigeria-what-employees-must-know-about-rights-and-risks/>
  15. Manwa & Company Advocates. (2025). Whistleblower rights in Kenya: Strengthening protections under the Bribery Act 2016 and EACC guidelines. Manwa Advocates. <https://manwaadvocates.com/whistleblower-rights-strengthening-protections-under-the-bribery-act-2016-and-2025-eacc-guidelines/?utm>
  16. Cliff Dekker Hofmeyr. (2022). The Whistleblower Protection Bill 2021: An attempt to cure the cycle of corruption in Kenya. CDH Governance Alert. Available at: <https://www.cliffedekkerhofmeyr.com/en/news/publications/2022/Practice/Corporate/corporate-and-commercial-alert-16-march-2022-the-whistleblower-protection-bill-2021-an-attempt-to-cure-the-cycle-of-corruption-in-Kenya.html>
  17. PwC Eastern Africa. (2022). Why public sector entities must enhance whistleblower programmes. PwC Kenya Blog. Available at: <https://www.pwc.com/ke/en/blog/public-sector-whistleblower-programs.html> (PwC)
  18. International Ombudsman Institute (IOI). (2024). Best practice principles on the protection of whistleblowers. IOI. Available at: [file:///C:/Users/j/Downloads/BPP%20-%20Whistleblower%20Protection May%202024.pdf](file:///C:/Users/j/Downloads/BPP%20-%20Whistleblower%20Protection%20May%202024.pdf)
  19. Hassan, S. (2022). Social implications of corruption in developing countries: A case study of Pakistan and India. *Central European Journal of Public Policy*, 16(2), 42–56. <https://reference-global.com/2/v2/download/pdf/10.2478/cejpp-2022-0003?utm>

20. Masiu, P. N., & Motlamente, M. (2025). Ethics and professionalism in Lesotho's public sector: An empirical perspective. *Journal of Social Science Studies*, 12(1), 1–19. Available at: <https://www.macrothink.org/journal/index.php/jsss/article/view/23021> (Macrothink)
21. Resimić, S. (2025). Alternative strategies to improve public sector integrity in contexts characterised by systemic corruption. *U4 Anti-Corruption Helpdesk Answer 2025:8*. Available at: [https://knowledgehub.transparency.org/assets/uploads/kproducts/Alternative-strategies-to-improve-public-sector-integrity-in-contexts-characterised-by-systemic-corruption\\_ForPublishing.pdf](https://knowledgehub.transparency.org/assets/uploads/kproducts/Alternative-strategies-to-improve-public-sector-integrity-in-contexts-characterised-by-systemic-corruption_ForPublishing.pdf) (Transparency International Knowledge Hub)
22. Nicolaides, A. (2024). Fighting corruption in the public sector through good governance. *OIDA International Journal of Sustainable Development*, 17(11), 39–50. Preprint available at: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=4928204> (SSRN)
23. Sithomola, T. (2024). The public sector's futile fight against corruption: Professional ethics and governance failures. *Administratio Publica*, 32(3), 75–95. Available at: <https://journals.co.za/doi/10.61967/adminpub.2024.32.3.5> (Journals)
24. Kubbe, I., & Merkle, O. (2025). Breaking the silence: Gender, corruption and intersectionality in whistleblowing cases. *Forum on Crime and Society*, 11(1), 19–49. Available at: [https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Forum/Forum\\_2025/ForumCrimeSociety-Vol11\\_Chapter2.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Forum/Forum_2025/ForumCrimeSociety-Vol11_Chapter2.pdf) (CRIS Maastricht University)