Preventive Discipline and Industrial Relations Atmosphere of Electrical Engineering Service Companies, South-South, Nigeria

[1] **Asawoba A. I. BlueJack, C. Biriowu and Soye P. Asawo**
Department of Management, Rivers State University
asawobabluejack@gmail.com

Abstract
This study explored the relationship between preventive discipline and industrial relations atmosphere of electrical engineering service companies in South-South, Nigeria. The objective of the study was to ascertain the extent to which preventive discipline impacts on industrial relations atmosphere measures such as adversarial and harmonious industrial relations atmosphere of electrical engineering service companies in Port Harcourt. The research design for this study takes the form of a cross sectional survey research strategy and data were obtained using well-structured questionnaire from a total of 144 employees within the companies. The Cronbach alpha reliability was used in assessing the reliability of the instruments adopted in the study. The test on the hypothesis showed that there is significant negative but strong relationship between preventive discipline and adversarial industrial relations atmosphere. There is also significant positive but strong relationship between preventive discipline and harmonious industrial relations atmosphere. It was therefore concluded that as preventive discipline mechanisms are applied in the workplace, the adversarial industrial relations atmosphere is significantly reduced. Also as preventive discipline mechanisms are adopted the harmonious industrial relations atmosphere is significantly increased. The study recommends that electrical engineering service companies in south-south, Nigeria should improve on their preventive discipline techniques by helping employees to understand the need for discipline. Management should inform erring employees about the penalties for minor and major offences and give them opportunity to learn.

Keyword: *Preventive discipline, industrial relations atmosphere, adversarial industrial relations atmosphere, harmonious industrial relations atmosphere, workrules*

Introduction
The necessity of a conducive industrial relations atmosphere in the work environment, both public and private, regardless of size and complexity, cannot be overemphasized. Organizations the world over are increasingly being exposed to various adverse industrial relations atmosphere (Ahiauzu, 2006). Employees themselves have to operate under work climates that are constantly engulfed with inherent and endemic conflicts of employment relations, which are not properly managed by organizational managers (Tamunomebi, 2019). As plant activities progress, it will be necessary that the industrial relations atmosphere is also made as congenial as possible by making statutory provisions that can foster good industrial relations at work. Consequent upon this, it still is necessary that organizations regularly appraise the level of industrial relations that exist in their organizations and also device multiple methods to effectively manage employee behaviours that will sustain a stable industrial relations atmosphere.

Although, there has been justifications as to discover and understand the meaning of industrial relations atmosphere in the past, scholars in the field of industrial relations still maintain their stand as to what constitutes the right meaning for the construct. Industrial relations atmosphere, which represents a system of labour-management relations through which interests and differences are adjusted on a continuous basis, thus attracts strong implication for the organization. Industrial relations atmosphere in simple terms, refer to the industrial climate in which the workforce and their managers operate and it requires full co-operation of all the actors in the industrial relations system (management, union and the government) to make this a reality. According to Dastmalchian, Blyton and Adamson (1989), industrial relations atmosphere, which most often is interchanged as industrial relations climate, is a subset of organizational climate that pertains to the norms and attitudes reflecting union-management relationships in an organization. Arguing in the same line, Payne and Pugh (1976) claim that the concept of industrial relations atmosphere can be interchanged with industrial relations climate because the concept of industrial climate has variables, which supposedly

have a reasonable capacity to convey the general psychological atmosphere of an organization, and consequently can influence the satisfaction, motivation and behavior patterns of individuals in the workplace. This view emphasizes the role of industrial relations atmosphere not only as an important concept, but also as an outcome of various policies, rules and structures implemented by organizational decision makers, and which consequently leads to the enhancement of, or deterioration of organizational performance with several positive and negative parameters.

The main focus of industrial relations in organizations is widely considered to be the development of peaceful relations that ensures mutual respect for parties and comprehensive solution to problems affecting the employment conditions of workers, as well as industry efficiency. Such parameters as sound recruitment policies, good union-management relations, effective communication, well articulated grievance procedures can improve labour-management relations which further fosters good or harmonious industrial relations atmosphere (Onasanya, 2005). Howbeit, the industrial relations system through which the industrial relations atmosphere can be identified may be highly formal with many levels and forms of rules and regulations to guide interactions, or it may be extremely informal, based on the practices of the organization over the years. Poor or adversarial industrial relations atmosphere can have serious implication for industrial systems and there structures, as organizations and their managers will find it hard to recover the cost that accrues from such depleting industrial relations atmosphere with a state of persistent industrial crises and ineffectiveness, the indicator of which is industrial disharmony, manifesting in rampant labour grievances, trade disputes and especially, incessant worker's strikes.

Industrial relations atmosphere, seem to have gained a broad acceptance for two major measures as expressed in (Ahiauzu, 1999; Yesufu,1984, Zeb-Obipi, 2018) which are, adversarial industrial relations atmosphere and harmonious industrial relations atmosphere. It is suggested that a firm's industrial relations activities generate a characteristic atmosphere in the organization, which further activates the state of the general organizational industrial relations practice (Litwen and Stringer,1968; Payne, 1971).The industrial relations atmosphere and system may be relatively be crude with adversarial metrics, with one actor simply imposing his wish on the other through the use of force, because of the lack of rules; or on the other hand, it may be relatively subtle atmosphere that is harmonious in nature, embodying many levels of jointly agreed rules and various checks and balances of power.

The adversarial industrial relations atmosphere context has also attracted more recent interest in the industrial relations atmosphere thesis. Recently, Yesufu (1984) in Oji and Amucheazi (2015) study, showed how the equilibrium of industrial relations is constantly disturbed in organizations. In the process, the satisfactions derivable from the work situation tend to become permanently elusive. More recent line of enquiry associated industrial relations atmosphere with a scope of negative outcomes. Zeb-Obipi, Obiekwe and Ateke (2019) reported in evidence the adverse association between industrial relations atmosphere and organizational resilience. Study findings show how possible it is for employees to be resilient whenever the industrial relations atmosphere seem adverse. Early research has shown the influence of Industrial relations climate on job satisfaction and individual job performance (Freidlander and Margolies, 1969). Onasanya (2005) reviewed the predictors of good industrial relations atmosphere in organizations in Nigeria. Recently, Studies have shown the impact of industrial relations atmosphere on labour outputs in organizations (Nwaeke, 2017). More recently, some other studies have examined the actors that can determine the extent to which atmospheric/climatic stability can be assessed in industrial systems Dunlop (1958) in Onabanjo and Chidi, 2018; Dunlop(1958) in Tamunomiebi (2019).Yet another study have examined the impact of industrial relations environment on organizational resilience, with special interest on its implication on managers in Nigerian workplaces (Ahiauzu, 1999).Studies by Parker and Scott (1971), also shows the relationship between production variables , such as behaviours of parties and outside influence on industrial relations atmosphere. Lumley's(1980) show how the positive impact of workplace environment variable and employee attitude has on industrial relations atmosphere.

For decades now, electrical engineering service companies in south-south, Nigeria have been noted to experience fluctuations in their industrial relations atmosphere. As management makes rules unilaterally and impose it on the employees, there has been increased rates of indiscipline and disrespect for workrules

and regulations. This has led to serious internal employees agitations, grievance and disharmony between employees and employers. The proceeds of all this has serious negative indications for company performance and industrial relations atmosphere. This study was also guided by the following research questions.

i)   How does preventive discipline affect adversarial industrial relations atmosphere of electrical engineering service companies in south-south, Nigeria?

ii)   How does preventive discipline affect harmonious industrial relations atmosphere of electrical engineering service companies south-south, Nigeria?
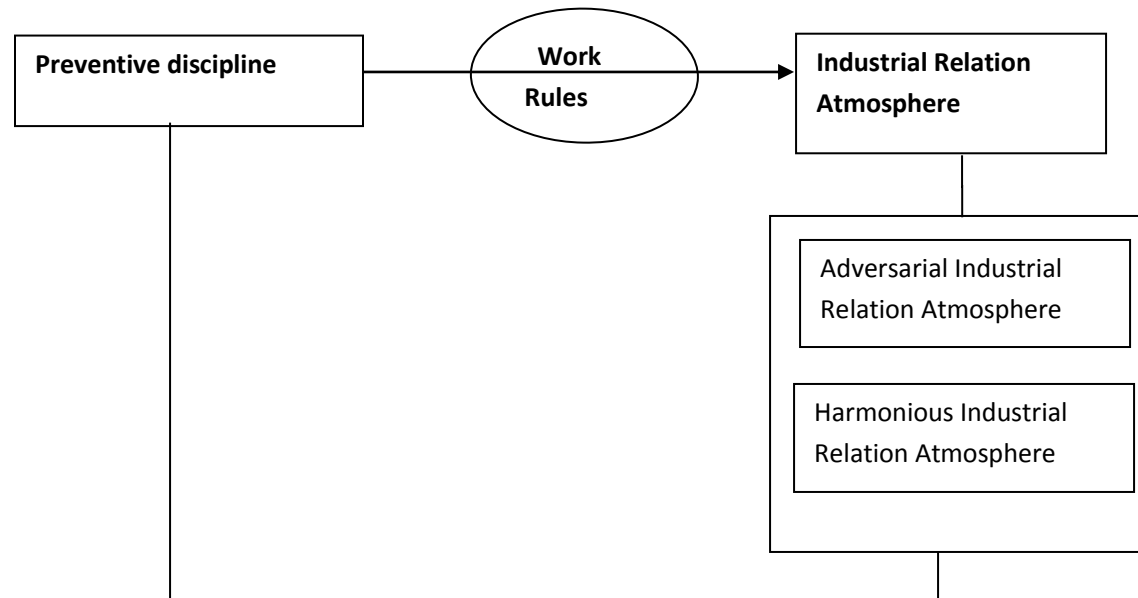
Conceptual Model

Figure 1:   Conceptual framework on Preventive discipline and industrial Relations Atmosphere.
Source: Desk Research (Authorities for measure of industrial relation atmosphere (Ahiauzu, 1999)

LITERATURE REVIEW
Preventive Discipline
Preventive disciplinary procedures are Proactive disciplinary measures aimed at discouraging or dissuading organization members from deviant work behaviours that manifest as lateness to work, absenteeism, redundancy, disobedience to superior officer, insubordination among others (Dumisan, 2002).This implies that it is pre-emptive in nature and so the manager cannot be excluded in the process as it his responsibility to lead and also deter other employees from carrying out acts of violation within the organization. Preventive disciplinary approach is founded on the deterrent theory of punishment as proposed by Peters (1966). The deterrent theory states that punishment is justified as a means of preventing violations of rule. According to Peters (1966), the basic case for punishment is surely in terms of deterrence and prevention. In other words, we punish so that the employees do not try to break the rule again, and to prevent other workers from following the same example. Peters (1966:272) in justifying the need for discipline states that:

> "there is considerable merit to the deterrent theory of punishment. It cannot be denied that the fear of punishment can exert a restraining and salutary influence on many workers. However the expected deterrent effect has not always been realized".

Durkheim (1961) does not endorse the deterrent theory. His reason is that, when punishment serves only as a threat, it merely guarantees overt and superficial property. That is to say, it simply is likened to a 'policing procedure' which does not have similar implication as what is expected of any organizational instrument. If this is so reasoned, we therefore are in contrast with this approach of discipline as it does not present the intent of our study; hence the need to address the next approach of workplace discipline.

However, McGregor (1967) an astute behavioral scholar advocates a trend towards preventive and constructive approaches to dealing with deviant behavior in organizations. He addressed to a great extent the limitations posed by other traditional approaches to dealing with indiscipline. McGregor (1967) referred to this approach as 'the hot stove rule.' He poised that a sound disciplinary system should possess the following characteristics: i) advance warning, ii) immediacy of action, iii) consistency, iv impersonality. Amah (2010) stressed that this approach insist on immediate investigation and discipline just after the rules are broken in accordance with the reinforcement principle. Amah (2010) stressed that the rules are expected to apply consistently to all employees. It is expected that employees will avoid breaking the rules as one avoids touching the hot stove with bare hands. It is assumed that more problems will surface if the investigations are delayed.

Concept of Industrial Relations Atmosphere
Blyton and Turnbull have argued that industrial relation apart from having a distinctive characteristics has an independent nature which is continuous and open-ended and such employment relationship can engender both conflict and co-operation. As such Tamunomebi (2019), building on this assertion, noted that there are three basic aspects of industrial relations which every industrial relations system must be occupied with before one can be rightly assured of a peaceful industrial relations atmosphere. These include:

The Development of Healthy Labour
This connotes the existence of an organized democratic trade union and an association of employers. Both organizations are capable of enhancing job security and improve other terms and conditions of employment. These organization's also allow for increased workers' participation. This can also enable further negotiations, discussions or even negotiations. The spirit of collective bargaining is encouraged as the equality of status of the conflicting member's or groups are not taken for granted. This singular act will create the expected atmosphere of trust and goodwill among the parties in the negotiation table. According to

Tamunomiebi (2019) collective bargaining when properly practiced plant discipline and union relations which are likely industrial relations. Welfare work provided by the three actors maintains and improve labour management relations which contributes to the development of industrial peace.

Maintenance of Industrial Peace
Industrial peace at any point in time can be largely achieved through the following means
a)   Setting up machinery for the prevention and settlement of industrial disputes. Some legislative and administrative enactments can be made such as the trade union acts, industrial dispute acts, standing order act, work committees, joint management councils, conciliation tribunals, courts of enquiry national tribunals, industrial tribunals and provision for voluntary arbitration.
b)   The government as one of the actors should have power to refer disputes to adjudication when the situation tends to get out of hand.
c)   The government enjoyed the power to maintain the status quo
d)   The provision of the bipartite and tripartite forms for the settlement of disputes. These forums act on basis of the code of discipline industry the code of conducts, the code of efficient and welfare, model standard order, grievance procedure and the granting of voluntary recognition.
e)   The creation and maintenance of implementation of cells and evaluation committees.

Measures of Industrial Relations Atmosphere
Scholars and industrial relations practitioners have conceived industrial relations atmosphere as being in two forms (Ahiauzu,2001; Adenugba and Omolawal, 2014; Atilola, 2011).This distinction is useful for the analysis of the character signal of industrial relations atmosphere. These parameters have been strictly valid and most useful for the interpreting industrial relations atmosphere over time even though their mode of emission differs from one organization to another.

Adversarial Industrial Relations Atmosphere
Adversarial industrial relations atmosphere is one measure of an industrial relations atmosphere. Deriving from the foregoing explanations and definition of industrial relations, an adversarial industrial relations atmosphere is encompassed by and repercussion leaves with it a crises state of persistent ineffectiveness of industrial relations, the indicator of which is industrial disharmony, manifesting in rampant labour grievances, trade disputes and especially, workers' strikes. According to Atilola (2011), this definition justifies the need and function of industrial relations as the practice that is geared towards the containment of industrial disharmony. It has been noted that the period of economic crises seemed to heighten the adversarial aspect of the industrial relation atmosphere (Adenugba & Omolawal, 2014). Deriving from the foregoing explanations and definition of industrial relations, industrial relation crisis which can be interpreted to mean adversarial industrial relations atmosphere, is a state of persistent ineffectiveness of industrial relations, the indicator of which is industrial disharmony, manifesting in rampant labour grievances, trade disputes and especially, workers strikes. This definition is in cognizance of the fact that the essence and function of industrial relations practice is the containment of industrial disharmony.

It is possible to infer that a change in industrial relations climate is likely to be, at least in part due to changes in either structural outcomes or systemic outcome. According to Dastmalchian, (1986) it is possible to postulate that a situation of labour dependency is likely to be related to more positive organizational and industrial relations climates. It may also be possible to establish that some features of organization which have become regular outcomes of industrial relations such as employees' absenteeism, turn over intensions, grievances and disputes and work stoppages or strikes are the key issues that also make manifest an adversarial industrial relations atmosphere. It is argued particularly in Dastmalchian, Blyton & Adamson (1989) as cited in Likat,1967; Payne & Pugh, 1976; Pugh & Payne 1977 studies on organizational climate that industrial relations climate acts as an intervening variable between the industrial relations inputs and outcomes. In perusing existing literature on adversarial industrial relations atmosphere, we see clearly the need for organizations and their managers to

drastically mitigate the negative consequences that could manifest as repercussion or threat, that stem from either mismanagement of pending industrial relations issues in the work place or lack of proper management of industrial relations issues.

Ahiauzu (2001) suggested some processes toward functional workplace industrial relations such as : i) there should be adequate knowledge by parties of the formal and informal rule-making methods which are adopted in the organization; ii) the grievance ventilation, dispute , redundancy and disciplinary procedures should be well articulated and communicated to all members of the organization; iii)the exercise of power, authority and control by both management and labour organizations, should be done responsibly, and definitely not with flagrant disregard of human feelings and likely consequences of the affected member's perception of actions; iv) conflict should be functionally managed by both parties in the industrial relations arena; v) there should be established mechanism for prompt and effective communication between management and workers on matters that affect either parties. Recent studies have however presented that these processes have suddenly gone extinct in most organizations of which the case of Nigeria is not different. Our next line of discourse therefore examines literature on some choice parameters that make up the adversarial industrial relations atmosphere such as: regular conflict, strike actions, discontents and rampant collective grievance in the workplace.

Organizations, engage workers who themselves, are seen as a social mixture of people who differ in personality, temperament, or even ideas. The peculiarities of these individuals may be a latent source of friction. Consequently, when friction that emanates from their individual attitudes and actions in regard to interpersonal relationships manifests, it results in conflict. Similarly, Swanstrom and Wiessman (2005) enumerate a number of behavioral and attitudinal cues that encourage conflict such as opposing needs, ideals, beliefs, values or goals. Hence, in continuation of this view Ahiauzu, (1999) stressed that the inevitability of conflict in industrial society cannot be contested.

The existence of prolonged conflict in organizations is another indicator of an adversarial industrial relations atmosphere. Conflict is described as a situation in which two or more parties strive to acquire the same scarce resources at the same time. Conflicts stem from challenging or contesting the way things have been done or sometimes, even ideas that have not been explored from multiple perspectives. While some professionals view conflict as a perennial dilemma common even to the New Testament experience in the Bible (Ojemola, 2003; Asaju, 2003); apparently, other scholars view conflict as healthy differences of opinion among workers. Furthermore, Asaju (2003) defined conflict in these four perspectives as: (i) an ecclesiastical tension, (ii) a subjective decision-making,(iii) a contestable interests,(iv) an unfriendly co-existence. However, Ojemola (2003) opined that conflict can be viewed in two distinct perspectives: (i) as a basic disagreement, sometimes intensified and magnified due to a situation in which people are trying to claim the same "space" (decision or viewpoint), and neither of them is ready to share with the other.(ii) as a collision over personal goals. All these views about what conflict is, in our own contemplation is not incorrect. Historically, organizations have not been conflict-free for obvious reasons. A history of organizational peace may not rule out the fact that interpersonal conflicts do arise in organizations.

Scholars in the field of conflict management therefore argue that, management must deal effectively with both their external and internal environment to secure needed resources that will ensure good interpersonal relationship, that will in turn enhance improved performance and guarantee success and sustenance of a harmonious industrial relations atmosphere. Conflict is a natural and inevitable outcome in any group. According to Ahiauzu, (1999) the conflict theorists subscribes to the idea of the inevitability of conflict in industrial society while citing (Hyman, 1975, 1978; Shalev, 1980; and Allen, 1972). It is a subject of discuss under industrial relations. A field of study which is concerned with establishing a philosophy which will govern the nature of work with which industrial relations activities can be conducted on day-to-day basis. It is for this reason that Er-ast-orto (1981) argued while pointing at the behavioral aspect of conflict that conflict should not be defined simply in terms of violence or hostility, but Foshoyin (1980) in reviewing the arguments of Mills modern conflict theory, Bobbit *et*

al., (1978), concluded that conflict is both a dynamic and social process in organizations. This is so because it involves relationships between people in the workplace.

Conflict has also been generally conceived as a relational dispute between two or more parties (Jones, 2015). Massie (2009) observed that conflict is usually present in management situations and so stressed that management must continually adjust to the total situation and offered a process for resolving it (i) domination, (ii) compromise, or (iii) integration. More elaborately, Jones (2015) also refers to conflict as the existence of a clash of interests, ideals, beliefs, values, actions or directions. Stressing further, it is an inherent part of any relationship and it is usually a precursor to a dispute. Conflict also involves making a choice between two or more incompatible goals. This implies the accepted choice and the alternative which is the forgone choice. Also, in terms of incompatibility or difference in issue position, the explanation given by the Oxford dictionary agrees with this position that conflict is simply "the clashing of opposed principles". It is the managers' responsibility to therefore ensure an effective managerial initiative and control at all times, which in a way will seek also to develop policies and action plans that commands the respect and confidence of employees.

Harmonious Industrial Relation Atmosphere
Harmonious industrial relations atmosphere is another measure of industrial relations atmosphere. Harmonious industrial relations atmosphere is a state of persistent effectiveness of industrial relations, the indicator of which is policy stability (Zeb-obipi, Obiekwe and Ateke,2019); industrial harmony, industrial peace, teamwork (Bamson and Lebura, 2018); collaboration, low strike incidences, increased consultation expanding collective bargaining (Ahiauzu,1999). It is pertinent therefore, to point out that a good or effective or harmonious industrial relation atmosphere is such that exist in an enterprise or industry, to the extent that the following indicators are present: i) The highest possible levels of efficiency or output; ii) Effective communication and mutual understanding between employers / managements, employee/trade unions and the state; iii) Regular payment of wages and salaries, and the implementation of other conditions of service, which are fair, and reasonable; and iv) The lowest possible level of labour grievances, trade disputes and strikes. It is essentially important in assessing good and effective industrial relations in that the issues there in have direct implications for the other indicators. Thus in analyzing industrial relations in south-south Nigeria, workers strikes, labour grievance and trade disputes will be used as indicators of the trend in industrial relations. These issues according to Atilola (2011) have direct implication for other indicators that could equally be used to analyze industrial relation and other variables.

Expanded collective bargaining is one among many indicators of a harmonious industrial relations atmosphere. Harmonious industrial relations atmosphere according to Onasanya (2005) citing Yesufu (1984) is an industrial climate where good human relations exists, it will be easy to organize and receive co-operation of the workers for productive purpose. Hence in good industrial relations, understanding and trust through dialogue are therefore necessary to promote industrial harmony. When management and union leaders want to ensure the operation of collective agreements in a true spirit, there is always a sharing of information and joint consultation with each other because such efforts usually lead to full cooperation to provide better services and increase productivity, reduce costs, maintain discipline and create a congenial atmosphere which are the prime concern of management (Dunn, 2007). According to Dunn (2007) collective bargaining can have a positive influence on management- union relationship if the union's efforts can result in better service to customers and in reducing cost. Hence, at the time of signing an agreement between the management and the union in industries, a clause is generally inserted that the workmen will increase production.

Labour Unions existence is another indicator of an industrial relations atmosphere. Labour Union is a combination of workers or employees, whether temporary or permanent, the purpose of which is to regulate the terms and conditions of employment of workers (The Trade Union Decree 31 of 1973). According to Amah (2010) Trade Union is an organization that has the legal authority to negotiate with employers on behalf of employees and arrive at enforceable agreements on issues such as wages, hours of work and other conditions of employment. Employer's hostility has brought about labour unions. In organizations, there is need

for channels through which hostility may be expressed without fear. Labour unions have risen for verifying the pent-up hostility. Each employee has an innate human desire for recognition which management may have a tendency to neglect. However, labour unions are becoming the vehicle to accomplish this.

Preventive discipline and Industrial relations atmosphere
Adequate workplace discipline is required to prevent and mitigate disorderliness, deviant behaviours and irregularities in the character of new employees at engagement. It is for this reason that Tripathi (1992…) remarked that:

> "Nothing left loose ever does anything creative. No horse gets anywhere until he is harnessed. No stream ever turned into light and
> power until it is funneled. No man ever grows until he is disciplined".

From the foregoing, the point being made is that whatever the abstractions of atmospheric turbulence, for efficiency and effectiveness to be attained within a said organization, trade union must engage in consistent and proper orientation of its inductees so that they will be aware and conversant with the rules Workplace discipline is an essential phenomenon in industries. It is very essential for a healthy industrial atmosphere and in the achievement of organizational goals (Monappa, 1995).According to Salamon (1987), disciplinary policy is set in organizations to set the organizational climate within which disciplinary matxters will be determined.

Opatha (2017) citing Robbins (1982) defines discipline as a condition in the organization when employees conduct themselves in accordance with the organization's rules and standards of acceptable behaviour. It is necessary for the success and progress of any organization and in achieving the goals of the organizations, whether private or public firms. Mathis and Jackson (2000) are of the view that discipline can be seen as a training that enforces organizational rules. This implies that discipline at every point in time is geared towards ensuring that: i) employees conduct themselves in accordance with set rules and standards of acceptable behaviour; ii) it ensures obedience to rules and standards of acceptable behaviour; iii) ensures punishment for erring employees: iv) managerial action which encourages employees to comply with standards of the organization are put in place. Dessler (1984) stressed that the aim of discipline is to encourage employees to behave sensibly at work by adhering to rules of the organization. This is very important to ensure that employees conform to set norms and standards of behaviour within the organization; where they will carry out their activities. Absence of discipline therefore constitutes the bulk of the problem in enterprise management (Marthis and Jackson, 2000; Mamor, 1991).

Also, the relationship between Preventive discipline and harmonious industrial relations atmosphere can be ascertained as we reflect on research on staff indiscipline and productivity in public sector organizations in Nigeria. Ehiyamen, Abah and Gberevbie (2009), view discipline as primarily categorized into two basic forms, namely' positive' or constructive discipline and 'negative discipline'. Abah and Gberevbie (2009) remark that" positive discipline" has the tendency of fostering co-operation and high to level of morale, such that the written and unwritten rules and conditions are obeyed willingly by employees. Stressing further, Abah and Gberevbie (2009) citing Onah (2003) stated that these rules may cover general terms of employment, hour of work, communication, performance standards, organizational expectations and general employees conduct. Conversely, negative discipline is referred to as the control by force or punishments, threats, warning, pay-cut, interactions, suspension and dismissal (Okoli, 2004).
According to Onabanjo and Chidi (2018), the employers of labour in most manufacturing industries hold unto the unitary view of organizations and in such case, it is believed that the employers of labour are the only authority at work, all workers owe allegiance and loyalty; management's prerogative is legitimate; any opposition to management is irrational; conflict is exceptional and considered frictional and not structural and must have been caused by communication gap or personality clashes and where management exists, it is tolerated rather than being accepted. Increased preventive discipline will therefore increase the worker's sense of awareness and the orientation and make the employees know what is expected of them in terms of discipline and workplace behaviour, especially as they come into the organization. This can also be viewed in the light of Simon (1964) assertion as cited in Johnnie and Nwasike (2002, 187) that:

"in applying discipline one must bear in mind the fact that workers are of different maturity levels with regard to responding to and understanding the work rules in the organization. However whichever level of external discipline that is found necessary or expedient to use, this should always be compatible with the workers being ultimately able to develop internal self-discipline which is the ideal discipline. It is heard too that the interest of workers ought to be considered".

Work Rules
Jaja (2000) identified the traditional or oxford approach as one among the three labour management system theories. It is obvious that thrust of the oxford or traditional theory was on job-regulation (Flander, 1975; Fox, 1969; Robert, 1968). Basically, the argument is premised on the fact that both the employer and employees are jointly concerned with the making of rules, which will regulate job at the workplace. Flanders (1968) is of the opinion that joint-regulation is much more appropriate to contemporary labour management system practice. Many contemporary industrial relations theorist have also built on this key notion (Flanders 1975; Fox, 1969; Robert, 1968).

According to Jaja (2000), these rules are of two categories. The substantive rules are rules which deal on matters such as the determination of pay increases, length of work day/week, condition of service and so on. Stressing further, Jaja (2000) noted that this type of rules cut across the entire organization as it concerns all, irrespective of class. The second type of rule is the procedural rules. This is the mechanism adopted in changing the substantive rule. For instance, how the demand for high wages is to be made and the procedure to follow in the event of industrial dispute.

Basically, it is worthy of note that the actors in Industrial Relations system influence the rule making process and the rules also influence the behavior of the actors in Industrial Relations system (Jaja, 2000). Jaja (2000), noted in the results of Ahiauzu (1984) study on rule making methods adopted in Nigerian workplaces, that managerial regulations accounted for 60.8% of the rule making process adopted by managers in their organizations. This is a situation where management consults the employees or their representatives before making the rules. Similarly, Zeb-Obipi (2018) drawing from Flanders (1968) assertion, noted that the industrial relations system comes to existence when it is able to make rules and implement those rules and then organize itself around those rules. For our purposes we can say that job regulation refers to the process by which systems make rules.

In Flander's theory, there are also two basic kinds of distinctions. The first is the distinction between the industrial relations system and its environment. The second is the distinction that industrial relations systems makes within itself, internal distinctions. In Flander's theory there are two basic forms of rule. The first is the substantive rules. The second is the procedural rules. In other words, once an industrial relations system has distinguished itself from its envorinemnt it proceeds to develop internal rules. Perhaps the most practical aspect of Flander's industrial relations theory, his description of the different forms of work rules. There are at least two ways that industrial relations systems implement rules.

According to Cole (1986), if rules are not written down or acknowledged, people are likely to remember the rules differently and varying approaches to discipline will occur. And employees may not be too certain as to what they can and can't do and supervisors and managers may or line managers may erroneously adopt various ways to administering discipline between different departments with some managers unsure of what authority/power they have and can put to use. Further, in recent times, trade unions have tended to make some rules unilaterally as response to the unilateral rule making by management, especially in areas of strikes, work stoppages, slowing down of work, work to rule action and others. This move seems to be a counter weapon but it s effectiveness is yet to be recorded in the history of Nigerian labour management system.

Yesufu (1982) acknowledged that the key to a realistic basis for cooperation and effective management of conflict lies in the formulation of and implementation of appropriate rules for action, to guide day-to-day workplace relations. Rules would promote the following: (i) orderliness and equitability in the conduct of industrial relations, (ii) consistency in management behaviours (iii) elimination or minimization of uncertainty which could exist when reliance is placed on customs and practices (iv) communication of company's policy by acting as an objective reference point (v) a basis for change by enabling management to plan ahead and anticipate events (vi) ability to secure and return initiative changing situation.

Work rules refer to the rules, regulations and instructions given to the employee by the employer as being standards of operation for the employees (Oji and Amucheazi, 2015). According to Amucheazi (2015, 108), "work rules are not agreed terms, and thus not contractual terms". Hence, if the employee fails to comply with work rules, he will not be in breach of his contract. However, being unilateral term Imposed on the employee, they are regarded as orders emanating from the employer, breach of which we can lead to dismissal on the grounds of disobedience to lawful and reasonable orders. Also, according to Amucheazi (2015), work rules, normally do not trace their origin to collective agreement; however, they can be part of a contract of service by incorporation. And where they are thus incorporated, they can become part of the employee's contract of service, and can be champed by mutual agreement by both parties. Work rules are produced in booklet forms and given to the employee on commencement of employment, sometimes they are put in pamphlet form or pasted on the notice boards for all to see and comply with. Creation of rules is therefore the central aim of the industrial relations system.

Nwaeke (2017) citing Dunlop (1956) opined that industrial relations system creates a complex set of rules to govern the work place and work community which enables the Industrial Relations atmosphere. These rules according to Nwaeke (2017) could take a variety of forms in different system, thus agreements, polices, statues, orders, decrees, regulations, awards, practices, and customs. In Nwaeke's (2017) view these actors in industrial relations system are regarded as confronting an environmental context at any point in time. This is due to the fact that these factors in any given context are capable of establishing rules for the work place and work community. According to Chidi and Okpala (2011) the rules of industrial relation system may be expressed in a variety of forms such as the regulation and policies of the management hierarchy, the law of any workers hierarchy, the regulations, the decrees, decision, awards, or orders of government agencies collective bargaining agreement and the customs and traditions of the work place and the work community.

Ho$_1$: There is no significant relationship between preventive discipline and adversarial industrial relations atmosphere of electrical engineering service companies in south-south, Nigeria

Ho$_2$: There is no significant relationship between preventive discipline and harmonious industrial relations atmosphere of electrical engineering service companies in south-south, Nigeria

Methodology

Ogolo (2012) posit that Research design involves the major procedure to be followed in carrying out the research. The study adopted a cross sectional research design method. This involve a situation where data is assembled just once from a sample chosen to represent a large population (Ahiauzu & Asawo, 2016). The population of this study was drawn from ten (10) electrical engineering service companies south-south, Nigeria. a total of two hundred and twenty five (225) employees formed population of the study. The Taro Yamene (1973) was used to determine the sample size of 144. The structure questionnaire was the primary source of data generation. The reliability test for the instrument was done using the Cronbach alpha coefficient and all the items were greater than the benchmark of 0.7 as in table 1 below. The study made use of the Spearman's Rank Order correlation coefficient to determine the strength and direction of relationship between the study variables. The hypotheses were tested using the Spearman's Rank Order correlation tool at a 95% confidence interval. Specifically, the tests cover hypotheses Ho1 to Ho2 which are bivariate and all stated in the null form. We have relied on the Spearman's rank (rho) statistics to undertaken the analysis. The 0.05 significance level is adopted as criterion for the probability of either accepting the null hypotheses at (p>0.05) or rejecting the null hypotheses at (p<0.05).

Table 1 Reliability Test

Variables	Dimensions/Measures	Items	Alpha
Workplace discipline	Preventive Discipline	4	0.741
Industrial relations atmosphere	Adversarial Industrial Relations Atmosphere	4	0.723
	Harmonious Industrial Relation Atmosphere	4	0.734
Work Rules	Substantive work rules	4	0.792
	Procedural workrules	4	0.741

Source: SPSS Output, 2020

4. Data Analysis
4.1 Preventive discipline and measures of industrial relation atmosphere

Table 2: Univariate distribution for properties of preventive discipline

		In my organization there is shared understanding between employees and managers over appropriate behaviours	Penalties for minor and major offences are posted at strategic points to remind employees of their work behaviour and giving them the opportunity to learn and adjust	In my organization employees are regularly counselled on organizational custom and practice to prevent future disciplinary risk	In this organization, fines for minor and major offences are written in the organizational handbook to prevent intending violations
N	Valid	131	131	131	131
	Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.5878	3.3511	3.6336	3.0382
Mode		4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
Std. Deviation		.94356	1.08786	.91320	1.21151

Source: SPSS Data Output, 2020

The result on the distribution for the properties of the first dimension of workplace discipline: preventive discipline is shown in table 2 above. The result shows that there appears to be substantial evidence of related practices of preventive discipline based on the distributions for its properties where mode distributions reflect *Mo* = 4 (agree) for all four indicators and with mean distributions that exceed the adopted benchmark of *x* = 2.5 where *SD*< 2.0 implying that respondents affirm and agree to the evidence of these practices within their respective organizations.

The resulting 3.58x value for item 1 of the first dimension of workplace discipline shows that the workers accept that in there organization there is shared understanding between employees and managers over appropriate behaviour. Similarly for item 2 respondent expressed above average affirmation that penalties for minor and major offences are posted at strategic points to remind workers of their work behaviour. So this gives them the opportunity to learn and adjust. The 3.35x value is evident of this assertion for item 3. The place of counseling employees on organizational customs and practice to prevent future disciplinary risk attracted an above average affirmation. In this case, the x value is 3.63. Finally for item 4 workers expressed a strong support that they are notified of the minor and major offences in the organizations handbook to prevent intending violations. The x value is 3.0382.

Table 3   Univariate distribution for properties of adversarial industrial relation atmosphere

		In this organization there are frequent cases of conflict between managers and employees resulting to incessant strikes	In this organization the rate of employee exclusion from organizational activities such as the making of work rule has led to continuous dispute	In this organization we experience cases of output restrictions	In this organization we experience rampant collective grievance resulting in deliberate mishandling of tools
N	Valid	131	131	131	131
	Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean		2.2519	2.4809	2.1908	2.3130
Mode		2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
Std. Deviation		.99494	1.01034	.87806	1.09603

Source: SPSS Data Output, 2020

The distribution for adversarial industrial relation atmosphere, as captured and illustrated on table 3 presents the variable as poorly expressed and with weak evidence within the electrical engineering service companies in the south-south of Nigeria. This is as the result for the manifest properties of the variable suggest it is not a characteristic of the companies given that all properties have a mode of $Mo = 2$ (disagree) and mean distributions that are reflect weak manifestations for the properties, x < 2.5. This can be considered as substantially representative of the opinions and views of the majority where standard deviation SD < 2.0. The 2.25x value for item 1 of the first criterion variable (adversarial industrial relation atmosphere) shows weak support that there are frequent cases of conflict in these companies. Similarly the x value of 2.48 of item 2 shows that respondents expressed below average affirmation that the rate of employee exclusion in the making of workrule is high. Workers also expressed below average affirmation that there are cases of output restrictions with a x value of 2.19. Finally, 2.31x value response shows that workers affirm that there are frequent cases of grievances in these companies.

Table 4   **Univariate distribution for properties of harmonious industrial relation atmosphere**

		In this organization there is mutual co-operation and a harmony of interest between employers and employees	In this organization conflict is temporary due to effective communication	In this organization the level of industrial peace is high and commendable	In this organization there is usually an expanded collective bargaining between union and management
N	Valid	131	131	131	131
	Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.4580	3.3969	3.4275	2.6107
Mode		4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
Std. Deviation		1.04704	1.13463	1.01550	1.28046

Source: SPSS Data Output, 2020

The distribution for the items for harmonious industrial relation atmosphere is revealed to be substantial and well evident within the electrical engineering companies in the south-south of Nigeria. This is as the table 4 presents the properties of harmonious industrial relation atmosphere as evident and as characterizing the context of the interest in the investigation. All properties are also noted to have mode distributions of $Mo = 4$ (agree) suggesting affirmatives to the items and with mean distributions which exceed the stated base mean of x = 2.5. Standard deviation coefficients also validate the mean as being representative of the views of the respondents where SD < 2.0. The x value of 3.45 of item 1 of the second criterion variable, shows strong support to the presupposition that there is harmony of interest between employers and employees. The 3.39x value for item 2 also shows strong support that conflict may arise, but they are usually temporary in nature due to effective communication. Item 3 shows x value of 3.42 which shows another strong support by respondents that the level of industrial peace in these companies is high. Finally, there is usually expanded collective bargaining which prompts union and management to negotiate terms. The 2.61x average value is evident of this assertion.

Conclusion
Electrical engineering service companies adopt preventive discipline mechanisms to prevent inappropriate behaviours which shows disobedience to rules, the adversarial industrial relations atmosphere is significantly reduced. As electrical engineering companies adopt preventive discipline mechanisms to prevent inappropriate behaviours which shows disobedience to rules, the harmonious industrial relations atmosphere is significantly increased. Industrial relations atmosphere does not increase proportionately to the degree to which preventive discipline in the electrical engineering companies are increase only applied. As electrical engineering service companies in south south Nigeria apply harmony mechanism in the administration of discipline, the more harmonious industrial relation atmosphere is significantly increased.

Recommendations
The following recommendations are made:

i. Efforts should be made by organizational managers in the electrical engineering companies to help employees understand, the need for discipline in the organizations and why they need to be aligned to the laid down workrules and standards of behaviour of their organization. Through the enactment of a workrules as statements in the organization handbook, this can be achieved.

ii. Managers, as a matter of necessity, need to learn to share understanding with their employees, inform them about the penalties for minor and major offences and give them opportunity to learn.

iii. Managers need not only to inform but also counsel workers on organization customs and practices, and also initiate fines for minor and major offenders in the organizational handbook to prevent intending violations. In so doing, workers will have full knowledge of the organization's rules and practices.

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