



JOINT CONSULTATION AND EMPLOYEE PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN THE HOSPITALITY SECTOR IN PORT HARCOURT

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ABSTRACT

This study primarily examined the relationship between joint consultation and employee prosocial behaviour in the hospitality sector in Port Harcourt. The study adopted the cross-sectional research survey design. Primary data was generated through structured questionnaire. The population of the study was 1674 employees of 11 selected hotels in Port Harcourt. The sample size was also drawn using the Krejcie and Morgan (1980) sample size determination table. The reliability of the instrument was achieved by the use of the Cronbach Alpha coefficient with all the items scoring above 0.70. The hypotheses were tested using the Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficient. The tests were carried out at a 0.05 significance level. The findings revealed that there is a significant relationship between joint consultation and employee prosocial behaviour in the hospitality sector in Port Harcourt. Hence, the study concludes that joint consultation positively enhances employee prosocial behaviour in the hospitality sector in Port Harcourt. Implying that when organizations in hospitality sector actively engage in joint consultation practices, such as open communication, collaboration, and employee involvement in decision-making, there is a notable improvement in prosocial behaviors among employees. Therefore, the study recommends that there is a need to strengthen joint consultation platforms which involves creating structured forums where both management and employees can engage in meaningful discussions. This could include regular town hall meetings, feedback sessions, and collaborative workshops. By fostering an environment of open communication, these platforms can serve as a foundation for building a positive relationship between stakeholders.

Keyword: Joint Consultation, Employee Prosocial Behavior, Whistleblowing, Volunteering, Co-Worker Support

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INTRODUCTION

Work organizations are faced with the challenges of operating within business environment that has become increasingly dynamic with characteristic volatility. In addition, recent technological breakthroughs and globalization practices have also stimulated hyper-competition with increased rate of labour mobility and turnover (Alimora & Jonah, 2011; Damsah & Gilbert, 2016). The implication of this is that a committed workforce with knack for extra-roles that support attempts at gaining competitive advantage becomes fundamental and strategic. Aside formal roles assigned to employees, the strategic nature of employees in attending to arising concerns, stretching towards functional and informal voluntary involvement is emphasized. Latef and Azeez (2018) posit that attracting a committed workforce remain central in the face of the evolving competition and further described such workforce as resilient, innovative and dedicated to work goals. The expressed features are simply conceptualized as prosocial behaviour in the works of Brief and Motowildo (1986).

In practice employee's prosocial behaviour on one hand is seen as voluntary effort undertaken to help co-worker for timely task accomplishment, while on the other, demonstrating support towards the organisation (Egbagha & Simeon, 2012). It entails cooperating with peers, undertaking extra-role task, punctuality and sharing information among work members. Attracting pro-social behaviour among employees at work as a means of attaining and sustaining organisational goals has equally evoked

secular and theoretical concern. Goziem and Mpano (2016) posits that employee pro-social behaviours can be harnessed through a bundle of workplace actions that channel employees cognitively and psychologically to shifting away from classical work practices of job design, job assignment and structural niceties.

Attempt at establishing what workplace variables are likely to predict pro-social behaviour among employees constitutes the new face of research effort (Arrow, et al., 2000; Bishop & Goldsby, 2005; Howell & Caprazano, 2015.). The common denominator in extant works is the incentive schemes and programmes with financial incentive showing dominance as predictors (Ibiolo & Jack, 2010; Mende & Mende, 2015; Egeh, 2015; Peterson, 2017).

The purpose of this paper therefore was to examine the relationship between joint consultation and employee prosocial behavior in the hospitality sector in Port Harcourt. The specific objectives of the study included:

- To examine the relationship between joint consultation and whistleblowing in the hospitality sector in Port Harcourt.
- To examine the relationship between joint consultation and volunteering in the hospitality sector in Port Harcourt.
- To determine the relationship between joint consultation and co-worker support in the hospitality sector in Port Harcourt.



Figure 1: conceptual model for the relationship between joint consultation and employee prosocial behavioural outcomes.

Source: Desk Research (2023)

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Foundation

Job Characteristics Model

Model of job characteristics was developed by Hackman and contemporaries and it's majored on five jobs structural characteristics. The jobs structural characteristics included variety of task, feedback, autonomy, identity and significance. The researchers disputed that such characteristics can improve amongst others, motivation of work, satisfaction of job, and performance of job (Hackman & Oldham, 1976, 1980; Hackman & Lawler, 1971). In its early stages, the researchers had a condition on a variety of its features. For instance, Aldag, Barr and Brief (1981) reported that there existed weak relations concerns between characteristics of job and job performance and with additional questions over the build between job perceptions nature as well as attitudes of job. Aspersions have been casted as to its soundness with queries of whether simply matching enhancement in reimburse could establish preference for enrichment of job (Simonds & Orife, 1975).

The Job Characteristics Model (JCM) is a useful framework for studying job redesign practices and their impact on employee conscientious behavior.

The JCM provides a comprehensive approach to job design that considers the core job characteristics that affect employee motivation and performance. The JCM identifies five key job characteristics that influence employee motivation and performance: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback. These characteristics are central to the model and provide a framework for understanding the impact of job redesign practices on employee behavior. he JCM provides a framework for job redesign that is based on the core job characteristics. This framework can be used to identify specific changes that can be made to a job to enhance the job characteristics and improve employee conscientious behavior.

Joint Consultation

Joint consultation is a formal system of communication between the management of an organization and the employees' representatives used prior to taking decisions affecting the workforce, usually carried out by a joint consultative committee (Collins Dictionary, 2000). According to Armstrong (2003), joint consultation enables managers and employee representatives to meet on a regular basis in order to exchange views and utilize member's knowledge and expertise in dealing with matters of common interests that are not the subject of collective bargaining. Armstrong

(2003) reports that for joint consultation to work well, it is necessary to first define, discuss and agree on its objectives. These objectives should be related to tangible and significant aspects of the job, the process of management, or the formulation of policies that affect the interests of employees. That consultation should take place before decisions are made.

Management must believe in employees and involve them in decision making. The unions must also believe in participation as a genuine means of giving them voice and advancing the interests of their members, instead of using it as a way of getting more power. It is believed (Marchington, 1992; Parasuraman & Jones, 2006) that employers introduce joint consultation for the following reasons: to enhance efficiency by increasing the stock of ideas, which are available within the organisation because of the wider exposure of an issue or problem; to reduce industrial action as it provides an opportunity for employees to express their views; it leads to increased employee satisfaction due to the greater level of commitment that joint consultative committee brings. Researchers (Guest & Peccei, 1998; Parasuraman & Jones, 2006; Marchington & Armstrong, 2001) have highlighted the usefulness of joint consultation in organisations. Guest and Peccei (1998) reports that joint consultation was highly favored by companies at different stages in their progress towards a partnership arrangement with employee representatives in the area of policy making and strategic matters. In their study of a Malaysian firm, Parasuraman and Jones (2006) reported that Joint consultative committee is focused towards joint decision making on selected operational and strategic issues. It provides employees with bargaining power. Workers and unions actively engage in decision making, but only to a limited extent.

Concept of Prosocial Behaviour

The concept of prosocial behaviour is faced with a lot of definitional issues even as much work has been dedicated to the demystification of prosocial

behaviour construct, with related terms such as extra role behaviours or positive citizenship behaviours (Brief & Motowidlo, 1986; Organ, 1988, Zellars *et al.*, 2002). As Baruch, *et al.* (2004) rightly noted that there may exist no clear-cut definition of pro-social; behaviour in literature even as a glaring overlap is observed with other similar concepts. For instances, Brief & Motowidlo (1986) in their study noted 13 specific kinds of behaviour from employees that are considered pro-social premised on their belief that the various behaviour may be organizationally functional, individually functional, or dysfunctional. For instance, an old employee in the workplace volunteering to mentor a new employee contributes positively towards the organization's goals. Conversely, an employee offering assistance to co-worker adjudged to be publicly critical of the workplace or even indulge in behaviours considered counterproductive or inimical to the organizational goals and integrity in the eyes of other stakeholders could be viewed as organizationally dysfunctional pro-social behaviours (Vardi & Weitz, 2004).

Even with the observation of definitional issues on pro-social behaviour, Brief & Motowidlo (1986) gave a striking, practically understandable definition by suggesting the following: "pro-social behaviour is behaviour which is (a) performed by a member of an organization, (b) directed towards an individual, group, or organization with whom he or she interacts while carrying out his or her organizational role, and (c) performed with the (intention of promoting the welfare of the individual, group, organization towards which it is directed" . In another perspective, Organ and Konovsky (1989) Defined pro-social behaviour as a kind of behaviour which reflects a combination of social and economic exchange association with the organization. Staw (1984) supported the position of Brief and Motowidlo (1986) when he opined that pro-social behaviour as a construct should not be viewed only from the perspective of actions towards individuals, but also actions towards the organization on employee works. In addition to

individually function and organizationally functional prosocial behaviour of employees, there is also the employee pro-social behaviour that is considered role prescribed and those that are extra role (Brief & Motowidlo, 1986).

Measures of Employee Behavioural Outcomes

Whistle Blowing

The concept of whistleblowing has recently been seen in organizations as a subject that requires a systematic study that attracts the attention of the authorities and the public (Near and Miceli, 1985). Researchers discuss the concept of whistleblowing in variety of fields including psychology, sociology, ethics, law and public policy. Both organization and government policy-makers are greatly interested in the successful implementation of legal and organizational stems to promote the reporting of illegal or unethical behaviors. However, researchers can only offer limited number of recommendations for the design and implementation of such systems without establishing a comprehensive theoretical framework on whistleblowing (Park, 2009). The concept of whistleblowing which began to take place in the literature in the 1990s started to be used with the whistling of British policemen to warn criminals. The concept of whistleblowing has been also used in organizations along with the announcement of illegal practices and the disallowance of non-disclosure of those who carry out such practices in many companies.

The terms organizational wrongdoing, organizational misconduct, malpractice and wrongdoing are widely used to explain the concept of whistleblowing (Yarmaci, 2018). Whistleblowing is expressed as the disclosure of illegal, unethical, or illegitimate practices under the control of employers by members of the organization (former or present) to persons or organizations that may affect the action (Near and Miceli, 2011). Elliston (2012) likened civil disobedience, an action that a person performs for moral reasons, to whistleblowing in his study. According to Bouville (2008), whistleblowing is explained as reporting information that an employee (or former

employee) believes to be unethical or illegal behavior to the senior management (internal whistle-blowing) or the external authority or the public (external whistle-blowing). In addition, whistleblowing is understood as a form of worker assertion or opposition in the endless war between labor and management, i.e. as a new form of worker resistance, in order to control the worker (Rothschild and Miethe, 1999).

Volunteering

Volunteering as related to extra role-efforts, is the act of an employee getting involved in additional task which may or may not be connected to the job assigned to him/ her with the intention of rendering assistance to the organization (Brief & Motowidlo, 1986). Volunteering activities by employees in the workplace may include: volunteering for activities in the workplace such as committee assignments, speaking involvement. It could also entail simply taking actions/ steps when necessary with a view to correcting non-standard conditions, to remove obstacles to smoothen the way for organizational processes, and to protect the organization from unexpected occurrence (Brief & Motowidlo, 2016).

Penner (2002) expressed volunteering as a long-term planned and non-obligatory form of helping individuals as coworkers or the organization. It is a practice that ensues in a formal organizational setting. In a supportive effort Pearce and Amato (1980) argued that volunteering is one endpoint as the most planned and formal form of helping. Research conducted (Penner, 2002) on antecedents of volunteering basically focused on two theoretical approaches which are the dispositional and the motivational approaches. Penner (2002) contend that other oriented empathy and helpfulness are really the most vital and significant predictors for employee volunteerism. While Omoto and Snyder (1995) established that self-attributed motivational underpinnings predict volunteering. Longitudinal studies provide evidence that prosocial behaviour such as volunteering add to psychological well-being (Li & Ferraro, 2005; Thoits & Hewith, 2001).

Volunteering as a measure of prosocial behaviour is expressed differently and also has unique connotations in different countries and culture (Dekker & Halman, 2003).

Wilson (2000) defined volunteering as any activities in which an individual invest his/her own time freely with the primary aim of benefiting others. It is usually without payment negotiation and also not obligatory, but however takes place within the context of an organization (Dekker & Halman, 2003). Even though there is no negotiation of payment, volunteers are not precluded from whatsoever benefit that comes out from the work (Vohra & Bathini, 2014). Volunteering covers a wide spectrum of activities, which could be influenced by different and self-efficacy belief traits, and values. To further bring the term to light, it is pertinent to consider the action of volunteering in two perspectives; prosocial or helping perspective and delegation involvement perspective (Vohra & Bathini, 2014). They however noted that volunteering activity can involve both helping and delegation involvement perspectives.

Co-worker Support

Co-worker support involves assisting one's co-worker. It has to do with employee's willingness to help members of the organization tackle difficulties or challenges encountered by colleague in the course of their job task (Boundenghan *et al.*, 2012). Help is seen as various kind of assistance that is directed towards the nature of identified problem. Helping behaviour is a type of prosocial behaviour in which employee in the workplace goes beyond his/her way to render assistance to co-workers in the organization, ostensibly, to ensure successful execution and completion of their jobs (Organ 1988). Helping co-workers adds value not only to group or peer performance but also contributes towards effectiveness of the organization and employees, own well-being. When employees in the workplace involve themselves in such act, they boost the quantity and quality of peer performance (Podsakoff, Ahearne, & Mackenzie, 1997), enhance performance among group of employees in the

workplace (Bachrach, Powell, Collins, & Richey, 2006).

Borman and Motowidlo (1993) add that employee engagement in helping behaviour also increase the organization's competitive advantages and enjoy high levels of association satisfaction for themselves (Hoption, 2016), Turnispeed (2002) argued that the tendency for an employee to voluntarily reach out to other coworkers in the workplace to assist them complete their assigned tasks has vital ethical component, in that the notion of being good stems from employees, values and ethics. Efforts have been made by researches in determining possible factors which can either promote or threaten the possibility of employee engaging in helping act (Deckop, Cirka, & Andersson, 2003; Tang *et al.*, 2008). Meanwhile, prior studies by scholars address various factors, capable of promoting employee helping behaviour, including intrinsic and prosocial motives (Tang *et al.*, 2008), affirmative treatment by coworkers (Deckop *et al.*, 2003), group cohesion and cooperation (Liang, Shih, & Chiang, 2015; Ng & Vandyne, 2005).

Joint Consultation and Employee Prosocial Behaviour

Joint consultation as a dimension of workplace democracy truly motivates employees in the workplace to engage in prosocial act that benefit coworkers. Researchers have adopted the theoretical postulation of Ashmos and Duchon (2000) in the realm of workplace democracy to conceptualize what meaningfulness is about. Researchers appreciate the fact that employees all have inner life which nourishes and is nourished by being engaged in a joint consultation that occurs within the context of delegation (Duchon & Plowman, 2005). It is instructive to note that management can create a spiritualized work environment which allows employees' spiritual needs for experienced inner life, joint consultation and delegation to be met (Ahmad & Omar 2016; Albuquerque, Cunha, Martins & Sa, 2014; Daniel, 2015).

Joint consultation as an element of democracy encompassed cognitively meaningful tasks, but also employee experiencing work which gives sense of joy, connecting workers to larger benefits and things employees see as being vital to their lives (Duchon & Plowman, 2005). When an employee feels good or experiences joy in the work he/she does, such individual can engage in extra role acts. In as much an employ feels good and derives meaning in the work, the tendency for such employee to begin helping coworkers is most likely sure. Reason is because, his/her feeling is positive towards the work. If an employee feels good prosocial behaviour can improve that mental state and further maintain the positive feeling (Batsen, Van Lange, Ahmad, and Lishner, (2007). Krishnakumar and Neck (2002) posited that democracy at work improves employees' intrinsic motivation by way of inspiring a sense of individual fulfillment and improved morale. This no doubt is an estate where employee in the workplace experience inner life, joy and meaningfulness which has the potency of evolving employee extra role acts that coworkers in the organization tend to benefits.

Employees' experience of democracy at work is often associated with employee's belief, goals, and practices, connected to citizenship behaviour at work (Dehler and Welsh, 2003; Millimon *et al.*, 2003; Mitroff & Dentton, 1999). Relatedly, those possessing high level of democracy may indulge in prosocial acts as a result of the values, or enjoyment they derive from the work itself (Dehler and Welsh, 2003; Millimon *et al.*, 2003). It is noteworthy that prosocial behaviour is driven by employees' positive attitude towards their job (Moorman & Harland, 2002). Also, employees who see their work been meaningful to them may likely develop more willingness to work and also add

value to their job because of the emotional attachment (Van Dyne & Pierce 2004). This assertion can be explained by the psychological ownership theory, which holds that people seem to get more attached to any target when they identify strongly with it (Pierce, Kostova, & Dirks, 2003). From the foregoing discourse, the study hypothesized thus:

- Ho₁:** There is no significant relationship between joint consultation and whistleblowing in the hospitality sector in Port Harcourt.
- Ho₂:** There is no significant relationship between consultation and volunteering in the hospitality sector in Port Harcourt.
- Ho₃:** There is no significant relationship between joint consultation and co-worker support in the hospitality sector in Port Harcourt

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the cross-sectional research survey design. Primary data was generated through structured questionnaire. The population of the study was 1674 employees of 11 selected hotels in Port Harcourt. The sample size was also drawn using the Krejcie and Morgan (1980) sample size determination table. The reliability of the instrument was achieved by the use of the Cronbach Alpha coefficient with all the items scoring above 0.70. The hypotheses were tested using the Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficient. The tests were carried out at a 0.05 significance level.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Table 1 below shows the result of correlation matrix obtained for joint consultation and Measures of employee prosocial behaviour. Also displayed in the table is the statistical test of significance (p - value).

Table 1: Correlations Matrix for Joint Consultation and Measures of Employee Prosocial Behaviour

			Joint Consultation	Whistle Blowing	Volunteering	Co-Worker Support
Spearman's rho	Joint Consultation	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.939**	.729**	.668**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000
		N	268	268	268	268
	Whistle Blowing	Correlation Coefficient	.939**	1.000	.767**	.696**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000
		N	268	268	268	268
	Volunteering	Correlation Coefficient	.729**	.767**	1.000	.628**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.000
		N	268	268	268	268
	Co-Worker Support	Correlation Coefficient	.668**	.696**	.628**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.
		N	268	268	268	268

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: SPSS 23.0 data Output

Table 1 elucidates the test for the three previously postulated hypotheses:

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between joint consultation and whistleblowing in the hospitality sector in Port Harcourt.

From the result in Table 1, it is shown that a strong positive relationship exists between joint consultation and whistleblowing in the hospitality sector in Port Harcourt. The *rho* value 0.939 indicates the strength and magnitude of this relationship which answers the research question one. Also, the relationship is significant at $p= 0.000 < 0.01$, therefore, based on these empirical findings, the previously stated bivariate null hypothetical statement is hereby rejected and the alternate is accepted as the study finds that: There is a significant relationship between joint consultation and whistleblowing in the hospitality sector in Port Harcourt.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between joint consultation and volunteering in the hospitality sector in Port Harcourt.

From the result in Table 1, it is shown that a strong positive relationship exists between joint consultation and volunteering in the hospitality sector in Port Harcourt. The *rho* value 0.729 indicates the strength and magnitude of this relationship which answers the research question two. Also, the relationship is significant at $p= 0.000 < 0.01$, therefore, based on these empirical findings, the previously stated bivariate null hypothetical statement is hereby rejected and the alternate is accepted as the study finds that: There is a significant relationship between joint consultation and volunteering in the hospitality sector in Port Harcourt.

Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between joint consultation and co-worker support in the hospitality sector in Port Harcourt.

From the result in Table 1, it is shown that a strong positive relationship exists between joint consultation and co-worker support in the hospitality sector in Port Harcourt. The *rho* value 0.668 indicates the strength and magnitude of this relationship which answers the research question

three. Also, the relationship is significant at $p=0.000 < 0.01$, therefore, based on these empirical findings, the previously stated bivariate null hypothetical statement is hereby rejected and the alternate is accepted as the study finds that: There is a significant relationship between joint consultation and co-worker support in the hospitality sector in Port Harcourt.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The first, second and third hypotheses sought to examine the relationship between joint consultation and employee prosocial behaviour. Hence, it was hypothesized that there is no significant relationship between joint consultation and employee prosocial behaviour. These hypotheses were tested using the Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient. Data analysis revealed that there is a positive and significant relationship between joint consultation and employee prosocial behaviour. This finding is in line with earlier study by Usman, Javed, Shoukat, & Bashir (2021) who examined the direct and indirect relationship between joint consultation and cyber loafing. They tested the moderating role of leader-member exchange (LMX) in the direct association between joint consultation and cyber-loafing. The findings showed that joint consultation is negatively related to cyber-loafing, both directly and indirectly. They study also found that leader-member exchange moderates the negative relationship between joint consultation and cyber-loafing.

Also, in corroboration Shreshtha and Jena (2017) studied the relationship between workplace democracy and two job attitude variables: job satisfaction and job involvement. It further examined the moderating effect of perception of organizational politics on these associations. The findings indicated that workplace democracy is

significantly and positively associated to job satisfaction and job involvement and perception of organizational politics moderates the association between workplace democracy and job involvement. To further support this, Matela and Riekkilä (2018) investigated autonomy, competence, relatedness, and beneficence: A multicultural comparison of the four pathways to joint consultation. They tested the association between these satisfactions and perceived joint consultation in Finland. The findings support the importance of these four satisfactions in explaining the psychological underpinnings of joint consultation.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The idea which necessitated this study was to examine the relationship between workplace democracy and employee prosocial behaviour in the hospitality sector in Port Harcourt. From the data generated and analyzed, it was empirically discovered that a strong positive and significant relationship between workplace democracy and employee prosocial behaviour in the hospitality sector in Port Harcourt. Based on results and the findings of the present study, our study revealed that as joint consultation, collective bargaining and delegation increases, it increases the employee prosocial behaviour in the hospitality sector in Port Harcourt.

Therefore, the study recommends that there is a need to strengthen joint consultation platforms which involves creating structured forums where both management and employees can engage in meaningful discussions. This could include regular town hall meetings, feedback sessions, and collaborative workshops. By fostering an environment of open communication, these platforms can serve as a foundation for building a positive relationship between stakeholders.

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