



Industrial dispute and workforce productivity: A survey of manufacturing companies in Rivers State, Nigeria

Elenwo Nchelem Worlu

Department of Management, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt, Nigeria

Abstract

This study investigates the relationship between Industrial dispute (lockout) and workforce productivity in manufacturing companies in Rivers State. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey design. The population of the study comprised of 264 managers of twenty-two (22) manufacturing companies in Rivers State, Nigeria. Census was adopted in which all the elements of the population were studied. Three hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Data were elicited through structured questionnaire along Likert 5-point scale, while the Cronbach Alpha coefficient of 0.90 bench-mark was observed to confirm the reliability of the instrument used. Out of the 264 questionnaire administered to respondents, 252 copies were duly retrieved. Data retrieved, were analyzed using descriptive statistics of mean, standard deviation while the formulated hypotheses for the study were tested with Pearson's Product Moment Correlation at 0.05 level of significance respectively with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Results from the analysis revealed that: there is a significant relationship between industrial dispute (lockout) and workforce creativity. Also, there is a significant relationship between lockout action and output quality. Lastly, there is a significant relationship between lockout action and quality service delivery of manufacturing companies in Rivers State. The study further recommends that government should enforce and ensure that Nigerian labour laws are complied with, by all company's management/executives. Also, management should ensure that they set up of good negotiation panel/communication network concerning terms and conditions of employment to avoid lockouts.

Keywords: lockout action, premises lockout, machine shutdown, creativity, output, quality service delivery

Introduction

Globally, conflict has become unavoidable occurrence in the relationship between employers and employees, as each often seek beneficial outcomes. As noted by Ratnam (2007) ^[33] employer-employees' conflicts are commonly found in industrial society. This occurs because of the modern industrialization that has created great difference between employees and management regarding who control proceeds, production process, power as well as authority at the workplace (Mamoria, Mamoria & Gankar, 2009). Conflict of interest occur regarding the share of production proceeds as employees seek to improve their wages and other benefits while employers seeks to enhance profits and returns for shareholders and owners. Though, conflict of interest often occurs between employer and employees at the workplace, workers and management also have common interest relating to the production process which provides the products as well as the proceeds that enable firms survive, make profits and grow (Patricia & Moussa, 2013) ^[30]. Disagreement spanned from simple differences to contention and war between labour and management (Philips, 1988).

Disputes at the workplace may occur between management and workers, employees and trade unions or trade union and management, employer and employer as well as between employee and employee. Parties involve in industrial dispute such as employees, management and trade unions often seek beneficial outcome in the employment relationship through coercion. This situation makes management take harsh steps in the form of lockouts while employees resort to various forms of strikes and picketing if the situations were not handled timely with mutual consents.

However, the emergence of the industrial revolution which characterized free labour market and large-scale organization with numerous number of wage earners, brought the modern employment relationship (Kaufman, 2004) ^[17]. This changes in the industrial sector, elicit various forms of strike and lockout due to the varying interest existing between parties involve in the employment contract.

Nevertheless, industrial disputes have various effect on the well-being of the employers and employees as well as the economy. On employees' perspective, disputes result into pay cuts or reduction in terms of wages and other benefits as well as the risk of losing one's means of survival at the workplace, thereby causing discontentment, de-motivation, poor health issues and generally family related problems. Contrarily on the employers' perspective, industrial dispute affects productivity negatively as it elicits work stoppage and loss in sales due to decrease in production. In addition, industrial dispute often results in wastage of national income, thus inducing social unrest in the society and the national economy (Archana, 2010) ^[5].

Though, capital, equipment, manpower, environment and parties in business all play critical roles in the successful operation organizations, the most valuable of all, is the human element since they direct and coordinate every other resource in achieving set objectives. Organizational objectives are achievable through the development of industrial relations' programmes that promote industrial harmony, thus, resulting in improved productivity. As noted by David (2002) ^[9], improved productivity is the basis for improve standard of living for workers, higher profits to business owners as well as the reduction in prices of goods

and services for consumers.

The influence of industrial conflicts and workforce productivity in manufacturing companies in Nigeria appropriately confirms the age-long fight between trade unions over wage against management in Nigerian workplaces and this battle has long been drawn, with no end in sight. The casualties are uncountable on both sides despite the efforts made to end this protracted chess game and battle of wits (Nduka in Jaja, 2015 ^[14]). Though, Nigeria as a country with highly diversified natural resources has the potential of attracting a lot of investment into its manufacturing sector as a result of the role the natural resources plays as raw material for production which is the core occupation of manufacturing companies, Nigeria like other nations, is susceptible to the uncertainty and unpredictability emanating from the continuous interaction in the business environments and have thus, affected the ease of doing business particularly in the manufacturing sector.

For manufacturing companies to be productive and yet achieve industrial harmony there are certain factors that have to be recognized like the interactions among stakeholders in the organization. These factors include the relationship between employers, employees, rivals/competitors, host communities and the government, since the activities of these people have relationship either directly or indirectly with productivity of firms particularly in the manufacturing sector as human beings are seen as the main resource of manufacturing companies in Nigeria, since the interactions between members of any unit are not devoid of disagreements or conflict situations and the time spent in resolving these disagreements affect the productivity of the individual employee as well as the organization directly or indirectly.

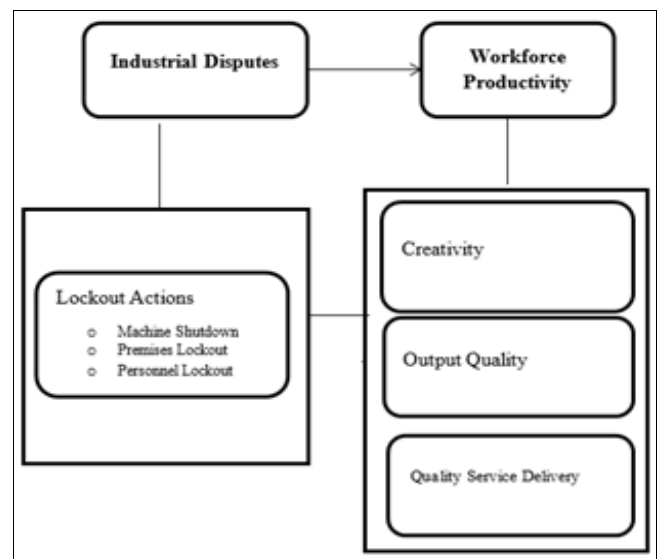
Disagreement in most cases grows like a burning flame of fire and degenerate into industrial actions such as: Strike; (strike frequency, duration and verities), lockouts; (machine shutdown, primitive lockout and personnel lockout), layoff, protests, picketing, plant closure or removal etc. which sometimes have a very indubitable demonic influence on the efficiency and effectiveness of the employees particularly on their creative ability to deliver quality product and services. Disputes also lead to low morale, heightened dissatisfaction, less commitment and increased turnover among employees. On the long run, the organization faces entropy as consequence of rebellion among staff.

In spite of this, managers seem to be one step ahead of subordinates, as most times the subordinates take a surrendering but necessary step to return and maintain a balance of corporate co-existence. But as most managers in Nigeria continue to pay lip service to corporate co-existence, the more these managers will run ring around the neck of their subordinates Jaja, (2015) ^[14] which eventually leads to employees' low morale and productivity. The common denominator was however traced to ignorance and elements in the crumbling pillar equation according to Jaja (2015) ^[14] in his inaugural lecture titled; Breaking the Management Coconut: Do you see Crumbling Pillars or an Ark? To the present study, the ignorance and elements in the crumbling pillars refer to the inability of the employers to channel the energy they spent on lockouts, layoffs and unionization in their organization to a positive work practices that may lead to competitiveness, creativity, quality products, increased output and quality service

delivery to mention but few.

In Nigeria, specifically the manufacturing sector, the major source of industrial conflict has always bothered on issues relating to wages and sometimes workers' welfare that collective bargaining was supposed to have address before any employment contract. As noted by Akinbode and Ebeloku (2017) ^[2], victimization of workers or union executives, delay in the payment of employees' remuneration and allowances, dispassionate attitude of government regarding wage review and failure to implement agreement, redundancy/retrenchment of workers, casualization of workforce, refusal to negotiate with worker or their unions... are some of the causes of industrial dispute in Nigeria. Prolong industrial dispute have become a source of threat to employees, organizations as well as the nation's economy (Uma, Eboh, Obidike & Ogbonna, 2013) ^[36].

Though, studies have been conducted on industrial dispute and workforce productivity, few literatures exist on industrial dispute and workforce productivity of manufacturing companies in Rivers State. Against this background, the study empirically examines industrial dispute and workforce productivity in the manufacturing sector in Rivers State. Specifically, industrial dispute is studied from the employers' perspective (Lockouts) while productivity is measured in terms of Creativity: (pro-activity and problem solving, Output: (output quality and timeous output), Quality service delivery: (time saving and customer satisfaction).



Source: Desk researcher (2019) adapted from (Zeb-Obipi, 2018)

Fig 1: Conceptual framework showing the relationship between industrial disputes and workforce productivity.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between industrial disputes and workforce productivity in manufacturing companies in Rivers. However, specific objectives of the study are:

1. To evaluate the degree of relationship between lockout actions and creativity of employees of manufacturing companies in Rivers State.
2. To ascertain the degree of relationship between lockout actions and output of employees of manufacturing companies in Rivers State.
3. To find out the degree of relationship between lockout

actions and quality service delivery of employees of manufacturing companies in Rivers State.

Research Hypotheses

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between lockout actions and creativity of employees of manufacturing companies in Rivers State.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between lockout actions and output of employees of manufacturing companies in Rivers State.

Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between lockout actions and quality service delivery of employees of manufacturing companies in Rivers State.

Literature Review

Theoretical Review

The theoretical stands of this article anchored on the Pluralist theory of Industrial Relation.

Pluralist Theory of Industrial Relations

The pluralist theory to industrial relations emanated from the positions of Sidney and Beatrice Webb in England, John R. Commons who is unarguably presumed to be the father of U.S. industrial relations, and members of the Wisconsin school of institutional labor economists in the early twentieth century. The views of pluralist theory were stipulated in the New Deal U.S. labor policies of the 1930s Great Depression Epoch and cemented in practice by a generation of postwar scholar-arbitrators, as mostly used by neo-classical scholars in the field of industrial relations.

The pluralist theory of industrial relations state that:

1. Disputes or conflicts are inevitable and they occur as a result of different opinions, values, and beliefs within the workplace.
2. Industrial disputes or conflicts can be avoided or minimized by involving the trade union representatives in decision-making processes.
3. Industrial disputes can be better managed through a system of negotiated trade-offs and settlements.
4. Collective bargaining deals with problems on a collective basis, as they are most efficient means for institutionalizing employment rules. Thus, management should ensure fairer outcomes by balancing employee and management power.

This approach is more applicable in modern organizations such as manufacturing companies in Nigeria as it recognizes the importance of trade unions as legitimate representatives which enable employees to influence management decisions (Seniwoliba, 2013). This can be effectively done when there is dispute (lockouts) in the system. The legitimate representatives enable the restoration of peace and harmony in the workplace which are drivers to workforce productivity (creativity, output and effective service delivery). It is evident that there are divergent interests between capital and labour - employers seek to maximize or create wealth whilst employees seek to protect their well-being among manufacturing companies in Nigeria. In practice, the pluralist theory encourages the formation of trade unions for the protection and promotion of groups' socio-economic interests.

Conceptual Review

Industrial Dispute

Studies have been conducted by many scholars on the issue of conflict to investigate and explain why conflict is inevitable in work organization and possible ways to manage it. However, constant changes in work system vis-à-vis demand of both employees and employers call for periodic study of conflict situation in contemporary workplace. To understand the multi-dimensionality of dispute in today's competitive business environment, attempt is made here to examine the works of scholars such as Ubeku (1975) ^[35] who observed that dispute in organization is a consequence of enduring power struggle between workers and their employer over the control of various aspect of work, inequality in the distribution of proceeds of industry, job insecurity of the worker, and poor management control. Also, Fajana (2002) ^[12] separated industrial conflict from other forms of conflict to refer to the powerlessness of the employers and employees to arrive at a common agreement on any issue connected with employers-employees' interactions. In addition, Oribabor (2000) ^[28] conceived that industrial conflicts take place whenever there is conflict of interests and objectives in labor-management relations. Also, Alebiosu and Akintayo (2007) ^[3] noted that industrial conflict emerges as a result of employers not taking into consideration the needs or request of their workers.

Zeb-Obipi, (2016) ^[38] stated that industrial disputes refer to different situations between employer and employee or group of employer and employee leading to any party taking punitive measure to compare its opponent to meet its demand. This can happen at different levels and types as follows:

1. Industrial discontent; this is where conflict is not expressed and as such it is latent or passive.
2. Industrial grievances; where discontent is active or expressed and could be individual or collective.
3. Industrial or Trade dispute; where unaddressed grievances or unsatisfactory aggrieved grievance that leads to a formal declaration or acknowledgement of conflict.
4. Industrial action; wherein punitive measures are applied by any of the party following the dissolution of industrial dispute. In this regard, we posit that there are two major levels of industrial conflict (individual and collective) and four major types of industrial disputes as listed above.

Industrial dispute simply means a difference or disagreement of strife over some issues between employees and employers which is connected with the employment or non-employment or the terms of employment and conditions of employment of any person. Industrial disputes could be organized; that is representing a conscious strategy on the part of the actor to change a situation defined as the source of discontent. In contrast, unorganized form of industrial conflict is usually individual phenomena neither recognized by the individual as an expression of conflict as such nor designed to change the identified source of discontent. Conflict can be destructive but in some other times constructive.

When conflict takes attention away from other important activities or undermines employees' morale and eventually leads to irresponsible and damaging behavior and it is considered to be destructive.

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Lockout Actions

The term "Lockout" is the direct opposite of strike or otherwise referred to as the action of an employer in temporarily closing down or shutting down the undertaking or refusing to provide its employees with work with the intention of forcing or compelling them either to accept the demands made by them or to withdraw the demands made by them on him. Lockouts are usually implemented by simply refusing to admit employees onto organizational activities which may include changing locks of the premises, machines or personnel. Under the Industrial dispute Act, 1947, a lockout means the closing of a place of business or employment or the supervision of work or the refusal by an employer to continue to employ any number of persons employed by him. Subsection 2(1) of the Industrial Dispute Act leads thus: a lockout is the closure of an industrial undertaking because of the existence of or apprehension of an industrial dispute, violence and damage to property; it is the suspension of employment in so far as the employer refuses to give work to the employees until they yield to his demand or withdraw the demands made on him; or because of closing down to a place of employment and the suspension of the work; a lockout is an antithesis of a strike. Just as the employees can go on strike so the employers have a weapon against the employees to lock them out of his premises and not allow them to return to work; A lockout is used with some intention, i.e. to coerce or force employees to come to terms of engagement.

Critical examination of the meaning of lockout as suggested in this study shows that it is not all act of stopping the labour from work that is lockout hence the following does not constitute a lockout; Prohibiting an individual employee from work, Termination of employment by retrenchment, Termination of services of more than one person at a time, Declaration of a lockout by an employer merely on the ground that the employees have refrained from attending to work is not a lockout. Different forms of lockdown take place at the workplace, these include:

Machine Shutdown

Machine shutdown is an industrial action initiated by the employer where the employer shuts the operating machines thereby denying the employees the opportunity to carry out their official and legitimate assignment (Zeb 2018). The reason for machine shutdown could be as a result of the existence of or apprehension of an industrial dispute, violence and damage to property (Okene 2014) ^[25] by an employee or group of employees or as result of any other act capable of disrupting production process in the organisation. When machines are shut down, employees are not utilized, production cost increases, additional cost are incurred in retraining employees, raw materials for production that has no alternative uses are lost leading to decrease in productivity of the organization. In essence, it will cost the company time and resources to revitalize and improve in order to increase the productivity of the employees.

Premises Lockout

This has to do with locking of the premises against members of staff. The bases for premises lockout was investigated considering the lawfulness of lockout within the framework of statutory provisions delineating the boundaries of industrial action and the immunities available under Nigerian statute law for torts committed by trade unions and their officials in the course of a trade dispute. It observes that lawful lockouts are virtually impossible in this country notwithstanding its democratic ideals. Whilst the constitution guarantees freedom of association and the right to join or form a trade union, existing statutory provisions negate the exercise of trade union activity in the form of strikes or lockouts. Based on the foregoing, the TUA (2005) has set the following conditions where lockout actions could be lawful:

It shall be lawful for one or more persons, acting on their own behalf or on behalf of a trade union or registered federation of trade unions or an individual employer or firm in contemplation or furtherance of a trade dispute, to attend at or near a house or place where a person resides or works or carries on business or happens to be, if they so attend merely for the purpose of peacefully obtaining or communicating information or of peacefully persuading any person to work or abstain from working, Trade Union Acts, (TUA, 2005):

- a. No person shall subject any other person to any kind of constraint or restriction of his personal freedom in the course of persuasion (TUA, 2005).
- b. No trade union or registered federation of trade union or any member thereof shall in the course of any strike action compel any person who is not a member of its unions to join any strike or in any highways, institutions or premise of any kind for the purpose of giving effect to the strike (TUA, 2005).

Personnel Lockout

This is precisely the opposite of Machine Shutdown. This style of lockout ignores the machines and equipment blockage instead it is the refusal of the human elements of the company to enter their place of work for the purpose of compelling them to abide by the terms of contractual agreement.

The employees are denied access to operate the equipment sometimes because of high level of damages, or where the workforce resort to overtly expressing negative attitude to work by way of go-slow, Sit-down, Stay-in, Tool-down and Pen-down strikes etc. The provision in the Trade Dispute Acts also states that the employers owe their employees duty to provide job for them, duty to write testimonials for a departing employee and so on. Similarly, the employee owes the employer the duty of obedience, duty to use skill or care and indemnity, duty to be free from misconduct, etc. It is therefore obvious to maintain that exhibiting negative attitude(s) will warrant the employer to decide on personnel lockout which has the ability to determining the productivity of the workforce. However, the consequences of lockouts are detrimental to the industry and the nation's economy because they lead to lose in production and productive efforts (Mamoria, 2011) ^[21].

Concept of Workforce Productivity

Productivity is commonly defined as a ratio between the output volume and the volume of inputs. In other words, it measures how efficiently production inputs, such as labour and capital, are being used in an economy to produce a given level of output. Productivity is considered a key source of economic growth and competitiveness and, as such, is the basic statistical information for many international comparisons and country performance assessments. For instance, productivity data are used to investigate the impact of product and labour market regulations on economic performance. Productivity growth constitutes an important element for modelling the productive capacity of economies. It also allows analysts to determine capacity utilisation, which in turn allows one to gauge the position of economies in the business cycle and to forecast economic growth. In addition, production capacity is used to assess demand and inflationary pressures. Though, there are different measures of productivity and the choice between them depends either on the purpose of the productivity measurement and/or data availability, one of the most widely used measures of productivity is Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per hour worked. This measure captures the use of labour inputs better than just output per employee. Generally, the default source for total hours worked is the OECD Annual National Accounts database, though for a number of countries other sources have to be used.

However, the study focus on individuals' output of employees within the manufacturing companies in Nigeria. The influence of low output that are prevalent in the production sector in Nigeria, have in the past and at present shaped the output of individual labour and the management, influencing socio-economic development, and overall productivity of the individual employee and the organization. Based on the foregoing, it is imperative to look at workforce productivity in this study under the following measures; creativity, output quality and quality service delivery.

Creativity

The term creativity refers to the ability to produce something that is both new and valuable. Good education, proper care and provision of opportunities to inspire, stimulate and sharpen the creative mind and it is in this sphere that parents, society and teachers make a significant

contribution. Mumford, Hunter, Eubanks, Bedeli and Murphy (2007) averred that creativity has become a crucial issue for organizations to survive the uneasiness and ambiguity emanating from the environment. Creativity and innovation may either be encouraged or suppressed depending on the existing atmosphere in the environment (Mathisen & Einarsen, 2004) ^[22]. Fostering creativity shows employees that they can change their workplace. Letting people make a visible, tangible impact on their work environment is a powerful motivator. No one wants to feel like a drone, mindlessly working through a task list having no apparent meaningful impact.

One of the keys to nurturing a creative workplace is to give all workers a way to voice their ideas. And by surfacing those ideas with your entire organization, you simultaneously make workers feel valued and spread new, innovative thinking throughout your business. This is not just a boon for productivity; it has the pleasant side effect of also improving loyalty. Creativity gets people emotionally invested. But for some, sparking that passion in the workplace requires a little more motivation. Regardless of their department or role, workers who participate in the creative process can take ownership of an idea rather than a to-do list. When staffers can own and nurture an idea from the beginning all the way to its execution, they become more passionate and emotionally invested and will work that much harder to see that idea their idea come to life. Promoting creativity removes the fear of failure. A key component of fostering a creative environment is giving people the freedom to fail. The fear of failure cripple's creative environments and hamstring the flow of ideas and ultimately productivity. Failure that arises in the pursuit of new ideas should be celebrated. This encourages innovative thinking, and it is through innovation that new productivity heights are realized.

However, proactive personality was one personal characteristic that affected creativity (Kim, Hon, Lee, 2010) ^[18]. Proactive personality refers to individuals' disposition toward engaging in active role orientation, such as initiating change and influencing their environment (Bateman & Crant, 1993; cited in Kim, 2010) ^[18, 19]. Bateman and Crant (1993) noted that proactive people actively worked to manipulate their environment and seek out new information and practices in order to improve their performance.

Output Quality

Quality in this work is defined as the ability of a product or service to satisfy the purpose for which it was meant to serve. Output quality on the other hand is seen as the extent to which a product actualizes the organizational goal. Therefore, it is essential to put strategies in place to improve our output quality. Bergmann and Scarpello, (2001) ^[7] opined that compensation systems have traditionally been designed to attract and retain employees and to motivate them to increase their effort and outputs toward the achievement of organizational goals. Juran (2013) ^[16] said that quality is the hardest aspect of Workforce Productivity to measure. The common element of the business definitions is that the quality of a product or service refers to the perception of the degree to which the product or service meets the customer's expectations. Quality has no specific meaning unless related to a specific function and/or object. It is not easy to define the word quality since it is perceived differently by the different set of individuals. If experts are

asked to define quality, they may give varied responses depending on their individual preferences (Juran, 2013) ^[16]. Output quality means incorporated features of a product that have a capacity to meet customers' needs satisfaction by improving product and making them defects or deficiencies free. Thus, output quality as a measure of Workforce Productivity is based on the fact that an employee who produces unacceptable or products that does not meet the demand of the customer is rather wasting than producing and therefore is not a productive employee.

Quality Service Delivery

The discussion of quality service delivery as a measure of workforce productivity in this study was examining the phrase in its intangible features as time factor/saving and customer satisfaction. This study looked at quality service delivery as getting the best out of every activity involved in service, it involves continuously meeting the agreed customer requirement at the lowest cost by employees. Quality is an ambiguous term although we cannot define it; we know what it is (Prisigi, 1978) ^[32]. Nevertheless, Parauraman (1988) ^[29] argue that quality is zero defects; doing it right the first time. Yet in the view of Juran, (1974) quality is fitness for use, the extent to which the product successfully serves the purpose of the user during usage. Also reacting to Juran, Zeithamal (1990) ^[39] posit that quality is exceeding what customers expect from the service.

Ejor-Orusa (2016) ^[11] described quality service delivery as the the process of meeting customer demands through production of quality products, using the right channel to deliver at the right time and in the right place. Quality service delivery could be seen as the regularity with which a service provider can provide efficient service to the customer (Zeithamal, 1990) ^[39]. It is of the essence to note that organization cannot deliver adequately if the employees fail to provide quality service; therefore, every organization must be sure that their employees are productive to enable the organization to provide adequate quality service to their customers. Quality service delivery could be considered in different scale depending on the expectation of the customer because what constitute quality service is not sacrosanct. It means different thing to different persons, and sometimes it connotes; Assurance - exciting, reliance and self-assurance, Empathy - compassion, personalized interests given to customers, Reliability - delivering on time and Responsiveness - willing to help customers and provide without delay.

Empirical Review

Donkora, Afriyieb, Adjei & Nimsah (2015) ^[10] explored the effect of the three types of organizational conflict, namely the relationship, task and process conflict, on the output of employees in Ghana using Coca Cola Company Ghana Ltd as a case study. The study employed two estimation procedures; the Pearson correlation and the logit estimation method. The marginal effect extracted from the log it estimation exhibited that of the three types of conflict - only relationship conflict has a significant effect on the performance of employees. It confirmed the assertion by the existing body of literature that relationship conflict has a negative effect on output of workers. The Pearson correlation also revealed that whilst relationship conflict adversely affects performance, both task and process conflicts have a positive influence on output of workers.

The association between process conflict and performance was however unanticipated. Lastly, the Pearson correlation method brought to view that there is a very weak linkage between all the three types of organizational conflict and the performance of workers in Coca Cola Company Limited.

Jepkorir (2014) ^[15] examined the effect of trade unions on organizational productivity in the cement manufacturing industry in Nairobi. The study's objective was to establish the various activities of trade unions in cement manufacturing industry within Nairobi; establish the challenges of trade union activities in cement manufacturing industry; and determine the effect of trade unions on organizational productivity in cement manufacturing industry in Nairobi. Research questions and hypotheses were raised for the study. The study adopted a descriptive cross-sectional survey design. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages were used to analysed data. The results obtained indicated that trade unions play an important role in the work-life of their members. The activities discharged such as collective bargaining, striking actions, employee representation, embolden workers and eventually make them confident and productive thus spurring organizational productivity.

Anas (2019) ^[4] investigated the relationship of customer satisfaction towards service quality in Iraqi banks. The aim of this study is to examine the service quality on customer satisfaction in Iraqi banks. The components of service quality consist of assurance, reliability, tangibility, empathy, and responsiveness and are identified as the independent variable (IV). As for dependent variable (DV), the customer satisfaction was chosen. This study follows quantitative approach; questionnaire was adopted from previous studies and was distributed among the Iraqi customers. The sample for this study consisted of 323 customers of Iraqi banks in Bagdad. SPSS 21 software was used to analysis the data. The results indicated that service quality components namely, assurance, reliability, tangibility, and empathy effect positively and significantly on customer satisfaction.

Methodology

Research design is a framework that is used as a guide in collecting and analyzing data for a study (Baridam, 2001) ^[6]. As opined by Ahiauzu (2016), a good research design should capture the type of research that is undertaking by the researcher, the unit of analysis and the time frame for the study. Thus, the type of research design adopted in this study is the cross-sectional survey design. The population of the study comprised of 264 employees of managerial positions (4 first line managers, 4 middle line managers and 4 top line managers) in Personnel, Account/Finance, Marketing and Production departments from twenty-two (22) manufacturing companies in Rivers state. However, census was adopted in which all the elements of the population were studied since the population consist only managers of the companies. Data were generated through structured questionnaire along Likert 5-point scale, as well as through textbooks, journals, periodicals, company magazines and the internet. Face and content validation of the research instrument used for data collection was carried out, while a reliability coefficient of 0.90 was obtained from the pilot study using the Cronbach Alpha. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics of mean, standard deviation and the hypotheses were tested using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation at 0.05 level of significance respectively with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

Data Analysis, Results and Discussion

Table 1: Descriptive statistics for Lockout Actions

Descriptive Statistics					
Lockout Actions	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Machine shutdown are frequently permeated during dispute between management and employees	252	1	5	3.89	1.562
Premises lockouts are used to contain the escalation of dispute between management and employees especially when there is perceived violence	252	4	5	4.68	.466
Personnel do go on lockout when compensation and other employment related issues are not resolved by management	252	1	3	1.45	.587
Lockout action is among the mechanisms used by both employees and management during disputes.	252	3	5	4.56	.697
Valid N (listwise)	252				

Source: SPSS data survey (2019).

The result in table 4.1 above indicates that: there are 252 cases with a 100% response in all the 4 items that were distributed; the Lockout item 2 has the highest mean of 4.68 while the item ‘1’ has the highest value on standard

deviation of 1.562.

The result shows that machine shutdown are frequently permeated during dispute between management and employees.

Table 2: Presentation of the result and the correlation coefficient of the relationship between Lockout Actions and the dimensions of workforce productivity

Correlations					
		Lockout	Creativity	Output quality	Service Quality
Lockout	Pearson Correlation	1	.947**	.897**	.855**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	252	252	252	252
Creativity	Pearson Correlation	.947**	1	.848**	.783**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	252	252	252	252
Output quality	Pearson Correlation	.897**	.848**	1	.928**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	252	252	252	252
Service Quality	Pearson Correlation	.855**	.783**	.928**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	252	252	252	252

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

Table 4.2 illustrates the test for the three previously stated hypotheses that:

Based on the empirical results illustrated above, all previously stated null hypotheses are hereby rejected as the study finds that:

Ha₁: There is strong, positive and significant relationship between lockout actions and creativity at (r = 0.947, p = 0.000 < 0.05).

Ha₂: There is positive and significant relationship between lockout actions and output quality at (r = 0.897, p = 0.000 < 0.05).

Ha₃: There is positive and significant relationship between lockout actions and quality service Delivery at (r = 0.855, p = 0.000 < 0.05).

Results from table 4.2 of Ha₁(r = 0.947, p = 0.000 < 0.05), Ha₂(r = 0.897, p = 0.000 < 0.05) and Ha₃(r = 0.855, p = 0.000 < 0.05) indicate that there is a significant relationship between lockout actions and workforce productivity. These findings are in line with the view of some researchers who asserted that lockout actions are a lockout of business. This means that when an organization is lockout, operations ceases which affect the inflow and outflow of cash, raw material, etc. All these hampers workforce productivity (Onah, 2010; Idemobi, *et al* 2017; Ukah, 2016; Olu & Abolade, 2016) [13, 27]. On the other way, it is obvious that management would prefer to work with those workforces

that are most creative, valuable, skillful and strategically difficult to substitute. The decision so far has encouraged creativity among the retained staff while those that were downsized will be forced to improve their creative ability in order to improve their employability. The company may also decide to lockout personnel or shutdown machine due to incompetence, underutilization of the equipment and perceived low output (Zeb-Obipi, 2018). Capital intensive damages could also force the management to decide to shutdown equipment as a way of controlling unjustifiable expenditure in the future and as well disputes beyond their present control. Lockout leads to serious damages to the company and the employees. This is because the creativity, output and quality service delivery of the workforce will be demoralized; the supposed useful man hours will be wasted in resolving dispute and does not add any value to the output of either the company or the individual (Mamoria, 2011; Juran, 2013) [21, 16]. The consequences of lockouts are detrimental to the industry and the nation’s economy because they lead to lose in production and productive efforts (Mamoria, 2011; Lawrence, 2016; Yusuf *et al*, 2015) [21, 20, 37].

Ejor-Orusa (2016) [11] described quality service delivery as the process of meeting customer demands through production of quality products, using the right channel to deliver at the right time and in the right place. In the

meantime, the processes of taking products to the customer becomes a matter of joint concern between the executives and the employees. This is because the employees are the medium through which the company's product and reputation are being sold to the customer and the general public (Olang, 2017; Okereke *et al*, 2018; Idemobi *et al* 2017) [26, 13]. It is also imperative that managers be mindful of the incidence that will lead to Lockout Actions or ban on employees because it will affect efficient distribution of goods and services at the detriment of the company's goal attainment.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Disputes create bad feelings, resentment and hostility that would not enable the employees work together as a team thereby resulting in decline in work performance, low productivity, loss of customers, high labour turnover, adverse effects on the goodwill of the organization and complete collapse of the organization. From the results of the findings, the study concludes that industrial disputes (Lockouts) actually influence workforce productivity (creativity, output quality and service quality) of manufacturing companies in Rivers State, Nigeria. Based on the findings and conclusion, the study recommends that:

1. Government should enforce and ensure that Nigerian labour laws are complied with by manufacturing companies' management/executives to reduce lockout actions.
2. Management of manufacturing companies should ensure that they set up good negotiation panel/communication network concerning terms and conditions of employment in order to prevent lockout actions.
3. Management of manufacturing companies should maintain ample designation of authority and sustainable industrial democracy in the organization.

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