

Workplace democracy and employee resilience in Nigerian hospitality industry

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Abstract: This study investigates the relationship between workplace democracy and employee resilience in Nigerian hospitality industry using cross-sectional survey. Accessible population of one hundred (100) managers, supervisors and employees were sampled from twenty selected hospitality firms operating in Abakaliki, Ebonyi State, Nigeria. Simple random sampling technique was used in selecting the twenty hospitality firms. Sample size of eighty (80) was ascertained from the accessible population with Krejcie and Morgan sample size determination table. Closed ended structured questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents. Eighty (80) copies of questionnaire were administered to respondents but sixty three (63) copies were correctly filled and found useful for analysis. Face validity was used to ascertain the validity of the instrument, while Cronbach α was used to ascertain the reliability of the instrument. Respondents' demographic characteristics were analysed with descriptive statistics (frequencies). Kendall Coefficient of Concordance was used to analyse the hypotheses with IBM SPSS Statistics (20.0). The study found that workplace democracy dimensions are positively associated with measures of employee resilience in Nigerian hospitality industry. This study concludes that workplace democracy that is measured in terms of organisational justice and individuation predicts employee resilience in Nigerian hospitality industry.

Keywords: Workplace democracy, employee resilience, adaptive capacity, situation awareness, individuation, organisational justice.

Introduction

The capacity to remain resolute in the midst of uncertainties is one of the attributes of resilient hospitality firms in Nigeria and the world at large. Thus, hospitality firms that plan ahead of its competitors are able to succeed as a result of

its employee's resilient capacity. It has been shown that hospitality firms with resilient culture and capacity attracts talented human resource that those that are not (Eketu, 2015). Pullman and Rodgers (2010) affirmed that employee resilient is associated with high tourist attraction, repurchased intention and high profitability. It has been shown that hospitality firms that inculcate resilient tradition to its employees prosper in every business environment (Linnenluecke, 2015; Eketu and Ifionu, 2015; Zhen, 2004). Robbins and Judge (2018) asserted that workplace discretionary behaviour can only be sustained in the hospitality industry if employees are resilient conscious. For effective service delivery to be achieved in the hospitality industry, top level managers must mentor their subordinates on the need to be resilient otherwise their objectives may not be feasible to attain (Eketu, 2015; Lashley, 2008). It has been revealed that resilience enterprises are more capable of recovering from and even developing in times of great crisis (Linnenluecke, 2015). On another dimension, Edeh and Dialoke (2016) contended that with the advent of globalization, hospitality firms that are ready to become market leaders must possess resilient capacities to survive. Supporting this argument, Chesser (2016) contended that hospitality business practitioners should perceived resilient as necessity since unforeseen circumstances such as climate change, natural disaster, and insecurity are uncontrollable.

However, for employees in the hospitality industry to display resilient behaviour, managers and tourism practitioners need to initiate workplace democratic behaviours such as involvement of employees in decision making in the workplace. Pausch (2013) contended that workplace democratic antecedents such as safe and healthy working environment; presence of job security; effective compensation; effective career advancement; work-life balance and organisational justice enhances

employee resilient in the workplace. Workplace democracy implies encouraging employees to contribute positively to organisational decision making. It is also the right to employees' citizenship (Singh, 2013). Workplace democracy plays significant roles in maintaining workplace stability, flexibility and sustainability. Workplace democracy portends to equality in terms of allocation of resources within and outside the organisation. Workplace democracy is associated with employee retention; and affective commitment towards organisational policies and norms. Singh (2013) argued that industrial democracy that is characterized with the principle of security; individuation and work autonomy improves employees' effectiveness and efficiency. Workplace democracy decreases absenteeism in the workplace and provides room for employee voice. It has been shown that workplace democracy is associated with employee participation and organizational decision making process (Vidyarathne, Dhammika and Mendis, 2017). Workplace democracy also engenders employee self esteem, job satisfaction, work enrichment and recognition. Previous trends of thought show that workplace democracy is positively correlated with organisational variables (Dupe, 2015; Armin, Wolfgang, Christine and Sarah, 2012; Ome- Egeonu and Lawrence, 2017; Stanley and John, 2018). Most of the above studies did not investigate workplace democracy and employee resilience. This is what has propelled the researchers to embark on this study.

Workplace democracy

The word "democracy" is traditionally known as the government of the people by the people and for the people. But Alapiki (2004) assert that democracy is a situation where all citizens took part in law making and policy formulation. Alapiki (2004) contended that the essence of democracy is to enable people exercise the

governing power either directly or through a representative. Linking it to workplace or organisational democracy, workplace democracy connotes a philosophy whereby employees or subordinates that make up the workplace are allowed to make contributions or participate without any intimidation or fear of dismissal. Industrial democratization is a multidisciplinary concept that has to do with workers participation in decision making regarding workplace activities (Greenberg, 1981; Grady, 1990; Poutsma, Hendrickx and Huijgen, 2003; Harrison and Freeman, 2004; McShane and Von Glinow, 2018). Industrial democracy is used interchangeably with employee voice (Armstrong, 2009; Marchington, Wilkinson and Dundon, 2004; Boxall and Purcell, 2003); participative management and involvement (Robbins, Judge and Sanghi, 2009). Employee involvement is a participative process that utilizes the contribution of employees to enhance their commitment to the success of the organisation (Robbins, Judge and Sanghi, 2009). Examples of employee involvement programmes include participative management, representative participation and quality circles (Robbins, Judge and Sanghi, 2009). Dahl (1985) perceived workplace democracy as the right to self-government through the democratic process. Kaufman (2000) argued that the premise of workplace democracy is greater equality in bargaining power which will enhance efficiency, equality of the market system that will lead to win-win outcomes for employers, employees and general public. Workplace democracy implies that workers will be giving more room to contribute in decision making, thus breeding increased capacities, competencies and more positive attitudes required for societal and political citizenship (Hatcher, 2007). Workplace democracy is concerned with the structure and institutional mechanisms that provide workers or their representatives with power over decisions within their places of employment (Poole, 1986). Studies

have shown that workplace democracy has predicted so many criterion variables. Armin, Wolfgang, Christine and Sarah (2012) investigated the relationship between workplace democracy and socio-moral climate northern Italy. Their finding revealed that social moral climate has a positive impact on work-related discretionary behavioural orientations and democratic engagement orientation. Dupe (2015) investigated the impacts of workplace democracy on organizational performance of selected private and public sector organizations in Lagos State, Nigeria. Dupe's finding revealed that workplace democracy has significant relationship with employee behaviour. Stanley and John (2018) investigated workplace democracy and organizational effectiveness of selected parastatals in Rivers State. Findings of their study show workplace democracy have significant relationship with organizational effectiveness.

Employee resilience

Resilience is the ability and capacity of an enterprise to withstand unpredictable transformations, discontinuities and risks caused by the environment (Carvalho, Ribeiro, Cirani and Cintra, 2016). Resilience is a combination of two components; vulnerability and adaptive capacity (Dalziel and McManus, 2004). American Psychological Association (2014) perceived resilience as the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or even significant sources of stress. Employee resilience was drawn from organisational resilience which is the ability to of an enterprise to absorb strain and at the same time function effectively (Sutcliffe and Vogus, 2003). Employee resilience simply means the capability and ability of an employee to anticipate, improvise for environmental uncertainties and regain stability after they have occurred. On another perspective, Edeh, Chukwu and Osueke (2019)

opined that employee resilience is concerned with employees' capacity to withstand any external circumstance that may have negative effects on the organisation. Alamene, Eke and Anyanwu (2017) viewed employee resilience as employees' capability to predict future circumstances from gradually unfolding, adapt to change, and able to stand after the event. Subordinates' resilient ability is also dependent on leadership flexibility to accept responsibility by associating with every members of the organisation. Changes in global space as well as homeland disturbances measured in terms of insurgency, militancy, agitation for self determination and other natural disasters has adversely affected many hospitality businesses in Nigeria. It is based on these unforeseen and uncontrollable forces that hospitality practitioners ought to socialize its workforce on the need to be resilient conscious and future occurrences can be mitigated. Employees' awareness on disaster preparedness, monitoring and control are the sole responsibilities of the top level managers otherwise, only the managers may not solve the problem. Langvardt (2007) opined that employee resilience is an employee ability to create structures that can provide security and stability during the period of transformations. Indicators of employee resilience include adaptability, vulnerability (Alamene, Eke and Anyanwu, 2017); adaptive capacity, situation awareness, and management of keystone vulnerabilities (McManus, Seville, Vargo and Brunsdon, 2008); robustness, redundancy, resourcefulness and rapidity (Tierney, 2003); people, process, technology (Fukofuka, Fukofuka and Loke, 2018; Edeh, Chukwu and Osueke, 2019).

Indicators of workplace democracy in this study will be limited to organisational justice and individuation. Moorman (2009) defined organizational justice as how workers conclude about their treatment in their jobs and how these views affect their performance at work. Organizational justice refers to how employees feel about

management and decision makers on how they treat them at work (Robbins and Judge, 2018). Individuation refers to the work environment such as freedom of expression and autonomy in which employees are encouraged to develop themselves to their fullest potential (Singh, 2013). On the other hand, the measure of employee resilience will be limited to situation awareness and adaptive capacity. Adaptive capacity refers to the ability of an employee to maintain an experimental attitude towards new situations as they occur and to act in terms of changing circumstances (McManus, Seville, Vargo and Brunsdon, 2008). Situation awareness is the extent to which firms understand potential threats or circumstances that may affect them (Hatton, Brown, Kipp, Seville, Brouggy and Loveday, 2018). Situational awareness focuses on the openness and understanding of information necessary to combat environmental turbulences (Hatton, et al., 2018).

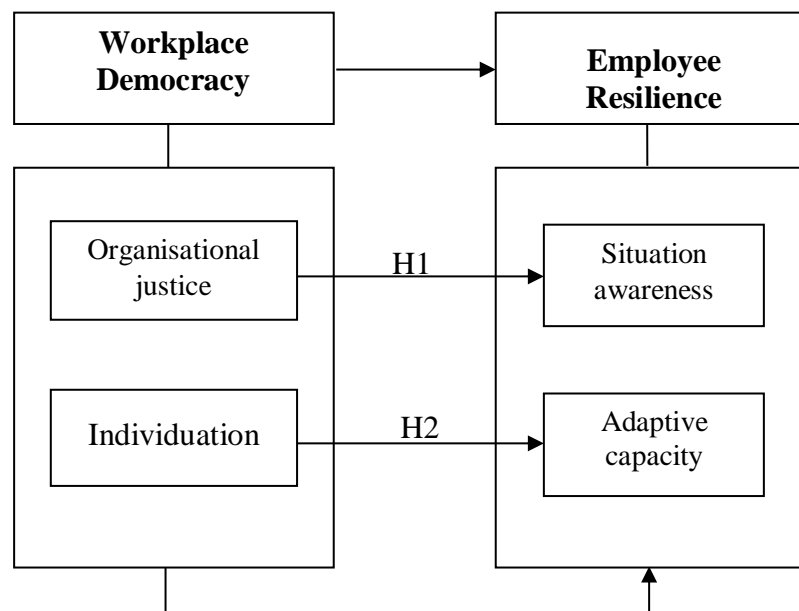


Figure 1.1: Conceptual framework showing the effect of workplace democracy on employee resilience in Nigerian hospitality industry.

Source: Researcher's Conceptualization (2019).

Research hypotheses

From the conceptual framework above, the following research hypotheses were formulated.

H1: organisational justice has positive significant effect on situation awareness

H2: individuation has positive significant effect on adaptive capacity.

Research methodology

This study employed cross-sectional survey as it allows the researcher to collect data once over a period of days or weeks or months, in order to answer research questions associated with the study (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009).

Sampling Procedure and Population

Simple random sampling was used to select twenty hospitality firms operating in Abakaliki, Ebonyi State, Nigeria. Accessible population of one hundred (100) managers, supervisors and employees were sampled. Sample size of eighty (80) was ascertained from the accessible population with Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size determination table.

Measurement of Instrument

Closed ended structured questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents. Eighty (80) copies of questionnaire were administered to respondents but sixty three (63) copies were correctly filled and found useful for analysis. Indicators of workplace democracy (organisational justice, individuation) and measures of employee resilience (situation awareness, adaptive capacity) were measured with 3-items each on five point Likert scales ranging from 5=Great extent; 4=Moderate extent; 3=Considerate extent; 2=Slightly extent; 1= Not at all. Face validity was used

to ascertain the validity of the instrument, while Cronbach α was used to ascertain the reliability of the instrument.

Methods of Data Analysis

Respondents' demographic characteristics were analysed with descriptive statistics (frequency). Linear regression was used to analyse the hypotheses with IBM SPSS Statistics (20.0).

Analysis and results

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of respondents'

Variable	Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender		
Male	39	61.9
Female	24	38.1
Age bracket		
46 years & above	9	14.3
36-45 years	19	30.2
26-35 years	25	39.7
Academic Qualifications		
Diploma	30	47.6
Bachelor degree	27	42.9
Postgraduate	6	9.5

Source: Field Survey (2019)

Table 1 above shows the analysis of demographic profiles. 39 respondents representing 61.9% are males while 24 respondents representing 38.1% are females. Age bracket results shows that 9 respondents representing 14.3% are within 46 years and above; 19 respondents representing 30.2% are between 36-45 years; 25 respondents representing 39.7% are between 26-35 years; 10 respondents representing 15.9% are between 20-25 years of age. Educational qualifications of respondents revealed that 6 respondents representing 9.5% holds postgraduate degree; 30 respondents representing 47.6% holds diploma certificates; 27 respondents representing 42.9% holds bachelor degree. However, the linear regression results for hypotheses one and two are presented on table 2 and table 3 below.

Table 2: Effect of organisational justice on situation awareness

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.824 ^a	.679	.673	.68066

a. Predictors: (Constant), Organisational Justice

ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	59.675	1	59.675	128.805	.000 ^b

1					
	Residual	28.261	61	.463	
	Total	87.937	62		

a. Dependent Variable: Situation Awareness

b. Predictors: (Constant), Organisational Justice

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.562	.151		3.727	.000
1 Organisational Justice	.738	.065	.824	11.349	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Situation Awareness

Table 2 above shows the result of linear regression analysis of organizational justice on situation awareness. The R shows a substantial correlation between the predictor variable and the criterion variable ($R = .824^a$). The R-square value indicates that about 68% of the variance in situation awareness is explained by the predictor variable. The β values indicate the relative influence of the entered variables, that is, organisational justice has a great influence on situation awareness ($\beta = .738$). The direction of influence for predictor variable is positive. Also, F -ratio revealed that the predictor variable is statistically significant and predicted the criterion variable, $F(1, 61) = 4.00$, $p < 0.05$, $R^2 = .507$ and with a high degree of correlation ($R = .824^a$). F calculated is greater than the tabulated ($128.805 > 4.00$). Since F calculated (128.805) is greater than the tabulated value (4.00), the null hypothesis is hereby rejected and alternate

hypothesis accepted. Based on these results, the study found that organisational justice has a positive significant effect on situation awareness.

Table 3: Effect of individuation on adaptive capacity

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.748 ^a	.560	.552	.71631

a. Predictors: (Constant), Individuation

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	39.781	1	39.781	77.531	.000 ^b
	Residual	31.299	61	.513		
	Total	71.079	62			

a. Dependent Variable: Adaptive capacity

b. Predictors: (Constant), Individuation

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.723	.154		4.688	.000
	Individuation	.564	.064	.748	8.805	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Adaptive capacity

Table 3 above shows the result of linear regression analysis of individuation on adaptive capacity. The R shows a substantial correlation between the predictor variable and the criterion variable ($R = .748^a$). The R-square value indicates that about 56% of the variance in adaptive capacity is explained by the predictor variable. The β values indicate the relative influence of the entered variables, that is, individuation has a great influence on adaptive capacity ($\beta = .56$). The direction of influence for predictor variable is positive. Also, F -ratio revealed that the predictor variable is statistically significant and predicted the criterion variable, $F(1, 61) = 4.00, p < 0.05, R^2 = .507$ and with a high degree of correlation ($R = .748^a$). F calculated is greater than the tabulated ($77.531 > 4.00$). Since F calculated (77.531) is greater than the tabulated value (4.00), the null hypothesis is hereby rejected and alternate hypothesis accepted. Based on these results, the study found that individuation has a positive significant effect on adaptive capacity.

Discussion of findings

From the results of hypotheses analysis it was found that workplace democracy dimensions have positive effect on the measures of employee resilience in Nigerian hospitality industry. These findings are in line with empirical evidence of Armin, Wolfgang, Christine and Sarah (2012); Dupe (2015); and Stanley and John (2018). Armin, Wolfgang, Christine and Sarah (2012) finding revealed that social moral climate has a positive impact on work-related discretionary behavioural orientations and democratic engagement orientation. Dupe (2015) finding revealed that workplace democracy is significantly associated with employee behaviour. Stanley and John (2018) findings show that workplace democracy has significant relationship with organizational effectiveness.

Conclusions and implication

This study concludes that workplace democracy that is measured in terms of organisational justice and individuation predicts employee resilience in Nigerian hospitality industry. This implies that workplace democracy gives employees the opportunity to make contributions that will enhance the performance of every organisations in terms of service delivery, growth, profitability and sustainability. One of the implications of this study is that; hospitality practitioners and managers should encourage their employees to make positive suggestions during weekly or monthly meetings as this will go a long way providing solutions to many problems facing the organisations.

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