



Collective Bargaining Agreements and Industrial Harmony in Rivers State-Owned Tertiary Institutions

Azubuiké Achoson Ehoró and Dr. K.T. Konyá

Department of Management, Faculty of Management Sciences, Rivers, State University,
Nkpolu-Oroworukwo, PMB 5080, Port Harcourt, Nigeria

Abstract: *This study investigated the relationship between collective bargaining and industrial harmony in Rivers State- owned tertiary institutions. The study adopted the cross-sectional survey in its investigation of the variables. Primary data was generated through self- administered questionnaire. The target population of this study consists of 1,796 academic staff of 4 Rivers State- owned tertiary institutions. The sample size of 327 was determined using Taro Yamane sample size formula. The reliability of the instrument was achieved by the use of the Cronbach Alpha coefficient with all the items scoring coefficients above 0.70. The hypotheses were tested using the Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Statistics. The tests were carried out at a 95% confidence interval and a 0.05 level of significance. The study findings revealed that there is significant relationship between collective bargaining and industrial harmony in Rivers State- owned tertiary institutions. The study recommends that management of tertiary institutions should show more commitment and respect for collective bargaining agreements as a way of fostering industrial harmony in the educational sector.*

Keywords: *Collective Bargaining, Industrial Harmony, Absence of Unrest, Reduced Level of Grievance*

INTRODUCTION

Over the years, industrial harmony has been the concern of organizations, researchers, employees and other stakeholders because of its importance on productivity (Fajana, 2012). Industrial harmony is important in the tertiary education industry like other industries because it promotes employees' commitment which enables the achievement of organizational goals.

Collective bargaining is at the heart of trade unionism and industrial relations. Generally, Collective bargaining rests on four fundamental principles. First is the principle of collectivism as opposed to individualism that together there can be purposeful achievement. This means that the numerous workplace problems facing workers can be best resolved by trade unions. The second principle is cooperation as opposed to competition. The third is solidarity as opposed to survival of the fittest. The fourth principle underlying collective bargaining is economic and social justice and fairness or equity (Budd & Bhavé, 2008).

Collective bargaining is central to any industrial relations system since it is a tool through which regulated flexibility is achieved (Godfrey, Theron & Visser, 2007). A number of studies show that where workers had their terms and conditions of employment determined through collective bargaining and where management supported unions, there was an improved industrial relations environment (Edwards, 2002). Adewole and Adebola (2010) asserted that frequent eruption of industrial conflicts between employers and employees in general can be effectively managed through collective negotiation and consultation with the workers' representatives. Collective bargaining has been noted to help promote cooperation and mutual understanding between workers and management by providing a framework for dealing with industrial relations issues without resort to strike and lockouts. Therefore, fair and legal process will result in successful collective bargaining, hence maintenance of industrial discipline and peace and vice-versa (Gomez et al. 2003).

According to Bronwyn (2010), the process of collective bargaining is bipartite in nature involving negotiations between employers and the employees, usually, without a third party's intervention. A trade union(s) may negotiate with a single employer typically representing a company's shareholders or with a federation of businesses to reach an industry-wide agreement (Carrell & Heavrin, 2012). The result of the negotiations is usually referred to as a collective bargaining agreement (CBA) or a Collective Employment Agreement (CEA) by the negotiating parties. Bronwyn (2010) writes that CB enables working people who are union members to negotiate with their employers to determine their terms of employment including; pay, work hours, leave, health and safety policies, ways to balance work and family and much more.

A large stream of empirical research has examined the concept of industrial harmony using various predictor variables. Sholokwu and Olori (2016) examined the relationship between management practices and industrial harmony in oil and gas firms in Rivers State. Nwokocha (2015) considered Employers and the Enhancement of Industrial harmony in Private Sector Organizations in Nigeria. Also, Kormena, Accra-Jaja and Ukoho (2017) investigated the relationship between Reward Strategy and Industrial harmony among manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. However, there has been relatively little empirical research report that details how firms can achieve industrial harmony, through effective collective bargaining agreements within this geographical sphere. Therefore, this study intends to empirically fill that gap examining the relationship between trade union activities and industrial harmony in Rivers State-owned tertiary institutions. This study therefore examines the relationship between collective bargaining and industrial harmony in Rivers State-owned tertiary institutions. Furthermore, this study will also be guided by the following research questions:

- i. What is the relationship between collective bargaining and absence of unrest in Rivers State-owned tertiary institutions?
- ii. What is the relationship between collective bargaining and reduced level of grievance in Rivers State-owned tertiary institutions?

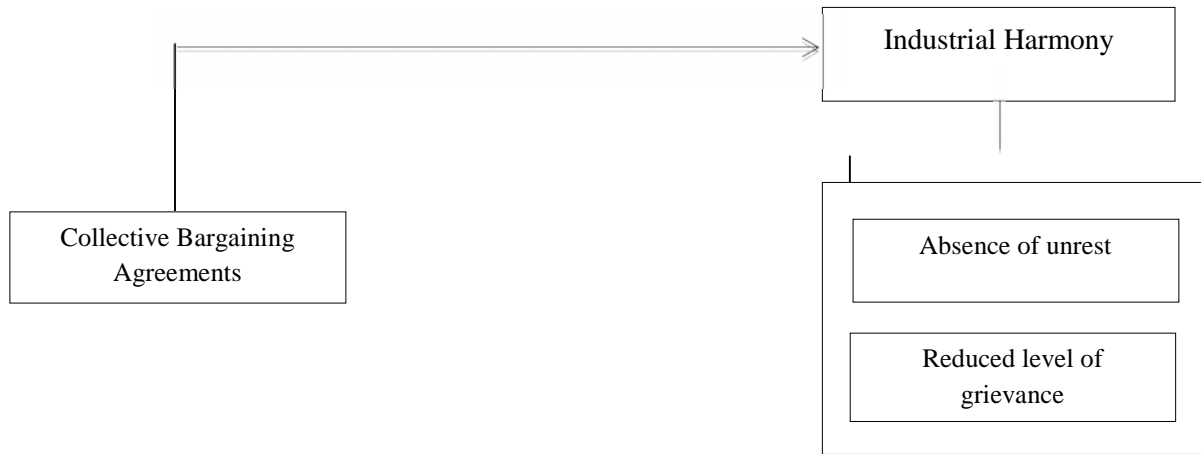


Fig.1 Conceptual Framework for the relationship collective bargaining agreements and industrial harmony

Source: Desk Research, 2020

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Foundation

Unitarist Theory

The unitarist theory is a basis of the relationship between management and trade unions in particular or employees in general as stated/originated from (Fox's, 1966). According to Armstrong (2006) the unitary view is typically held by management who saw their function as that of directing and controlling the workforce to achieve economic and growth objectives. To this end, management believed that it is the rule making authority. Management tended to view the enterprise as a unitary system with one source of authority itself and one focus of loyalty to the organization. It extolled the virtue of teamwork, where everyone strives jointly to a common objective, everyone pulls their weight to the best of their ability, and everyone accepted their place and function gladly, following the leadership of the appointed manager or supervisor.

To a unitarist, an organization is an integrated, friendly and collaborative whole. They believe that loyalty to such an organization would detract from employee loyalty to a company (disrupting the bond between employer and employees). The Unitary Model is without doubt the least sympathetic to the presence of trade unions or collective bargaining in the workplace, which are regarded as interference in the efficient performance of the managerial functions and unnecessary for the protection of employee interests (Farnham, 2000). It embodies a central concern of HRM, that an organization's people, whether managers or lower-level employees, should share the same objectives and work together harmoniously. From this

perspective, conflicting objectives are seen as negative and dysfunctional. Consequently, trade unions activities are deemed as unnecessary since the loyalty is between the industry.

Salamon (2000) states that the unitary perspective assumes the organization is or should be an integrated group of people with a single authority/loyalty structure and a set of common values, interest and objectives shared by all members of the organization. Management prerogative is regarded as legitimate, natural and accepted and any opposition to it formal or informal, internal or external is seen as irrational. Consequently, trade unions are deemed unnecessary and conflict is perceived as disruptive and pathological. According to Cooper *et al.* (2011), the unitary perspective views the organization as pointing towards a single or unified authority and loyalty structure. Emphasis under the unitary perspective is placed on common values, interest and objectives. Those subscribing to this view see all organizational participants as a team or family thereby implicitly emphasizing on shared values, shared goals and common destiny. Unitarism in essence implies the absence of factionalism within the enterprise (Fajana, 2000).

Pluralist Theory

Pluralist theory as it originated from Fox's (1966) states that trade unions activities have an important role to play in representing those interests by regulating both market and managerial relations. This approach does not deny the common long term objective of employers and workers for the survival of business which unitary approach advocates, but it emphasizes inevitable and inherent conflict between employers and workers. The employers are more concerned about their profit and investment, whereas workers are concerned about their wages and standard of living. These different kinds of interests lead to traditional conflict between employers and workers. It emphasizes on the representative function of management and trade unions, and it reinforces the value (and legitimacy) of collective bargaining. Pluralists recognize organizations within management and within unions as legitimate. They believe that management's primary function is to coordinate, communicate and persuade, rather than control or demand (Kessler and Purcell 2003).

In pluralism, the organization is perceived as being made up of powerful and divergent sub-groups, each with its own legitimate loyalties and with their own set of objectives and leaders. In particular, the two predominant sub-groups in the pluralist perspective are the management and trade unions. Consequently, the role of management would lean less towards enforcing and controlling and more toward persuasion and co-ordination. Trade unions are deemed as legitimate representatives of employees, conflict is dealt by collective bargaining and is viewed not necessarily as a bad thing and, if managed, could in fact be channeled towards evolution and positive change (Giles 1989). The employers want to maximize profit at the expenses of the employee and employee want to enjoy social benefits inform of increased in wages and conducive environment. Therefore, conflict is inevitable and the need for trade union to protect the interest of both parties. Also, there is dual authority/loyalty in this approach. Therefore,

employees are loyal to the management as well as their labour leaders (Gennard & Judge, 2002).

This perspective views society as being post capitalist. That is a relatively widespread distribution of authority and power within the society, a separation of ownership from management and a separation, acceptance and institutionalization of a political and industrial conflict (Salamon, 2000) noted that this perspective assumes that the organization is composed of individuals who organize themselves into a variety of district sectional groups, each with its own interests, objectives and leadership. The organization is thus multi-structural and competitive in terms of leaderships, authority and loyalty within the groups consequently there is a complex of tension and competing claims, which is managed in the interest of maintaining a viable collaborative structure. Conflicts that often result represent total range of behaviours and attitudes that express opposition and divergent orientation. In a nutshell, there is recognition of divergent interests, trade unions and conflict is functional (Oginni & Faseyiku, 2012).

Collective Bargaining Agreements

Collective bargaining is a process through which trade union represent their members and negotiate terms of employment such as; wages, benefits, and working conditions with their employers (American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations, 2016). According to Kochan (2012), collective bargaining is employee relationship between unions and their employers. Finnemore and Van der Mewe (1994) defines collective bargaining as "A collective agreement means a written agreement concerning terms, conditions of employment or any other matter of mutual interest concluded by one or more registered trade unions and one or more employers and or registered organisations. Labor unions in the United States use collective bargaining agreements to determine a framework for working conditions; it will include productivity and output (Rolfson, 2013). According to Zhavoronkov (2015), trade Unions negotiate collective bargaining agreement to protect and increase the rights of their members to receive better pay and workplace protections. Odhong and Omolo (2014) noted that collective bargaining provides an important channel and framework used to determine employment terms and conditions. In addition, collective bargain provides a structure that provides a clear job description and work performance. Gyesie (2017) investigated exploring the impact of collective bargaining agreements on employee performance management. It was established that collective bargaining influences performance.

Godfrey *et al.* (2007) did a study on collective bargaining which meant that CB is central to any industrial relations system since it is a tool through which regulated flexibility achieved. A number of studies showed that where workers had their terms and conditions of employment determined through collective bargaining and where management supported unions, there was an improved industrial relations environment (Edwards, 2002). Adewole *et al.* (2010) asserted that frequent eruption of industrial conflicts between employers and employees in general could be effectively managed through collective negotiation and consultation with the workers'

representatives. Collective bargaining was noted to help promote cooperation and mutual understanding between workers and management by providing a framework for dealing with industrial relations issues without resort to strike and lockouts. Therefore, fair and legal process would result in successful collective bargaining, hence maintenance of industrial discipline and peace and vice versa (Gomez *et al.* 2003).

Concept of Industrial Harmony

Industrial amicability alludes to a situation of peace in relative sense in any industrial organization, which includes; nonappearance of strikes, and doubt among work gatherings or unions, tranquil relationship amongst unions and administration of the organization, and additionally representative positive view of his or her commitment as member not as subject inside the organization. Industrial harmony is an exceptionally basic element of organizational profitability and execution. Industrial agreement in its optimal structure, presupposes an industry in a state of relative balance where relationship amongst people as well as gatherings are heartfelt and profitable. Sayles and Strauss (1981) noticed that with the unavoidable contrasts among gatherings inside an organization, struggle and varying destinations saturate cutting edge organizations. This kind of contention keeps the presence of industrial agreement which mirrors a condition of authoritative shakiness (Sayles and Strauss, 1981). Furthermore, as Hanson (1972) noted, industrial agreement speaks to nonappearance of conflict by industrial unions which will undoubtedly bring about viable and proficient organization.

Measures of Industrial Harmony

Absence of Incidence of Strike

To the industrial striker, strike speaks to the activity of his major right to pull back his administrations. Circumstances which seem to negate his own desire and yearning or which debilitates the satisfaction of the requirements of the individual are being enrolled during the time spent striking. All the more vitally, it is these individual rights that are outfit by the exchange union to set out on strike activity. The union quality in an industry, in this manner generally lay on the force of the strike. The strike is an extremely strong apparatus and can be intense if the workers on strike speak to key work or if the creation lost brought about by the business amid the strike is exceptionally huge. The strike likewise makes the administration to unite genuinely in future transaction; in that capacity, effective strikes improve the dealing position of the union for next arrangement. The strike if effective, enhances the financial prosperity of the individuals from exchange union as they can pay increments as a consequence of strike activity.

Striking workers additionally stand the danger of losing considerable wage amid the time of the strike. This on account of the Nigerian business may frequently summon the no-work-no-pay law. The Nigerian Government has reliably constrained the privilege to assault in the oil business. A portion of the applicable enactment could be located in the Trade disagreement Acts of 1969, 1976, and 1996. The Trade Unions (Amendment) Decree of 1996 made trade union registration contingent on a "no strike" proviso all through the lifetime of an aggregate

understanding. Without a doubt, it unmistakably expressed that businesses were not allowed trade union levy to the trade union concerned, unless union individuals consented to this 'no strike' statement.

Absence of Grievance Frequency

Grievance manifests in employment relations when employees or union perceive ill- treatment or violation of terms of contract agreement by employers (Bemmels &Foley, 1996). Grievance relates to a feeling that infringement has occurred in contract relationship. In such instance, three options are available for employees. These include: the worker may choose not to report grievance officially, in which case, he wallows in his pains and frustration; or quit the job; or courageously report his grievance officially following an official laid down procedure in defiance of any consequence (Pettersson & Lewin, 2000). Hirschman (1970) postulated exit, voice and loyalty" theory. The crux of this theory is that the tendency for an employee who officially reported grievance to get positive response or management retaliation in terms of job relieve is predicated on his loyalty or importance and the criticality of his job to the organization. What this means is that an employee who feels his job is not critical to his employer may be constrained from initiating grievance filing even when unfair treatment is present. In a unionized workplace, grievance procedure serves as official platform for aggrieved employees to report perceived unfair treatment and seek redress. The procedure outlines steps and stages which should be followed in order to effectively manage conflicts (Colvin 2003; Lewin, 2005). Similarly, Colvin (2003) believes that collective bargaining is a process through which disputes are managed and employees receive fair response in a unionized setting. However, Bingham (2004) maintains that alternative dispute resolution (ADR) which covers open-door systems, early mutual investigation, review panels are some useful paths to managing disputes in a non-unionized situation.

Relationship between Collective Bargaining Agreements and Industrial Harmony

Cole (2002) explains that, the process of negotiating collective agreement does not occur in a vacuum. The aim of the process, so far as employees representatives are concerned, is to achieve a workable relationship with management, found on mutual respect, in which tangible benefits are realized on agreed terms and not just on management's whim. On their part, management representatives see collective bargaining as one method of attaining corporate objectives relating to pay and conduct of employee relations. Collective bargaining is therefore a rational process in which appeal to facts and to logic reconciles conflicting interests in the light of common interest of both parties (Bendix, 2001). Hence, the application of the agreed set of rules to govern the substantive and the procedural terms of employment relationship between the employer and employee will influence industrial relations environment. The amount of trust built up between management and the trade union representatives, in particular, and management and workforce generally, during the process is a major factor in the quality of industrial relations. Where the trust is high, it is less likely that one side or the other will resort to sanctions (Cole, 2002).

From the foregoing point of view, the study hereby hypothesized thus:

- Ho₁:** There is no significant relationship between collective bargaining agreements and absence of unrest in Rivers State-owned tertiary institutions.
- Ho₂:** There is no significant relationship between collective bargaining agreements and reduced level of grievance in Rivers State-owned tertiary institutions.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the cross-sectional survey in its investigation of the variables. Primary data was generated through self-administered questionnaire. The target population of this study consists of 1,796 academic staff of 4 Rivers State-owned tertiary institutions. The sample size of 327 was determined using Taro Yamane sample size formula. The reliability of the instrument was achieved by the use of the Cronbach Alpha coefficient with all the items scoring coefficients above 0.70. The hypotheses were tested using the Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Statistics. The tests were carried out at a 95% confidence interval and a 0.05 level of significance.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Bivariate Analysis

Table 1 bears the result of correlation matrix obtained for collective bargaining agreements and industrial harmony. Also displayed in the table is the statistical test of significance (p - value), which makes us able to generalize our findings to the study population.

Table 1: Correlations for Collective Bargaining Agreement and Industrial Harmony

			CBA	Absence of incidence of unrest	Reduced level of grievance
Spearman's rho	CBA	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.633**	.844**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000
		N	134	134	134
	Absence of incidence of unrest	Correlation Coefficient	.633**	1.000	.734**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000
		N	134	134	134
	Reduced level of grievance	Correlation Coefficient	.844**	.734**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.
		N	134	134	134

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

Source: SPSS output, Version 23.0

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between collective bargaining agreements and absence of unrest in Rivers State-owned tertiary institutions.

From the result in the table 1, the *correlation coefficient* 0.633 confirms the magnitude and strength of this relationship between collective bargaining agreements and absence of unrest. The correlation coefficient represents a strong correlation between the variables. The tests of significance indicates that the relationship is significant at $p < 0.000 < 0.01$. Therefore, based on this finding the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between collective bargaining agreements and absence of unrest in Rivers State-owned tertiary institutions.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between collective bargaining agreements and reduced level of grievance in Rivers State-owned tertiary institutions.

From the result in the table 1, the *correlation coefficient* 0.884 confirms the magnitude and strength of this relationship between collective bargaining agreements and reduced level of grievance. The correlation coefficient represents a very strong correlation between the variables. The tests of significance indicates that the relationship is significant at $p < 0.000 < 0.01$. Therefore, based on this finding the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between collective bargaining agreements and reduced level of grievance in Rivers State-owned tertiary institutions.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings revealed that there is a significant relationship between collective bargaining agreement and industrial harmony in Rivers State-owned tertiary institutions. This finding agrees with According to Zhavoronkov (2015) trade unions negotiate collective bargaining agreement to protect and increase the rights of their members to receive better pay and workplace protections. Odhong and Omolo (2014) noted that collective bargaining provides an important channel and framework used to determine employment terms and conditions. In addition, collective bargain provides a structure that provides a clear job description and work performance. Gyesie (2017) investigated exploring the impact of collective bargaining agreements on employee performance management. It was established that collective bargaining influences performance.

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could be effectively managed through collective negotiation and consultation with the workers' representatives. Collective bargaining was noted to help promote cooperation and mutual understanding between workers and management by providing a framework for dealing with industrial relations issues without resort to strike and lockouts. Therefore, fair and legal process would result in successful collective bargaining, hence maintenance of industrial discipline and peace and vice versa (Gomez *et al.* 2003).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study concludes that collective bargaining significantly influence industrial harmony in Rivers State-owned tertiary institutions. The study recommends that management of tertiary institutions should show more commitment and respect for collective bargaining agreements as a way of fostering industrial harmony in the educational sector.

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Collective Bargaining Agreement or "CBA" has the meaning provided in Section 20.7. Sample 1. Sample 2. CLERICAL and CAFETERIA EMPLOYEES COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TRUSTEES OF COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK AND 1199 SEIU UNITED HEALTHCARE WORKERS EAST CLERICAL EMPLOYEES June 1, 2015 to May 31, 2019 TABLE OF CONTENTS AGREEMENT made and entered into as of this 7th day of May 2015, by and between the TRUSTEES OF COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY IN THE CITY OF.

@inproceedings{Gyesie2017ExploringTI, title={Exploring the Impact of Collective Bargaining Agreements on Employee Performance Management}, author={Nana Gyesie}, year={2017} }. Nana Gyesie. Published 2017. Political Science. Exploring the Impact of Collective Bargaining Agreements on Employee Performance Management. scholarworks.waldenu.edu. Save to Library.

Collective Bargaining Agreements and Industrial Harmony in Rivers State-Owned Tertiary Institutions. Dr. K. T. Konya. 2020. Collective Bargaining and Administration of Agreement. Industrial Relations. Collective Bargaining. relations and in ensuring industrial harmony. The negotiations for C.B. require joint sessions of the representatives of labour and management. These help a lot in promoting a better understanding of each other's point of view as well as the problems confronting them. Through discussions and interactions, each party learns more about the other, and misunderstandings are often removed.

Origin. The phrase C.B. is said to have been coined by Sydney and Beatrice Webb of Great Britain which is said to be the "home of collective bargaining". The idea of C.B. emerged as a result of industrial conflict Collective Bargaining and Industrial Relations. — Khan Sarfaraz Ali. Collective Bargaining is the negotiation between representatives of management and workers to produce a written agreement covering terms and conditions of employment. It is essentially a compromise and balancing of opposing pressures of two social groups who have enough mutual interests to work together. Overall, collective bargaining coverage is high and stable only in countries where multi-employer agreements (i.e. at sectoral or national level) are negotiated and where the share of firms that are members of an employer association is high, or where agreements are extended also to workers working in firms which are not members of a signatory employer association. In other countries (such as Germany and Austria and more recently Spain), sectoral agreements dominate but they leave room for firm-level agreements to apply less favourable terms for employees, either in a generalised way or only temporarily in case of a crisis.