

Impact of Corporate Conspiracy on Employees Productivity in Rivers State Universities

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Abstract: This study examined impact of corporate conspiracy on employees productivity in Rivers state universities. The study was led by a single research question, and one null hypothesis was put to the test. The study design used was a descriptive survey. There were 38 lecturers in the population, hence a census survey sampling was used. Three professionals validated the data gathering questionnaire, which had four response possibilities. Cronbach's alpha was used to determine the instrument's dependability, and the results showed coefficients of 0.73. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed to assess the null hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance, while mean and standard deviation were utilized to answer the research question and quantify the dispersion in respondents' viewpoints. Findings revealed that that corporate conspiracy very highly, impacts negatively on lecturers productivity. Consequently, it was concluded that if universities managements are not careful of corporate conspiracy and device a better way of getting information, the productivity of lecturers will continue lower with serious negative effect on the students performance and overall objectives of the universities. Based on the finding, it was recommended that Rivers State universities managements should be very careful of corporate conspiracy and conspiracy theories because of their negative impact. The universities management should adopt Goal-Setting Theory to examine the extent to which goal setting and feedback drive employees (lecturers) productivity in the universities.

Keywords: *Impact of corporate conspiracy, lecturers, employees productivity, universities.*

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Introduction

The economic turmoil and the unnecessary quest for political and economic powers in the organizations (universities) have created rooms for employers and employees to engage in corporate conspiracy and conspiracy theories to mostly satisfy their interest.

Corporate Conspiracy

Corporate conspiracy refers to a situation where two or more individuals within a corporation (university) conspire to commit criminal offenses or deceive others. This can involve gossips, maligning, defrauding the government, regulatory entities, investors, or the public. The goal is often to make financial gain, promotion and popularity through deceit or misrepresentation (Faster Capital,2024). It is also the secretive and sometimes illegal activities of individuals, companies and their executives to achieve a common goal. Corporate conspiracy can take many forms, ranging from harassment, price fixing and market manipulation to insider trading and bribery. This may also include witch-hunting, slander and maligning which may make staff experience increased anxiety as a result of their employment, therefore, it may impact negatively on the employees productivity.

The intricacy of these acts has hurt the public and smaller businesses, making it difficult for law enforcement and regulators to find and bring charges against them. According to van Prooijen and de Vries (2016), a corporate conspiracy is "the interpretative beliefs of employees (university lecturers) who complain about their bosses, subordinates, or coworkers and secretly meet to accomplish goals commonly regarded as vicious and evil." This can potentially result in employee withdrawal. **Employees (Lecturers) Withdrawal**

As a result of corporate collusion, employee disengagement is seen as one of the detrimental attitudes (negative impact) connected to human resource management. The withdrawal reflects a portion of the personnel that avoid overwhelming the work environment and occasionally putting in their best (Carpenter & Berry, 2017). Withdrawal behaviours (interest) are the reactions of an employee who is dissatisfied with their working conditions. A variety of volunteer activities outside of the extra jobs are seen to be essential to organisational effectiveness, and it is evident that these reactions do not favourably impact the success of employment activities. An employee may occasionally begin to resign from both his position at work and his affiliation with the

organisation. According to Rurkkhum (2018), these behaviours include employee volunteer delays, absenteeism, carelessness, and plans to leave the company due to corporate and conspiracy notions.

Conspiracy Theories in Organizations

According to conspiracy theories, organisations engage in covert, malevolent behaviour to further their own self-serving objectives. According to some recent studies, corporate conspiracies may really have a detrimental impact on workers' productivity (Van Prooijen & Jostmann, 2013). A well-known conspiracy theory suggests that the 9/11 attacks were a "inside job" (Douglas, Ana, & Leite, 2017) and that people are being misled about the truth about climate change. Conspiracy theories explain events as the result of cover-ups and cover-ups by malevolent and powerful groups. Accordingly, the root causes of important events are the covert activities of evil organisations that conceal information to further their own agendas (Jolly, Meleady & Douglas, 2019; Douglas & Sutton, 2018). In order to garner favour, some university employees have lied to management about colleagues who are ineffective, inefficient, pad results, collect bribes, submit petitions, participate in sexual harassment, and skip courses. In tertiary institutions, the desire for instant gratification and the struggle for political and economic dominance have given rise to numerous corporate or organisational conspiracy theories.

Corporate or Organizational Conspiracy Theories and Their Impact

Conspiracy theories about corporations or organisations are beliefs that influential individuals or groups (such managers) in higher education institutions are working covertly to accomplish a malicious goal. For instance, managers may consciously plan to remove an employee or choose a favourite applicant for a position (appointment) who may not be qualified. Specifically, rumour and gossip more often implicate individuals and reduce motivation, rate of attending class, attending meeting, publication than groups and so is conspiracy theories in organizations between individuals, which may in turn impact negatively on the employees (lecturers) productivity (Douglas, Ana & Leite, 2017). Corporate conspiracy theories are consequential as they have a real impact on people's health, relationships and safety. They give negative emotions and not rational deliberations cause by conspiracy beliefs.

Corporate conspiracy beliefs are closely associated with psychological motivations, while undermining the employees productivity (Grzesiak-Feldman, 2013). The consequences of corporate conspiracy can be far-reaching and devastating. It can lead to lower of interest, emotional trauma, higher prices, reduced competition, and decreased innovation in the marketplace. It can also undermine the public trust in the business community (universities) and create a sense of injustice and unfairness (Benedict, 2021). Specifically, employees (lecturers) may be more likely to consider leaving their organization to the extent that they view it as a negative place.

Employees (Lecturers)

Employees and lecturers have the same meaning in this study. In the domains of employment law, human resource management, and labour economics, workers are essential components. Workers are individuals who have a contract with their employer that gives the employer the power to supervise and

direct their work (Olumba et al., 2023). Post-secondary educators hired by the institution to teach in a college or university are referred to as lecturers. They work for the universities as employees. The universities lecturers are employed to teach students through lectures, seminars, tutorials, fieldwork, and online learning, prepare course contents, including presentations and assignments conduct research in their field of expertise, publish scholarly journal articles or books, sit on academic committees, mentor, manage, and supervise other staff, develop curriculum and engage students and the public meaningfully, as such, conspiracy in the universities environment may lead ineffective and inefficient performances of the lecturers (Zippia Team, 2025). Developing platform-neutral course materials and curricula, collaborating with other academics and lecturers to enhance teaching methods and expand knowledge, finishing and grading homework, giving tests and assessments, conducting research and producing papers, proposals, journal articles, and books, and participating in internal and external meetings, conferences, and publications are just a few of the performance requirements of the lecturers' job descriptions. In order to stay up to date, a university lecturer's duties include helping students and colleagues, participating in institutional training programs and initiatives, and reading widely and creating published work in the subject (Mekuri-Ndimele & Ukata, 2024).

The jobs of the lecturers are very tasking as such when there is corporate conspiracy there is a very tendency of impacting on their performance negatively.

Productivity (Performance)

Performance and productivity are used interchangeably in this study. The effective and economical utilisation of all resources is a necessary component of productivity. Time, people, expertise, data, money, equipment, physical space, energy, and materials are some examples of resources. According to Olumba et al. (2023), productivity is a quantitative indicator of the amount of output produced relative to the amount of input used. The efficacy and efficiency of a business (university) or economy in using labour and capital to produce goods and services is measured by productivity. According to Calabrese (2012), productivity is the amount and calibre of output produced using the resources utilised. Mustapha and Omoredede (2017) assert that because of the distinctive features of public service, the economist's view of productivity faces major challenges in the global public sector. Thus, job performance refers to the extent to which lecturers carry out their responsibilities in terms of teaching, research, development, and community service tasks, responsibilities, and activities intended to promote students' learning and assist them in achieving their learning objectives.

The degree to which academic staff members at postsecondary institutions accomplish a range of duties (such as teaching, research, and community service) has been characterized by scholars as the job performance of lecturers (Owan et al., 2020).

Employees Productivity (Lecturers Jobs Performance)

The productivity of employees and the job performance of lecturers are also employed interchangeably in this study. The concept of employee productivity is essential to human resource management since it indicates how well employees (lecturers) do their duties and support the goals of the institution. It measures an employee's productivity by evaluating the results obtained in relation to the time and resources used. Because it has a direct

impact on operational effectiveness, profitability, and customer satisfaction, employee productivity is critical to an organization's overall success and competitiveness. Employee productivity is influenced by a number of indicators and factors, including motivation and job satisfaction, a positive and encouraging work environment, training and development, time and workload management, employee engagement, and rewards and recognition (Olumba et al, 2023; Davis & Taylor, 2020). Job performance is the extent to which lecturers fulfill their responsibilities, tasks, and activities pertaining to teaching, research, development, and community service in order to promote students' learning and the achievement of the desired educational goals. Scholars have defined lecturers' job performance as the extent to which academic staff members at postsecondary institutions carry out a variety of responsibilities, such as teaching, research, and community involvement (Owan et al., 2020). The relationship between teaching qualities and academic achievement both within and outside of the classroom determines the work performance of academic personnel (Ukata and Agburuga, 2024). As a result, among other things, corporate conspiracy may have a detrimental influence on academic staff members' incentives to perform, instructional efficacy, dedication, and job satisfaction. Given the potential long-term and substantial impact on students' and the nation's educational results, the job description states that lecturers' work performance is essential and cannot be exaggerated (Akah et al., 2022).

Theoretical Framework

The theory used in this study is the Goal-Setting Theory, which was created by Edwin Locke and Gary Latham in the 1960s and 1970s (Olumba et al., 2023). The goal-setting theory's central tenet is that performance and motivation are enhanced by the establishment of specific, difficult goals. The theory states that in order to effectively drive performance, objectives should adhere to the SMART framework, which stands for specified, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound. Furthermore, the idea contends that achieving goals requires accountability and feedback rather than corporate machinations and conspiracy theories. The study's focus is on how corporate conspiracies affect workers' productivity at Rivers State Universities. There are various ways in which the Goal-Setting Theory is pertinent. The hypothesis might be applied, for instance, to investigate how much goal-setting and feedback are utilised to improve university instructors' performance. The idea could also be applied to examine if the objectives set for lecturers are clear, difficult, and attainable, as well as whether they receive feedback on how well they are doing in relation to these objectives. In the end, the Goal-Setting Theory may be able to provide light on how lecturers who are actually employees performed in their emotional assignments.

Subjects and Moderating Variables of the Study

The study's subjects are male and female lecturers (workers) at Rivers State Universities with varying degrees of years of teaching experience and educational attainment whose productivity will be impacted by corporate conspiracy. According to Ezenwafor and Ukata (2022a), a lecturer's ability to exhibit understanding of corporate conspiracy is influenced by their age, years of teaching experience, educational background, and training and retraining. As a result, Ukata and Okeke (2023) and Ukata and Nmihelle (2022) asserted that age and teaching experience are two elements that affect lecturers' understanding of how corporate

conspiracies affect workers' productivity. This is because, lecturers who have spent above 10 years in teaching in the universities are expected to possess higher knowledge on the impact of corporate conspiracy on employees productivity than those with 6 to 10 and 1 to 5 years teaching experience. Also, lecturers with higher degrees such as PhD and M.Sc./M.Ed., are expected to possess higher knowledge on the impact of corporate conspiracy on employees productivity than those with HND/B.Sc./B.Ed due to their knowledge (Ukata & Udeh, 2022; Ezenwafor & Ukata, 2022b). Accordingly, the study tested the influence of these respondents' years of teaching experience and educational attainment (three levels of moderating variables) on the impact of corporate conspiracy on employees productivity in Rivers state universities.

Statement of the Problem

The economic turmoil and the unnecessary quest for political and economic powers in the organizations (universities) seem to have created rooms for employers and employees to engage in corporate conspiracy and conspiracy theories to mostly satisfy their interest. Managers of Rivers universities appear to have depend more on corporate conspiracy and conspiracy theories instead of using a better way such as Goal-Setting Theory for setting tasks, gathering information and evaluating the performance of lecturers. Perhaps they do not know the problems associated with corporate conspiracy and how it impact on the lecturers, therefore, the reason for this study "impact of corporate conspiracy on employees productivity in Rivers state universities." The findings of this study will close the gap in the body of knowledge since there is no study with an exact purpose like this, and make available an empirical data for decision makers.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the impact of corporate conspiracy on employees productivity in Rivers state universities. The specific objective of this

Study was to find out:

- How corporate conspiracy impact on lecturers productivity in Rivers state universities.

Methodology

The research design used in the study was a descriptive survey. Given that it aimed to gather the opinions of both male and female academics regarding the effect of corporate conspiracy on employee productivity at Rivers State Universities, a descriptive survey research design was judged appropriate. The population of the study was 38 lecturers from Rivers State University (21) and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education (17). Census survey technique was adopted to sample all the 38 lecturers because it was of manageable size. The instrument used for data collection was a self-designed four-point response options questionnaire titled, "Impact of corporate conspiracy on employees productivity (ICCEP)".

It contains one section with 10 items and were rated as very highly (4.50 - 5.00), highly (3.50 - 4.49), moderately (2.50 - 3.49), and lowly (1.50 - 2.49). The instrument was administered to ten lecturers from the University of Uyo who were not part of the study population. Cronbach's alpha was used to compute the reliability coefficient, yielding an alpha value of 0.73. These high reliability coefficients demonstrate that the instrument was reliable.

The researcher personally delivered copies of the questionnaire to the respondents at their educational institutions with the assistance of three research assistants who had been properly trained on the protocols to be followed. The questionnaire was evaluated in person and in terms of its content by three experts from the Faculty of Education at Nnamdi Azikiwe University in Awka. The measure of internal consistency technique was used to determine the instrument's reliability. The researcher visited each postsecondary institution and secured approval from the relevant department heads prior to starting the investigation. After that, the researcher and their assistants visited each school and handed over the required quantity of copies of the instrument to the department heads, who then provided them to the lecturers to complete. Five working days later, they came back to pick up the finished copies. Thirty-four duplicates of the instrument were accurately completed, retrieved, and used for the data analysis. The arithmetic mean and standard deviation were

used to answer the two study questions and assess the degree of homogeneity or diversity of respondents' viewpoints with respect to the questionnaire items and the aggregated mean. The one-way analysis variance (ANOVA) was used to test the null hypothesis at the 0.05 level of significance. The ANOVA was used for the null hypothesis since it measured a single category independent variable with three levels of moderating variables. The null hypothesis was accepted when the calculated significant (Sig.) value, also known as the p-value, was more than or equal to (\geq) the alpha value of 0.05. Otherwise, the null hypothesis was refuted. The data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.

Result Presentation, Analysis and Discussion

Research Question 1

- How does corporate conspiracy impact on lecturers productivity in Rivers state universities?

Table 1: Respondents' mean ratings on how corporate conspiracy impact on lecturers productivity 34

SN	How corporate conspiracy impact on lecturers productivity	\bar{X}	SD	Remarks
1	It wrongly implicate individuals and reduce motivation at work	4.53	.81	Very Highly
2	It reduces the rate of attending classess to teach students	4.51	.82	Very Highly
3	It reduces the rate of attending meetingongs to meaningfully contribute	4.54	.81	Very Highly
4	It lowers my interest in publications	4.52	.80	Very Highly
5	It impact on my emotions being badly	4.53	.82	Very Highly
6	It bring ill-health, relationships and safety	4.54	.83	Very Highly
7	It kills good relationships in the workplace	4.51	.80	Very Highly
8	corporate conspiracy makes lecturers look unsafety	4.52	.82	Very Highly
9	It undermines lecturers efforst in the workplace	4.54	.83	Very Highly
10	Corporate conspiracy ecreases innovation	4.51	.80	Very Highly
Aggregated Mean		4.53		Very Highly

Table 1 shows that all the 10 have very highly negative impact of corporate conspiracy with mean scores that ranged from 4.51- 4.54. In the same manner, the aggregated mean score of 4.53 also shows that corporate conspiracy very highly impact negatively on on lecturers productivity. According to the standard deviations for the ten items on the list, which varied from 0.80 to

0.83, respondents were uniform in their belief that corporate conspiracy has a significant detrimental influence on the productivity of professors at Rivers State universities.

Hypotheses Testing

Table 3: ANOVA summary of male and female lecturers on how corporate conspiracy impact on lecturers productivity based on their years of experience.

Sources of Variance	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F-cal.	Sig.	Decision
Between Groups	2.258	2	1.329	1.288	.283	Accept H_{01}
Within Groups	52.357	32	.777			
Total	56.615	34				

Table 2 shows a calculated F-value of 1.28 at degrees of freedom 2 and 32, with a significant (sig.) p-value of 0.28 that is greater than the alpha value of 0.05 ($0.38 > 0.05$). Thus, the null hypothesis (H_{01}) was accepted. This indicates that, according to their years of experience, male and female professors at Rivers State University do not significantly differ in their mean evaluations of the influence of corporate conspiracy on their productivity.

Discussion

The study's conclusions demonstrate that corporate conspiracy has a significant detrimental effect on lecturers' output. The results support Douglas, Ana, and Leite's (2017) assertion that gossip and rumours more frequently falsely blame individuals and lower motivation, attendance at meetings, classes, and publications than groups. They also found that conspiracy theories within

organisations between individuals can have a detrimental effect on the productivity of lecturers. The results further support the argument made by Grzesiak-Feldman (2013) that corporate conspiracy theories are closely linked to psychological motivations and lower employee productivity. Corporate conspiracies can have disastrous, far-reaching effects. Lower interest, emotional distress, increased costs, less competition, and less innovation in the market are all possible outcomes. Additionally, it can erode public confidence in the business community (universities) and foster feelings of unfairness and injustice (Benedict, 2021).

The study's findings also indicate that, according to their years of experience, male and female professors at Rivers State University do not significantly differ in their mean evaluations of the effects of corporate conspiracy on their productivity. Additionally, the results support the claims made by Ezenwafor and Ukata (2022a) that the number of years of teaching experience,

educational background, training and retraining, and age of lecturers all influence how well they exhibit understanding of corporate conspiracy. Therefore, Ukata and Okeke (2023) and Ukata and Nmiehelle (2022) asserted that age and teaching experience are two factors that affect lecturers' knowledge of the impact of corporate conspiracy on employee productivity. This is because lecturers with more than 10 years of university teaching experience are expected to know more about the impact of corporate conspiracy on employee productivity than those with 6 to 10 and 1 to 5 years of teaching experience. The fact that the study demonstrates that corporate conspiracy has a significant negative impact on lecturers' productivity suggests that university management should exercise extreme caution when it comes to corporate conspiracy theories.

Conclusion

Based on the findings that emanated from the discussions of the study, it was concluded if universities managements are not careful of corporate conspiracy and devise a better means such as Goal-Setting Theory founded by Edwin Locke and Gary Latham in 1960s and 1970s, the productivity of lecturers will continue to go lower with serious negative effect on the students performance and overall objectives of the universities.

Recommendation

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- Given the detrimental effects of business conspiracies and conspiracy theories, management at Rivers State University should exercise extreme caution. The goal-setting theory, which was developed by Edwin Locke and Gary Latham in the 1960s and 1970s, should be used by university administration to investigate how much goal-setting and feedback are utilized to improve the performance of university staff members (lecturers). The idea should also be applied to examine if the objectives set for lecturers are clear, difficult, and attainable, as well as whether they receive feedback on how well they are doing in relation to these objectives. Finally, the Goal-Setting Theory contributes to the understanding of how lecturers (workers) carried out their assigned tasks with their feelings.

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