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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between Remote working and Employment Relations in the Chemical and Non-Metallic Industry in Port-Harcourt, Nigeria. The objective of the study was to find out how employees of the Industry stayed connected while on the job in the face of remote working. The study population was the two (2) companies in the Chemical and non-metallic industry in Port Harcourt. A census sampling technique was adopted. The instrument that was used to gather the data was the Interview Guide. The instrument was tested for validity, using the peer review method and reliability was ensured by maintaining consistency of interview questions throughout the research. Data for the study was presented in diagrams and paragraphs and analyzed using the QSR NVivo. Data showed that there is no relationship between the Remote Working and Employment Relations, but showed a relationship between a child node of Remote Working and an outlier (health challenges and other special circumstances). The Chemical and Non-Metallic industry in Port Harcourt did not transit to remote work like most of the industries in the world did in 2019, except in special circumstances that could include health challenges of employees. The result indicated that remote work has not been adopted in the Chemical and Non-Metallic industry but a hybrid work model is introduced gradually and when necessary, which means that employment contract, workplace rules, workplace grievances and disputes settlements did not have the need to change. Since the industry is yet to adopt remote working, but is gradually tilting towards the adoption and utilization of the hybrid work model, it is recommended that organizations in the industry should prepare for the future by drafting a prospective employment contract model, to cover potential organizational changes when the industry goes hybrid or totally remote.

Keywords: *Remote Working, Employment Relations, Co-working spaces, Hybrid working, Employment Contract, Employment Parties, Government.*

1.0 Introduction

Employment relations refer to the formation of the workplace employment contract; the performance of the contract; the determination of the contract; the specification of the parties in the contract; and the ways by which the parties are involved in the regulation of the contract (Biriowu, 2018). The Employment Relations domain has experienced shifts that have occurred in the model of managing people in Organizations. These shifts were responses to emerging eras in the industrialization regimes of the production of goods and services. The first regime brought with it increasing hierarchically structured organizations and employees with low discretionary know-hows. The corresponding people management model that suited these employees then, is referred to as Personnel Management. The second and third industrialization era (globalization) came with it, global, flatter organizations and a global workforce.

The corresponding people management model that suited these employee sets is referred to as Human Resource Management. The emergence of the fourth industrial revolution, also known as Industry 4.0 (World Economic Forum, 2022), which marked the era of technological advancements, particularly in the spectrum of digital technology, drastically transformed the way that organizations and employees work and relate with one another. The era of the world's most significant technologically driven change is forcing organizations to harness converging technologies in order to create an inclusive human centered future for employees. This includes employees' ability to "do their jobs from a location other than a central office operated by the employer" (VMware, 2022, para. 1), also termed remote work. Okikiola (2019) states that remote work includes work that occur in employee's home or co-working spaces, private offices, including other off-site locations such as in cars, parks, churches, mosques, cafés, etc.

Remote work entails organizational flexibility to enable and encourage employees' blend of known practices and technology to connect with and work in virtual teams to create value. The transition from physical Office working model to the Remote working model would normally lead to the formation and fashioning out of terms and conditions of employment for the management of this paradigm shift. Employers are therefore looking at the practicalities of how to transition staff back to office-based working. This is because the decision to permanently transit to remote working is said to go to the very root of the employment relationship, and the meaning of work and the workplace (Smith et. al., 2022). For Smith et. al. then, any future solution requires employers to navigate complex local legal considerations, traversing not only employment laws and human resources topics, but also tax, data privacy, and immigration laws.

The focus of this paper therefore was to find out how employees of the Chemical and Non-Metallic Industry in Port Harcourt, Nigeria, stayed connected while on the job in the face of the emerging reality – remote working, and indeed the rise of a remote workforce, and the general implications of remote work on employment relations.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Prior to the advent of distant or virtual working, the formation, performance and determination of the terms and conditions of employment of workers had the physical work setting in mind before the authoring of the rules of engagement. With the emerging technological trends that has inevitably caused a change in workplace practices where a large number of the workforce has been sent home to set up offices in locations other than the workplace, the terms of engagements would inadvertently change too. For instance, when such practices that require a physical or in-person meeting (i.e. contract formation, performance and determination) are done remotely, organizations as well as employees are forced to change the rules of

engagements. This poses a problem. This study examined the implications of remote working on employment relations in the age of technological advancements.

1.2 Research Questions

The study was conducted to find answers to the following questions:

- i. In what ways does remote work affect the formation, performance and determination of the employment contract?
- ii. How does remote working affect the making of workplace rules?
- iii. How does remote working affect workplace grievances and disputes settlement?

2.1 Literature Review

2.1.1 Technological Determinism

The theory was propounded by Marshall McLuhan in 1962 in his *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The making of Typographic Man*. The theory is a deterministic approach to explaining how technology and technological innovations play a role on how individuals live their lives. McQuail (2010) states the theory describes how social change will be caused by technological innovations, particularly in the spectrum of the media, and the role that media technology disruptions will affect the way that people in a society act, think, and live their lives, moving from one technological innovation to another. Purporting that all technology is communication and an extension of ourselves which offers us the means of enhancing our communicative and innovative abilities through time and/or space (Griffin, 2000). Although the theory is also argued to be a reductionist approach to linking the technology and behavior (Van Dijk, 1999), it is an overall explanation of the effects of technology in the way that society operates and develops. The adoption of remote work stems from communications technological innovations and society's need for flexible work style and pace, which is why the technological determinism theory is relevant to the study.

2.1.2 Remote Working

Remote Year (2019) describes remote work as “a working style that allows professionals to work outside of a traditional office environment” (para. 3). It refers to the situation where an employee does not need to be physically present in a work environment to perform their contractual duties. Organizations allow their employees to set up a workstation remotely and on the go as long as they execute their projects and meet or surpass organizational goals. Also popularly known as work from home, remote work is “a telecommuting type of flexible working arrangement that allows an employee to work from remote location outside of corporate offices” (Gartner, 2020, para. 1). This offsite arrangement affords employees the flexibility of time management and the result is a balance of work-life situations, access to other career opportunities, safety from commutation hazards and ease of tasks delivery. Remote work signifies employees ‘dial in’ or ‘stay connected’ to the work nexus even when they are not physically present at the workplace.

For VMware (2022), the new thinking in organizations today is on how to stay connected on the job either through physical presence at the workplace or remotely. For VMware therefore, staying connected while on the job may come in the following ways:

THE NORMAL – The use of Trado- physical office setting model. This involves the use of office-based workers; in-office employees; Out-of-office workers; Office workers.

THE NEW NORMAL- The use of the remote working model (work from the employee's home and work from anywhere else outside the employer's workplace).

THE HYBRID MODEL – The use of a combination of the physical office setting and remote working models.

For VMware then, remote working takes different forms that range from working from an employee's home; working from other co-working spaces; short term remote work or telecommuting (temporary or less frequent version of remote work for child birth or other health challenges); working from an Organization's home office.

Many employers are said to be mindful of the following benefits that being in the same physical space brings (Smith *et al.*, 2022):

- Collaboration and innovation
- Knowledge sharing and
- Social cohesion.

2.1.3 Making Home Work – Opportunities and Threats

Smith *et al.* (2022) contend that remote working is the most dramatic transformation of the global workforce. For Smith *et al.*, 2022, therefore, tens of millions of office-based workers have been sent home to set up remote workplaces from kitchen, dining tables and home offices on a scale never seen before, and businesses around the world have adapted surprisingly well. Studies conducted by some Consulting Firms (American Telephone and Telegraph Company, 2020; Surepayroll, 2020) on the reasons why remote working will be sustained indicate that:

- Workers make home work because working from home eliminates commuting to the workplace and its associated hazards, including traditional office related stress, boredom, job burn-out and other health challenges.
- A study published in Science-Norway indicates that long before COVID-19, studies showed that office workers were getting sick more often, finding those energy-efficient physical office buildings as demons, at not just trapping heat but airborne pathogens as well.
- Workers make home work because non-commuting to work eliminates the cost of auto mobile gas and vehicle maintenance costs.

According to studies carried out by AT & T (2020), other reasons why remote working will be sustained indicate that Employers support the idea of making home work because, the absence of in-office workers leads to a reduction in production costs such as office maintenance related spending. Employers also increasingly support the making home work because it contributes to green office management (lowering carbon emissions to the planet).

The above position was supported by a survey conducted by Sure-Payroll (a U S based Consulting Firm in 2020) who found that 86% of people prefer to work alone to maximize their productivity, and their sentiments were proven by 2020's increase in productivity when most professionals were working remotely). AT&T was reported to have saved \$30 million a year with its telework initiative within the same period. At the other spectrum are arguments on why remote working should die and the CEO of WE-WORK (2020) observes that a significant threat is that remote workers end up missing the camaraderie and find their homes distracting and those who are severely engaged with the company want to go to the office two-thirds of the time, at least. Other threats that plague homework have been identified and according to the CEO of WE-WORK (2020), they include:

- Remote working is said to be a threat to corporate culture and innovation.

- Paucity of remote working tools to employees occupying non-leadership positions will kill remote work success.
- The population of the corporate world has a preponderance of digital immigrants than digital natives (Prensky, 2014).
- A study confirmed that although Millennials disproportionately suffered financially from 2020's lockdowns, it was Gen Zers who endured diminished career prospects. That's because it's harder to learn a job when you only have a laptop for leadership. Internships may not provide the same value when they are fully remote.
- Working remote leads workers to miss the group solidary and happy hour plans that engender team work spirit.

2.1.4 The Hybrid Model

The use of a combination of the physical office setting and remote working models is referred to as the hybrid model. In this model as stated in Birriowu (2022), employers' decisions are informed by the provisions of their employment contractual documents, the new meaning of work (which includes remote workers and in-office workers), and the workplace (which includes the physical office setting and the remote work setting).

This model incorporates the following best remote work practices for their remote work population, VMware (2022):

- Clear guidelines and policies: A culture of trust is often grounded in a healthy understanding of expectations: Is a person expected to be "in the office" (or accessible for communication online) by a certain time or for a certain number of hours a day?
- Team building for the remote work population: A virtual team is still a team. Managers, in particular, have a responsibility to build collaborative, communicative teams that are invested in each other's success.
- Top-notch technologies: Companies with high-performing remote teams invest in the technologies their people rely on to do their jobs. These include remote desktops and mobile devices, high-speed broadband, reliable and easy-to-use applications, and other business-specific needs.

2.1.5 The HR Employee Support Function (Making Work Home)

At the commencement of the employment relationship with an employer, the workplace becomes the place where employees spend the majority of their waking time. It is the expectation of all employees to be in a positive, welcoming and productive environment. It is also the expectation of employees to have a workplace or environment where they would be well-informed, well cared for, and valued as part of the team. Where an employer puts in place these mechanisms that would make the workplace enticing, exciting, inviting and interesting, then the performance and productivity delivery from employees are assured. These conditions may create passion in employees such that the workplace may be missed when they are off on vacation and other forms of absences from work. These will lead to positive employee experience; engagement; commitment; and employees' citizenship behavior.

The Human Resource employee support function of an organization provides the structure to fulfill the expectation of all employees whose desire is to be in a positive, welcoming and productive environment. These will make work home.

The key components of the HR employee support function are:

- Recreational facilities provision at the workplace such as Gyms, inter-work group sporting competitions, happy hour events.
- Employees' Queries Resolution,
- Workplace Accommodation/Relocation Management,
- Effective Newcomer Orientation/Onboarding scheme
- Dual Careers Administration,
- Activity Tracking/Time Management,
- Career orientation Review and
- Employee Mentoring advisory

2.1.6 E-Human Resource Management

The advent of the fourth Industrialization made its debut with the principle of work and organization digitalization, and a corresponding remote workforce. The people management model that suits this new normal is referred to as E-Human Resource Management.

E-Human Resource Management, according to (Biriowu, 2022) uses the following tools to function:

- effective communication technology,
- teleconferencing,
- telework technology,
- video conferencing,
- widespread internet broadband adoption,
- email,
- increasingly mobile modern workforce,
- remote work software,
- mobile work tools, and
- virtual reality conferencing

VMware (2022) added that E-Human Resource Management requires a collaborative and dynamic mobile and multi-generational workforce with different communication preferences to function.

2.1.7 Employment Relations

Employment Relations refer to the formation of the workplace employment contract; the performance of the contract; the determination of the contract; specification of the parties in the contract; and the ways by which the parties are involved in the regulation of the contract (Biriowu, 2018). The transition from physical office working model to the Remote working model would normally lead to the formation and fashioning out of terms and conditions of employment for the management of this paradigm shift. As their words import, "Union-Management relationship should be based on the making and administering of rules which regulate employment relationships (Dunlop, 1958; Flanders, 1965). This serves as the basis for the employment contract.

2.1.8 Employment Contract

The employment contract could be understood on the basis of its formation, performance and termination.

The Formation of the Contract:

In legal parlance, a contract is said to be an agreement between two or more persons, which creates an obligation to do or not to do a thing, and the agreement must be enforceable at law.

This contract which is seen as a master/servant relationship, empowers the employer (the master) to decide what thing is to be done; the way it should be done; the means by which it should be done, the time and place it should be done.

Prior the birth of Remote working, the intent of the parties in the employment contract is for one of the parties to present him/herself at the physical workplace. The implication of the introduction of Remote working therefore will entail a re-visitation of the pre-remote employment contract model, to cover, those Organizations are who either totally remote or hybrid. Once the formation of the contract has been perfected, the duties and obligations of the parties are brought to bear on the parties. This, in legal terms, is referred to as the performance of the contract.

2.2 The Performance of the Employment Contract:

In the performance of the employment contract, Drake (1985) points out that, the Courts, over the years, developed duties, rights and obligations for the parties, and remedies for damages suffered by the parties in the employment relationship.

Remedies (claims for damages) are available at common law where one of the parties proves a breach of its rights and duties by the other party. At common law, therefore, labor (a worker) is entitled to claim damages only where he is able to prove a breach of the common law duty which an employer owes him. An employer is also entitled to claim damages only where he can prove a breach labor owes him. These duties, obligations and rights are described in legal parlance as common law duties. For Drake (1985) therefore, these duties and obligations are apportioned to both employers and employees.

The duty to take reasonable precautions to secure the physical safety of workers may be regarded as the most important of all the duties of the employer at common law, of similar relevance are the other duties implied at common law. However, and for the purpose of this paper, the duty to take reasonable precautions to secure the physical safety of workers have implications to the birth of Remote working, in the face of its key attributes of non-delegability, Reasonability and Non- extension to employees' properties. A recent case of injury reported by a Remote Worker in South Korea who had a fractured leg while at home working was held by the Court as qualified to be paid damages.

The Remote working implications of this duty of care is on how to re-define what constitutes "out of and in the course of employment" to qualify for damage claims.

2.2.1 The Termination of the Employment Contract

The termination of contract of employment could be explained in relation to the law of contract. That is, where a party to the contract commits a breach to the contract, the innocent party could either accept or waive that breach. This conception which applies in England however, relates to the law which provides that a congenial reason be provided before an employee is removed (Uvieghara 2001).

This practice is absent in Nigeria. The Courts of England prohibit the removal of workers at the whims and caprices of employers. In Nigeria, the Courts uphold the legal maxim, "that no one imposes a willing servant on an unwilling master" and vice versa. In cases of dismissal however, Nigerian Courts would demand congenial reason to enable them determine the wrongfulness or otherwise of cases bothering on dismissal.

The implications of the birth of Remote Working on proving congenial reason to determine the wrongfulness or otherwise for termination of employment when such occurs without the physical presence of the employers Representatives or co-workers becomes a task that has to be re-visited. In Human Resource Management parlance, the word termination is widely used to describe all forms of personnel separations in industrial organizations (such as termination, resignation, redundancy and dismissal).

For Uvieghara (2001), there are various ways by which a contract of employment can be brought to an end. These are by notice, by agreement, by frustration, by performance and through constructive termination. A contract of employment may be brought to an end by notice where either party gives appropriate notice on an intention to terminate the contract. Appropriate notice may be determined by provisions in the employee's conditions of service handbook; by statute and practice. A contract of employment may also be brought to an end by agreement where duration of contract is spelt out in that agreement. Through frustration (supervening events such as Civil War, illness, death etc.), a contract of employment could be brought to an end. By performance, parties to an employment contract may bring it to an end when a definite period is fixed for the performance of the contract. It is another matter if a dispute arises on whether the parties actually performed.

2.2.3 The Employment Parties

The relationship between employers and employees comprises three groups of actors or parties. These actors are the workers or employees and their associations; the employers and their associations; and the Government (and its agencies).

2.2.4 The Workers or Employees:

A worker or an employee has been identified as anybody that offers his/her labor services to an individual or organization in return for a definite remuneration (Oyesola, 2010). The worker sees his relationship with his employer as that of an engagement to secure the best possible conditions and living standards for himself. Okene (2012) points out, the Courts have formulated three types of tests in order to determine whether a person is a servant (employee or worker) or not. These tests are referred to as the control test; organization or integration test; and multiple or economic reality test. The control test emphasizes the right of control exercised by the employer over the worker. That is, a control on when and how a job is to be done.

Due to some observed difficulties associated with the control test, the organization or integration test was developed to take care of likely injuries to third party employees which the control test excluded. Following the complex nature of the employment relationship, the Courts over the years found the control and integration tests to be inadequate in determining this relationship. The multiple test which takes care of the nature of the job, the skill types and sets, are now used to determine the employment relationship. Following the birth of Remote Working, the right of control exercised by the employer over the worker, that is, a control on when and how a job is to be done is flexible and at the discretion of the employee, which is likely to be abused. The Courts are to re-visit the testing model that will re-affirm to model of control for the use of the employer whose right it is to run the Organization.

It is to be noted that workers formed unions so as to have a strong power base to withstand the strength of the powerful employer.

2.3 The Employer:

Oyesola (2010) sees an employer as the individual or organization that hires men to work for him or it. Characteristically, his focus is all about having the right to manage, the ability to plan for the future, so that the organization can continue to be a success, to make profit for its

shareholders, and to keep its employees ‘motivated’. The Nigerian Trade Disputes Act (S.90 (3) defines an employer to be any person who has entered into a contract of employment to employ any other person as a worker either for himself or for the service of any other person and includes the agent, manager or factor of the first mentioned person or his personal representative”. Employers over the years had to band together through the formation of Employers Organizations to withstand the increasing power of workers’ unions.

The birth of Remote work is likely to alter the primary focus of employer on his right to manage and his ability to plan for the future, so that the organization can continue to be a success, to make profit for its shareholders, and to keep its employees ‘motivated’.

2.4 The Government (and their Agencies):

The problem of labor immiseration led to concern shown by some persons who clamored for the role of Government in the management of employment relations. This pressure and social conscience according to Akerele (1982) compelled governments to intervene in the employment relations system so as to mitigate the harsh effects of labor exploitation by regulating such things as hours of work and the employment of children. It is to be noted that Government or state intervention over the years has come in the form of the creation of the Labour Ministry; statutes as noted in constitutional provisions and Acts promulgated by the law making arm of the state; judicial interventions, including common law and court decisions; and the recognition and listing of workers’ unions and employers’ unions or organizations.

The birth of Remote Working will compel Government to review the Labour Legislations that were modeled to protect employees from work conditions associated with the physical workplace. The Labour Act that empowers Authorized Labour Officers to enter and inspect premises where workers perform their jobs may not permit them to enter private homes of Remote Workers.

Figure 1: is a representation of Remote Working as a Predictor variable and Employment Relations as a Criterion variable:

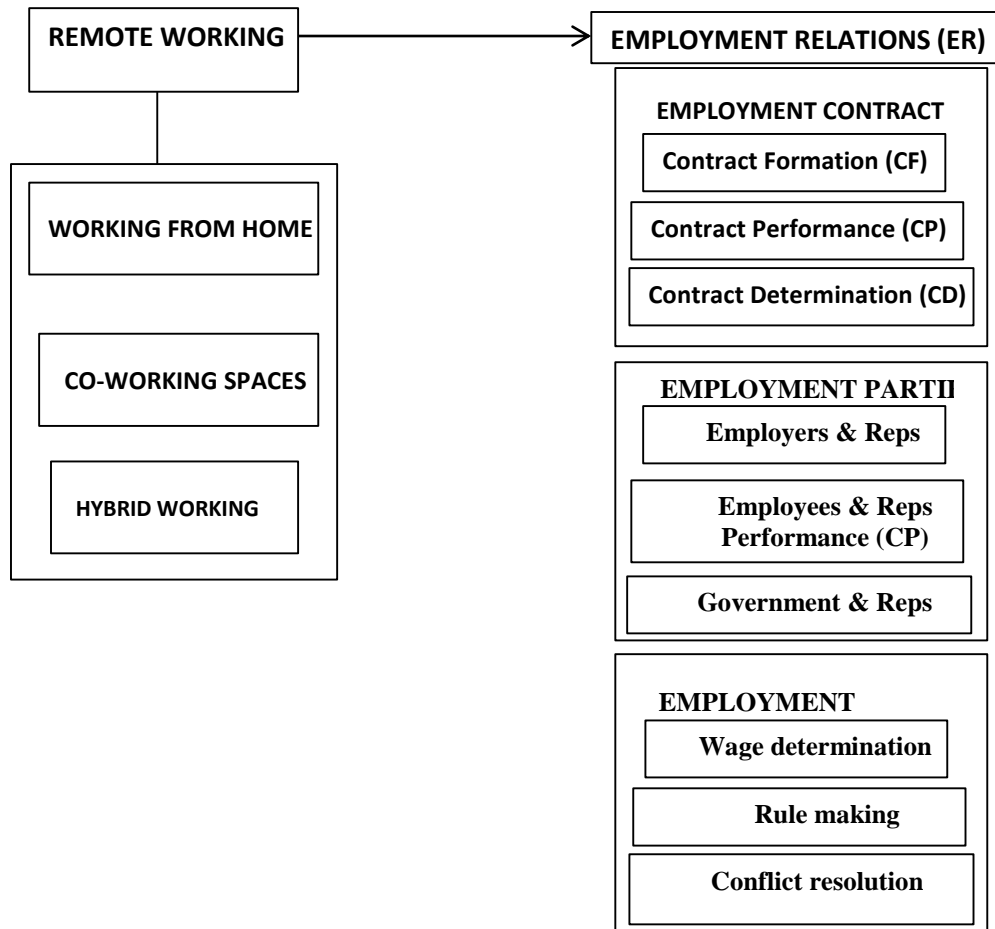


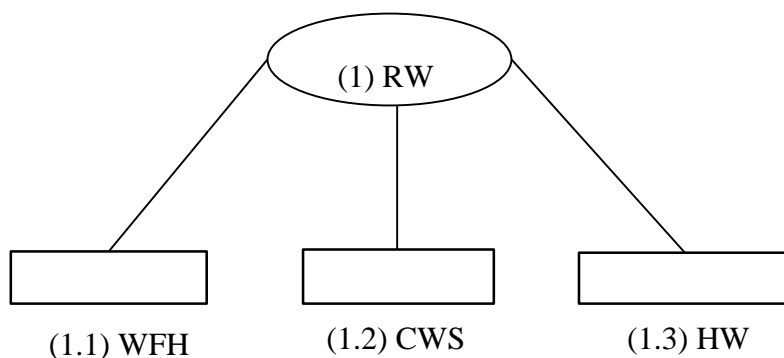
Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of Remote working and Employment Relations

3.0 Methodology

This study qualitatively examined the ways remote work affects employment relations in the chemical and non-metallic industry in Port Harcourt. Using a survey research design, the researcher conducted the study at a macro-level unit of analysis, a study that prompted the eliciting of responses from Human Resource Managers in the industry. The study was conducted at a macro (organization) level thus, the study's population was the two (2) companies in the Chemical and non-metallic industry in Port Harcourt namely, Ndorama Eleme Petrochemicals and Notore Chemical Industry. The study adopted a census sampling technique because the population is a manageable size, hence both companies were surveyed. The instrument that was used to gather the data was the Interview Guide, which was formulated to congregate responses that answered the Research Questions. The instrument was tested for validity using the peer review method and reliability of instrument was ensured by maintaining consistency of interview questions throughout the research. Data for the study was presented in diagrams and paragraphs and analyzed using the QSR NVivo.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Figure 1: Dimensions of Remote Work (RW)



Measures of Employment Relations (ER)

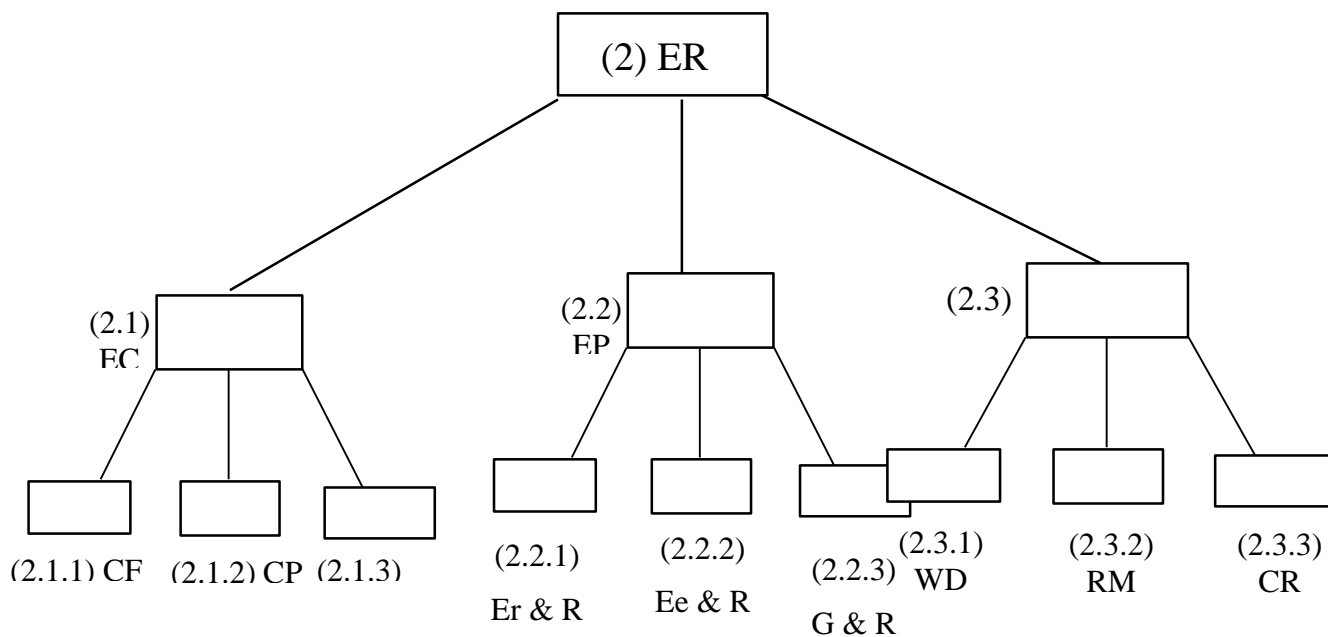


Figure 2: QSR NVivo (2022) Analysis of Remote Work and Employment Relations

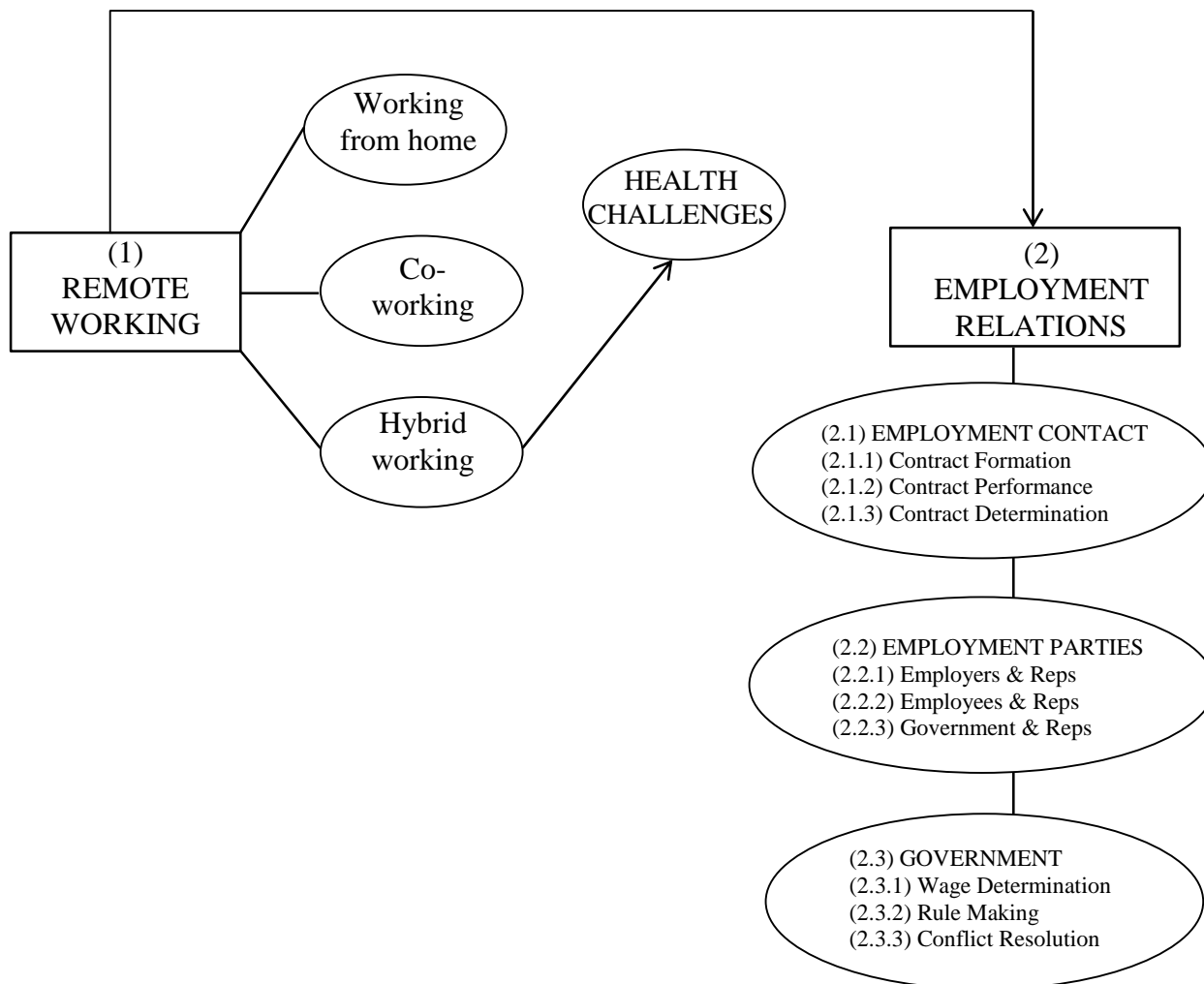


Figure 3: Relationship between Remote Work and Employee Relations in the Chemical and Non-Metallic Industry

QSR NVivo Output

The output of the QSR NVivo data analysis as presented above that showed the relationship between two parents nodes, Remote Work (RW) and Employee Relations (ER), and as displayed, the Dimensions of RW (children nodes) are Working from Home (WFH), Co-Working Spaces (CWS) and Hybrid Working (HW) whereas the Measures of Employment Relations (ER) (children nodes) are Employment Contract (EC), Employment Parties and Employment Regulations. Data showed that there is no relationship between the RW and ER but showed a relationship between a child node of RW (HW) and an outlier (health challenges and other special circumstances).

4.0 Descriptive Analysis

The HR departments of the Chemical and Non-Metallic industry in Port Harcourt claimed that Remote Work was only an interim plan that is now defunct. While HR Dept 1 stated that "...my organization being a manufacturing company has returned to full blown work", HR Dept 2 revealed that remote work is a mechanism that is employed in the organization "not as a mode

of work but to manage staff needs to be off work depending on circumstances or work situations... our working structure is a physical workspace but people can be allowed to work from home based on their needs". In describing how Remote Work is not fully an adopted type of service delivery, HR Dept. 1 attested that as a result of the fact that the Chemical and Non-Metallic industry is a manufacturing industry, Remote Work is not practical, stating that "... unfortunately my organization being a manufacturing company has returned to full blown work", which HR Dept. 2 corroborated, stating that the organization "has the physical work setting in mind as of today and the current practice is still physical work space setting".

The organizations also explained that their contracts of employment have not changed because according to HR Dept. 2 for instance, "our employment contract is based on physical working settings... as a petrochemical plant, 70% of our employees are expected to be physically present at work as machines are to be mounted and the process monitored... since we are not changing our work structure, our relationship is being managed within the physical working environment... we are not changing the employment contract" and the HR Dept. 1 elaborated on the topic stating "our contract conditions remain the same post Covid-19. The only gradual change is that they are trying to digitalize some processes that should eventually encourage work from home in the next two years... for now, employees are expected to physically be at work. Work from home is yet to be enshrined in company policy".

The organizations however stated that even though in special cases where some level of remote work is allowed, for instance in the case of HR Dept. 1 that stated that "work from home is only considered for employees with low immune system, health challenges or a few employees working in non-plant areas of the company", the industry is still largely physical work-oriented, which HR Department 2 purported thus:

"Employees still has physical work setting in mind, since we are still majorly physical work oriented and just using the remote system as options to manage work life balance of each staff requiring remote working. KPI is still monitored as per physical work setting, however, when people are allowed to work from home, they are expected to meet their KPIs irrespective of their challenges".

4.1 Discussion of Findings

Finding for Research Question 1 as inferred from data revealed that remote work does not affect the formation and determination of the employment contract and that the contract remains the same because the Chemical and Non-Metallic Industry is still physical work oriented as is only beginning to introduce the hybrid work scheme. This is yet to affect employment contract in any way. This finding supports Dunlop (1958) Flanders (1965) position about employment contract that union-management relationship should be based on the making and administering of rules which regulate employment relationships. The import of this is that since there is no change in employees' means of carrying out their duties, there is no need for a change in employment contract.

Finding for Research Question 2 showed that remote working is yet to affect the making of workplace rules in the Chemical and Non-Metallic industry because the means of working is still office/plant based. This is because remote work is yet to be implemented in the industry. Finally, finding for Research Question 3 workplace grievances and disputes settlement are status quo because remote work has not been fully adopted and the industry's operations are still very physically-based. However, further finding showed that hybrid work is being practiced at special instances where employees grapple with health challenges or other special circumstances that could restrict movements. Additionally, finding revealed that the study's

findings are hinged on the technological determinism theory because technological innovations play a significant role in the adoption of hybridization as the Chemical and Non-Metallic industry are gradually adopting hybrid work.

5.0 Conclusion

The Chemical and Non-Metallic industry in Port Harcourt did not transit to remote work as most of the industries in the world did in 2019. Except in special circumstances that could include health challenges of employees, the industry is majorly plant-based, employees are required to be at the workplace to install, maintain and monitor machines and see production processes through. To this end, remote work has not been adopted in the Chemical and Non-Metallic industry and a hybrid work model is introduced gradually and when necessary, which means that employment contract, workplace rules, workplace grievances and disputes settlements have not need to change.

6.0 Recommendations

Based on the finding of the study, taking into cognizance the fact the Chemical and Non-Metallic industry is yet to adopt remote work but is gradually tilting towards the adoption and utilization of hybrid work, the following are recommended:

- A drafting of a prospective employment contract model, to cover potential organizational changes when the industry goes hybrid or totally remote.
- HR employee Support function is to be restructured to make work home.
- The Courts are to re-visit the testing model that will re-affirm the model of control for the use of the employer whose right it is to run the Organization.
- The alteration of the primary focus of the employer on his right to manage and his ability to plan for the future, so that the organization can continue to be a success; to make profit for its shareholders; and to keep its employees 'motivated'.
- Remote work should be highly considered in the industry because its birth adoption will compel Government to review the Labour Legislations that were modelled to protect employees from work conditions associated with the physical workplace.
- The workplace rules currently in vogue are modeled to work for physical workplace settings. Models of workplace rule making for Remote working will now need the instrumentality of high cost technologies and employees and Managers re-skilling.

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