Three Essays on Voice in Non-Traditional Employment Relationships

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy degree in Employment Relations and Human Resource Management in the London South Bank University Business School, Department of Management, Marketing and People, 2022.

BY

Kabiru Ayinde Oyetunde

London, United Kingdom

November 2022

Abstract

This thesis presents three essays on voice in non-traditional employment relationships with specific focus on triangular workers. The first essay provides a systematic literature review of previous empirical research exploring the voice of workers in non-traditional employment relationships. Findings from the systematic review revealed a research lacunae in the understanding of voice of workers in triangular employment relationships. These workers, in physically mediated (temporary agencies workers) and digitally mediated (platform workers) employment arrangements, are in a precarious working state and vulnerable. Hence, the second and third paper seeks to examine the voice experiences of these category of non-traditional workers, analyse the voice mechanisms available to these workers, the issues of concern to them, the motivators/inhibitors of their voice, and the outcomes of their voice. Specifically, the second essay presents a conceptual model to depict the determinants of triangular workers' voice, and the third essay empirically investigates triangular workers' voice, examining the voice experience of temporary agencies workers in the banking and health sectors, and e-hailing platform drivers in Nigeria. Findings from the empirical studies indicate that in the face of deliberate managerial silencing of triangular workers, they are in constant struggle to voice. The findings further demonstrates that beyond management-initiated voice mechanisms, workers also struggle to initiate voice means. Results from the study show convergence and divergence in the forces shaping voice among variants of triangular workers studied. While few similar forces influenced the voice of both triangular workers categories, a large differential was found in how individual and organisational structural forces influence temporary agency and online co-employment platform workers' voice. Further findings from the

empirical study expands previous research by identifying voice skill, self-identity conflict, agency-ownership governance, agency-client relationship, transition opportunity and perceived relative equity as new influencers of triangular workers' voice. These findings add to the non-traditional workers voice theory development by identifying peculiar forces shaping less typical workers' voice.

To Ummi, who passed away while I was on this journey. May Allah (SWT) forgive

her misdeeds and shortcomings, aameen.

Acknowledgements

I owe my most profound gratitude to Professor Rea Prouska, my supervisor, and Director of Studies. My relationship with Rea was more maternal than formal. Thank you, Rea, for your indefatigable support and for being my paddle in the stormy waters of my PhD journey. I am highly grateful for the opportunities, and I have learnt a lot from you that will guide me through my career as a researcher and academic. Thank you!

Also, to my second supervisor, Aidan, I appreciate your corrections and support throughout the journey, despite the enormous tasks and responsibilities the Head of Department role threw at you. Thank you, Aidan.

My sincere appreciation also goes to all my colleagues in the London South Bank University Business School and LCBER. Thank you, Professor Karin Moser, for the continuous learning and development support provided by LCBER. I am also grateful to Dr John Opute for the fatherly support and advice. I cannot also forget my PhD buddies, Sarah Altaf and Ajeyomi Ademola. I deeply appreciate your support and companionship. Sarah, thank you for not making my doctoral journey lonely. I enjoyed all the research and life conversations we have had. I hope we continue to be friends forever.

To my father and siblings, I could not have done this without your prayers and support. I am highly indebted to you all as words cannot express how much I appreciate the calls, words of motivation, and prayers. Thank you all.

Now to the loves of my life. My deepest appreciation goes to my amiable wife, Fausat. You are an amazing and wonderful soul. I could not fathom your unflinching support

throughout this journey. I appreciate your patience and understanding. Adunnimi, you are indeed a jewel. To our lovelies, Mutmainnah, Mohsin and Munnawarah, thank you so much for your understanding that Daddy had to be away for sometimes to earn a PhD. May you all be successful in both worlds. As always, Baaroka Lahu Feekum (Aameen).

Contents

Publications

The three papers in this thesis are written as independent essays with the aim of publishing in an ABS rated journal at the level of 3 or 4/4* ratings. Chapters 2, 3 and 4 are essays aimed to be published independently. Hence, there are some overlaps in the citations and unavoidable repetition across the entire thesis. However, I have struggled to minimise the repetitions as much as possible.

Although my Director of Studies/Lead Supervisor, Professor Rea Prouska, and co-supervisor, Dr Aidan McKearney are co-authors in the publications and conference paper submissions, I led each paper by contributing majorly to its development with supervisory efforts from both Rea and Aidan.

Essay 1 (Published in a journal and presented at AOM, 2021):

Oyetunde, K., Prouska, R., & McKearney, A. (2022). Voice in non-traditional employment relationships: a review and future research directions. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *33*(1), 142-167.

Oyetunde, K., Prouska, R., & McKearney, A. (2021). Non-traditional workers' voice research: A systematic review. In *Academy of Management Proceedings* (Vol. 2021, No. 1, p. 11319). Briarcliff Manor, NY 10510: Academy of Management.

Essay 2 (Presently under review in BJM and presented at AOM, 2021):

Oyetunde, K., Prouska, R., & McKearney, A. (2021). Triangular worker voice antecedents: Towards a conceptual model and research propositions. In *Academy of Management Proceedings* (Vol. 2021, No. 1, p. 11326). Briarcliff Manor, NY 10510: Academy of Management.

Oyetunde, K., Prouska, R., & McKearney, A., Workers' voice from the triangular employment relationship lens: Towards a conceptual model., *British Journal of Management*, Under Review.

Essay 3 (Currently under review):

Oyetunde, K., Prouska, R., & McKearney, A., Incessant struggle to be heard: A study of temporary agency and platform workers' voice., *Human Resource Management Journal*, Under Review.

Chapter 1

Introduction

> *Some people have better ideas than others; some are smarter or more experienced or more creative. But everyone should be heard and respected. (Wining by Jack Welch, 2005, p. 56)*

1.1   Research Rationale

One of the major questions repeatedly facing organisations is how best to optimally utilise all organisational resources, especially the human resources (HR) which drives other resources. This explains the scope of modern HR research which seeks to provide clear direction to the policies and processes organisations could adopt to ensure optimal use of their people. Previous scholars (e.g., Albrecht, 1983; Wilczynski, 1983) acknowledged the institutionalisation of workplace/industrial democracy and the overarching need for organisations to allow and sustain employee participation and voice as one of the optimal ways of utilizing employees at work. The classical industrial relations theorists (e.g., Clegg, 1960; Webbs and Webbs, 1897) have also proposed industrial democracy and employee participation as a means of eschewing or managing industrial conflict. Similarly, recent scholars (e.g., Dundon et al., 2004; Morrison and Milliken 2000; Wilkinson and Fay, 2011; Wilkinson, et al., 2018) have indefatigably acknowledged the increasing need for voice, and that the focal point of employee voice centres on not only the expression of concerns and suggestions, but also the integration of structures and mechanisms for full workplace participation. Hence, employee voice should include the co-determination of terms and conditions

of employment, expression of complaints and grievances, suggestions for work and organisational improvement, core decision making participation and possibly board representation.

Previous studies identified the benefits of voice to individual workers and organisations. For instance, Rybnikova (2016) and Wilkinson et al. (2015) argued that allowing employee voice strengthens the worker-firm relationship irrespective of workers' employment contract type. Empirical evidence affirmed improved employee wellbeing, employee loyalty, improved performance, decreased absenteeism, improved organisational innovation as consequences of the presence of workers' voice (see Holland, et al., 2013; Wilkinson, et al., 2004). Conversely, lack of voice impacts workers' dignity (Wilkinson, et al., 2018) and breeds disloyalty and exit (Hirschman, 1970).

Despite these acknowledgements, a few scholars (e.g., Morrison, 2014; Wilkinson et al, 2018) have highlighted the negligence of the voice literature to cover a wider categories of employees with variations of employment contracts. This neglect is bemusing as how employees perceive and respond to workplace issues cannot be detached from the typology of their employment contracts (Rybnikova, 2016). For instance, there is a clear distinction between traditional/standard and non-traditional/non-standard employments (Kalleberg et al., 2000). While the definition of standard employment is narrow but clear, non-standard employment covers a wide but equivocal range of non-traditional employment arrangements. As evidenced from previous scholars, the coverage of temporary employment relationship is not limited to employees on temporary full-time, temporary part-time, fixed-term contracts, renewable fixed-term contracts; but also include employees with temporary agencies

and participants in the gig economy (Spreitzer, et al., 2017). Despite these identified distinctions, we have little understanding of the ways in which these variants of employees participate in workplace issues through voice. Hence, it is germane to study these workers as there is evidence of proliferation of non-traditional work as occasioned by recent economic crises.

In this thesis, I examine the voice experiences of non-traditional workers with special focus on triangular workers. Following the classification of Meijerink and Arets (2021), I understand triangular workers to cover workers in physically mediated (temporary agency workers) and digitally mediated (online labour platform workers) employment arrangements. My motivation for focusing on triangular workers stems from the precarious working conditions these workers are subjected to especially in a developing context where regulations and labour legislations are nearly non-existent. Also, triangular work offers a unique context to study voice as the neo-liberal economic underlying motives behind the creation of these jobs are likely to make workers vulnerable in a such a skewed employment arrangement. Thus, voice opportunities for triangular workers might play a significant role in ameliorating workers vulnerability. However, before embarking on the empirical study of examining triangular workers voice, I systematically reviewed previous empirical studies on non-traditional workers' voice. Findings from the review demonstrates that examining triangular workers' voice is pertinent due to the tremendous growth in triangular work as occasioned by economic crisis, need for flexibility and the drive of teeming youth population towards platform work. Also, previous studies (e.g., Hudson-Sharp & Runge, 2017; Wilkinson et al., 2021) acknowledged the need to understand how social, economic, and

technological dynamics associated with triangular work influence workers' voice and participation.

1.2 Research Aims and Questions

The major aim of this thesis is to understand the voice experiences of non-traditional workers with specific focus on triangular workers. It seeks to investigate how triangular workers express ideas and grievances at work, the motivators/inhibitors of such expressions, the issues they raise, the level of influence they have on organisational decision making, and the outcomes of their voice. Hence, this research is centred on the perspective of workers on their voice experiences as initiated and encouraged by the management or the workers and their unions. To achieve the above objectives, this thesis seeks to explore current stance of the non-traditional workers' voice research, develop a conceptual model of triangular workers voice, and contribute to current voice literature by developing a framework of triangular workers' voice in an emerging context. To achieve these aims, I ask:

1. What is the current empirical evidence on non-traditional workers voice research?
2. How do triangular workers express their ideas and grievances? What mechanisms and structures are available for triangular workers to express their ideas and grievances?
3. What are the issues expressed by these workers and what determines these issues?
4. What factors motivate or impede triangular workers' voice?

5. How do triangular workers' voice influence organisational actions and decisions?

1.3 Significance of the Study

This study develops an initial framework of triangular workers' voice due to lack of in-depth understanding of how mediated employment arrangements impact workers' voice. This study contributes to the voice theory by first reviewing body of empirical studies on non-traditional workers' voice. This provides an unusual opportunity to unpack current understanding of voice among workers in less typical employment contexts. This aims to address the call for the inclusion of workers in atypical employment relationships in voice research and provides a unique opportunity to address the lacunae in this line of voice research and offers important contribution to current voice literature stance which has isolated non-traditional employment contexts. In addition, models and theories to explain workers' voice is limited (Kaufman, 2014). There is a paucity of models offering explanation on forces that shape workers' voice and a few developed in the voice literature are targeted at traditional employment context. However, less typical employment context such as triangular work has been neglected in the theorisation of voice. The second essay in this thesis fills this gap by joining a few authors (e.g., Prouska & Kapsali, 2021) to fill this theoretical gap. Previous voice literature was extended by developing triangular workers' voice model and offering propositions that can be tested in future empirical studies. The last theoretical contribution of this thesis points to the extension of voice research to acknowledge the heterogeneity of non-traditional workers by comparing two sub-

variants of triangular employment context – temporary agency and online co-employment platform workers. This departs from previous research that has limited triangular work to agency work. In addition to unbundling triangular work, the empirical part of this thesis was carried out in an emerging context which offers interesting insights as previous studies on voice in temporary agency work has been limited to the developed contexts. Hence, findings from this thesis extends the determinants of voice to capture new factors not acknowledged both in the traditional and non-traditional voice literature.

This study is relevant to ER/HR practice. Considering the importance of affording workers voice which have been established in the literature, the inability of agency/platform managers and client firm's management to understand the factors that trigger triangular workers' voice can have adverse impact for workers, managers, and client organisations. This study also affords organisations the opportunity to be more aware of the external, firm, employment-context, and individual factors that may influence triangular workers' voice. Managers will also become aware of the cost and consequences of workers silence and nip in the bud underserved actions and treatments workers get for speaking up. Finally, the study suggests that contribution of triangular workers to the workplace through their voice is important for agency/platform-client relationship. Hence, client firms should pay adequate attention to fostering employee voice through appropriate HR policies and practices that will spur triangular workers to express their grievances and suggest ideas for organisational success.

1.4 Brief Review of Literature

1.4.1 Employee voice definition and conceptualization

Voice within organisations, as a concept, dates to many centuries ago (Kaufman, 2014). The operationalisation and conceptualisation of voice among organisational members can be traced Hirschman's (1970) seminal work on Exit, Voice, and Loyalty. Hirschman (1970) conceptualises voice from political and economic viewpoints, and theorised that dissatisfied customers of the Nigeria Railway Corporation have a choice between exit, voice, and loyalty in managing their grievances. He posited that a dissatisfied customer would attempt exit if s/he is disloyal and care less about attempting to change "an objectionable state of affairs". However, a loyal dissatisfied customer would attempt voice to change "an objectionable state of affairs". He argued further that voice attempted by customers can be through individual or collective means which may include petitions, protests, actions, and galvanizing public opinion, targeted at management with the aim of change (Hirschman, 1970).

Building on Hirschman's (1970) seminal work, Freeman and Medoff (1984) domiciled the voice concept in Employment Relations (ER) research by applying voice to employees' attempt to change workplace policies through organised effort such as trade unions. Since Freeman and Medoff's work, employee voice research has multiplied, and there are several scholarly attempts across the disciplines of Organisational Behaviour (OB), ER, and HR, to further conceptualise and operationalise the construct. However, these scholarly efforts have grown to become disciplinary silos over the years (Mowbray et al., 2015). For instance, a collection of OB scholars (e.g., Morrison, 2011; 2014; Van Dyne and Le Pine, 1998) conceptualised

employee voice to be a discretionary in-role or extra-role behaviour targeted at improving the firm. They argued that workers are willing and proactive in suggesting ideas for organisational improvement. Following the psychology discipline, a measurement scale to assess the degree of employee usage of voice for promotive change of status-quo was developed by Van Dyne and Le Pine (1998). This scale further cemented the psychologization of the employee voice construct by the OB scholars (Barry and Wilkinson, 2022) indicating a clear deviation from the political and sociological standpoint of the early employee voice scholars. Besides, few of the OB scholars (e.g., Klaas et al., 2012) tilt towards conceptualising voice from the organisational justice standpoint. While the voice of these scholars within the OB voice literature is low, they acknowledge the need to speak against injustice and wrongdoing, and address grievances perceived as injustice at work. This standpoint, although psychologised with measurement scales, closely relate to the ER perspective of voice to be discussed next.

Conversely to the OB perspective, the ER/HR scholars (e.g., Wilkinson and Fay, 2011) conceptualised voice from a political standpoint of addressing grievances and dissatisfaction of employees, targeted at having a reasonable influence on organisational decisions and determination of their work. The ER/HR voice scholarship understands voice as opportunities, mechanisms and means available to workers such as trade unions, grievances procedures, work councils which allows greater influence on management actions and decisions (Barry and Wilkinson, 2022). The ER scholars argued that employee voice transcends expressing voice behaviour through informal speaking up on issues but include a more organised collective way of participating in workplace issues. To the ER perspective, employee voice can only be

understood from a sociological viewpoint where workers need to be qualitatively studied to understand how they can have a say in the determination of their work conditions and other workplace issues.

Despite the growth of the disciplinary silos over the years, recent calls have advocated for the integration of these perspectives to reflect Hirschman (1970) and Freeman and Medoff's (1984) original conceptualisation of both having a say in not only suggesting ideas for organisational improvement, but also addressing their grievances, and having influence on the determination of work conditions and organisational decisions. Based on the integrative perspective, I understand voice in this thesis to mean – mechanisms, structures and processes of voicing available to workers aimed at not only suggesting opinions, airing concerns or complaints, but high-level participation and involvement in the decision-making process in order to influence not only employment terms but also work autonomy and other business issues.

1.4.2 Employee voice dimensions

In understanding employee voice beyond the tailored conceptualisation of the disciplinary silos, scholars (e.g., Dundon et al., 2004; Kaufman, 2014; Marchington and Suter, 2013) identified dimensions of employee voice. These dimensions exemplify the composition of the voice construct following an integrative perspective. The development of the voice dimensions began with Dundon et al. (2004) who theorised the two dimensions - form and agenda of employee voice. They argued that employees can either exhibit voice directly or indirectly (form) and speak about shared or contested issues (agenda). In addition, efforts from Marchington and Suter (2013)

also presented the dimensions of level, scope, and degree of employee voice. However, extending Dundon et al., (2004) dimensions, Kaufman (2014) added voice influence drawing from the escalator of participation proposed by Marchington and Wilkinson (2005). Kaufman (2014) argued that beyond the speaking directly or indirectly about issues of concern, employee voice must indicate influence on organisational actions and decisions. He therefore added to that employee voice influence can either be mere communicating/speaking or having high level influence. Kaufman (2014) illustrated the dimensions using a line scale to depict movement from informal/shared/communication to formal/contested/influence in using employee voice. Hence, in this thesis, I understand the voice construct to have the dimensions of form, agenda and influence following Kaufman's (2014) escalator of voice model. My choice of the Kaufman's model is its integrative nature combining the OB and ER/HR perspectives.

1.4.3 Employee voice models

Research and theorization in employee voice have made substantial progress. For instance, we now have a greater clarification of conceptualisation and operationalization of employee voice across disciplines, voice dimensions, determinants and inhibitors of voice, benefits of voice for individuals and organisations, and consequences of voice presence or absence. Despite this progress, scholars have argued that more needs to be done. While Kaufman (2014) acknowledged the underdevelopment of voice theory and models, Wilkinson et al. (2018) acknowledged the diversity of workers and the opportunity to develop models explaining more personal and institutional factors that shape voice in the workplace amidst the diversities. Besides the numerous models developed by OB researchers in studying

voice amidst other OB variables such as turnover, wellbeing, perceived organisational politics, servant leadership etc., that of Morrison (2011; 2014) stands out in illustrating the determinants and outcomes of employee voice behaviour. However, only a few models have been developed to delineate the determinants and outcomes of voice following the ER perspective. Recent efforts from Kaufman (2015), Mowbray et al. (2015), Nechanska et al. (2020), Oyetunde et al. (2022), Prouska and Kapsali (2021), widen the scope beyond the disciplinary silos by putting forward integrative models. A perusal of these models indicates the voice conceptualisation, determinants, and outcomes (see Table 1).

Table 1. Employee Voice Models

Author(s)	Perspective	Voice conceptualization	Determinants	Outcomes
Morrison 2011	OB	Discretionary communication, prosocial, extra-role behaviour, ideas, suggestions and opinion, organisational functioning.	Motive, organisational contextual factors, individual factors, perceived costs versus safety, perceived efficacy versus futility.	Voice (message, tactics, and target)
Klaas et al 2012	OB/Integrative	Discretionary communication, prosocial, grievance procedure, whistleblowing	Trait-like characteristics, satisfaction, commitment and loyalty, risk and safety of voice, voice legitimacy, voice utility, aversive conditions, culture.	Voice
Morrison 2014	OB	Informal, discretionary communication, ideas, suggestions, concerns, and opinion, change and improvement.	Latent voice opportunity, prosocial motivation, expected utility calculus, non-calculative automatic processes.	Voice or silence
Mowbray et al 2015	Integrative	Formal mechanisms and informal mechanisms	Motive, content, mechanisms, and target.	Voice form/channel

Kaufman 2015	Integrative	Say, formal mechanisms, structures, influence, decision making	External environment, organisational configuration, governance structure, employment relationship, decision making and voice choice, internal contingencies, ER climate, voice system, voice demand and supply.	Voice (form, agenda, and influence)
Nechanska et al. (2020)	Integrative	Informal channels, formal structures and mechanisms, influence, structured antagonism, grievance procedure.	OB/HR – voice efficacy, psychological safety, managerial and co-worker behaviour and beliefs, norms, emotions, image and branding, individual traits. IR – labour and product markets, management styles and beliefs, contractual terms, TU density and bargaining, role of the state and institutions, voice efficacy, voice depth and scope. LP – markets and capitalization, nature of work, labour indeterminacy, identity/subjectivity, gender, voice depth and scope, manager and co-worker behaviour/beliefs, skills, role of the state and institutions.	Voice or silence
Prouska & Kapsali (2021)	Integrative	Project worker voice, say, informal and formal means, organisational state of affairs influence, managers and owners' interests.	Network (project workers network position, ties, and tie strength), governance conflicts (stakeholder influence, devolution of management processes, knowledge governance mechanisms), employment relationship (resourcing, competency, performance evaluation), ER climate (employment climate, team climate, environment climate)	Voice (form, agenda, and influence)
Oyetunde et al. (2022)	Integrative	Non-traditional workers' voice, say, formal and informal mechanisms, participation and involvement, influence.	Individual level: work status, job insecurity, unionism orientation, interpersonal risks, expertise, freedom, autonomy and exit, power status and fear, conflict with customers/clients, perceived employment certainty, replaceability	Voice (form, agenda, and influence)

			Firm level: size and workers composition, management ideology/control, structural and social factors, cost	
			External level: industry attributes, institutional context, national legislations, professional network.	
			Intervening factors: preferred work status, political savvy, organisational culture, self-efficacy, social connection, social media interaction, gender.	

While these models have evidenced that the nature of employment contract, and contract-related factors are significant predictors of employee voice, there is a gap in the understanding of how specific employment-related contracts determines workers' voice. For example, Morrison (2011) outlined contextual organisational factors but did not explicitly focus on the employment relationship. Kaufman (2015) also acknowledged employment relationship as a determinant of employee voice but did not consider distinctive employment arrangements, such as the peculiar nature of non-traditional work. Although Prouska and Kapsali's (2021) model focus on project-based workers, a type of non-traditional work, there is a major difference between these workers and other types of non-traditional workers.

Hence, it is apparent that advancement has been acknowledged in voice research, however, deep and integrated understanding of workers' voice has been downscaled by the lack of models to explain voice offered to non-traditional workers, especially workers in triangular employment relationships. While there are a few

empirical studies (e.g., Gegenhuber, et al., 2021; Rybnikova, 2016) examining voice among temporary agency workers and platform workers, none among the studies developed a model depicting how voice is operationalized in these employment patterns, and what factors determines voicing among these workers. Hence, in this thesis, I develop a model and framework depicting the voice experiences of triangular workers, the determinants, and outcomes of their voice.

1.5   Theoretical Framework and Methodology

1.5.1 Theoretical Framework

The seminal work of Hirschman (1970) on exit, voice and loyalty snowballed into what has become an influential theoretical framework in the study of employee voice. Hirschman's initial effort provided the needed theoretical foundation to understanding employee voice. Hirschman (1970) argued that individuals respond to dissatisfaction with three actions – voice, loyalty, or exit. By voice, he meant – attempt at changing rather than escaping an objectionable state of affairs (Hirschman, 1970). He argued that through voice, organisational members can express their dissatisfaction and change their state of affairs. He further argued that, when voice is not effective, individuals will resort to exiting the organisation or displaying loyalty in the face of apparent dissatisfaction with organisational state of affairs.

At the other extreme end of organisational members' behaviour, as Hirschman (1970) puts it in his theoretical model, is exit. Exiting an organisation is seen as an alternative in the event of voice failure. The OB disciplinary studies perceive exit as

'employee turnover' which has been established by previous studies as one of the consequences of voice. Similarly, the ER/HRM and related disciplines also agree to the workers' withdrawal of their services in the face of increased and continuous dissatisfaction. As management exercise certain prerogatives (e.g., to hire and fire) over workplace processes, workers also have prerogative right to withdraw their services at will.

Between the extreme positions of voice and exit in Hirschman's framework is loyalty. Workers display loyalty when they cannot use voice, their voice is ineffective at changing their conditions, and/or there are no alternative opportunities that could necessitate exiting the firm (Hirschman, 1970). To the OB researchers, loyalty is perceived to be silence. Silence, disinterest of an employee to speak up meaningful information or offer a suggestion on a workplace issue (Morrison, 2014), indicates workers are not convinced about the efficacy of voice (Morrison, 2011), display disaffection about their organisation and are ready to persevere in their plight (Donaghey et al., 2011). Silence, in OB research, has been used in the last two decades as the opposite of voice (Morrison et al., 2011), a distinct construct from voice (Dyne et al., 2003), or intertwined with voice (Morrison, 2014). However, according to the EVL theory, silence is not a distinct concept but an offshoot of loyalty (see Barry & Wilkinson, 2022). For instance, while the ER/HRM and related disciplinary silo understands that there may be inability of workers to use voice, their usage of silence as an alternative to voice has been cautious. Instead, the ER/HRM scholars argued following Hirschman's model that workers' voice depends largely on the influencing employment relationships conditions, the relative power imbalance between the management and workers, the extent to which an employee decides to be loyal to the

firm, and the availability of alternative job or entrepreneurial opportunities in the external labour market (Barry & Wilkinson, 2022).

Building on Hirschman's work, a few scholars have advanced theoretical understanding of employee voice with frameworks and models. For example, Rusbult et al. (1982) expanded Hirschman's EVL framework to include neglect (EVLN). With neglect, workers deliberately through silence allows matters at work to get worse. The major criticism of the neglect addition is that in it is more oriented towards OB understanding of voice as a behaviour than ER/HR's understanding of voice as a means of dissatisfaction.

Despite these efforts, Kaufman (2014) argued that the lack of new theories has limited theoretical understanding of employee voice and that there is a need for an integrative theoretical understanding of voice across disciplines (Kaufman, 2015; Mowbray et al., 2015). Hence, the theoretical framework guiding this study is Hirschman's (1970) EVL framework. My choice of the EVL over the EVLN framework is the integrative nature of the former, and the adoption of this theoretical principle across the employee voice research disciplinary silos (see Barry and Wilkinson, 2022).

1.5.2 Brief Methodology

Every research study is conducted within the scope of broader philosophies of science which predetermines the procedural framework for carrying out the investigation (Blumberg et al, 2011). Although more research philosophical foundations have been put forward by scholars in recent times (pragmatism, postmodernism, realism, etc.), the two major academic research philosophies mostly adopted are: positivism and interpretivism. To address the research questions across the three papers, this study

took an interpretivist research philosophical paradigm underpinned by ontological subjectivism (Saunders et al., 2019). Interpretivism is based on social constructivism where individuals perceive and understand the world from the subjective meaning they attach to their experiences (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). These attached meanings allow for varied and multiple interpretations of situations. My choice of the interpretivism is to understand how triangular workers make sense of their voice experiences. Saunders et al. (2019; 149) also stated, "the purpose of the interpretivist research is to create new, richer understandings and interpretations of social worlds and contexts". Hence, to achieve this, a researcher must immerse himself into the context or situation being studied.

Following the interpretivist philosophy, this study took the inductive research approach and qualitative research method as it moves from data to theory. This is a major part of research method. It encompasses tools, techniques, and strategies to be adopted in carrying out a study. Qualitative research is connected to the inductive approach of theory building. It is answers the 'why' and 'how' of a research concept and construct. Qualitative studies are in the form of ideas, concepts, taxonomies, and themes that cannot be numerically measured for replication or generalization. Data used in qualitative studies are collected through observations, interviews, focus groups, documents, diaries; and presented to lend credence and justifications for a phenomenon (Walliman, 2011). Qualitative research method is employed when little is known about a concept or phenomenon thereby providing an opportunity for a depth and thorough understanding of the existence and various dimensions of the phenomenon. With qualitative research strategy, I seek to understand the triangular workers voice from the view of the study participants.

Research design provides clear pathways for how a research problem will be investigated. It is a blueprint which gives how a research study is planned, how data will be collected to answer the research questions of a particular investigation. Saunders et al. (2019) posited that research design is a roadmap which assists researchers to structure their study and give guidance in preferring solutions to the formulated research questions. Research design adopted for this study is phenomenological where I inquire about the lived experiences of triangular workers about their voice at work.

1.6   Thesis Structure

There are five chapters in this thesis. This chapter introduced the study by providing a brief research rationale and elucidating, based on previous research and apparent practical trends, the need to study triangular workers' voice. The second chapter exemplifies an essay titled – "Voice in non-traditional employment relationships: A review and future research directions". The essay is a systematic review of empirical studies available in the literature on non-traditional workers' voice. As stated elsewhere, while there is a myriad of studies on traditional workers' voice, only a few studies have examined non-traditional workers' voice. Hence, to understand the stance of non-traditional workers' voice research and establish a rationale for this study, a systematic review was presented in chapter two. The aim of this review is to map previous studies and develop a framework that will provide a clear understanding of what is known in non-traditional workers' voice.

Following a review of the non-traditional workers' voice literature, chapter three presents an essay aimed at developing a conceptual model of triangular workers' voice. The choice of triangular workers was based on the findings from the systematic review essay presented in chapter two. Thus, the rationale for a conceptual understanding of triangular workers' voice is rooted in - an increasing trend in temporary agency and platform work (WEC, 2020); the need to acknowledge and understand the heterogenous nature of workers in voice theorisation (Syed, 2014); the lack of current voice models to capture work contextualised in mediated arrangements; and the changing social, economic and technological developments occasioning these types of work (Wilkinson et al., 2021). The essay entitled – "Workers' voice from the triangular employment relationship lens: Towards a conceptual model", provided a theoretical lens to understand the determinants of triangular workers' voice and how the determinants influence the voice dimensions (form, agenda, and influence).

The fourth chapter builds on the model conceptualised in chapter three by empirically examining the triangular workers' voice in an emerging context. The essay entitled – "Incessant struggle to be heard: A study of temporary agency and platform workers' voice", compares the voice experiences of workers in physically-mediated and digitally-mediated triangular work. In the chapter, with a qualitative study of temporary agency and platform workers in Lagos, Nigeria, I demonstrate how triangular workers are in a constant struggle to express their grievances. From the findings, I develop an initial framework resting on the Exit, Voice, and Loyalty theory (Hirschman, 1970) to illustrate the triangular workers voice experiences. The last chapter delineates the study conclusion, theoretical and practical contributions.

1.7   References

Albrecht, S.L. (1983) Forms of industrial and economic democracy: a comparison of prevailing approaches, *Mid-American Review of Sociology*, pp.43-66.

Barry, M., and Wilkinson, A. (2022). Employee voice, psychologisation and human resource management (HRM). Human Resource Management Journal, 32(3), pp. 631–646. https://doi.org/10.1111/1748-8583.12415

Blumberg, B., Cooper, D. and Schindler, P. (2011) *Business Research Methods.* Europe: McGraw-Hill

Clegg, H.A. (1960) *A new approach to industrial democracy*. Oxford: Blackwell

Creswell, J.W. and Creswell, J.D., (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage publications.

Donaghey, J., Cullinane, N., Dundon, T. and Wilkinson, A., (2011). Reconceptualising employee silence: problems and prognosis. *Work, Employment and Society*, 25(1), pp.51-67.

Dundon, T., Wilkinson, A., Marchington, M. and Ackers, P. (2004) The meanings and purpose of employee voice. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 15(6), pp.1149-1170.

Dyne, L.V., Ang, S. and Botero, I.C., (2003). Conceptualizing employee silence and employee voice as multidimensional constructs. *Journal of Management Studies*, 40(6), pp.1359-1392.

Freeman, R. B., and Medoff, J. L. (1984). What do unions do? *Indus. & Lab. Rel. Rev.*, 38, pp. 244.

Gegenhuber, T., Ellmer, M. and Schüßler, E., (2021). Microphones, not megaphones: Functional crowdworker voice regimes on digital work platforms. *Human Relations*, 74(9), pp.1473-1503.

Hirschman, A.O. (1970) *Exit, voice, and loyalty: Responses to decline in firms, organizations, and states* (Vol. 25). Harvard university press.

Holland, P. J., Allen, B. C., and Cooper, B. K. (2013). Reducing burnout in Australian nurses: The role of employee direct voice and managerial responsiveness. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 24(16), pp. 3146-3162.

Hudson-Sharp, N. and Runge, J. (2017) *International trends in insecure work: A report for the Trades Union Congress* (Vol. 3). London: National Institute of Economic and Social Research.

Kalleberg, A.L., Reskin, B.F. and Hudson, K. (2000) Bad jobs in America: Standard and nonstandard employment relations and job quality in the United States. *American Sociological Review*, pp.256-278.

Kaufman, B. E. (2014). Explaining breadth and depth of employee voice across firms: A voice factor demand model. *Journal of Labor Research*, 35(3), pp. 296-319.

Kaufman, B. E. (2015). Theorising determinants of employee voice: An integrative model across disciplines and levels of analysis. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 25(1), pp. 19-40.

Klaas, B. S., Olson-Buchanan, J. B., and Ward, A. K. (2012). The determinants of alternative forms of workplace voice: An integrative perspective. *Journal of Management*, 38(1), pp. 314-345.

Marchington, M. and Suter, J., (2013). Where informality really matters: Patterns of employee involvement and participation (EIP) in a non-union firm. *Industrial Relations: A Journal of Economy and Society*, 52, pp.284-313.

Marchington, M. and Wilkinson, A., (2005). Direct participation and involvement. *Managing human resources: personnel management in transition*, pp.398-423.

Meijerink, J. G., and Arets, M. (2021) Online labor platforms versus temp agencies: what are the differences?. *Strategic HR Review*, 20(4), pp.119-124.

Morrison, E.W. (2014) Employee voice and silence. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 1(1), pp.173-197.

Morrison, E.W. and Milliken, F.J. (2000) Organizational silence: A barrier to change and development in a pluralistic world. *Academy of Management Review*, 25(4), pp.706-725.

Mowbray, P. K., Wilkinson, A., and Tse, H. H. (2015). An integrative review of employee voice: Identifying a common conceptualization and research agenda. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 17(3), pp. 382-400.

Nechanska, E., Hughes, E., & Dundon, T. (2020). Towards an integration of employee voice and silence. *Human Resource Management Review*, 30(1), pp. 100674.

Oyetunde, K., Prouska, R., and McKearney, A. (2022). Voice in non-traditional employment relationships: A review and future research directions. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 33(1), pp. 142-167.

Prouska, R., and Kapsali, M. (2021). The determinants of project worker voice in project-based organisations: An initial conceptualisation and research agenda. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 31(2), pp. 375-391.

Rusbult, C., Zembrodt, I., and Gunn, L. (1982). Exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect: Responses to dissatisfaction in romantic involvements. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 43*(6), pp. 1230–1242. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022 -3514.43.6.1230

Rybnikova, I. (2016). Employee voice and silence in temporary agency work. *German Journal of Human Resource Management*, 30(3-4), pp. 287-309.

Saunders M. N. K., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. (2019). *Research methods for business students*. London: Pearson Education Limited

Spreitzer, G.M., Cameron, L. and Garrett, L. (2017) Alternative work arrangements: Two images of the new world of work. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 4, pp.473-499.

Syed, J. (2014). Diversity management and missing voices. In: Wilkinson, A., Donaghey, J., Dundon, T., & Freeman, R. (eds). *The Handbook of Research on Employee Voice: Participation and Involvement in the Workplace.* pp. 421–438. London: Elgar Press.

Van Dyne, L., and LePine, J. A. (1998). Helping and voice extra-role behaviours: Evidence of construct and predictive validity. *Academy of Management Journal*, 41(1), pp. 108-119.

Walliman, N., 2010. *Research methods: The basics*. Routledge.

Webb, S. and Webb, B. (1897). *Industrial Democracy*. London: Longman, Green and Co.

WEC (2020). *World Employment Confederation – Economic Report 2020.* Brussels: WEC publication.

Wilczynski, J. (1983). Industrial Democracy and Workers' Participation. In *Comparative Industrial Relations* (pp. 97-115). London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Wilkinson, A., Dundon, T., Marchington, M., and Ackers, P. (2004). Changing patterns of employee voice: Case studies from the UK and Republic of Ireland. *Journal of Industrial Relations*, *46*(3), 298-322.

Wilkinson, A. and Fay, C. (2011) New times for employee voice?. *Human Resource Management*, 50(1), pp.65-74.

Wilkinson, A., Gollan, P.J., Kalfa, S. and Xu, Y. (2018) Voices unheard: employee voice in the new century. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 29(5), pp.711-724.

Wilkinson, A., Knoll, M., Mowbray, P.K. and Dundon, T. (2021) New trajectories in worker voice: Integrating and applying contemporary challenges in the organization of work. *British Journal of Management*, 32(3), pp.693-707.

Wilkinson, A., Townsend, K., Graham, T. and Muurlink, O. (2015) Fatal consequences: an analysis of the failed employee voice system at the Bundaberg Hospital. *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources*, 53(3), pp.265-280.

Chapter 2

Voice in non-traditional employment relationships: A review and future research directions

2.0   Abstract

Research on employee voice has been widely documented for workers in traditional employment relationships (TERs) and has offered a broad understanding of how they express their ideas and complaints at work. However, an under-explored area concerns how workers express voice in non-traditional employment relationships (NTERs) characterised by flexibility, temporality, instability, and insecurity. Studying voice in NTERs is of high importance due to its increased potential proliferation and associated precariousness. In this paper, we expand the knowledge frontiers in the voice literature by conducting an integrative review of empirical studies that explore voice among workers in NTERs. We identify the forms of voice available to non-traditional workers, the issues they are interested in voicing, how effective their voice is in influencing management decisions, determinants, and outcomes of their voice. Future research agenda offered concerning how the neglected area of voice among non-traditional workers can be addressed.

Keywords: employee voice, employment relationship, non-traditional work

2.1 Introduction

Furthering ideas from the seminal works of Hirschman (1970) and Freeman and Medoff (1984), most of the voice research from both organisational behaviour (OB) and employment relations and human resource (ER/HR) perspectives have studied workers in traditional employment relationships (TERs) neglecting those in non-traditional employment relationships (NTERs). TERs, otherwise known as standard employment, are characterised by contract permanency, specified work hours, working on employer's premises, continuity, long-term career expectations, and income security (Ashford et al., 2007). Conversely, NTERs, otherwise known as alternative work arrangements, non-standard employment, flexible staffing arrangements, contingency work, vulnerable work, or precarious employment (Kalleberg, 2000), are characterised by flexibility, temporality, instability, and insecurity. The rise of this employment type has been widely reported, and there are forecasts that the number of workers in such employment arrangements will continuously increase (ILO, 2016). Recent events have also disrupted working arrangements and occasioned an increased rate of remote working and non-traditional employment patterns (Spurk & Straub, 2020). However, in most cases, these employment patterns enable precarity and exploitation of workers without recourse to discourse.

Extant voice literature assumes homogeneity of workers with less consideration for the peculiarities of non-traditional workers, making the theoretical paradigm of diversity in voice research missing (Syed, 2014; Wilkinson et al., 2021). For instance, while there is a plethora of studies and reviews on the operationalisation, dimensions, determinants/inhibitors, and outcomes of voice of traditional workers (for example, see

Morrison 2011; 2014; Mowbray et al., 2015), there is a limited attempt for non-traditional workers' voice. Hence, deep, and integrated understanding of workers' voice has been downscaled by the lack of theorization of voice offered to these workers. Corroborating these claims, Kaufman (2014) acknowledged the underdevelopment of voice theory, and Wilkinson et al. (2018) call for further theorization of the factors that shape workers' voice amidst workplace diversities.

In this article, we therefore conduct a meta-synthesis (see Cooke et al., 2012) of findings around voice among workers in NTERs. We use a systematic approach in reviewing employee voice studies within the NTER context to address the following research questions: (a) what forms of voice are available to workers in NTERs? (b) what types of issues do they voice? (c) how do they influence management decisions and actions with their voice? (d) what are the determinants and outcomes of voice for workers in NTERs? The paper addresses these questions by identifying, extracting, and evaluating previous empirical studies on employee voice in any form of NTER since the adaptation of voice to an organisational context by Freeman and Medoff (1984). The paper also offers future research directions for the theoretical advancement of the voice literature. Additionally, it contributes to the voice literature in the following ways. Firstly, it maps out from previous studies the voice forms available to non-traditional workers, the issues they express, and the level of influence they have on management actions and decisions. Secondly, the review looks at the determining factors, at the individual, firm, external, mediating, and moderating levels of analysis, that influence non-traditional workers' voice form, agenda, and influence. Thirdly, our review identifies the outcomes of non-traditional workers' voices as identified in the literature. Lastly, we extend the previous voice models by developing

an integrative framework of voice research among non-traditional workers. The following section proceeds by delineating employee voice and NTERs vis-a-vis TERs.

2.2   Employee Voice: Meaning and Dimensions

The debate on the conceptualization of employee voice has been between the OB and ER/HR scholars. The OB scholars (e.g., Morrison, 2011; 2014; Van Dyne & Le Pine, 1998) view voice as an informal, discretionary, in-role, and extra-role behaviour by workers aimed at expressing ideas, suggestions, and concerns, and targeted at challenging the status quo to bring about change. Conversely, the emphasis of the ER/HR scholars (e.g., Barry & Wilkinson, 2016; Kaufman, 2014; Wilkinson & Fay, 2011; Wilkinson et al., 2018) is on the mechanisms and structure which allows workers to have a say in the determination of their employment and participate in decision-making within the workplace. However, in recent times, authors (e.g., Kaufman, 2015; Mowbray et al., 2015; Wilkinson et al., 2020) have advocated integrating the two perspectives. In this paper, an integrative view of voice (see Kaufman, 2015) will be adopted to define employee voice as *mechanisms, structures, and processes of voicing available to workers aimed at not just suggesting opinions, airing concerns or complaints, but initiating high-level participation and involvement in the decision-making process to influence not only employment terms but also work autonomy and other business issues.*

Scholars (e.g., Dundon et al., 2004; Kaufman, 2014; Marchington & Wilkinson, 2005) have theorised the voice dimensions. An example is the dimensions of Marchington & Wilkinson (2005), who proposed depth (of influence), level (at which

participation takes place), scope (topics covered), form (direct, indirect, financial, problem-solving) as the patterns employee voice can take in the workplace. Kaufman (2014), extending the dimensions of Dundon et al. (2004), proposed an escalator of voice that depicts the breadth, depth, and influence of employee voice. While Dundon et al. (2004) proposed the two voice dimensions of form and agenda, Kaufman (2014) added voice influence. Therefore, he presented voice to include form, agenda, and influence.

Voice form can either be direct (individual, face-to-face), indirect (collective, representative), or both. While direct voice involves individual upward communication with supervisors and mostly emphasised in non-union firms, indirect voice encompasses workers' collective representations primarily through unionisation (Budd et al., 2010). Issues necessitating employee voice are either shared or contested between the workers and employers. However, employees voicing these issues and making an impact is predicated on whether the issues are integrative or distributive, creating a win-win or win-lose situation for employer and workers, respectively (Walton & McKersie, 1965).

Our understanding of employee voice will follow the dimensions espoused by Kaufman (2014). The choice of Kaufman's voice menu in this review is its all-encompassing and integrative nature. He illustrated voice movement from direct, shared, and upward communication, as argued from the OB viewpoint, to indirect and contested from the ER/HR viewpoint. This will allow reviewing findings from the NTER voice literature through the lens of the forms of voice available to non-traditional workers, what issues dominate their concerns, and whether their voice depicts mere communication, or they can influence workplace decisions.

2.3   Traditional vs. Non-Traditional Employment Relationships

For this paper, integrating the classification criteria from previous scholars (Pfeffer & Baron, 1988; Cappelli & Keller, 2013; Spreitzer et al. 2017), we define non-traditional workers as *workers with limited temporal, physical, and administrative attachments to the organisations they work for, restricted directive control from the employer, total control of their work scheduling and process; and highly flexible in their timing and location of work.* Concisely, NTERs are characterised by limited degrees of attachment, low employer's control, and high flexibility, without necessarily implying vulnerability or precarity (Haapakorpi, 2021; Standing, 2018). For example, highly skilled and sought-after professionals in non-precarious jobs have limited temporal, physical, and administrative attachment to the different organisations they work for (Flinchbaugh et al., 2020), are not under the direct control of the employer (Capelli & Keller, 2013), and are flexible with their timing and location of work (Menger, 2017; Spreitzer et al., 2017). NTERs include *temporary employment, part-time employment, on-call/zero-hour, multi-party employment,* and *disguised employment or dependent self-employment* (ILO, 2016). By temporary employment, we mean fixed-term employment. It covers workers in seasonal and casual work and those working on a project-basis for different organisations. Fixed-term contracts are terminable by date, end of an event, or completion of a task/project (ILO, 2016). While part-time work involves reduced work hours (usually less than 30-hours/week) with some relative degree of permanency compared to other temporary workers (Zeytinoglu & Cooke, 2008), on-call/zero-hour work is characterised by a high level of unpredictability in the determination of work hours. Multi-party employment involves more than two parties

(e.g., temporary agency work), while disguised work involves workers whose legal status is 'hidden' due to the nature of their engagement (e.g., freelancers, gig workers).

Authors (e.g., Ashford et al., 2007; Schoukens & Barrio, 2017) identified the core elements of TERs to include contract permanency, specified working hours, work done on employers' premises, continuous employment, long term career expectation, and income security. Extant review of the NTER literature pointed to the *differential*, *triangular* and *alternative* viewpoints to conceptualizing these employment arrangements. While the differential perspective, using a sui generis approach, views NTERs as an apparent deviation from the attributes and practices of TERs (hence, tagged 'bad jobs') (see Kalleberg, 2000; McGovern, Smeaton & Hill, 2004), the triangular viewpoint conceptualises NTERs from the lens of tripartite employment relationship patterns, arguing that a significant chunk of non-traditional workers can be found in temporary agency work (see Cranford et al., 2003; Feldman, 2005). The alternative perspective views NTERs as an alternative to TERs, which can be a choice for employers and employees (Katz & Krueger, 2019; Spreitzer et al., 2017). Integrating the three viewpoints, scholars (e.g., Capelli & Keller, 2013; Spreitzer et al., 2017) argued that efforts at classifying jobs as TERs vs. NTERs are eroding as features attributed to each job category are permeating and intersecting. For example, traditional workers now work remotely with increasingly flexible work schedules. Hence, based on identified attributes, while TERs are not necessarily good, NTERs are also not necessarily bad.

Hence, for clarification, we draw on the recent works of ILO (2016) and Flinchbaugh et al. (2020) to enumerate the different work arrangements' features. The criteria used for comparison are derived from the employment relationship elements

drawn from Chadwick and Flinchbaugh (2016) and Schoukens and Barrio (2017). Table 1 gives a view of the distinctions.

Table 1. Similarities and differences between TERs and NTERs

Criteria	TERs	NTERs				
		Temporary Employment	Part-time Employment	On-call/Zero-hour Contracts	Multi-party Employment	Disguised Employment
Personal subordination	Yes	Possibly	Yes	Yes	No	No
Bilateral relationship	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Mutuality of obligations	Yes	Possibly	Possibly	Yes	No	No
Salary payment	Direct	Direct	Direct	Direct	Indirect	Indirect
Benefits provided	Yes	No	No	No	Possibly	No
Economic dependency	Yes	Possibly	No	No	No	No
Location of work	EP	EP	EP	EP	NEP	NEP
Work schedule	FT	Indeterminate	Reduced	AA	Possibly FT	On-demand
Work duration	ID	Definite	ID	UPD	UPD	ID
Income security	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No
Legislations and collective agreements protection	Yes	Possibly	Yes	Limited	No	No*
Continuous employment	Yes	No	Possibly	No	No	No
Long term career expectation	Yes	No	No	No	No	No

Note. EP-Employers' Premises, FT-Full-Time, NEP-Non-Employer Premises, ID-Indefinite, AA-Always Available, UPD-Unpredictable
*This is dependent on the context as some countries, e.g., Spain, offer some protection for the dependent self-employed.
Source: adapted by the authors from Flinchbaugh et al. (2020) and ILO (2016)

From the table, it is apparent that traditional workers have a great sense of personal subordination (i.e., total employer control), experience bilateral employment relations, have mutuality of obligations with employers, receive their pay directly from employers, economically dependent on their employers, indefinitely work on the employer's premises, have continuous employment and long-term career

expectations, and mostly protected by employment legislation (see Chadwick & Flinchbaugh, 2016; Schoukens & Barrio, 2017). Conversely, the degree of presence or absence of all the mentioned attributes varies for non-traditional workers. For instance, while temporary workers, part-timers, and on-call/zero-hour workers have similar attributes with traditional workers in the areas of employers' control, bilateral relations, and direct remuneration; they have limited or no employment legislation protection, opportunity to work for many employers, economically independent, short-term career spell, and sometimes definite work duration. Non-traditional workers in temporary agency work and disguised employment have more evident employment conditions different from that of traditional workers. Table 1 indicates lack of personal subordination, multi-party relations, absence of mutuality of obligations with employers, indirect remuneration, economic independence, on-demand work schedule, indefinite and unpredictable work location, short-term career expectation, and lack of legislative protection.

In a nutshell, the employment relationship experiences of traditional and non-traditional workers differ. Hence, how and through what structure non-traditional workers experience voice, representation, involvement, and participation at work is vital to understanding their employment relationships' psychological composition. Studying the voice behaviour of these workers in their variations and different level of dissections; addresses call from scholars (e.g., Wilkinson et al., 2020) to explore the experiences of workers in NTERs.

2.4 Method

2.4.1 Literature search

A major constraint in reviewing previous voice studies in the NTER context is its under-exploration. However, doing a systematic review in an under-studied field is not unusual (see Kelan, 2018; Kilby et al., 2018; Semrad et al., 2019). The voice construct's multidisciplinary nature necessitates the need to capture studies from varying schools of thought and methodological approaches. The search covered articles across OB, ER/HR, and Labour Economics disciplines. It was limited to empirical studies published since 1984 when the voice construct was adapted to an organisational context by Freeman and Medoff (1984). For a thorough search, databases of online libraries such as EBSCO, Emerald, JSTOR, SAGE, Scopus, Springer, Taylor and Francis, Web of Science, and Wiley were combed for studies of interest. The main keywords used in the search were "employee voic*", "worker voic*", "non-traditional employ*", and "non-standard employ*". Included in the search were synonymous terms for these concepts as identified in the literature. For instance, "employee participation", "employee involvement", "employee communication", "employee consultation", "labour disputes", "grievance studies" are synonyms of employee voice as identified by previous scholars (Wilkinson & Fay, 2011). Similarly, terms such as "contingent work", "flexible employment", "alternative work arrangements", "on-demand work", "on-call work", "zero-hour contract", "casual work", "part-time employment", "temporary employment", "temporary agency work", "triangular employment", "gig work", "platform work", "independent contractors" which

are used for NTERs (Collins et al., 2019; Flinchbaugh et al., 2020) were also used in the search.

2.4.2 Inclusion and exclusion criteria

The criteria to choose articles for review were: (a) the papers must be either quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-method empirical studies on any of the voice dimensions (form, agenda, and influence) among workers in NTERs; (b) the papers must consider either the determinants or outcomes of voice/non-voice among non-traditional workers; (c) employee voice or any of its identified synonyms must occur in relevant parts of the article; (d) the papers must be published in peer-reviewed scholarly journals; (e) the papers must be written in English. Grey literature that did not meet the above criteria was excluded (Adams et al., 2017).

2.4.3 Selection of relevant studies

The search produced 54 articles. After the first round of search, we decided to look for constructs with employee voice as a dimension (Bagdadli & Gianecchini, 2019). We found that some scales of the "Organisational Citizenship Behaviour" (OCB) and HR practices constructs have voice or participation as a dimension (e.g., Moorman & Blakely, 1995). Hence studies on OCB and HR practices within the NTER context that used scales with voice/participation as a dimension were included for review. Studies in this category were thoroughly checked for a strong presence of voice/participation in their analysis and discussion. This gave us an additional four articles. Using the reverse process (Kelan, 2018) to capture articles not found in the keyword search, we checked the references of the relevant articles and articles citing our previously selected articles. The reverse process also generated an additional two articles,

leaving us with a total of 60 articles. After considering the inclusion and exclusion criteria, we were left with 33 articles to be reviewed. Figure 1 illustrates the article selection and review process.
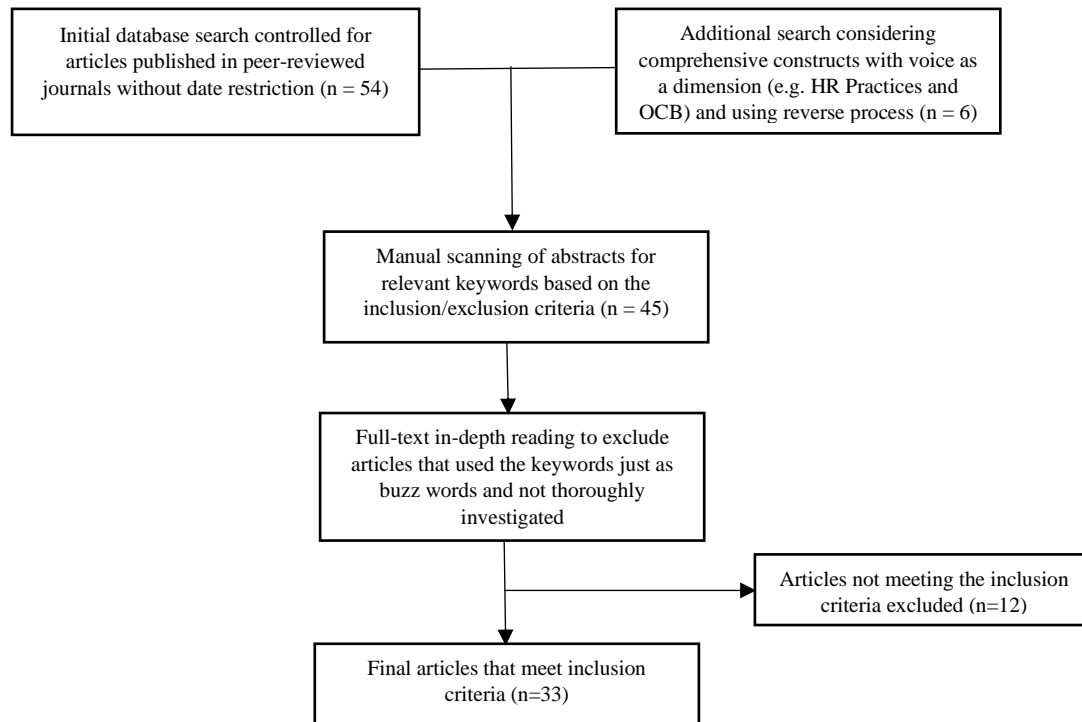
Fig. 1. Article selection and review process

2.4.4 Review procedure for selected studies

With NVivo 12, we analysed the texts using a manual content analysis method (Vaismoradi et al., 2013) to do a narrative synthesis (Bailey et al., 2017). The narrative synthesis method is used to identify a fragmented body of evidence to bring coherence (Bailey et al., 2017). It provides an opportunity to detail the story beneath a contrasting body of evidence, allowing reviewers to synthesise the findings for data coherence. The process involves thorough reading and line-by-line coding of the issues in each

of the articles to identify, categorise and analyse concepts, find links between concepts, and provide insights for future research. Using a deductive approach, we coded text from the articles with a pre-determined coding template in mind (Finfgeld-Connett, 2014). We selected key phrases or sentences to sort the issues identified into different categories and collate related or similar categories (Xiao et al., 2020). The pre-determined coding themes considered include – employee voice dimensions (form, agenda, and influence), determinants, and outcomes of voice/non-voice.

2.5 Results Analysis

2.5.1 Descriptive analysis

Descriptive analysis of the included studies reveals that the majority (n = 27) were published in ER/HR-related journals. Only a handful (n = 6) of studies were published in OB and related disciplines' journals. Many of the included studies investigated the voice forms available to workers in NTERs, with 19 studies each enquiring about direct/individual and indirect/collective voice, respectively. While some studies (e.g., Maffie, 2020) investigated both forms of voice, others investigated direct (e.g., Rybnikova, 2016) or indirect (e.g., Booth & Francesconi, 2003) voice only. Similarly, some studies (e.g., Markey et al., 2002) investigated the issues (shared vs. contested) voiced by workers in NTERs with seven studies (e.g., Hoque & Kirkpatrick, 2003) examining shared issues and four studies (e.g., Markey et al., 2003) exploring contested issues. While eight studies explored voice influence in terms of communicating suggestions and complaints, six studies examined whether workers in NTERs have an actionable influence over workplace decisions. Surprisingly, only four

studies (e.g., Soltani et al., 2018) examined all three voice dimensions among temporary and part-time workers.

It was observed that the term "non-traditional employment" was not used by any of the articles. However, synonymous terms such as "non-standard employment", "flexible employment", "temporary employment," and "contingent work" were employed. Most of the studies cover part-time employment (e.g., Gray & Laidlaw, 2002). Thirty of the studies were conducted in developed economies while only 3 in developing countries. Six were comparative studies using data sets from surveys conducted across European Union (EU) countries. Most studies (n = 24) employed a cross-sectional research design as compared to other designs (longitudinal - 2, panel data - 6, case studies - 7). Quantitative methods for data collection and analysis were used in 13 studies, while qualitative methods were used in 16 and mixed methods in 4.

2.5.2 Workers' Voice in Non-Traditional Employment Relationships: Forms, Agenda, and Influence

Results from the review depict that most studies operationalise voice from the two dominant perspectives. Only a few (n = 4) (e.g., McDonnell et al., 2014) consider a combination of prosocial voice behaviour and voice structure/mechanism for an integrated view of non-traditional workers' voice experiences. Most studies (n = 28) focus distinctly on either voice mechanisms (e.g., Rybnikova, 2016) or voice behaviour (e.g., Qian et al., 2020), with the operationalisation of voice in terms of structure/mechanism dominating these studies. Hence, we synthesise findings on the voice dimensions (form, agenda, and influence) below and depicted in Table 2. The

table indicates the dimensions of voice available to the different categories of non-

traditional workers.

Table 2. Voice dimensions among non-traditional workers

Voice Dimensions		Temporary/Casual Employment	Part-time Employment	Multi-party Employment	Disguised Employment
Forms	Direct/individual	Daily walk-around conversations In-depth conversations Surveys Staff meetings Weekly briefings Newsletters Annual reports Media releases Organised training and workshops	Daily walk-around conversations In-depth conversations Suggestion schemes Newsletters/notices/bulletins Electronic mail Staff surveys Formal meetings Social functions	Team and employee meetings Surveys Employee suggestions	Contact forms Messaging systems Mini-fora Chat boxes Social media Surveys Blogs
	Indirect/collective	Work councils Consultation committees Grievance procedure	Autonomous work groups Quality circles JCCs Unions (reported as ineffective)	Union representation Ombudsman	Work councils Unions Professional associations Virtual networks Alternative grassroot groups
Agenda	Shared	Working and living conditions Health and safety	Staffing issues Occupational health and safety Quality standards Introduction of new technology Work organisation Introduction of new product Equal employment opportunity Affirmative actions	Tasks and duties Pace of work	Training needs Knowledge sharing Professional experience and standards
	Contested	Pay Grievance Unfair dismissal	Pay and work conditions Financial decisions Employee discipline Individual grievance		Pay Working conditions
Influence	Communication	Communication and consultation (top-down). Low-level of upward communication	Communicative, information sharing and consultation (mostly top-down). Low level upward communication.	Low level upward communication.	Communication and consultation
	Influence		Reasonable level of influence over management decisions and actions Partake in lower-level workplace decisions		Gig workers – low level influence Freelancers and independent contractors - high level influence on

				management decisions due to autonomy and professionalism
N	10	8	5	10

Forms of employee voice. Direct voice was the most common form of voice among non-traditional workers (see Goni-Legaz & Ollo-Lopez, 2017; McDonnell et al., 2014). Among professionals in disguised or dependent self-employment, an informal pattern of worker participation was reported (Ruiner et al., 2020). Daily walk-around conversations, in-depth conversations between individual employees and managers, suggestion schemes, electronic mails, staff surveys, social networking sites, installed support software are the direct forms of voice reported (see Gegenhuber et al., 2021; Good & Cooper, 2014). However, formal meetings, workgroups, quality circles, joint consultative committees (JCCs), short-term task force, professional associations/networks, alternative grassroots groups, and virtual networks are the collective forms of voice found (see Borghi et al., 2021; Rybnikova, 2016). Participative management through organised training and workshops, trade unions, and structured grievance procedures were also forms of participation afforded to non-traditional workers (e.g., Wood, 2016). While one study found work councils and JCCs as typical voice mechanisms (Markey et al., 2002), there are more reports of a weak collective voice for NTER workers (Soltani et al., 2018). Even where workers join unions, the impact on their voice experience is minimal (McDonnell et al., 2014).

Further analysis shows variations in voice forms for the types of NTER and study context. For example, among workers in multi-party employment, two issues were identified concerning individual and collective voice. Individually, the question is whom they voice their ideas and concerns to – the agency or the client organisation.

40

There is contention among collective representation of temporary agency employees being domiciled within the agency or the client organisation. Hakansson et al. (2020) found that temporary agency workers are afforded collective representation both at the client and agency levels. Conversely, Rybnikova (2016) found temporary agency workers' representation rare due to their workplaces' transient nature and the relatively small size of the temporary work agency business.

For workers in "disguised employment", our review's findings revealed that their dispositions to collective voice are changing and that their employers are increasingly enabling voice opportunities. In examining voice mechanisms among digital platforms, Gegenhuber et al. (2021) found that platforms enable voice mechanisms to bind workers to the platform in the face of increased competition and ensure workers' job quality and fair working conditions. Borghi et al. (2021) also found platform workers collective representation can either be through trade union or alternative grassroots group. They further argued that the complementary, alliances and otherwise of the union and alternative grassroot groups depends on the context of discourse/practice. Additionally, Saundry et al. (2006; 2007) and Umney (2016) found freelancers to be increasingly interested in collective representation to voice their dissenting opinions through professional networks. These networks are not affiliated to trade unions as the workers believed strong advocacy of unions could impede their career growth (Wood et al., 2018). This need for collective representation of these workers may be due to evidence that they are less likely to be directly consulted (Hoque & Kirkpatrick, 2003).

Employee voice agenda. Studies (n = 8) (e.g., Ruiner et al., 2020) identified shared issues as dominant. This is due to the shared issues' integrative nature against

the contested concerns' distributive nature. Markey et al. (2003) reported that part-timers have more input in improving shared decisions than their full-time counterparts. Similarly, Hoque and Kirkpatrick (2003) found professionals having higher input in staffing decisions. For gig workers, communication and feedback channels provided by platforms are mostly restricted to task-based processes. This may likely be a result of the job nature of these workers which largely depends on their availability and increased workplace processes and performance (Hoque & Kirkpatrick, 2003) and, the desire of management to control voice patterns and mute dissenting voices on contested issues (Gegenhuber et al., 2021). Hence, employers are more likely to be receptive to workers' input in decisions over shared concerns. On the one hand, future workplace plans, staffing issues, change in work practices, and health and safety are the identified shared decisions workers in NTERs have input. On the other hand, grievance, equal opportunity, compensation, and holiday/work timing are distributive issues identified.

Employee voice influence. Our review found a varying degree of influence afforded to workers in the different variants of NTERs. Some studies (n=5) (e.g., Soltani et al., 2018; Yang, 2012) reported the low level of upward communication among temporary employees, part-timers, temporary agency workers, even where they have access to collective voice (Wood, 2016). In contrast, Donnelly et al. (2012), Ruiner et al. (2020), and McDonnell et al. (2014) reported that temporary employees, independent contractors, and part-timers could offer suggestions, air their ideas about workplace issues, and complain about issues that affect them. Identified issues include – holiday/work timing, work tasks, pay and benefits, work conditions, and training needs (Donnelly et al., 2012).

Most studies reviewed found workers in NTERs having little or no influence over workplace decisions due to power imbalance (Wood, 2016), nature of their contract/job and industry (Ruiner et al., 2020). However, McDonnell et al. (2014) argued that part-time employees influence lower-level workplace decisions and accept wittingly their inability to influence higher-level management decisions. In comparison with workers in TERs, Markey et al. (2002) reported little or no difference in the degree of influence both part-timers and full-timers have on decisions that affect them at work. They argued that both workers in TERs and NTERs are less likely to display a reasonable degree level of influence in management decisions and actions. Surprisingly, Ruiner et al. (2020) found independent consultants in the health sector having a higher degree of influence than permanent physicians. They argued that the independent consultants could influence management actions by voicing due to expertise, freedom, and loyalty to professional values. They further reported that the independent consultants' voice influences management actions for favourable work conditions, even for permanent doctors.

2.5.3 What are the determinants and outcomes of voice for workers in NTERs?

2.5.3.1   Determinants

We present an integrated framework of the individual-firm-external determinants of voice in NTERs. These arise from our review in Figure 2 and further explain these determinants in this section.
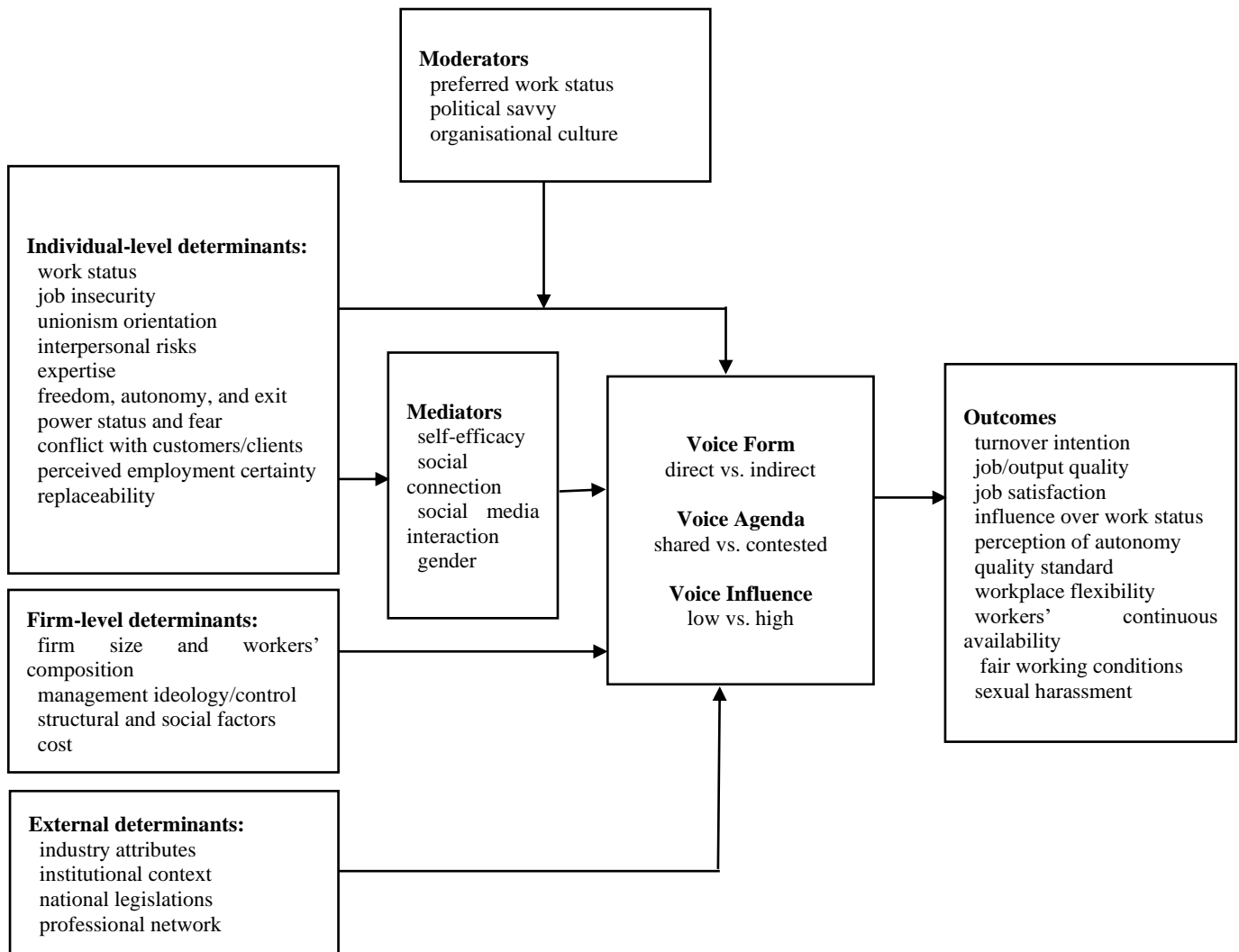
Fig. 2 Voice research in NTERs: an integrative framework

Individual-level determinants. A few of the reviewed studies focused on individual-level factors. Dominant among these individual determinants is work status (e.g., see Al-Amin & Islam, 2020; Johanson & Cho, 2009; Stamper & Van Dyne, 2001). Work status is a subset of the hierarchical configuration among organisational members, and workers who perceive themselves at the lower end of the cadre are likely to eschew upward voice behaviour (Morrison, 2011) with the belief that their voice input may be ignored. Reviewed studies found non-traditional workers to be highly cognizant of their status amidst other organisational members and felt least entitled to

voice discontent or grievance (Sluiter et al., 2020). For example, casual retail workers facing sexual harassment rarely speak up due to their job's temporary nature (Good & Cooper, 2014). Also, interpersonal risks assessment (Qian et al., 2020), job insecurity (Benassi & Vlandas, 2016), perceived unemployment uncertainty, and degree of replaceability among freelancers and temporary agency workers (Sluiter et al., 2020) have been reported to impede voice. For temporary agency workers, workers' unionism orientation and ideology (Hakansson et al., 2017; Heery et al., 2004), power status and fear (Rybnikova, 2016) were found as determinants.

In addition to Sluiter and colleagues' findings for workers in disguised employment, Ruiner et al. (2020) and Maffie (2020) also found freedom, expertise, autonomy and exit, and conflict with customers/clients as determinants of freelancers and gig workers' voice. Findings from these studies revealed that independent freelancers with a high level of expertise, freedom, and autonomy would voice their discontent and ideas compared to standard workers (Ruiner et al., 2020). Similarly, for digital platform workers, conflict with clients/customers propel information sharing and discussion among colleagues, a recipe for collective representation for gig workers (Maffie, 2020).

Moderators and mediators. Our review revealed that intervening variables influence the linkage between some individual-level determinants and non-traditional workers' voices. For moderators, preferred work status and organisational culture, and political savvy were identified (e.g., Qian et al., 2020; Stamper & Van Dyne, 2001). For mediators, few studies examined factors explaining how some individual-level determinants influence non-traditional workers' voices. Self-efficacy (Qian et al., 2020), social connection, and social media interaction (Maffie, 2020) are identified

from the reviewed studies. Gender was also found to explain how work status influence non-traditional workers' voice (Booth & Francesconi, 2003; Hoque & Kirkpatrick, 2003). These studies reported less collective voice for both men and women, with the degree of union-coverage for women being lesser. Similarly, non-traditional female workers in non-professional jobs or the public sector are likely to be covered by a union compared to professionals and those in the private sector.

Firm-level determinants. Studies examining the influence of firm-level factors on non-traditional workers' voice identified size and workers' composition, management ideology and control, structural and social factors, and cost as determinants. Concerning size, studies reviewed found a significant relationship between firm size and workers' composition and availability of workers' participation. Both Markey et al. (2002) and Markey et al. (2003) found small workplaces (<50 workers) to have a low incidence of workplace participative practices compared to larger firms. Gegenhuber et al. (2021) also found that platform size impacts how they perceive voice and the need to give workers voice opportunity. Also, they established that digital platforms consider crowd workers' composition (heterogeneity/homogeneity) before installing voice mechanisms to balance diverse perspectives and backgrounds of the workers. Management ideology and control were also a significant determinant of non-traditional workers' voices (Gegenhuber et al., 2021; Rybnikova, 2016). Among platform organisations, Gegenhuber et al. (2021) found the ability of digital platforms to shape workers' voice direction as a prerequisite for installing voice mechanisms. They argued that digital platforms prefer direct voice mechanisms in a bid to retain control as they refrain workers from taking collective action. Similarly, Rybnikova (2016) found that management leadership behaviour and control influence temporary

agency workers' voice, arguing that authoritative leadership behaviour and control of temporary agency workers by supervisors in the client organisation stifle their voice. In terms of structural and social factors, Rybnikova (2016) suggests that workers' duration of assignment, working arrangements, designation of specific tasks, and the role of agency influence temporary agency workers' voice. In addition to firms' structural factors, we identified cost and resources as an influencer of an organisation's willingness to install voice mechanisms for non-traditional workers. Findings demonstrate that the decision of firms/platforms to design voice structures is highly influenced by the resources required to install and maintain the voice system (Gegenhuber et al., 2021).

External determinants. Our review found that researchers have extensively studied a few external determinants – *industry attributes*, *institutional context*, *national legislation*, and *professional network*. First, previous studies found that the industry where non-traditional workers work determines the level of voice opportunity available to them and the extent to which they can influence management decisions (Ruiners et al., 2020). Research demonstrates that the industry/sector of firms influences the level of flexibility they can adopt (Kalleberg, 2000) and impact how the degree of flexibility can influence employee outcomes (Guest, 2004). For instance, independent professional workers in the health industry were found to have more voice influence (Ruiners et al., 2020) compared to professional workers in the gig economy with a low level of influence over management actions and decisions (Gegenhuber et al., 2021; Maffie, 2020).

Second, Benassi and Vlandas (2016) and Pulignano and Signoretti (2016) considered institutional context. It was argued that national employment institutions

and collective bargaining structures available in any country impact the use of non-traditional labour. The more structured the national employment, labour market, and collective bargaining institutions are, the more likely it is for all forms of workers (traditional and non-traditional) to have similar pay structures, employment terms and conditions, and be covered in collective agreements (Pulignano & Signoretti, 2016). This is in line with the argument of Oliver (2011) that with strong bargaining institutions and wider bargaining coverage, "outsiders" can also benefit from "insiders'" institutions. Third, researchers have also explored the importance of national labour legislation for non-traditional workers' voice. In contexts of stricter employment legislation and protection for traditional workers and with little or no protection for their non-traditional counterparts, firms are more likely to exploit the vulnerability of these workers and increase their usage, except where legislations are specifically targeted to protect these workers (Pulignano & Signoretti, 2016).

Lastly, reviewed studies (Saundry et al., 2006; 2007; 2012; Umney, 2016) found professional networks to significantly influence freelancers' collective voice. They argued that such worker networks serve as a springboard to a collective determination of their terms and conditions. Professional networks serve as advocates for freelance and project-based workers and as an avenue for the expression of discontent and bonding with colleagues. Hence, professional networks are likely to offer disguised workers some form of collective or network voice (Prouska & Kapsali, 2021).

Further results from our review indicate that, contrary to previous research which argues that low employment protection and regulation motivates union inclusiveness and collective voice for temporary agency workers, Benassi & Vlandas (2015) examined and affirmed high bargaining coverage, high union authority, and

workers' movement ideology as determinants of collective voice for temporary agency workers.

2.5.3.2 Outcomes

Our analysis also points to the outcomes and consequences of voice. Unlike the many individual and organisational level outcomes reported for voice among traditional workers, few studies (n=7) (e.g., Kroon & Freese, 2013) examined how voice impacts turnover intention, job quality, job satisfaction, and sexual harassment of temporary workers, temporary agency workers, and part-timers. Besides, perception of autonomy, quality standard, workplace flexibility, and workers' perception of having fair working conditions was found as consequences of non-traditional workers' voice. Further findings reveal interactions between the outcomes of voice among non-traditional workers. For example, Good and Cooper (2014) found that temporary workers seldom exercise voice behaviour when they face sexual harassment and highly dissatisfied with their employers' responses.

2.6 Discussion and Directions for Future Research

As one of the first systematic reviews to synthesize empirical evidence on non-traditional workers' voice, we departed from the previous voice reviews (Morrison, 2011; 2014; Mowbray et al., 2015), which identified the antecedents and decision-making process of traditional workers' voice, to develop an integrated understanding of the voice form, agenda, and influence within the non-traditional work domain. Following calls from scholars (Wilkinson et al., 2020), we adopted the integrative perspective of voice and argued following Kaufman (2015) that employment contextual

factors may likely influence workers' voice. Kaufman argues that the labour market's state concerning opportunities available, and the employment climate determines employee voice. Similarly, Wilkinson et al. (2018) acknowledged that workers' diversity, concerning personal and institutional factors, shapes voice. Wilkinson et al. (2021) further argued that social, economic, and technological developments such as alternative/flexible work arrangements and the presence of marginalised/minority groups at work may threaten workers' voice. Therefore, non-traditional workers' voice concerning their labour market experience and employment climate may differ from those of traditional workers. We rested on this reasoning and extended it to have a cursory look at empirical studies on non-traditional workers' voice. Hence, this synthesis's objective was to conceptually map the evidence to date of traditional workers' voice determinants and outcomes.

We reviewed empirical studies on voice among non-traditional workers published since 1984 and identified factors that determine such workers' voice behaviour and outcomes. Thirty-three studies met our inclusion criteria, and findings from these studies indicated that a wide variety of voice channels and mechanisms are available to non-traditional workers. These variations are determined by the aims of the studies, type of NTER studied, contextual differences, varying predicting factors, and methodological differences. For instance, while voice among part-timers, temporary and disguised workers has received considerable attention, studies on temporary agency workers' voice remain limited. Similarly, individual-level determinants of voice have been considerably explored, and many factors have been reported as determinants, mediators, and moderators of NTER workers' voice. However, firm-level, and external factors influencing voice among NTER workers

remain largely understudied. Corroborating our findings is the call from Morrison (2014) for the urgent need to consider more macro-level external factors in the determination of workers' voice.

Overall, we found that voice research among NTER workers is growing and receiving increasing attention. However, the studies remain fragmented. We address this need for integration by presenting a compilation of findings of voice research in NTERs in a framework (see Figure 2) and add to voice theory and previous work at conceptualising voice (Kaufman, 2015; Mowbray et al., 2015). Our review paves the way for more research into voice in NTERs. We set directions for future research opportunities following the identification of research gaps across the variants of NTERs studied, voice dimensions, context, determinants, and outcomes of voice. Based on the identified strands, we recommend five significant directions for future studies.

First, most of the studies we reviewed are domiciled among part-timers. However, with the tremendous growth in triangular employment and gig work (Hudson-Sharp & Runge, 2017), more research is needed to study the experience of temporary agency, project-based, and gig workers. For instance, both temporary agency and project-based workers are seconded to work with different organisations and on different projects at different times by the employing agencies or firms (Rybnikova, 2016; Turner, Huemann & Keegan, 2008). Future research can investigate who is responsible for initiating voice practices in triangular employment and how frequent change in organisational settings influences these workers' voice experiences.

Second, more research is needed on the individual-level determinants of voice in NTERs. Beyond gender, future studies should consider investigating how other socio-demographic attributes of workers in NTERs (e.g., education, employment duration, work experience, financial status, social status) influence their voice behaviour. For instance, there is the possibility that a non-traditional worker with good financial status who decide to work for personal fulfilment, identity, care for others, or service (Budd, 2014) would exercise more voice compared to a financially unstable worker who views work as a commodity or disutility (Budd, 2014). More studies on organisational level determinants are needed to understand non-traditional workers' voice, such as the influence of a narcissistic leadership style on voice.

Third, future research is highly pertinent to the outcomes of voice, or lack of voice, among non-traditional workers. Previous scholars (e.g., Wilkinson, Townsend, Graham & Muurlink, 2015) have argued that workers' voice, irrespective of employment contract, impacts the worker-firm relationship. While traditional workers' voice outcomes have been widely studied (see Holland, Allen & Cooper, 2013; Wilkinson et al., 2004), implications of voice or lack of it for non-traditional workers have been largely understudied (Wilkinson et al., 2018). This is relevant to the call for employee voice inclusion in workplace practices as favourable consequences of employee voice (e.g., wellbeing, engagement) have been widely verified in voice research, while the absence of voice has been linked to adverse outcomes (e.g., insubordination, absenteeism).

Fourth, despite reports from international labour and human rights organisations on the abuse of labour and the high level of precariousness experienced by workers in NTERs in the developing and underdeveloped economies (ITUC, 2019),

little research has been completed on voice experiences of workers in NTERs in these climes. Studies from low and middle-income countries and other emerging nations would provide a broader understanding of the state of non-traditional workers' access to individual and collective voice.

Fifth, our review showed the dominant usage of cross-sectional research design, survey, and panel data collection method in previous studies. More longitudinal studies are needed exploring non-traditional workers' work duration within or across firms, labour market conditions, and terms and conditions of work. In addition, more qualitative studies are needed to gain deeper insights into these workers' voice experiences.

2.7   Conclusion

This review article explored the voice experience of workers in NTERs, established the research gaps, and suggested avenues for future research directions. We identified individual, firm, and external determinants of non-traditional workers' voice and the consequences of their voice and non-voice and presented these in an integrated framework that acts as a guide for future research. Besides Prouska and Kapsali's (2021) effort at modelling the determinants of project worker voice in the temporary employment context, previous integrative voice models (e.g., Kaufman, 2015; Mowbray et al., 2015; Nechanska, Hughes & Dundon, 2020) captured determinants of traditional workers' voice. These past models are broad, without special consideration for employment situation peculiarities. Joining Prouska and Kapsali (2021), our framework expands voice theory to non-traditional employment by

capturing the peculiar elements of the NTER context. Specifically, we add to the voice theory by identifying individual-level and intervening (mediating and moderating) factors that influence non-traditional workers' voice, and their voice outcomes.

The limitations of our study are twofold. First, only empirical studies in peer-reviewed journals were included, leaving out conceptual papers, books, book chapters, working papers, theses, and dissertations. This was a conscious decision as the purpose of the review was to capture empirical work published in peer-reviewed academic journals to ensure the quality of the analysis. Second, the relatively small sample of articles reviewed meant that we could not fully account for the heterogeneous nature of the composition of workers, which may create varying experiences of voice. Neither were we able to account for differences in the methodological approaches of the studies we reviewed. However, the future directions we proposed in the paper include avenues to overcome these shortcomings in future research.

2.8 References

Note: * denotes articles included in the review

Adams, R. J., Smart, P., & Huff, A. S. (2017). Shades of grey: Guidelines for working with the grey literature in systematic reviews for management and organisational studies. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, *19*(4), 432-454.

*Al-Amin, M., & Islam, M. N. (2020). Voices of the poor: Demystifying the nexus between rights and agency of Bangladesh's tea workers. *Labour History*, 1-19.

Ashford, S. J., George, E., & Blatt, R. (2007). 2 old assumptions, new work: The opportunities and challenges of research on non-standard employment. *The Academy of Management Annals*, *1*(1), 65-117.

Bagdadli, S., & Gianecchini, M. (2019). Organisational career management practices and objective career success: A systematic review and framework. *Human Resource Management Review*, *29*(3), 353-370.

Bailey, C., Madden, A., Alfes, K., & Fletcher, L. (2017). The meaning, antecedents, and outcomes of employee engagement: A narrative synthesis. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, *19*(1), 31-53.

Barry, M., & Wilkinson, A. (2016). Prosocial or pro-management? A critique of the conception of employee voice as a prosocial behaviour within organizational behaviour. *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, *54*(2), 261-284.

*Benassi, C., & Vlandas, T. (2016). Union inclusiveness and temporary agency workers: The role of power resources and union ideology. *European Journal of Industrial Relations*, *22*(1), 5-22.

*Booth, A. L., & Francesconi, M. (2003). Union coverage and non-standard work in Britain. *Oxford Economic Papers*, *55*(3), 383-416.

*Borghi, P., Murgia, A., Mondon-Navazo, M., & Mezihorak, P. (2021). Mind the gap between discourses and practices: Platform workers' representation in France and Italy. *European Journal of Industrial Relations*, 09596801211004268.

Budd, J. W. (2014). The future of employee voice. In Wilkinson, A., Donaghey, J., Dundon, T. and Freeman, R. (eds), *The Handbook of Research on Employee Voice: Participation and Involvement in the Workplace*. Cheltenham: Elgar Press, pp. 477-487.

Budd, J. W., Gollan, P. J., & Wilkinson, A. (2010). New approaches to employee voice and participation in organisations. *Human Relations*, *63*(3), 303-310.

Cappelli, P., & Keller, J. R. (2013). Classifying work in the new economy. *Academy of Management Review*, *38*(4), 575-596.

Chadwick, C., & Flinchbaugh, C. (2016). The effects of part-time workers on establishment financial performance. *Journal of Management*, *42*(6), 1635-1662.

Collins, B., Garin, A., Jackson, E., Koustas, D., & Payne, M. (2019). Is gig work replacing traditional employment? Evidence from two decades of tax returns.

IRS SOI Joint Statistical Research Program. Available online: https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-soi/19rpgigworkreplacingtraditionalemployment.pdf

Cooke, A., Smith, D., & Booth, A. (2012). Beyond PICO: The SPIDER tool for qualitative evidence synthesis. *Qualitative Health Research*, *22*(10), 1435-1443.

Cranford, C., Vosko, L., & Zukewich, N. (2003). The gender of precarious employment in Canada. *Relations Industrielles/Industrial Relations*, *58*(3), 454-482.

*Donnelly, N., Proctor-Thomson, S. B., & Plimmer, G. (2012). The role of 'voice' in matters of 'choice': Flexible work outcomes for women in the New Zealand Public Services. *Journal of Industrial Relations*, *54*(2), 182-203.

Dundon, T., Wilkinson, A., Marchington, M., & Ackers, P. (2004). The meanings and purpose of employee voice. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *15*(6), 1149-1170.

Feldman, D. C. (2006). Toward a new taxonomy for understanding the nature and consequences of contingent employment. *Career Development International*, *11*(1), 28-47.

Finfgeld-Connett, D. (2014). Use of content analysis to conduct knowledge-building and theory generating qualitative systematic reviews. *Qualitative Research*, *14*(3), 341-352.

Flinchbaugh, C., Zare, M., Chadwick, C., Li, P., & Essman, S. (2020). The influence of independent contractors on organizational effectiveness: A review. *Human Resource Management Review*, *30*(2), 1-19.

Freeman, R. B., & Medoff, J. L. (1984). What do unions do? ILR Review, *38*, 244.

*Gegenhuber, T., Ellmer, M., & Schüßler, E. (2021). Microphones, not megaphones: Functional crowdworker voice regimes on digital work platforms. *Human Relations*, *74*(9), 1473-1503, DOI: 0018726720915761.

Guest, D. (2004). Flexible employment contracts, the psychological contract and employee outcomes: An analysis and review of the evidence. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, *5*(1), 1-19.

*Goñi-Legaz, S., & Ollo-López, A. (2017). Temporary contracts, participation in decision making and job satisfaction in European workers: Is there a buffering effect?. *International Journal of Manpower*, *38*(6), 875-892.

*Good, L., & Cooper, R. (2014). Voicing their complaints? The silence of students working in retail and hospitality and sexual harassment from customers. *Labour & Industry: A Journal of the Social and Economic Relations of Work*, *24*(4), 302-316.

*Gray, J., & Laidlaw, H. (2002). Part-time employment and communication satisfaction in an Australian retail organisation. *Employee Relations*, *24*(2), 211-228.

*Håkansson, K., Pulignano, V., Isidorsson, T., & Doerflinger, N. (2020). Explaining job insecurity for temporary agency workers: A comparison between Sweden and Belgium. *Economic and Industrial Democracy*, *41*(2), 254-275.

Haapakorpi, A. (2021). Freedom but insecurity: the business consulting profession in the post-industrial service society. *Nordic Journal of Working Life Studies*, *11*(1), 45-62, https://doi.org/10.18291/njwls.122225

*Heery, E., Conley, H., Delbridge, R., & Stewart, P. (2004). Beyond the enterprise: trade union representation of freelances in the UK. *Human Resource Management Journal*, *14*(2), 20-35.

Hirschman, A. O. (1970). *Exit, voice, and loyalty: Responses to decline in firms, organisations, and states* (Vol. 25). Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

Holland, P. J., Allen, B. C., & Cooper, B. K. (2013). Reducing burnout in Australian nurses: The role of employee direct voice and managerial responsiveness. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *24*(16), 3146-3162.

*Hoque, K., & Kirkpatrick, I. (2003). Non-standard employment in the management and professional workforce: training, consultation, and gender implications. *Work, Employment and Society*, *17*(4), 667-689.

Hudson-Sharp, N., & Runge, J. (2017). *International trends in insecure work: A report for the Trades Union Congress* (Vol. 3). London: National Institute of Economic and Social Research.

ILO (2016). Non-standard employment around the world: Understanding challenges, shaping prospects. Geneva: International Labour Office.

ITUC (2019). *2019 ITUC global rights index: The world's countries for workers*. Brussels: ITUC.

*Johanson, M. M., & Cho, S. (2009). Uncovering the link between organisational behaviours and employment status in the US hotel industry. *Journal of Human Resources in Hospitality & Tourism*, *8*(2), 184-198.

Kalleberg, A. L. (2000). Non-standard employment relations: Part-time, temporary and contract work. *Annual Review of Sociology, 26*(1), 341-365.

Katz, L. F., & Krueger, A. B. (2019). The rise and nature of alternative work arrangements in the United States, 1995–2015. *ILR Review, 72*(2), 382-416.

Kaufman, B. E. (2014). Explaining breadth and depth of employee voice across firms: A voice factor demand model. *Journal of Labour Research, 35*(3), 296-319.

Kaufman, B. E. (2015). Theorising determinants of employee voice: An integrative model across disciplines and levels of analysis. *Human Resource Management Journal, 25*(1), 19-40.

Kelan, E. K. (2018). Men doing and undoing gender at work: A review and research agenda. *International Journal of Management Reviews, 20*(2), 544-558.

Kilby, C. J., Sherman, K. A., & Wuthrich, V. (2018). Towards understanding inter-individual differences in stressor appraisals: A systematic review. *Personality and Individual Differences, 135*, 92-100.

*Kroon, B., & Freese, C. (2013). Can HR practices retain flexworkers with their agency? *International Journal of Manpower, 34*(8), 899-917.

*Maffie, M. D. (2020). The role of digital communities in organizing gig workers. *Industrial Relations: A Journal of Economy and Society, 59*(1), 123-149.

Marchington, M. and Wilkinson, A. (2005) 'Direct participation and involvement', in S. Bach (ed), *Managing Human Resources: Personnel Management in Transition*, 4th edition. Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 398-423.

*Markey, R., Hodgkinson, A., & Kowalczyk, J. (2002). Gender, part-time employment and employee participation in Australian workplaces. *Employee Relations*, *24*(2), 129-150.

*Markey, R., Kowalczyk, J., & Pomfret, S. (2003). Part–time employment, gender and employee participation in Illawarra workplaces. *The Journal of Industrial Relations*, *45*(1), 48-66.

*McDonnell, A., Connell, J., Hannif, Z., & Burgess, J. (2014). Having "a say": Forms of voice in Australian call centres. *Employee Relations*, *36*(3), 214-234.

McGovern, P., Smeaton, D., & Hill, S. (2004). Bad jobs in Britain: non-standard employment and job quality. *Work and Occupations*, *31*(2), 225-249.

Menger, P. M. (2017). Contingent high-skilled work and flexible labor markets. Creative workers and independent contractors cycling between employment and unemployment. *Swiss Journal of Sociology*, *43*(2), 253-284.

Moorman, R. H., & Blakely, G. L. (1995). Individualism-collectivism as an individual difference predictor of organisational citizenship behaviour. *Journal of Organisational Behaviour*, *16*(2), 127-142.

Morrison, E. W. (2011). Employee voice behaviour: Integration and directions for future research. *Academy of Management Annals*, *5*(1), 373-412.

Morrison, E. W. (2014). Employee voice and silence. *Annual Review of Organisational Psychology and Organisational Behaviour*, *1*(1), 173-197.

Mowbray, P. K., Wilkinson, A., & Tse, H. H. (2015). An integrative review of employee voice: Identifying a common conceptualization and research agenda. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, *17*(3), 382-400.

Nechanska, E., Hughes, E., & Dundon, T. 2020. Towards an integration of employee voice and silence. *Human Resource Management Review*, *30*(1), 100674.

Oliver, R. J. (2011). Powerful remnants? The politics of egalitarian bargaining institutions in Italy and Sweden. *Socio-Economic Review*, *9*(3), 533-566.

Pfeffer, J., & Baron, J. N. (1988). Taking the workers back out: Recent trends in the structuring of employment. *Research in Organisational Behaviour*, *10*(1988), 257-303.

*Piasna, A., Smith, M., Rose, J., Rubery, J., Burchell, B., & Rafferty, A. (2013). Participatory HRM practices and job quality of vulnerable workers. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *24*(22), 4094-4115.

Prouska, R., & Kapsali, M. (2021). The determinants of project worker voice in project-based organisations: An initial conceptualisation and research agenda. *Human Resource Management Journal*, *31*(2), 375-391.

*Pulignano, V., & Signoretti, A. (2016). Union strategies, national institutions and the use of temporary labour in Italian and US plants. *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, *54*(3), 574-596.

*Qian, X., Li, Q., Song, Y., & Wang, J. (2020). Temporary employment and voice behaviour: The role of self-efficacy and political savvy. *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources*, *58*(4), 607-629, DOI:10.1111/1744-7941.12232.

*Ruiner, C., Wilkesmann, M., & Apitzsch, B. (2020). Voice through exit: Changing working conditions by independent contractors' participation. *Economic and Industrial Democracy*, *41*(4), 839-859, DOI: 0143831X17738041.

*Rybnikova, I. (2016). Employee voice and silence in temporary agency work. *German Journal of Human Resource Management*, *30*(3-4), 287-309.

*Saundry, R., Stuart, M., & Antcliff, V. (2006). 'It's more than who you know'–networks and trade unions in the audio-visual industries. *Human Resource Management Journal*, *16*(4), 376-392.

*Saundry, R., Stuart, M., & Antcliff, V. (2007). Broadcasting discontent—freelancers, trade unions and the Internet. *New Technology, Work and Employment*, *22*(2), 178-191.

*Saundry, R., Stuart, M., & Antcliff, V. (2012). Social capital and union revitalization: A study of worker networks in the UK audio-visual industries. *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, *50*(2), 263-286.

Schoukens, P., & Barrio, A. (2017). The changing concept of work: When does typical work become atypical?. *European Labour Law Journal*, *8*(4), 306-332.

Semrad, M., Scott-Parker, B., & Nagel, M. (2019). Personality traits of a good liar: A systematic review of the literature. *Personality and Individual Differences*, *147*, 306-316.

*Sluiter, R., Manevska, K., & Akkerman, A. (2020). Atypical work, worker voice and supervisor responses. *Socio-Economic Review*, *0*(0), 1-21.

*Soltani, E., Liao, Y. Y., Gholami, A. K., & Iqbal, A. (2018). Saying it without words: A qualitative study of employee voice in the Iranian building sector. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *29*(5), 1015-1055.

Spreitzer, G. M., Cameron, L., & Garrett, L. (2017). Alternative work arrangements: Two images of the new world of work. *Annual Review of Organisational Psychology and Organisational Behaviour*, *4*, 473-499.

Spurk, D., & Straub, C. (2020). Flexible employment relationships and careers in times of the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Vocational Behaviour* (2020), https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2020.103435

*Stamper, C. L., & Dyne, L. V. (2001). Work status and organisational citizenship behaviour: A field   study of restaurant employees. *Journal of Organizational Behaviour*, *22*(5), 517-536.

Standing, G. (2018). The precariat: Today's transformative class? *Development, 61*, 115–121. doi: doi.org/10.1057/s41301-018-0182-5

Syed, J. (2014). Diversity management and missing voices. In A. Wilkinson, J. Donaghey, T. Dundon & R. Freeman (Eds.), *The Handbook of Research on Employee Voice: Participation and Involvement in the Workplace* (pp. 421-438). London: Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd.

Turner, R., Huemann, M., & Keegan, A. (2008). Human resource management in the project-oriented organization: Employee wellbeing and ethical treatment. *International Journal of Project Management*, *26*(5), 577-585.

*Umney, C. (2016). The labour market for jazz musicians in Paris and London: Formal regulation and informal norms. *Human Relations*, *69*(3), 711-729.

Vaismoradi, M., Turunen, H., & Bondas, T. (2013). Content analysis and thematic analysis: Implications for conducting a qualitative descriptive study. *Nursing & Health Sciences*, *15*(3), 398-405.

Van Dyne, L., & Le Pine, J. A. (1998). Helping and voice extra-role behaviours: evidence of construct and predictive validity. *Academy of Management Journal*, *41*(1), 108-119.

Walton, R. E. & McKersie, R. B. (1965) *A behavioural theory of labour negotiations*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Wilkinson, A. & Barry, M. & Morrison, E. (2020). Toward an integration of research on employee voice. *Human Resource Management Review*, 30(1), 100677, DOI: 10.1016/j.hrmr.2018.12.001.

Wilkinson, A., Dundon, T., Marchington, M., & Ackers, P. (2004). Changing patterns of employee voice: Case studies from the UK and Republic of Ireland. *Journal of Industrial Relations*, *46*(3), 298-322.

Wilkinson, A., & Fay, C. (2011). New times for employee voice?. *Human Resource Management*, *50*(1), 65-74.

Wilkinson, A., Gollan, P. J., Kalfa, S., & Xu, Y. (2018). Voices unheard: employee voice in the new century. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *29*(5), 711-724.

Wilkinson, A., Knoll, M., Mowbray, P. K., & Dundon, T. (2021). New trajectories in worker voice: Integrating and applying contemporary challenges in the organization of work. *British Journal of Management. 32*(3), 693-707.

Wilkinson, A., Townsend, K., Graham, T., & Muurlink, O. (2015). Fatal consequences: An analysis of the failed employee voice system at the Bundaberg Hospital. *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources, 53*(3), 265-280.

*Wood, A. J. (2016). Flexible scheduling, degradation of job quality and barriers to collective voice. *Human Relations, 69*(10), 1989-2010.

*Wood, A. J., Lehdonvirta, V., & Graham, M. (2018). Workers of the Internet unite? Online freelancer organisation among remote gig economy workers in six Asian and African countries. *New Technology, Work and Employment, 33*(2), 95-112.

Xiao, M., Cooke, F. L., Xu, J., & Bian, H. (2020). To what extent is corporate social responsibility part of human resource management in the Chinese context? A review of literature and future research directions. *Human Resource Management Review, 30*(4), 1-17.

*Yang, X. C. (2012). Contingent worker, permanent loser? How perceived trust shapes communication between contingent workers and standard workers in knowledge-based organizations. *International Journal of Business and Social Science, 3*(8), 172-180.

Zeytinoglu, I. U., & Cooke, G. B. (2008). Non-standard employment and promotions: A within genders analysis. *Journal of Industrial Relations, 50*(2), 319-337.

Chapter 3

Workers' voice from the triangular employment relationship lens: Towards a conceptual model

3.0   Abstract

Despite the proliferation of triangular work as occasioned by recent events, voice research has mainly focused on standard workers, with limited knowledge on the voice experiences of triangular workers. This is significant as voice undermines triangular workers' precarity and enables organisational improvement. In so doing, we examine the circumstantial state of triangular work at the external, employment contract context, firm and individual levels to develop a conceptual model exemplifying the determinants of triangular workers' voice. By theorizing the influencing forces impacting triangular workers voice, we contribute to the non-traditional workers' voice theory by offering propositions that can inspire future empirical studies.

Keywords: employee voice, triangular employment, temporary agency work, platform work.

3.1 Introduction

Triangular employment relationships involve a working relationship with two or more firms – the client/user firm and the intermediary/agency/platform. Agencies hire workers and second them to other organisations' premises to carry out job assignments. Another strand of workers in these intermediated employment arrangements are online co-employment platform workers (Duggan *et al.*, 2020; Meijerink and Arets, 2021). While there are other categories of self-employed workers in the platform economy that are with freelance platforms, online co-employment labour platforms institute employment contracts with their workers and subject them to labour agreements and other human resource management (HRM) activities (Meijerink and Arets, 2021). These platforms engage in both overt and covert implementation of HR practices (Meijerink *et al.*, 2021) in their matchmaking of the demand and supply of labour.

Although, there is a clear contrast between freelance, self-employed platform workers and temporary agency workers, the similarity between online co-employment labour platform workers and temporary agencies workers is striking (Meijerink and Arets, 2021). Table 1 shows the commonalities between these workers. Similarly, scholars (Healy *et al.*, 2017; Stewart and Stanford, 2017) categorised these workers to be in triangular employment following legal court pronouncements and scholarly debates (see *Aslam v Uber,* UK Employment Tribunal, 2016; Healy *et al.*, 2017; *Pimlico Plumbers Ltd and another v Smith,* UK Supreme Court, 2018). Hence, our understanding of triangular work will cover temporary agency and online co-employment labour platform workers but self-employed platform workers.

Table 1. Commonalities and differences between online co-employment labour platforms and temporary agencies.

Factors	Online Co-Employment Platforms	Temporary Agencies
Matchmaking structure/platform	Online	Human/Physical
Matching process	Marketplace/platform match of client and worker	Employee of temporary agencies match worker and client
Flexibility of matchmaking	Hyperflexible	Flexible
Speed of matchmaking	Instant/on-demand	On-demand
Worker status	Employee to platform	Employee to temporary agency
Worker pay	Platform-determined	Agency-determined
Replacement	Platform's responsibility	Temporary agency's responsibility
Worker discipline	Platform	Temporary agency
Worker recruitment and selection	Platform's responsibility	Temporary agency's responsibility
Worker performance rating	Client's responsibility	Client's responsibility

Source: Adapted from Meijerink and Arets (2020), Howcroft and Bergvall-Kareborn (2019) and Halliday (2021)

Although a few empirical studies (Gegenhuber *et al.*, 2020; Rybnikova, 2016) have examined voice among temporary agency and online co-employment platform workers, none developed a model depicting factors determining their voice. The consideration of the peculiarities of distinctive employment arrangements, especially for triangular workers, is highly important for the following reasons:

First, the share of global workers in temporary agency work amounted to 1.6%, (WEC, 2020). In the EU and US, 2.1% of workers work for temporary agencies (Eurostat, 2020; WEC, 2020). Similarly, 10% of the adult population have provided platform services in the EU countries (Behrendt *et al.*, 2019). This continuous trend

occasioned by organisational restructuring, outsourcing, subcontracting, and technology (Spreitzer *et al.*, 2017) has implications for HRM practices and particularly for workers' voice. Hence, the need for voice research to keep up with this trend.

Second, there is an underlying assumption of workers homogeneity in voice theorisation (Syed, 2014), yet in some contexts, workers are made to sign "*yellow-dog contracts*" (contracts which deny workers of a right to join a union, thus, restrict their voice; Green, 2010). This demonstrates that voice theory needs to develop, to acknowledge variations in voice experiences among different types of workers.

Third, the assumption of unwillingness to voice among these workers is eroding as they are continuously exhibiting actions that challenge the power relations between the parties to their contract. For example, there are reports of protests and "unrecognised" strike actions from these workers in the US, UK, Australia, and Nigeria (see Adelagun and Adediran, 2021; Greenhouse, 2016; Paul, 2021).

Fourth, available voice models (e.g., Morrison, 2011, 2014; Kaufman, 2015) did not capture the peculiarities of these workers. these models did not consider how institutional complexity, legal employer ambiguity, and other individual and contextual factors determines triangular workers' voice. While some of the identified determinants in our model may also hold for traditional workers (e.g., voice skill, duration of assignment, etc.), their omission from previous voice determinants conceptual understanding is surprising.

Lastly, Wilkinson *et al.* (2021) acknowledged work dynamics occasioned by social, economic, and technological developments, and argued that both platform-mediated and agency-mediated triangular work arrangements precariously influence

workers' voice. Specifically, they posited that the continuous rise in non-traditional forms of work pose myriad of unsolved issues for workers' voice, and an understanding of what drives these workers' voice is pertinent.

Consequently, we ask – *what factors determine triangular worker voice and how they influence the voice dimensions – form, agenda, and influence?*

3.2   Triangular Workers' Voice

Drawing from previous definitions (Morrison, 2014; Wilkinson and Fay, 2011), we understand triangular worker voice to be – *the mechanisms, structures, and processes of voicing available to triangular workers aimed at not just suggesting ideas and opinions, airing concerns, and complaints, but high-level participation and involvement in the decision-making process of the organisation to influence not only employment terms and conditions but also work autonomy and other business issues.*

Voice has three dimensions: *form*, *agenda*, and *influence* (Dundon *et al.*, 2004; Kaufman, 2014). As illustrated by Kaufman (2014), workers can either exhibit voice directly or indirectly (form), speak about integrative or distributive issues (agenda), and have just communication or influence on management decisions. These dimensions stretch along a line scale from far left of direct/shared/communication to far right of indirect/contested/influence of voice and a mix at different degrees at any point on the scale.

Voice is a multi-disciplinary construct and each of the disciplinary studies grew in silos over the years. Recent efforts from Kaufman (2015), Mowbray *et al.* (2015),

Nechanska *et al.* (2020), Oyetunde *et al.* (2022), Prouska and Kapsali (2021), widen the scope beyond the disciplinary silos by putting forward integrative models. A perusal of these models indicates the voice conceptualisation, determinants, and outcomes.

Although previous scholars have evidenced the nature of employment contract, and contract-related factors as a significant predictor of employee behaviour, there is a neglect of the specific employment-related determinants. For example, Morrison (2011) outlined contextual organisational factors but did not explicitly focus on the employment relationship. Kaufman (2015) also acknowledged employment relationship as a determinant of employee voice but did not consider distinctive employment arrangements. The model presented by Oyetunde *et al.* (2022) and Prouska and Kapsali (2021) does consider such arrangements. However, while Oyetunde et al (2022) converged non-traditional workers' voice determinants without targeting a type of non-traditional work, Prouska and Kapsali (2021) only focus on project workers.

3.3   Determinants of Triangular Worker Voice

The model (figure 1) illustrates the external, employment context, firm and individual level forces that determines triangular workers' voice.
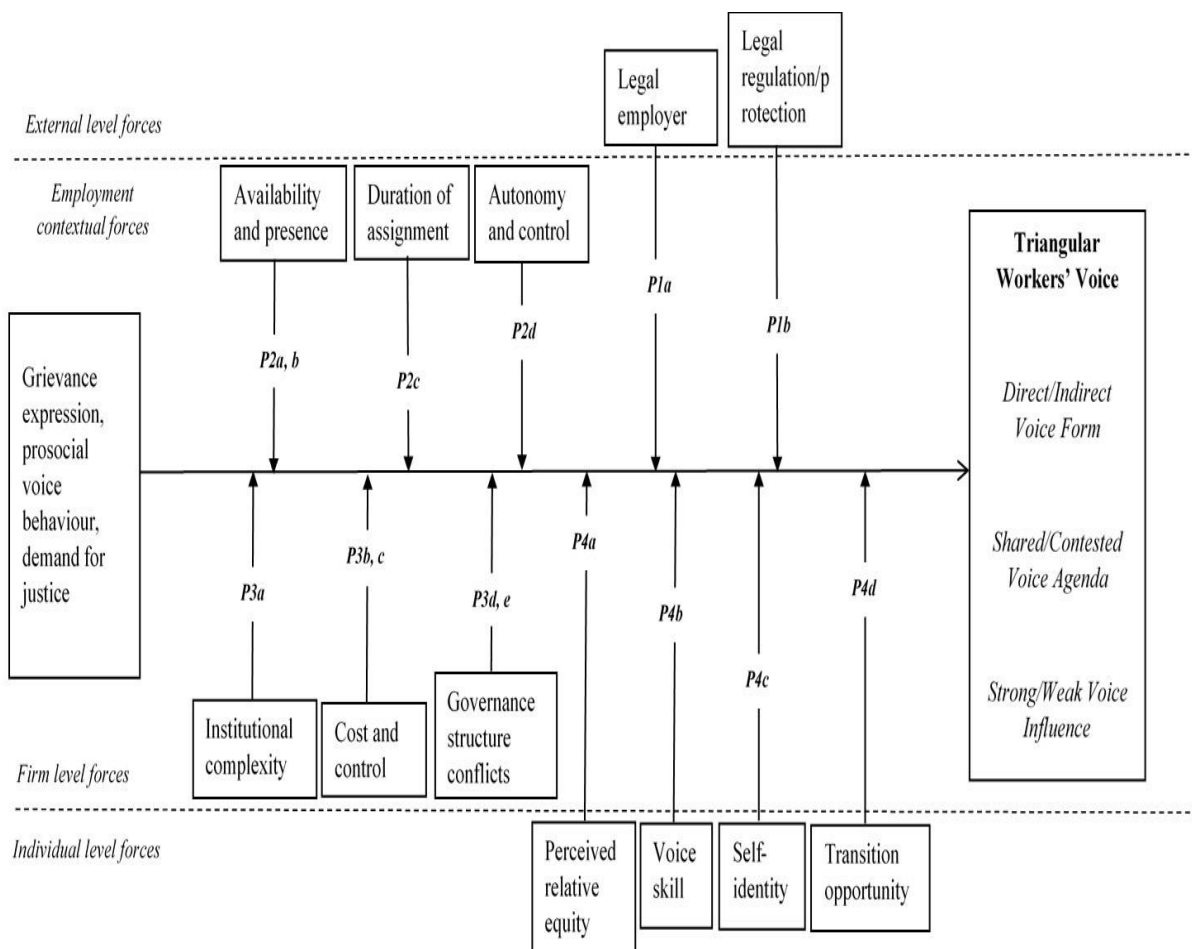
Figure 1. A model of triangular worker voice determinants.

3.3.1 External forces

Legal employer. The blurred understanding of the legal employer posed concerns for ER/HR scholars and practitioners over the years (Davidov, 2004). In the case of temporary agency workers, the client firm may assume the agency to be the employer while the agency might also assume the firm is the employer when offering placement services (Davidov, 2004), leaving the legal employer responsibility in the open. Legislations on the identification of the legal employer for temporary agency workers depend on context. For instance, the agency is the legal employer in many European

countries, but in Canada it is the user firm, while in the US, both the agency and client firm are co-employer (Davidov, 2004; Mitlatcher, 2007). Similarly, there is a growing concern of whether platforms such as Uber, TaskRabbit etc., are legal employers to platform workers or just firms providing platforms to source for clients (Healy *et al.*, 2017).

Consequently, the legal composition impacts how HR practices affect workers, and such practices in client organisations are highly impacted by the agency and vice versa (Mitlatcher, 2007). Dominance conflict exists between client organisations and agencies' HR practices with implications for workers, especially when moved frequently between organisations. For instance, it may be difficult for the agency to act as a full employer to the worker after deployment and uneasy for workers to always refer to the agency for HR issues. Hence, the legal employer's ambiguity may likely exclude triangular workers from influencing the formulation and implementation of HR policies and practices. This perception of exclusion can indicate a deficit for triangular workers. It can represent a 'half-way house' scenario where they come under the orbit of some HR policies and practices (e.g., health and safety training) but excluded from other HR practices, particularly voice.

Given the above, the inherent precariousness associated with triangular employment features voice exclusion. However, in situations where workers want to defy all odds to speak up, there is the dilemma of whom to speak to (Davidov, 2004) – the *de jure* or *de facto* employer (agency or user firm).

Proposition 1a: The more ambiguous the understanding of who the legal employer is, the less likely it will be for both the temporary agency and online co-employment platform workers' voice form to be direct.

Legal regulation/protection. There is evidence of an absence of legal regulations and protection for triangular workers in many contexts (ILO, 2016). Although many European countries (e.g., Germany, Belgium, UK) have legislations to regulate triangular employment and protect temporary agency workers, some countries (e.g., US) have minimal legislations and protection (Mitlatcher, 2007), while some countries in Africa/Asia (e.g., Nigeria) have none (Ojukwu, 2018). Similarly, in many countries, platform work lacks institutionalised legal employment regulations, leaving workers without legal protection amidst their contract's precariousness (Todolí-Signes, 2017). The argument for platform workers' exclusion is the non-recognisability of these workers as employees by the law, hence not covered by the current employment legislation in many countries.

Previous scholars (e.g., Håkansson *et al.*, 2020) argued that legal institutionalised regulations have implications for workers. Legal protection was found to enhance workers' rights, protect them from job insecurity and alleviate precariousness (Standing, 2011). The presence or absence of legal regulation and protection has implications for triangular workers' voice, such that temporary agency workers in contexts with weak national regulation of temporary agency work are left vulnerable and devoid of collective voice (Håkansson *et al.*, 2020). For example, due to most temporary agencies' small business nature, especially in contexts where targeted labour legislations for triangular workers are absent, work councils and union representation are rarely installed for collective workers' voice (Rybnikova, 2016).

Scholars (e.g., Ackers, 2007) have argued that collective voice and union representation afford workers the opportunity for inclusiveness and challenge the employment contract's inherent power relations by voicing more contested issues. Dundon *et al.* (2004) further argued that institutional/collective voice enabled by legal regulation allows workers to influence management decisions and contribute to the formulation of HR practices. Hence, we argue that when there are legalisations to regulate and protect triangular work, there is the likelihood that triangular workers will be emboldened and empowered by such protective legislation. Rights to representation can encourage a culture where triangular workers can contest issues and influence management decisions.

Proposition 1b: The more legal regulation and protection for both temporary agency and online co-employment platform workers is present, the more likely it will be for their voice form to be indirect, their voice agenda to be of a contested nature, and their voice influence to be strong.

3.3.2 Employment contextual forces

Availability and presence. Triangular employment has transcended work beyond traditional but permeable boundaries (Boudreau *et al.*, 2015), making workers' availability unpredictable. In the conceptualisation of non-traditional employment relationships, scholars (e.g., Cappelli and Keller, 2013) acknowledged the limited physical and administrative attachment of non-traditional workers to their organisations on the one hand and the restrictive direct employer control on the other hand. Spreitzer *et al.* (2017) in their review showed that triangular workers experience

a high level of flexibility in work time and location. For example, temporary agency workers experience a high level of volatility in their work location due to movements between clients by the agency (Mitlatcher, 2007). Similarly, online co-employment platform workers may have a limited interface with their platforms, and their work highly remote, serving clients as demanded.

Due to technological changes, workers can either work physically, virtually or hybrid of both. While physical work enjoins workers' physical presence in the employer's premises and proximity to co-workers, virtual work spans discontinuities such as location, time, and lack of physical proximity to colleagues (Conner, 2003). Triangular workers have their fair share of physical and virtual work. For instance, while most temporary workers work physically, some co-employment platform workers perform their work virtually. In their categorisation of platform work, Kalleberg and Dunn (2016) illustrated that crowd platform (e.g., mturk.com) workers engage in virtual work, transportation (e.g., uber.com), and delivery/home task (e.g., taskrabbit.com) platform workers require physical presence.

Social presence theory (Short *et al.*, 1976) posits that presence has a higher role in communication between parties. The availability of workers and the domiciling of work in their employers' premises shows presence and may likely influence the usage of direct voice mechanisms. Rybnikova (2016) found that shift work and changing workplace impact voice of temporary agency workers, possibly depriving them of voice channels in client firms. Atkinson and Hall (2011) also found that flexible working arrangement discourage discretionary behaviour (e.g., voice) among workers. Hence, the firm changing frequency and availability of workers and working patterns may likely influence voice forms available to triangular workers.

Previous studies (Beauregard *et al.*, 2019) have argued that both physical and virtual work have implications for workers and their firms. For instance, workers' physical presence allows workers interactions and relationships with managers, colleagues, and supervisors. Managers can monitor workers' performance and give feedback, thereby encouraging communication and interaction. Rybnikova (2016) found that increased interaction and interpersonal relationships between temporary agency workers with a prolonged physical presence in the client organisation and standard employees in the client firm enable voice opportunities for agency workers. It was argued further that increasing interaction and familiarity between temporary agency workers and supervisors in client firms allows temporary agency workers to attain a power status that allows them to influence decision-making.

Conversely, virtual working leaves supervisors to assess workers' performance by relying on output-related metrics and other monitoring techniques (Beauregard *et al.*, 2019). Virtual workers, due to physical, social, and professional isolation (Mitlatcher, 2007), have been reported to identify less with their organisations, and to communicate less with their managers and colleagues working physically in the office (Collins *et al.*, 2016). Similarly, platform workers also often work in isolation from others (Meijerink and Keegan, 2019; Stewart and Stanford, 2017). In most cases, the workers find it challenging to communicate with platforms. There is a lack of direct communication, which stifles their voice, reduces their bargaining power, and makes them unable to influence decisions (Chesley, 2014). Hence, the isolation and lack of communication arising from the virtual nature of their work may impede triangular workers' voice behaviour, especially where there are no formal mechanisms to voice, limiting their ability to influence decisions.

Proposition 2a: The higher the degree of availability at work, the more likely it will be for both temporary agency and online co-employment platform workers' voice form to be direct.

Proposition 2b: The more both temporary agency and online co-employment platform workers are physically present at work, the more likely it will be for their voice form to be direct, and their voice influence to be strong. Conversely, the more the virtual presence of these workers, the more likely it will be for their voice form to be neither direct nor indirect, and their voice influence weak.

***Duration of assignment**. A significant feature of triangular employment, especially for temporary agency workers, is the flexibility in the duration of workers' assignment to user firms (Håkansson *et al*., 2020), occasioning work time and geographical instability (Antoni and Jahn, 2009). The assignment duration between platform workers and clients can be finite or infinite (Meijerink and Keegan, 2019; Stanford). platform workers, especially the highly skilled, have relative stability of clients over time but more often move from one assignment to the other (Meijerink and Keegan, 2019). Similarly, while some user firms use temporary agency workers for a short period, others make use of them for several months or years.

Scholars (e.g., Antoni and Jahn, 2009) argued that temporary agency workers' duration of assignment is determined by the need of the client firms, workers desire, and legal regulations concerning maximum period of engagement. Previous research further showed that the duration of temporary agency workers' assignment has far-reaching implications for work conditions and health outcomes, and for the availability and sustenance of standard work (Antoni and Jahn, 2009). In the same vein, the

duration of assignment of triangular workers may likely impact their voice form. For instance, Rybnikova (2016) found that temporary agency workers on a short duration of assignment do not have the opportunity to participate in direct voice mechanisms provided by the user firm and are only expected to execute assigned tasks without discussion or queries.

Proposition 2c: The longer the duration of assignment of temporary agency workers with the client(s)/client firms is, the more likely it will be for their voice form to be direct.

Autonomy and control*.* Triangular work is precarious (ILO, 2016), and one of the dimensions of determining work precariousness is the degree of control over labour processes (Strauss and Fudge, 2014). Work status, work control and working conditions are parameters to determine the degree of autonomy and control of workers (Pichault and McKeown, 2019). This degree is connected to the presence/absence of trade unions and professional associations and control over working conditions (Cranford *et al.*, 2003).

Triangular workers have been reported to have limited control and autonomy over their labour processes (Spreitzer *et al.*, 2017). One of the features that sets online co-employment platform workers apart from independent contractors is the platform companies' increasing degree of control through covert HRM activities (Healy *et al.*, 2017; Meijerink *et al.*, 2020). The platform controls the worker-client relationship, determines working terms and conditions, allocates work, reserves the right to terminate the working relationship, enforces disciplinary actions, and restricts workers from working externally (Duggan *et al.*, 2020; Healy *et al.*, 2017).

Temporary agency workers also have a lower degree of control over their work processes. The temporary agency and the client firm determines the wages, working conditions and pace of work. Previous studies (Håkansson *et al.*, 2020) have found temporary agency workers to have less control over their work processes leading to insecurity and isolation in the workplace and occasioning their lack of opportunity for workplace representation and collective voice in the client organisation. Triangular workers have low power status and are highly deprived of social power leading to voice deprivation (Rybnikova, 2016). They experience low influence over their work conditions often due to supervisors' authoritative leadership behaviour, limiting their opportunities to participate in decisions (Rybnikova, 2016). Ruiner *et al.* (2020) also found that when supervisors have a higher degree of influence in determining assignments and shifts, the higher the possibility of restricting workers' voice.

Proposition 2d: The more likely temporary agency and online co-employment platform workers have a low degree of autonomy and control over their work status, content, and conditions, the more likely their voice influence will be weak.

3.3.3 Firm level forces

Institutional complexity. Temporary agencies and online co-employment labour platforms have been reported to face competing institutional logics – market and corporation logics (Meijerink, *et al.*, 2020). These competing logics occasioned institutional complexity where agencies and platforms struggle between acting as profit-oriented labour market intermediaries with little or no concern for workers relationship with clients/client organisations (market logic), or overtly/covertly

institutionalising HRM activities for coordination and control of workers (corporation logic) (Frenken *et al.*, 2020; Meijerink *et al.*, 2020). Both logics are appealing to agencies and online co-employment labour platforms as they consciously integrate these competing logics for profit, improved shareholder value and organised coordination of workers through HRM activities (Frenken *et al.*, 2020). This institutional complexity necessitates whether triangular workers will be classified by platforms/agencies as de facto employees (corporation logic) or freelancers (market logic) (Frenken *et al.*, 2020; Meijerink *et al.*, 2020). This is likely to have implications for the voicing opportunity extended to workers.

Temporary agencies either identify as intermediates in the employment contract between the worker and user client or as a significant party to the employment relationship (Purcell *et al.*, 2004). For instance, agencies/platforms sometimes act as subcontractors engaged by the user firm to source workers without taking employer-like responsibilities and view workers as independent of its operations (Gegenhuber *et al.*, 2020; Healy *et al.*, 2017). Although voluntary voice structures may be provided, this view exonerates the agencies/platforms from compulsory institutionalisation of voice mechanisms (Gegenhuber *et al.*, 2020). Platforms eschew providing voice mechanisms when they identify as neutral market connectors with a distanced and technocratic relationship with workers (Gegenhuber *et al.*, 2020). However, when agencies/platforms follow corporation logic by classifying workers as employees and interested in their commitment and motivation, they tend to provide community engagement and offer voice structures to address tasks concerns and clients' needs (Meijerink and Keegan, 2019). Hence, it is argued that in situations where agencies/platforms tilt more towards corporation logic, they are likely to offer triangular

workers direct voice structure as against when they favour market logic classifying workers as freelancers.

Proposition 3a: The more the agencies/platforms favour corporation logic, the more likely voice form offered to temporary agency and online co-employment platform workers will be direct.

Cost and control: Given that agencies/platforms practice cost-based HRM (Howcroft and Bergvall-Kåreborn, 2019), it can be inferred that temporary work agencies and digital platforms will assess the cost of installing voice structures against its potential benefits. The neo-liberal economic model, upon which triangular work arrangement is premised, is purely transactional, which makes providing workers' voice a marginal concern. Although previous studies (Wilkinson *et al.*, 2004) affirmed the organisational benefits of installing voice mechanisms, firms with a sizeable number of precarious workers are unreceptive towards enabling workers voice as it may be an avenue to influence management decisions and demand better working terms and conditions. For instance, it is expensive for digital platforms to install voice mechanisms due to costs of staffing, IT infrastructure and maintenance (Gegenhuber *et al.*, 2020). Also, due to workers heterogeneity and geographical dispersal, voice channels enabled by platforms may become increasingly complex, occasioning additional costs. Similarly, temporary agencies are primarily small/medium enterprises with limited capital and client base (Davidov, 2014; Rybnikova, 2016) and will do a cost-benefit assessment of installing voice mechanisms to cater for their dispersed workers. Enabling voice may cost agencies loss of clients as reports from workers about client firms may be unfavourable, and agencies have little or no power to change worksite conditions (Ellen *et al.*, 2012). Hence, when voice structures are not installed for triangular

workers by agencies/platforms due to cost, workers become isolated with clients/client firms and are likely to have weak influence over working terms and conditions.

Proposition 3b: The more it costs agencies/platforms to install voice structures compared to envisaged benefits, the more likely it will be for temporary agency and online co-employment platform workers' voice form to be neither direct nor indirect, and the more likely their voice influence will be weak.

Voice allows triangular workers to mitigate their vulnerability and precariousness in a disadvantaged employment arrangement. To reduce agitation, agencies/platforms may eschew providing workers voice opportunity or poised to control it. Agencies/platforms' assessment of the extent of influence they have over workers' voice direction may likely influence not only voice forms but also agenda. Ellen *et al.* (2012) found that agencies aggressively discourage or challenge workers' injury reports and that the agencies primarily control low-skilled workers' voice to shape its direction (Ellen *et al.*, 2012). Similarly, digital platforms retain control by enabling only direct voice forms as indirect forms may spur collectiveness and strong criticisms (Gegenhuber *et al.*, 2020). They enable communication of complaints through semi-standardised and non-standardised direct channels and only encourage the discussion of task-related issues (shared) (Gegenhuber *et al.*, 2020).

Proposition 3c: The more agencies and platforms control temporary agency and online co-employment platform workers' voice direction, the more likely it will be for their voice form to be direct, and voice agenda to be shared.

Governance structure conflicts. Extant literature (Kaufman, 2015; Morrison, 2011; Prouska and Kapsali, 2021) has identified governance structure as an antecedent of

voice. Temporary agencies and digital platform governance systems involve managing the contractual relationships among stakeholders (agency/platform, triangular workers, and clients/client firms). They define membership, allocate and evaluate tasks, set wages/commission, install feedback mechanisms, compliance surveillance, and formulate policies guiding stakeholders' engagement (Kirchner and Schubler, 2019).

HR governance is commonly structured in a decentralised mode (Prouska and Kapsali, 2021) with HRM functional responsibilities shared between the parties (Davidov, 2014; Stewart and Stanford, 2017): (i) the agency/platform and user firm leadership formulate, negotiate, and maintain work arrangement policies; (ii) clients/user firms track and evaluate workers' performance; and (iii) workers are responsible for their career projection and development.

The agency/platform and user firms' HRM policy formulation, which connects with stakeholders' influence, have implications for triangular worker's voice. There is always a cost minimisation (agencies/platforms and user firms), workers effectiveness and efficiency (user firms), and benefit maximisation contentions between parties. While the agency/platform shareholders and managers aim to meet the HR needs of client firms profitably with minimal cost, user-firm managers desire optimal productivity from workers. As stakeholders struggle to achieve their aims, the workers with little or no bargaining power are used as part of the contract negotiating conditions.

Although voice mechanisms are available to some triangular workers, these channels are usually weak and offer little or no influence (Gegenhuber *et al.*, 2020; Rybnikova, 2016; Håkansson *et al.*, 2020). For example, temporary agencies and

platforms prioritise the interests and concerns of clients/user-firms over that of workers. The agencies/platforms also usually have little or no power to enforce workers' concerns with the client/user-firms except by breaching or ending contracts (Ellen *et al.*, 2012). Hence, agencies/platforms show little or no concern about workers work conditions due to stakeholders needs and are, therefore, less likely to provide workers with channels and systems for airing their grievances and complaints and a chance at influencing management decisions.

Proposition 3d: The stronger the stakeholders' influence on agencies/platforms operations, the less likely it will be for temporary agency and online co-employment platform workers' voice form to be either direct or indirect, and the more likely their voice influence will be weak.

For performance management governance, the decentralisation of HR processes in the triangular structure of agency and platform work leaves the supervisor/manager in the user-firm's site in control of standards setting and performance evaluation. This role has implications for triangular workers' voice, as managers could motivate or inhibit workers voice before setting performance standards and following performance evaluation. For instance, Kirkpatrick and Hoque (2006) found that temporary agency employees have difficulty to voice even when unfairly blamed by supervisors. Studies (Ellen *et al.*, 2012) show that clients/user-firm managers often neglect workers' input in setting performance standards. This is in line with the argument that non-traditional workers are highly regarded as outsiders and offered little to no individual or collective voice, and their voice suppressed when it challenges clients/user firms' authorities (Bosmans *et al.*, 2015; Gegenhuber *et al.*, 2020). Hence, triangular workers will less likely use internal direct formal voice forms

and possibly remain silent when indirect voice mechanisms are not available. Additionally, triangular workers' voice influence will likely be weak when clients/user firms' managers discourage voice because they are less interested in triangular workers' input.

Proposition 3e: The more rigid the performance management governance mechanism of the clients/user-firms, the less likely it will be for temporary agency and online co-employment platform workers' voice form to be direct, and the more likely their voice influence is weak.

3.3.4 Individual level forces

Perceived relative equity. Drawing on the frame of reference theory (Marsh, 1986), individuals' perception of relative equity is a function of the subjective evaluation of their situation compared to others. This perception of relative equity impacts attitude and behaviour (Tansky *et al.*, 1997). Our relative equity comparison of triangular workers will be with standard workers working in the same firm. We argue that temporary agency workers are likely to evaluate the relative equity of their work conditions with standard workers, and this may impact their voice. For instance, factors such as similar supervisor treatment and relationship, same working hours, eating in the same canteen, and fewer differential experiences may likely give workers a perception of relative equity with standard workers. Illustrating this argument, let each triangular worker t have perception of differential with standard workers of D_t^i and perception of non-differential D_t^n so that the worker's perception of equity with permanent workers is $P_t^e = D_t^n - D_t^i$, where positive value indicates equity perception

87

and negative value points to perception of inequity. Hence, triangular workers will only voice where $P_t^e > 0$.

Bosmans *et al.* (2015) argued that temporary agency workers experience stigmatisation and exclusion due to discriminatory practices which may even include standard workers being involved in contract extension decisions for triangular workers (Bosmans *et al.*, 2015). In such instances, triangular workers find it challenging to raise voice over stigmatisation and perceived injustice. Hence, it can be argued that the necessity of equity judgements will determine triangular workers' voice such that triangular workers with a positive relative equity perception will use voice like standard workers. Rybnikova (2016) found that when temporary agency workers regard themselves as disempowered and disregarded by managers, they attached negative identity ascription, indicating higher perceived relative inequity levels, and were more likely to be silent or their voice to have less influence.

Proposition 4a: The more temporary agency workers have a negative relative equity perception of themselves in comparison with standard workers, the more likely it will be for their voice influence to be weak.

Voice skill. Scholars (Morrison, 2011) have argued that workers refuse to speak up to evade harming or damaging others' social reputation, as voice can stir interpersonal conflict and have a negative reflection on others (Milliken *et al.*, 2003). Voice can be risky, and workers may find it difficult to air their opinions and complaints, especially on contested issues where power asymmetry is present (Morrison, 2014). Hence, to use voice appropriately, workers may need to possess skills and competencies to speak up without harming or leaving an indelible negative reflection on others as this

can provide a buffer against interpersonal conflict. Therefore, voice skill is conceptualised as the ability to air one's opinion, ideas, and suggestions effectively or effectively complain and express grievances without making others feel threatened or inflicting damage on their social capital. As such, voice skilled individuals are likely to combine language astuteness with the capacity to adjust their speech to suit different individual personalities and understanding, displays expertise in communication skills that makes their speech comes out soft and truthful, emotionally intelligent to understand how their speech will affect others, to elicit the behaviour expected from others. Thus, it is argued that irrespective of the context, issues and individuals involved, voice skilled individuals will be able to interpret, understand and use context-appropriate voice behaviour. They will be more likely to speak up to supervisors about varieties of issues without harming others' social capital.

Triangular workers, both in temporary agency work and the online co-employment platform work, are unlikely to have a familial relationship with the supervisors in the agency/platform/client organisations due to their contract nature. The contract can evoke isolation, stigmatisation, and an outsider's identity (Purcell *et al.*, 2011). Although, triangular work has been argued to encourage silence and waning interest in workplace issues due to the backlash that may follow voicing (Rybnikova, 2016), we argue that triangular workers with high voice skill can swim the murky waters of grievance expression without consequential harm. Hence, high voice-skilled workers are likely to express grievances or suggestions without causing interpersonal conflict between them and their supervisors. Therefore, it is proposed that voice skilled triangular workers will be more likely to effectively use direct voice behaviour and speak about any agenda (shared or contested).

Proposition 4b: The more voice-skilled a temporary agency or online co-employment platform worker is, the more likely it will be for her/his voice agenda to be either shared or contested and the more likely it will be for her/his voice influence to be strong.

Self-identity. Due to their employment patterns' blurred nature, it is not surprising to find some triangular workers, especially in platform work, who self-identify as freelancers (Healy *et al.*, 2017; Meijerink *et al.*, 2020). Previous scholars (Morrison, 2014) argued that workers' sense of self and the need to act in a manner congruent with the self-identification may motivate voice behaviour. For instance, studies investigating freelancers' voice (Saundry *et al.*, 2007) found freelancers to use indirect voice – network voice (Prouska and Kapsali, 2021). Through networks, freelancers share their grievances with their colleagues and establish a shared identity based on common experience (Saundry *et al.*, 2007). Also, Ruiner *et al.* (2020) found that independent consultants have a higher degree of influence on management decisions.

Conversely, Healy *et al.* (2017) argued that platform workers who self-identify as employees, engage in direct voice with platforms, complemented with a social media voice. In addition, these workers are evidenced to engage in both physical and digital protests and demonstrations to voice discontents with their employment terms (Healy *et al.*, 2017). Although with a low influence on platforms' management decisions and actions, there is evidence of Uber drivers organising themselves collectively to express their grievances (Greenhouse, 2016; Paul, 2021). Similarly, Rybnikova (2016) also reported a lower level of influence for triangular workers due to fear of speaking up, low power status, and supervisors' disregard. It can therefore be argued that when triangular workers self-identify as freelancers, there is the likelihood

that they will engage in indirect voice and have a high level of influence on management decisions.

Proposition 4c: The more temporary agency and online co-employment platform workers self-identify as freelancers, the more likely it will be for their voice form to be indirect and for their voice influence to be strong.

Transition opportunity. Previous scholars (Spreitzer *et al*., 2017) stated that one of the motives why individuals choose triangular work is the opportunity for a transition into standard work either with the agency/platform or client organisation. Both the temporary agencies/platforms and client organisations can offer workers standard job opportunities and ameliorate underemployment incidence (Healy *et al*., 2017). Consequently, the transition expectation has been reported to influence these workers' behaviour (Broschak *et al*., 2008). Hence, it is argued that a transition opportunity for triangular workers is likely to influence their voice.

Rybnikova (2016) found temporary agency workers to engage in opportunistic silence due to the expectation of standard work. These workers may deliberately refuse to use direct or indirect voice or distort and confuse their opinions due to the selfish motive of gaining standard employment (Knoll and Van Dick, 2013). Broshack *et al*. (2008) also found that temporary agency workers whose reason was to get standard employment have a higher level of supervisor-worker relationship satisfaction and are less likely to evince voice behaviour, but when exhibited, such voices will likely be targeted at shared issues. Such workers are less likely to voice contested issues that might label them as troublemakers (Milliken *et al*., 2003).

Proposition 4d: The more temporary agency and online co-employment platform workers see an opportunity for a transition into standard employment either with the agency/platform or client organisation, the more likely it will be for their voice form to be neither direct nor indirect; where they engage in some voice, the more likely it will be for their voice agenda to be shared.

3.4   Conclusion

We present a conceptual framework depicting triangular worker voice determinants. The framework extends previous voice models with predominant elements situated in non-traditional employment context. Theoretically, we contribute to the current debates on voice trajectories by arguing that peculiar social, technological, and economic factors (Wilkinson *et al.*, 2021) rooted in mediated employment arrangements are key to understanding triangular workers' voice. Specifically, it extends both Oyetunde *et al.* (2022) and Prouska and Kapsali's (2021) efforts by highlighting the forces that influence triangular workers' voice. Hence, we highlight the following future research directions.

First, an empirical test of the model can examine if the proposed factors influence triangular workers' voice. Further development of the model can incorporate the identified determinants influence on external network voice (Prouska and Kapsali, 2021). Second, our study identified the legal definition of the employer and legal protection/regulation as external forces that determines triangular workers' voice. Although other external factors (e.g., national culture, presence of trade union, labour market conditions) may also act as factors determining triangular worker voice, we

could not find a linkage based on our review of the triangular employment literature. Future research can consider such factors. Third, future studies could also conceptualise/investigate the interrelationships between the identified forces in explaining workers' voice. For example, the degree of autonomy and control triangular workers have over their work may intervene in how the degree of availability and presence at work could influence their usage of voice mechanism and influence. In another view, triangular workers' self-identification as employees or freelancers may influence autonomy and control, and both intervening in how perceived relative equity will impact voice. Fourth, future research could also incorporate clients/user-firms related factors. New studies could specifically target clients/user firms' perception of voice mechanisms available to triangular workers and how HRM policies, ER climate and management ideology in user firms impact triangular workers' voice.

3.5   References

Ackers, P. (2007). Collective bargaining as industrial democracy: Hugh Clegg and the political foundations of British industrial relations pluralism. *British Journal of Industrial Relations,* **45**(1), pp. 77-101.

Adelagun, O. and I. Adediran (2021) Several drivers boycott as Uber, Bolt operators begin strike. Premium Times. 19 April. https://www.premiumtimesng.com/regional/ssouth-west/456179-several-drivers-boycott-as-uber-bolt-operators-begin-strike.html

Antoni, M. and E.J. Jahn (2009) Do changes in regulation affect employment duration in temporary help agencies? *ILR Review,* **62**(2), pp. 226-251.

Atkinson, C. and L. Hall (2011). Flexible working and happiness in the NHS. *Employee Relations,* **33**(2), pp. 88-105.

Beauregard, T.A., K.A. Basile and E. Canónico (2019). 'Telework: Outcomes and facilitators for employees'. In: R.N. Landers (eds), *The Cambridge Handbook of Technology and Employee Behavior,* pp. 511-543. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Behrendt, C., Q.A. Nguyen and U. Rani (2019). Social protection systems and the future of work: Ensuring social security for digital platform workers. *International Social Security Review,* **72**(3), pp. 17-41.

Boudreau, J.W., R. Jesuthasan and D. Creelman (2015). *Lead the Work: Navigating a World Beyond Employment.* London: John Wiley & Sons.

Bosmans, K., N. De Cuyper, S. Hardonk and C. Vanroelen (2015). Temporary agency workers as outsiders: An application of the established-outsider theory on the social relations between temporary agency and permanent workers. *Society, Health and Vulnerability,* **6**(1), pp. 27848.

Broschak, J.P., A. Davis-Blake and E.S. Block (2008). Nonstandard, not substandard: The relationship among work arrangements, work attitudes, and job performance. *Work and Occupations,* **35**(1), pp. 3-43.

Cappelli, P. and J.R. Keller (2013). Classifying work in the new economy. *Academy of Management Review,* **38**(4), pp. 575-596.

Chesley, N. (2014). Information and communication technology use, work intensification and employee strain and distress. *Work, Employment and Society,* **28**(4), pp. 589–610.

Collins, A.M., D. Hislop and S. Cartwright (2016). Social support in the workplace between teleworkers, office-based colleagues, and supervisors. *New Technology, Work and Employment,* **31**(2), pp. 161-175.

Conner, D.S. (2003). Social comparison in virtual work environments: An examination of contemporary referent selection. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology,* **76**(1), pp. 133-147.

Cranford, C., L. Vosko and N. Zukewich (2003). The gender of precarious employment in Canada. *Relations Industrielles/Industrial Relations,* **58**(3), pp. 454-482.

Davidov, G. (2004). Joint employer status in triangular employment relationships. *British Journal of Industrial Relations,* **42**(4), pp.727-746.

Duggan, J., U. Sherman, R. Carbery and A. McDonnell (2020). Algorithmic management and app-work in the gig economy: A research agenda for employment relations and HRM. *Human Resource Management Journal,* **30**(1): pp. 114-132.

Dundon, T., A. Wilkinson, M. Marchington and P. Ackers (2004). The meanings and purpose of employee voice. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management,* **15**(6), pp. 1149-1170.

Ellen, M., K. Lippel, S. Ron, K. Agnieszka, M. Liz, C. Carrasco and D. Pugliese (2012) Workers' compensation experience-rating rules and the danger to workers' safety in the temporary work agency sector. *Policy and Practice in Health and Safety,* **10**(1), pp. 77-95.

Eurostat. (2020) Temporary Agency Workers Among EU Regions. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/-/DDN-20200518-1

Frenken, K, T. Vaskelainen, L. Fünfschilling and L. Piscicelli (2020). An institutional logics perspective on the gig economy. In: *Theorizing the Sharing Economy: Variety and Trajectories of New Forms of Organizing.* Emerald Publishing Limited.

Gegenhuber, T., M. Ellmer and E. Schüßler (2021). Microphones, not megaphones: Functional crowdworker voice regimes on digital work platforms. *Human Relations,* **74**(9), pp. 1473-1503.

Green, H. (2010). *The Company Town: The Industrial Edens and Satanic Mills that Shaped the American Economy*. New York: Basic Books.

Greenhouse, S. (2016). On demand and demanding their rights. *The American Prospect*, Summer. Available at: http://prospect.org/article/demand-and-demanding-their-rights

Håkansson, K., V. Pulignano, T. Isidorsson and N. Doerflinger (2020). Explaining job insecurity for temporary agency workers: A comparison between Sweden and Belgium. *Economic and Industrial Democracy, 41*(2), pp. 254-275.

Healy, J,, D. Nicholson and A. Pekarek (2017). Should we take the gig economy seriously?. *Labour & Industry: A Journal of the Social and Economic Relations of Work, 27*(3), pp. 232-248.

Howcroft, D. and B. Bergvall-Kåreborn (2019). A typology of crowdwork platforms. *Work, Employment and Society, 33*(1), pp. 21-38.

ILO (2016). *Non-Standard Employment around the World: Understanding Challenges, Shaping Prospects.* Geneva: International Labour Office.

Kalleberg, A.L. and M. Dunn (2016). Good jobs, bad jobs in the gig economy. *LERA for Libraries, 20*, pp. 1-2.

Kaufman, B.E. (2014). Explaining breadth and depth of employee voice across firms: A voice factor demand model. *Journal of Labour Research, 35*(3), pp. 296-319.

Kaufman, B.E. (2015). Theorising determinants of employee voice: An integrative model across disciplines and levels of analysis. *Human Resource Management Journal, 25*(1), pp. 19-40.

Kirchner, S. and E. Schüßler (2019). 'The organisation of digital marketplaces: Unmasking the role of internet platforms in the sharing economy'. In G. Ahrne

and N. Brunsson (eds) *Organisation outside Organisations.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kirkpatrick, I. and K. Hoque (2006). A retreat from permanent employment? Accounting for the rise of professional agency work in UK public services. *Work, Employment and Society,* **20**(4), pp. 649-666.

Knoll, M. and R. Van Dick (2013). Do I hear the whistle…? A first attempt to measure four forms of employee silence and their correlates. *Journal of Business Ethics,* **113**(2), pp. 349-362.

Klaas, B.S., J.B. Olson-Buchanan and A.K. Ward (2012). The determinants of alternative forms of workplace voice: An integrative perspective. *Journal of Management,* **38**(1), pp. 314-345.

Marsh, H.W. (1986). Verbal and math self-concepts: An internal/external frame of reference model. *American Educational Research Journal,* **23**(1), pp. 129-149.

Meijerink, J. and M. Arets (2021). Online labor platforms versus temp agencies: What are the differences?. *Strategic HR Review*, **20**(4), pp. 119-124.

Meijerink, J., M. Boons, A. Keegan and J. Marler (2021). Algorithmic human resource management: Synthesizing developments and cross-disciplinary insights on digital HRM. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management,* **32**(12), pp. 2545-2562.

Meijerink, J. and A. Keegan (2019) Conceptualising human resource management in the gig economy: Toward a platform ecosystem perspective. *Journal of Managerial Psychology,* **34**(4), pp. 214-232.

Meijerink, J., A. Keegan and T. Bondarouk (2020). Having their cake and eating it too? Online labor platforms and human resource management as a case of institutional complexity. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, **32**(19), pp. 4016-4052

Milliken, F.J., E.W. Morrison and P.F. Hewlin (2003). An exploratory study of employee silence: Issues that employees don't communicate upward and why. *Journal of Management Studies,* **40**(6), pp. 1453-1476.

Mitlacher, L.W. (2007). The role of temporary agency work in different industrial relations systems: A comparison between Germany and the USA. *British Journal of Industrial Relations,* **45**(3), pp. 581-606.

Morrison, E.W. (2011). Employee voice behaviour: Integration and directions for future research. *Academy of Management Annals,* **5**(1), pp. 373-412.

Morrison, E.W. (2014). Employee voice and silence. *Annual Review of Organisational Psychology and Organisational Behaviour,* **1**(1), pp. 173-197.

Mowbray, P.K., A. Wilkinson and H. Tse (2015). An integrative review of employee voice: Identifying a common conceptualisation and research agenda. *International Journal of Management Reviews,* **17**(3), pp. 382-400.

Nechanska, E., E. Hughes and T. Dundon (2020). Towards an integration of employee voice and silence. *Human Resource Management Review,* **30**(1), pp. 100674.

Ojukwu, S. (2018). Triangular employment relationship in Nigeria: The employees' legal trepidations. *African Journal of Constitutional and Administrative Law (AJCAL),* **2**: pp. 174-186.

Oyetunde, K., R. Prouska and A. McKearney (2022). Voice in non-traditional employment relationships: A review and future research directions. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, **33**(1), pp. 142-167.

Paul, K. (2021). Uber and Lyft drivers join day-long strike over working conditions. *The Guardian*. 22 July. https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2021/jul/21/uber-lyft-drivers-strike-app-based-work-gig-economy

Pichault, F. and T. McKeown (2019). Autonomy at work in the gig economy: Analysing work status, work content and working conditions of independent professionals. *New Technology, Work and Employment,* **34**(1), pp. 59-72.

Prouska, R. and M. Kapsali (2021). The determinants of project worker voice in project-based organisations: An initial conceptualisation and research agenda. *Human Resource Management Journal*, **31**(2), pp. 375-391.

Purcell, C., P. Brook and R. Lucas (2011). Between keeping your head down and trying to get noticed: Agency workers in French car assembly plants. *Management Revue,* **22**(2), pp. 169-187.

Purcell, J., K. Purcell and S. Tailby (2004). Temporary work agencies: Here today, gone tomorrow?. *British Journal of Industrial Relations,* **42**(4), pp. 705-725.

Ruiner, C., M. Wilkesmann and B. Apitzsch (2020). Voice through exit: Changing working conditions by independent contractors' participation. *Economic and Industrial Democracy,* **41**(4), pp. 839-859.

Rybnikova, I. (2016). Employee voice and silence in temporary agency work. *German Journal of Human Resource Management*, **30**(3-4), pp. 287-309.

Saundry, R., M. Stuart and V. Antcliff (2007). Broadcasting discontent: Freelancers, trade unions and the Internet. *New Technology, Work and Employment,* **22**(2), pp. 178-191.

Short, J., E. Williams and B. Christie (1976). *The Social Psychology of Telecommunications.* London: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

Spreitzer, G.M., L. Cameron and L. Garrett (2017). Alternative work arrangements: Two images of the new world of work. *Annual Review of Organisational Psychology and Organisational Behaviour,* **4**, pp. 473-499.

Standing, G. (2011). *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class.* New York: Bloomsbury

Stewart, A. and J. Stanford (2017). Regulating work in the gig economy: What are the options?. *The Economic and Labour Relations Review,* **28**(3), pp. 420-437.

Strauss, K. and J. Fudge (2014). *Temporary Work, Agencies, and Unfree Labour.* New York: Routledge.

Syed, J. (2014). 'Diversity management and missing voices'. In A. Wilkinson, J. Donaghey, T. Dundon and R. Freeman (eds), *The Handbook of Research on Employee Voice: Participation and Involvement in the Workplace*, pp. 421-438. London: Elgar Press.

Tansky, J.W., D.G. Gallagher and K.W. Wetzel (1997). The effect of demographics, work status, and relative equity on organisational commitment: looking among part-time workers. *Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences/Revue Canadienne des Sciences de l'Administration,* **14**(3), pp. 315-326.

Todolí-Signes, A. (2017). The 'gig economy': Employee, self-employed or the need for a special employment regulation?. *Transfer: European Review of Labour and Research,* **23**(2), pp. 193-205.

WEC (2020). *World Employment Confederation – Economic Report 2020.* Brussels: WEC publication

Wilkinson, A., M. Barry and E. Morrison (2020). Toward an integration of research on employee voice. *Human Resource Management Review,* **30**(1), pp. 1-6.

Wilkinson, A. and C. Fay (2011) New times for employee voice?. *Human Resource Management,* **50**(1), pp. 65-74.

Wilkinson, A., P.J. Gollan, S. Kalfa and Y. Xu (2018). Voices unheard: Employee voice in the new century. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management,* **29**(5), pp. 711-724.

Wilkinson, A., M. Knoll, P.K. Mowbray and T. Dundon (2021). New trajectories in worker voice: Integrating and applying contemporary challenges in the organization of work. *British Journal of Management*, **32**(3), pp. 693-707.

Chapter 4

Incessant struggle to be heard: A study of temporary agency and platform workers' voice.

4.0   Abstract

Triangular workers are vulnerable to unfavourable employment relations practices particularly in developing economic contexts characterised by a high rate of un/under-employment and poverty. Theoretically framed on Hirschman's exit, voice, and loyalty (EVL) theory and drawing on the triangular work literature, our study compares the voice regimes in physically and digitally mediated triangular work in a developing context. Based on a qualitative study of temporary agency and platform workers in Nigeria, we demonstrate that triangular workers are in a constant struggle to voice their grievances, more so for platform workers than for temporary agency workers. Workers' individual considerations, organisation structural, and external societal influences drive or impede triangular workers' voice. However, triangular workers respond to voice restriction with loyalty or exit depending on the degree of their career commitment, and availability of alternative opportunity. Our study extends the voice and EVL theory by conceptualising an initial EVL-led framework of triangular workers' voice. It offers avenues for future research and presents practical implications for practitioners.

4.1   Introduction

Due to rising flexible work patterns and proliferation of digital platforms and remote working, triangular/mediated employment is forecasted to grow exponentially (OECD, 2021). According to WEC Economic Report (2021), there are over 161,000 temporary agencies with over 3.3 million internal staff operating in 41 countries around the world. Similarly, the number of online labour platforms mediating work grew from 142 in 2010 to over 777 in 2020 (ILO, 2021). In 2019, over 61 million workers were placed in different client organisations by temporary agencies around the world (WEC, 2021). Uber has been reported to have over 26,000 employees and over 5 million drivers across its operations in more than 60 countries (ILO, 2021). Although employment data from less developed contexts (e.g., Sub-Saharan Africa) are limited (ILO, 2016), apparent is the increasing rate of triangular work in these contexts. For example, the high rate of young people engaged in the informal economy in Sub-Saharan Africa (96%) (Kiaga & Leung, 2020) soared the participation rate in the platform economy.

Triangular work involves a relationship between agency/platform, client/user firm, and temporary agency/online labour platform workers. Our inclusion of online labour platform workers follows Meijerink and Arets' (2021) review, who argued that like temporary agencies, the online platforms perform employment mediation role and overt/covert employment relations and human resource (ERHR) practices (Duggan et al, 2020). While temporary agencies provide physical mediation, platforms provide digital mediation. This type of work offers a unique context to study workers' voice (Dundon et al., 2020).

A review of the literature demonstrates limited non-traditional workers' voice research. While traditional workers' voice has received appreciable attention, only a strand of studies has empirically examined non-traditional workers voice (Oyetunde et al., 2022). From these, only a few (e.g., Borghi et al., 2021; Gegenhuber et al., 2021; Hakannson et al., 2020; Rybnikova 2016) have independently studied voice experiences of physically mediated (temporary agency) and digitally mediated (online labour platforms) workers. Empirical studies that compare the experiences of workers in temporary agency and online platform work are non-existent (Meijerink & Arets, 2021). A study comparing voice of these workers is highly pertinent as it may extend our understanding of how online labour platforms compare to temporary agencies (Meijerink & Arets, 2021) in offering voice. Wilkinson et al. (2021) theorised that digitalization, espoused in online labour platforms, facilitates non-standard work, and has a huge impact on communication at work and workers' voice. Oyetunde et al. (2022), in their review of non-traditional workers voice, suggested the need to examine how frequent change of organizational settings and clients may likely influence workers' voice.

Hence, this study compares the voice experiences of triangular workers in Nigeria – temporary agency workers and workers of the e-hailing platforms. It exemplifies the voice mechanisms present in temporary agency work and e-hailing platforms and how workers explore the mechanisms to exercise voice, the issues they are interested in and the drivers and impediments of their voice.

The study contributes to voice theory in two ways. First, it uncovers the possible impact of the heterogenous nature of the triangular employment relationship on workers' voice and addresses a substantial gap in understanding how temporary

agency workers and digital platform workers, both in mediated work, differ in their voice regimes. The need to theoretically understand different work arrangements and be clear about the distinction between the experiences of non-traditional workers is needed for research clarity and false generalization avoidance (Spreitzer et al., 2017). Second, it extends the voice literature by expanding our understanding of voice regimes from a low/middle-income context where regulatory approaches and institutional frameworks for protecting triangular workers are nearly non-existent (Oyetunde et al., 2022). Our study contributes to the voice theory by conceptualising an initial framework of triangular workers' voice. We explain our theoretical anchor next.

4.2   Theoretical Framework: Voice, Loyalty, and Exit

Hirschman's (1970) exit, voice, and loyalty (EVL) theory provides the theoretical foundation to voice research (Barry & Wilkinson, 2021). Voice, as Hirschman (1970) puts it, is all attempts from organisational members to change rather than escape from an objectionable situation either individually or collectively. Building on Hirschman's theory, a plethora of studies from a multidisciplinary perspective have studied employee voice with competing conceptualizations and expectations. However, the understanding of voice for this thesis has been discussed in the previous chapter.

At the other end of organisational members' behaviour, as Hirschman (1970) puts it in his theoretical model, is exit. Exiting an organisation is seen as an alternative in the event of voice failure. Between the extreme positions of voice and exit in Hirschman's model is loyalty. Workers display loyalty when they cannot use voice,

when their voice is ineffective at changing their conditions, and/or there are no alternative opportunities that could necessitate exiting the firm (Hirschman, 1970). To the OB researchers, loyalty is perceived to be silence. Silence, an employee's unwillingness to speak up or offer a suggestion on a workplace issue (Morrison, 2014), indicates workers are not convinced about the efficacy of voice (Morrison, 2011), display disaffection towards their organisation and are ready to persevere in their plight. Silence, in OB research, has been used in the last two decades as the opposite of voice (Morrison et al., 2011), a distinct construct from voice (Dyne et al., 2003), or intertwined with voice (Morrison, 2014). However, according to the EVL theory, silence is not a distinct concept but an offshoot of loyalty (Barry & Wilkinson, 2021). Beyond the OB perspective of silence as an individual worker-induced behaviour of not wanting to voice, recent scholars (e.g., Donaghey et al., 2019; Hickland et al., 2020; Kougiannou & Mendoca, 2021) argued that the OB approach to silence is managerialist, simplistic and assume to be a deliberate choice of workers to hold information, neglecting the ER and labour process approach of management inducing workers' silence (Donaghey et al., 2019) through imposing silence-driven mechanisms. Specifically, the ER and labour process scholars argued that managerial policies and practices through actions and decisions can create a culture/climate of silence through negligence, nonchalance, and lack of responsiveness to workers' concern.

Taking a cue from Hirschman's EVL theory, we investigate the forces driving triangular workers' voice, and how they respond to voice hindrances. We choose the EVL theory as our anchor because we want to move away from the over/under psychologisation of the voice concept (Barry & Wilkinson, 2021) and take an

integrative approach. Calls from Pinder and Harlos (2001), and Bashshur and Oc (2015) echoed the need to return to Hirschman's EVL theory in voice research. Applying the EVL to triangular workers' voice will offer and opportunity to address these calls.

4.3   Triangular Workers' Voice

Few studies have empirically examined temporary agency and platform workers' voice. Rybnikova (2016) and Sluiter et al. (2020) examined temporary agency workers' voice from the OB perspective. From the ER perspective, Hakansson et al. (2020) and Pulignano and Doerflinger (2013) explored workers' access to representation and collective voice, while Bennasi and Vlandas (2016) explored union inclusiveness predictors. The OB stream of studies reported work nature and arrangement, fear, power imbalance, negative identity ascription, duration of assignment as social and structural determinants of temporary agency workers voice (Rybnikova, 2016; Sluiter et al., 2020). The ER stream has identified national and sectoral regulations and practices (Hakansson et al., 2020), societal contextual differences and collective bargaining structures (Pulignano & Doerflinger, 2013), and high bargaining coverage (Bennasi & Vlandas, 2016) as determinants of temporary agency workers access to collective voice and representation. A synthetical examination of the studies makes apparent the importance of societal and institutional context in temporary agency workers' voice research and the need to consider an integrative perspective in understanding these strands of workers' voice.

Similarly in platform workers' voice research, three streams of research can be identified. First, there are studies (e.g., Kougiannou & Mendoca, 2021), following the OB viewpoint, that examine platform workers' voice behaviour and utilization of voice mechanisms in the face of deliberate managerial silencing efforts from the digital platforms. Second are studies (e.g., Gegenhuber et al., 2021) that investigate the motivators of platforms offering workers voice. Last are studies (e.g., Borghi et al., 2021; Wood et al., 2018) that examine traditional and alternative efforts at collective organising among platform workers. Findings from these studies indicate that over-reliance of platforms on algorithmic management and online app inhibit workers voice and drive them towards silence (Kougiannou & Mendoca, 2021) and protests (Schreyer, 2021). Conversely, Gegenhuber et al. (2021) found that platforms provide voice mechanisms after carefully considering cost, ability to control usage, and workers' social structure. Reasons for extending voice to workers are not only to create a bond between the workers and the platforms, but also to satisfy clients and present a deceitful image of treating workers fairly (Gegenhuber at al., 2021). Despite providing voice mechanisms, local economy and context, exclusive reliance on online app (Kougiannou & Mendoca, 2021), perceived cost and non-relevance (Osterbrink & Alpar, 2021) have been reported to impede platform workers' voice. To exhibit voice behaviour, platform workers resolve to social media, social networking sites, grassroot groups and other alternative online communities to share ideas and express their grievances (Borghi et al., 2021; Maffie, 2020; Wood et al., 2018).

4.4   The Nigerian Context

The Nigerian culture is one with high power distance where social stratification is accepted. In tight cultures, as in Nigeria, hierarchy, formality, and rule adherence are

without questioning (Li & Gelfand, 2022). It is therefore interesting to note that such context pioneered voice research with Hirschman's study of the Nigerian Railways in the 1970s. Like Hirschman's choice, we chose Nigeria as the context of this study not only due to the growing youth un/under-employment occasioning high proliferation of triangular work, but also because Nigeria has the largest e-hailing sector in Africa (Cieslik, Banya & Vira, 2021). Nigeria, like other developing economies, not only embrace foreign direct investment, but also foreign economic and employment policies and practices that are neo-liberal. The neo-liberal policies and practices approved overtly or covertly by the Nigerian government, empower employers to take advantage of the high unemployment rate to encourage triangular work and infringe on workers' right at will (Itegboje & Chang, 2021).

The e-hailing sector in Nigeria was pioneered by Uber in 2014 in Lagos with Taxify platform coming onboard two years later. Taxify, which later transformed into Bolt, joined Uber as one of the leading platforms providing digital transportation systems in the commercial city of Lagos. Besides these market leaders, more than 20 new platforms are currently in the race to expand or share the market while digital taxi platforms average more than 300,000 visits per month (Cieslik et al., 2021). This trend has provided opportunity for un/under-employed Nigerians to earn income. Despite the numbers, the sector remains highly unregulated.

Like the e-hailing sector, the presence of temporary agencies in Nigeria occasioned casualisation and labour contracting of the teeming unemployed Nigerian youth. Many employers in the banking, oil and gas, health sectors, amidst others are continuously decreasing the proportion of their standard workers and increasing temporary agency workers, popularly referred to as 'contract staff' (Fapohunda, 2012).

Examples abound of employers laying off standard workers and re-employing them as contract staff through agencies (Jawando & Adenugba, 2015). While employment agencies in Nigeria are recognised by the government through registration with the Ministry of Labour and Productivity, the government through provisions of sections 23, 24, 25, and 71 of the labour law guide the operations of the agencies. Despite these provisions, contract staff in Nigeria are in a state of precarity and vulnerability (Jawando & Adenugba, 2015). The labour legislations which are supposed to entrench the rights of temporary agency workers to have a voice through trade union representation has been largely unadhered to (Danesi, 2012). These workers have little or no influence over often autocratic, erratic, and discriminatory employer practices (Danesi, 2012). Although trade unions across sectors (e.g., banking, oil and gas) have consistently made effort to organise these workers, managerial efforts and the Nigerian government's biased and discriminatory interventions through contract clauses and amendment of the trade union acts, hinders the representation of these workers (Itegboje & Chang, 2021).

4.5   Methodology

4.5.1 Methods and Data Collection

We followed an interpretivist philosophical paradigm that allows deep understanding of human attitudes, feelings, and experiences from the worker's viewpoint (Bryman & Bell, 2003). Using an exploratory qualitative research design based on in-depth semi-structured interviews, we were able to investigate workers' perceptions and probe their responses for further insights.

We conducted 49 interviews: 19 interviews with temporary agency workers and 30 interviews with drivers in the e-hailing sector in Nigeria. The participants were recruited by the first author based on his professional network. The interviews were conducted between October 2020 and May 2021 via telephone as the first author could not travel to Nigeria to conduct face-to-face interviews due to Covid-19 restrictions. Hence, we could not account for the non-verbal cues, emphasis or patterns that may have been noticed in a face-to-face interview. Access to participants proved challenging at first but eventually the study sample was selected using a snowballing technique. We were deliberate in selecting participants to capture both union members, non-members, and union officials.

The interviews captured the voice experiences of triangular workers. We specifically addressed issues such as their experience at work with respect to grievances and suggestions, and how they respond to voice impediments. All interviews were conducted in English. Tables 1 and 2 summarize the main attributes of the respondents. The interview timing ranged between 35 minutes and 108 minutes. Participants were assured of anonymity and confidentiality of information collected. All interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim.

Table 1. Participants' characteristics.

Characteristics		*N* = 49
Triangular work category		
Temporary agency workers (TAW)		19
Online platform workers (PW)		30
	TAW	PW
Gender		
Male	17	27
Female	2	3
Education		
National Diploma	0	6
Higher National Diploma	8	1
Undergraduate degrees and above	11	23
Age		
18 – 28 years	2	3
29 – 39 years	9	12
40years and above	5	10
Not disclosed	3	5
Industry/Sector		
Banking	15	0
E-hailing	0	30
Medical/IT	4	0
Experience		
1 – 5 years	13	22
6 – 10 years	6	7
Above 10 years	0	1
Union membership		
Member	0	14
Non-member	19	9
Ex-member	0	5
Executive	0	2

4.5.2 Data analysis

Following transcription of the interviews, data were analysed thematically drawing on Gioia et al.'s (2013) method, which we chose due to it appropriateness for extracting meaning to bring out new constructs from known concepts. This method involves slicing the collected qualitative data into pieces and the relevant ones coded into either pre-determined or emerging categories and aggregated into themes to understand the study phenomenon. It allows fresh insights into the how of the participants' experiences which can be visualized with a data structure.

The coding was done to ensure we capture the workers' lived voice experiences. At the initial stage, we engaged in open coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) by analysing our data based on reports that enable or impede voice, voice mechanisms and agenda following our research questions. Further, we examined the codes critically for reports connected to forces that motivate or inhibit voice and categorised the codes into second-order themes of determining forces, loyalty, and outcomes of voice. The second-order themes were obtained from the categorisation of similar codes from the first round of analysis, which later culminated into third-order theoretical dimensions. The data structure which shows the theoretical linkage in the analysed data is depicted in figure 1.
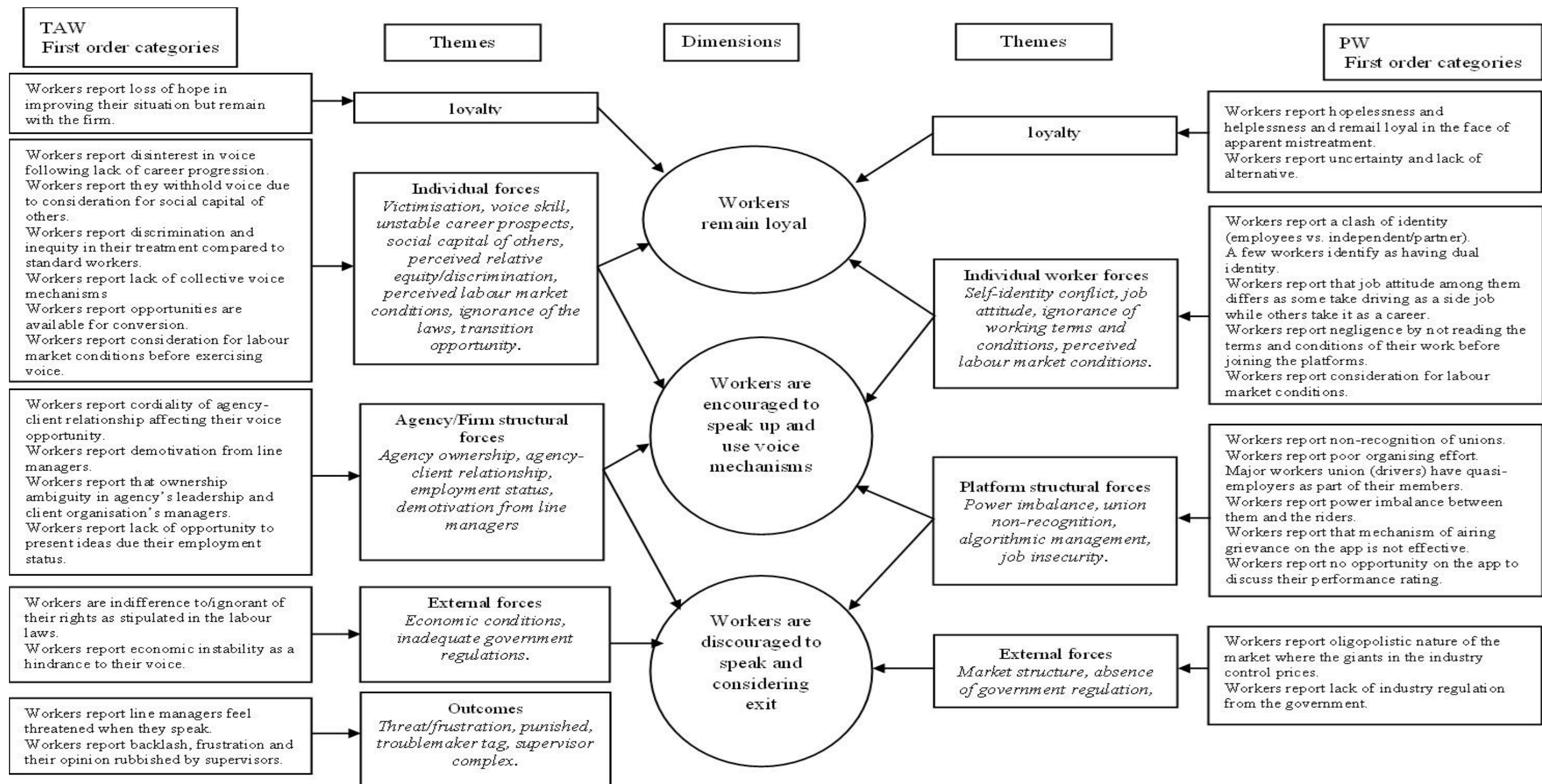
TAW
First order categories

Workers report loss of hope in improving their situation but remain with the firm.

Workers report disinterest in voice following lack of career progression.
Workers report they withhold voice due to consideration for social capital of others.
Workers report discrimination and inequity in their treatment compared to standard workers.
Workers report lack of collective voice mechanisms
Workers report opportunities are available for conversion.
Workers report consideration for labour market conditions before exercising voice.

Workers report cordiality of agency-client relationship affecting their voice opportunity.
Workers report demotivation from line managers.
Workers report that ownership ambiguity in agency's leadership and client organisation's managers.
Workers report lack of opportunity to present ideas due their employment status.

Workers are indifference to/ignorant of their rights as stipulated in the labour laws.
Workers report economic instability as a hindrance to their voice.

Workers report line managers feel threatened when they speak.
Workers report backlash, frustration and their opinion rubbished by supervisors.

Themes

loyalty

Individual forces
Victimisation, voice skill, unstable career prospects, social capital of others, perceived relative equity/discrimination, perceived labour market conditions, ignorance of the laws, transition opportunity.

Agency/Firm structural forces
Agency ownership, agency-client relationship, employment status, demotivation from line managers

External forces
Economic conditions, inadequate government regulations.

Outcomes
Threat/frustration, punished, troublemaker tag, supervisor complex.

Dimensions

Workers remain loyal

Workers are encouraged to speak up and use voice mechanisms

Workers are discouraged to speak and considering exit

Themes

loyalty

Individual worker forces
Self-identity conflict, job attitude, ignorance of working terms and conditions, perceived labour market conditions.

Platform structural forces
Power imbalance, union non-recognition, algorithmic management, job insecurity.

External forces
Market structure, absence of government regulation,

PW
First order categories

Workers report hopelessness and helplessness and remail loyal in the face of apparent mistreatment.
Workers report uncertainty and lack of alternative.

Workers report a clash of identity (employees vs. independent/partner).
A few workers identify as having dual identity.
Workers report that job attitude among them differs as some take driving as a side job while others take it as a career.
Workers report negligence by not reading the terms and conditions of their work before joining the platforms.
Workers report consideration for labour market conditions.

Workers report non-recognition of unions.
Workers report poor organising effort.
Major workers union (drivers) have quasi-employers as part of their members.
Workers report power imbalance between them and the riders.
Workers report that mechanism of airing grievance on the app is not effective.
Workers report no opportunity on the app to discuss their performance rating.

Workers report oligopolistic nature of the market where the giants in the industry control prices.
Workers report lack of industry regulation from the government.

Figure 1: Data Structure

116

4.6 Findings

4.6.1 How triangular workers voice their grievances and issues raised.

Findings from the interviews revealed that the management of both temporary agencies and platform workers provide voice mechanisms to workers. Besides management-initiated mechanisms, workers also initiate means of voicing recognised or not by the management. These workers-initiated mechanisms are more of an external network nature (Prouska & Kapsali, 2021) where workers share ideas and provide support to their peers.

Management-initiated mechanisms. Reports from the participants indicate that the management-initiated mechanisms are individual/direct. Temporary agencies/client organisations, and platforms initiate voice means for the purpose of communication and not necessarily consultation or influence. For temporary agency workers, besides face-to-face conversations, e-mails and other conventional means of communication, client organisations provide workers with an outsource desk where grievances of temporary agency workers are addressed. Also, workers are allowed to express voice through grievance committees, village meetings and whistleblowing.

> You can inform your line manager or inform the outsource desk. If it has something to do with you personally. (TAW8)

In the case of the e-hailing platform workers, the main voice mechanisms provided by management is through the app. The app has messaging systems through which workers report grievances and complaints. Also, there are contact forms, surveys and social media pages/handles through which e-hailers can report their concerns and

suggest ideas. Participants also report that the e-hailing platforms rarely call for round table discussions with selected e-hailers and even then, they are merely informed of the platforms' decisions.

> Sometimes they call for a roundtable discuss every now and then, it happens quarterly or if there are crisis they need to address or if there are drivers' agitations that they feel will affect them and the business, they will call for a roundtable discuss. (PW15)

Workers-initiated mechanisms. Participants reported that workers also initiate voice mechanisms with or without management recognition. It was found that these mechanisms are collective/indirect mechanisms (online or offline) targeted at not only expressing grievances but also sharing ideas and providing peer support. For example, both temporary agency and platform workers reported having peer-to-peer e-voice (Walker, 2021) through WhatsApp and Telegram groups for deliberation on not only how to resist exploitation and mistreatment, but also a means for sharing information and providing support. Particularly for platform workers, the online groups have resulted into collective action where workers embark on a warning strike to express their grievances before culminating partially into a full-fledged union.

> So, I created a group in 2015. For which attracted a lot of drivers when they heard about it. People were joining the group. When the platform reduced fare. We carried out the first deadly blow strike in 2016. PW17

Offline, while there is no effort from the temporary agency workers to have collective action, the platform workers have proliferation of unions and associations. Participants reported that there is an established and fully registered union,

Professional E-hailing Drivers and Private owners Association (PEDPA), and other smaller rival unions (Amalgamation of E-hailing Drivers, Ladies on Wheel, National Union of Professional E-hailing Drivers, National Union of Professional App-Based Workers, to mention a few) resulting from in-fighting for leadership.

> We have never had a common front because we have different individual agenda
> for selfish reasons. Some for political affiliation. Some for government to infiltrate
> these unions either for political advantage or all of that. (PW15)

Of interest is a gender-based platform workers collective association, Ladies on Wheel. This union particularly covers female drivers who are struggling for survival in a male-dominated industry.

> Ladies on Wheel Association of Nigeria. It is a new association. Our association is
> form of an empowerment for women. We just want to create awareness that women
> can also drive. We want to open the eyes of women. We want them to know that
> you can drive as a lady, forget about the norms and society believe that it is only
> men that need to be in that line of profession. We use the medium to voice it out.
> So that people who needs to hear it will hear it (PW8).

PEDPA, the most active union of drivers, is registered with the Ministry of Labour and Productivity and affiliated to the Trade Union Congress of Nigeria (TUCN). Other unions and associations were created as ordinary groups where members can share information and support one another with little or no union consciousness or activism. There are also efforts from the main union (PEDPA) to unite with smaller

unions for the purpose of uniting and having a common front against the platforms sexploitative policies and practices.

> Presently, we are admitting other unions and small association into our platform. We actually want to work with everybody. In like Ogun State and Oyo State. There are two different unions. We were able to merge them together and put them under PEDPA and give them positions. (PW16, Union Executive).

Although membership drive of main platform workers' union (PEDPA) is growing, time, job nature, labour market conditions, opportunity cost of union meeting attendance, lack of interest, union membership composition, workers' job attitude and ignorance are clogs in the wheel of the union's organising efforts.

> The turnout is low. This job has to do with the number of work that you do. So, people are always busy with their work. Nobody is given salary. It is that work that determines your earning. PW12

> I would say time and more than 70% of these drivers are on rentals. Some are on a hire purchase and the weekly rentals was 35,000 naira weekly. So, when you consider all of those factors it becomes impossible for you to find somebody who will leave his meeting to come and attend union meeting. You know it is difficult for you to find a driver partner on the street, leave his work and attend to meeting that has to do with association. In the end, they have to go out to look for money to sort out their weekly rentals. PW15

> I did not join because they are just working to get information, because we have owners there, ... PW6

Grievances. With respect to issues triangular workers are willing to express, the interviewees mostly expressed contested/distributive issues. Temporary agencies, client organisations, and platforms care less about triangular workers' welfare. Participants reported poor pay, discrimination, indiscriminate deactivation/layoff/dismissal, bullying, poor working conditions, lack of conversion to permanent position, lack of promotion and performance appraisal, as the major issues they are struggling to express to temporary agencies and client organisations' management. However, specific to platform workers are complaints about being treated as slaves, improper profiling of riders, sexual harassment, cost of operations, pricing, and security of their lives and properties.

> The major issues we have with them is 1, the riders are unverified. As long as drivers are verified, riders should also be verified. A rider will take a fake account and request you. On the ride, he will rob you the driver or the kill the driver and run away with the car. PW14

> On a mere customer dispute between drivers and riders. *** would permanently deactivate the drivers account after several thousands of 5 star. Also, a major problem we are facing now is ridiculous low fare. PW16

> There is an issue of security. There needs to be monitoring. Like I said every week, 2 to 3 drivers get missing. There is this guy who was robbed on a bridge the platform has not done anything. This guy is blind as I speak. PW13

Temporary agency workers also commented:

I think I have issues with the conversion process that are not totally based on merit.
It should be based on merit. The salary is very poor and there aren't a lot of
opportunity for outsourced staff compare to opportunities that core staff get. I am
thinking some sort of job shadowing, I did not have such opportunity because we
are outsourced staff. TAW5I have been working and there is no promotion but there
is nothing your supervisor can do to it because this thing is being controlled from
the head office if at all you are working like a Jacky, there is no body that sees you.
TAW14

Table 2. Understanding voice dimensions in triangular work

	Form		Agenda		Influence	
	Informal	Formal	Shared	Contested	Communication	Influence
TAW	Conversations and discussions Jokes Digital/social media platforms	Emails Anonymous whistleblowing Outsourced desk Surveys Grievance committee Village meetings Anonymous Emails to HR	Work processes improvement	Pay/reward Discipline Welfare Harassment/discrimination Promotion and appraisal Conversion to permanent staff Indiscriminate layoff/dismissal Erratic shift change Relationship with core staff Career path Bullying Work ethics and conditions	Consultation Idea generation	Low decision-making influence
PW	WhatsApp groups Telegram groups	Platform app Unions and associations Round table discussions with platforms Surveys Platform social media pages/handles Emails Partner session meetings	Improving service quality Drivers' professionalism Training and retraining	Indiscriminate deactivation Slavery treatment Proper profiling of riders Security of lives and work equipment of drivers Riders' rating Sexual harassment Cost of operations Compensation for job hazards Insurance Employee status Commission Pricing Participation in decisions	Information of platform management decisions	No influence on platform decisions

4.6.2 What are the forces driving or impeding triangular workers' struggle to voice?

We classified the forces into individual, agency/platform structural, and external societal/institutional forces.

Individual forces. Personal to the individual triangular workers are factors that motivate or inhibit their voices. For both temporary agency and platform workers, participants revealed that *ignorance of working terms and conditions* and *perceived labour market conditions* impact greatly their ability to express voice. Participants reported ignorance of their working terms and conditions with many triangular workers having contracts that stifle their voice from inception. Many of the triangular workers sign employment contracts with the platforms and agencies without taking time to read the devils in the employment contract's details. One of the platform workers union executive interviewed succinctly puts it:

> We joined their platform ignorantly without necessarily looking at their terms and
> conditions that we cannot come together collectively to challenge our collective
> problem under their platform. PW16

Besides ignorance of working terms, both temporary agency and agency workers also reported that their perception of labour market conditions influence their ability and willingness to express their opinions at work. The high rate of un/under-employment and lack of alternative opportunities inhibit their voice. The reports indicate that these workers have an inferential perception of the labour market indices influenced by their perceived employability in case of a job loss. As a result, they fear

speaking up to their supervisors. They acknowledge the precarious nature of their job and exert little effort to improve their situation due to severe economic situation of the country. The workers express their frustration:

> You know in Nigeria here to get a job is very difficult, is just like that, so the job you have, you just try to maintain it and make very good use of it. It means that if you feel that the agency is not doing enough, and you know if it is out of your power to complain, you rather try to adapt to whatever situation you find yourself. TAW2

> Because there is no job in the country, a lot of people are doing it under duress. … They don't have an option. They are not happy doing the job. Because there is no employment in the country. They just have to subscribe to doing it. It is pure exploitation. PW16

Besides the two factors identified for both categories of workers, specific to temporary agency workers are *victimisation, voice skill, transition opportunity and perceived relative equity/discrimination*. For most temporary agency participants, the risk of being victimised in client organisations inhibit their voice. Reports also indicate that these workers are subject to covert and overt victimisation from their line managers and supervisors due to the high cultural power distance (Emelifeonwu & Valk, 2019) and the fear of reprisal following the challenge hierarchical authorities. However, within the context of the apparent discrimination and victimisation, few participants with "voice skill", which we define as the ability to effectively express ideas and grievances without making others feel threatened or inflicting damage on their social capital, were able to navigate through the murky waters to express their grievances.

You dare to speak; one could be on a position for years. … it could be very frustrating. Like moving up, career development, all these things can frustrate the hell out of you, it may be not sacking. TAW9

They will hear and try the case. But as a contract staff, they will just sack you without hearing from you. So, where is the comparison? They will harass you and tell you that if you don't do well, they will send you back to your employer. TAW13

Yea, in life in other to get things done no matter how you try to make it sound the other person might get it wrongly, no matter the approach. It just depends on the understanding and how you can navigate yourself, you can be sure you don't insult or trampled on the other person. TAW6

Further findings also demonstrate that the desire to transit from agency workers to standard/permanent employment with the client organisation influence workers ability and willingness to voice. Most client organisations in the banking industry in Nigeria affords temporary agency workers the opportunity to transit into full time employment. This happens through a conversion exercise following performance appraisal, conversion test and interviews. Workers reported the competitiveness of the exercise and the desperate effort to appease their supervisors for excellent appraisal and to influence the process. Hence, workers decide to be cautious in voice not to jeopardise their transition opportunity.

You know how it is (laughs). Let me say no, but because of the environment where we work and sometimes your promotion is somewhat unstable. Just when you feel I should complain about this thing that is not happening well or they are not doing properly. All these people are your *Oga* (boss). They will just be like, see this trainee; you are complaining when I am about to promote you, so they may put a hold to it. You will just swallow up some things when you are going to benefit from it in a long run. TAW14

Findings also revealed that temporary agency workers are highly discriminated in reward and other pecuniary benefits, promotion, and access to collective voice. Due to the discrimination, they reported inequitable treatment from both management and their permanent colleagues.

If you are not a core staff. They hardly buy your idea. When you don't have an opportunity even if you have another idea, you will think its's not necessary because nobody will listen to you. There is always a case of discrimination. There are times you will be bullied because you a contract staff. TAW13

Moreover, platform workers also reported *self-identity conflict* and *job attitude* as personal influencers of their voice. Self-identity conflict was apparent in the responses of the platform workers interviewed. The workers were asked how they perceived themselves and how this influences their interest in having a say in work-related issues. Our findings revealed that a clash of identity exist as the workers identified either as employees, independent partners, or a combination of both on the one hand, and as either full-time, part-time, or circumstantial workers on the other hand. While those who identify as employees, and mostly work full-time, posited that the platforms

have refused to treat them as independent partners as stipulated in the e-hailing partnership agreement, others with dual conflicting identity opined that the phrase "independent partner" used to qualify them by the platforms only fits the workers' desire to be independent. However, the process involved in working and the controlling mechanisms the platform put in place on the app gives them little or no independence. The circumstantial drivers are those who work for the platforms due to their current economic situation. Participants further stated that the platforms treat them as employees rather than independent partners.

> The platforms would always refer to you as an independent contractors, and the terms and conditions are there. You must accept it before you would be able to go online if you are a first-time driver. Most people usually don't read it. They just click on it and move on. But if you look at the terms and conditions that identify you as an independent contractor. You would want to have certain kind of reservations. PW15

With respect to job attitude, the choice to take their job as full-time, part-time, or circumstantial impact platform workers' willingness to voice. While the workers who drive full-time are more interested in voicing their grievances, those who drive part-time and on a circumstantial basis are less interested in voicing their concerns. The latter category of drivers takes the job as a side hustle and not a career. Hence, they are less interested in individual or collective voice, and their propensity to join the drivers' union is low.

Organisational structural forces. Data from the interviews also reveal that organisational structural factors also afford or restrict triangular workers' access to

voice. Specifically, temporary agency work participants expressed that *agency ownership*, *agency-client relationship*, *demotivation from line managers*, and *employment status* affect their voice expression. Some participants testified that their agencies are owned by client organisations' top managers. This is of deep concern to participants as they express unwillingness to voice their grievances to the agency due to lack of neutrality and autonomy. Workers expressed that agencies owned and controlled by the top management of the client organisation can do little to address grievances raised against their owners. Some workers further stated that this has led to the lackadaisical attitude of the agency towards workers' plight. However, in situations where the ownership of the agency is not connected to the client firm, the degree of cordiality of the agency-client relationship impacts the voice opportunity that will be available to workers. Participants expressed that the kind of treatment and opportunity they enjoy is not only a function of their performance but also of the way the bank considers their agency in terms of previous relationships and their continuous desire to renew the agency's contract. Also, while some agencies are allowed have complaints desk within the client organisation premises, some client firms also have outsource desks where workers' concerns and grievances are promptly addressed.

Most of the agents are being controlled by the executive of the bank so it is insider things, it is not like they just consult neutral agents, who may one day oppose the management of the bank, because the agency is being controlled by the top management of the bank. Before they take any decision on a reported incident, the agent will consult the management, this is our plan. They don't even have any contribution or power to fight for workers. Sincerely speaking it's a slavery life so that is what happens most often because the management of the bank are the owner of the agency, and they still pay their salary so if at all they are going to take any decision it will still come from the bank. TAW14

Further testimonies from the participants reveal that line managers impede temporary agency workers' voice by directly or indirectly demotivating them from voice behaviour. Reports indicated that some line managers feel threatened by agency workers' superior ideas and suggestions in meetings. Managers dismiss workers' ideas even when they are apparently better suggestions. They also bully workers into accepting their performance evaluation without recourse to seeking clarifications. The line managers are after saving their jobs and care less of the consequence of that for workers. Hence, the managers induce workers accepting their fate and fear backlash because of voicing their opinions. These workers resort into being loyal subordinates at the expense of their voice.

If you have grievance. The only thing you can do is to tell your supervisor. But they

can tell you that's what the management wants. You can't do anything. …. someone

was just shouting and saying no, they can never change the code. It was treated as

if my suggestion was a total rubbish. After one year, they still changed the code. I

was like this is the same thing I suggested to this people. The painful part was that

even if they are not going to do it. They could just said it in a better way. I felt

embarrassed. TAW13

Temporary agency workers further reported that the nature of the employment

contract impact their voice. These workers are often given short-term contracts that

may be renewed at intervals, which places them at the mercy of the agencies.

For the e-hailing drivers, testimonies from the participants pointed to *algorithmic*

management, power imbalance, union non-recognition, job insecurity as

motivators/impediments to their individual and collective voice.

Platforms manage their workers using digital HR practices combining HRM

algorithms and artificial intelligence. The platforms' reliance on their app algorithms to

manage workers have implications for voice. Testimonies from the drivers

demonstrated that the app constitutes a major mechanism platforms rely on to provide

voice. The app infrastructure provides voice opportunities for both drivers and riders

to report incidents from the trips taken and air their opinions or grievances. Within the

app, riders and drivers rate each other at the end of a trip, drivers can also answer

prompt surveys about issues raised by the platforms for the purpose of decision

making. Despite the array of the app's voice opportunities, reports from the

participants indicated that platforms hardly respond to their complaints. At most, what

they get are machine generic responses and no opportunity for physical interactions to air their grievances. All participants stated that platforms deactivate them at will following riders' complaints or poor rating without hearing from them or responding to their complaints via the app. Drivers also reported that the structure of the app compels them to rate riders before picking another ride without having the same rule for riders is discriminatory and all complaints about this have been neglected by the platforms. Hence, the algorithmic management affords platforms the opportunity to restrict workers' voice as they effect upgrade or changes on the app without informing or consulting the drivers.

> A rider that is angry, you might not even be the one that got the rider angry maybe he is angry from where he is coming down from, he might pass down the anger to you. Now the machine that is processing rating calculates the percentage of who rates you high or low. The machine does not know what happen between you and the rider, the rider just gets annoyed and rate you low, so who check that action. There is no body now, they will not put a call through to you to find out what happened before deactivation. PW4

This is a result of the power imbalance in the employment relationship between the drivers and the platforms on the one hand, and between drivers and riders on the other. Participants reported that both the platforms and the riders are highly placed in the triangular interaction. For instance, with respect to power imbalance based on rating, a participant retorted:

That is one of the shortcoming of the app that PEDPA is trying to address. They rating system is a bad system that has really forfeited the integrity of the app itself. As a driver, if your rating goes below 4.1, you are going to be deactivated on the app. PW29

Further findings reveal that the refusal of the platforms to provide workers a collective voice or recognise workers' union hinders voice and occasion workers' continuous struggle to express their grievances. Testimonies from the participants acknowledged that initial efforts from the drivers to seek a face collectively with the platforms were met with strong resistance. Even when the union mobilise drivers to strike, the platforms refuse to recognise or dialogue with the union. A union executive reported:

They have not recognised us as a union. As a matter of fact, we have written to them two times. We have written a letter to them for a roundtable discussion. They fail to respond. They will say that they don't want to partner with union or association. (PW16)

Despite incessant struggle from the unions, the platforms have enabled a high degree of job insecurity for drivers, which have been reported to impede drivers' willingness to express their grievances. Participants testified that drivers get deactivated from the platforms indiscriminately due to flimsy complaints from riders, and inability to accept rides requests. And many hardly find their way back to the platforms after deactivation. The fear of deactivation and labour market conditions, which make alternative opportunities nearly unavailable put drivers in a state of high

insecurity. Hence, the drivers' voices are restrained, and they exhibit loyalty and accept whatever is thrown at them by the platforms, as the participants expressed:

… immediately they will report you, and the platform won't listen to you, they will just block you. They are not interested in what happened they don't even bother to get across to the driver and say we heard this and that, and what really happened but instead they will just block the driver and said because the rider reported. PW3

You can't because of one customer's complaint, and you just deactivate driver's account. Complaints like, you know, mere complain. You now deactivate these guys. PW16

External societal/institutional forces. At the external societal and institutional level, *economic conditions of the environmental context not limited to market structure*, and *inadequacy or absence of government regulations* impacts triangular workers' voice. These factors were reported by both the temporary agency and platform workers interviewed. The Nigerian economy characterised by high rate of unemployment, inflation and poverty always trigger deep reflection from the participants before voicing. They reported that since the economy is in bad shape and jobs are not readily available, voicing their concerns, especially their grievances, was considered out of place and a great risk. Participants in temporary agency work considered being in such job as a privilege that requires testimonies and thanksgiving. Hence, they are not poised to threaten their employment stance by expressing their grievances to the management.

… in fact, when you get that job, you will celebrate God and give testimony
unknowing that you are going into slavery, because there is job scarcity and
unemployment in the country. TAW14

Participants expressed that there is high level of poverty due to hyperinflation
which put undue pressure on their income. Hence, workers cannot afford to be out of
job as they have families to cater for. Despite the anonymous voice mechanisms such
as anonymous whistleblowing and village meeting put in place by management,
workers still have strong consideration for keeping their jobs in the adverse economic
situation than expressing their issues at work. Beyond the adverse economic situation,
participants within the e-hailing sector echoed that the oligopolistic nature of the
industry market structure as one of the hindrances to their collective voice. All
participants testified that the limited market competition and the dominance of the two
major e-hailing platforms in the industry has led to highhandedness and inability to
recognise drivers collective voice (i.e., unions).

We have had series of competitors who have not been able to penetrate well in the
business. The two giant companies have been able to be in the industry for almost
two to three years without major rivals. PW19

Further to the industry structure, participants expressed inadequate,
ambiguous and/or absence of government regulations as a major restraint on their
collective voice. The participants were clear on the disinterest of the government in
their plight and acknowledge lack of legislations and regulations to protect their
employment rights and interests. For example, the platform workers interviewed stated

that instead of enacting protective legislations, the government is enacting laws to exploit them through imposing levies. When asked if there are legal provisions to protect platform workers' rights, an ex-member of the platform workers union said:

> None. Rather the Lagos State government … are looking for a way to make profit from the system instead of protecting the drivers. PW15

Although platform workers are not clearly specified in the current labour legislations in Nigeria, the ignorance of the temporary agency workers on the provisions of the law affording them collective voice opportunity is surprising. When asked if there are legislations that protect their rights to have collective voice, all the temporary agency workers interviewed are oblivious of the legislative affordances.

> I don't think there is any law protecting us as contract worker, because they can just wake up and all of us will just loose our job. TAW6

> Well, the challenge I have in this country is that there is no law. Even the bank called CBN don't cater for the less privileged. TAW14

However, Section 1:1 of the Trade Union Act (1973) allows for temporary workers to be afforded the opportunity to form or join a union. The Act defined a union as 'any combination of workers or employers, whether temporary or permanent, …'. Despite this clear provisions in the law, none of the participants with temporary agency interviewed are aware of their right to form or join a union and have collective voice to advance their working lives.

I don't think bank workers are allowed to join a union. Personally, I don't know any staff that is part of any union. This is the first time I am hearing about union. TAW9

Moreover, when informed by the interviewer of the provisions of the law, many of the participants expressed fear and believe there will be consequences if agency workers attempt to collectively organise.

If anybody make attempt to do that, he is a goner because even the full staff that have a union, it is not effective. There is no contract staff that can be bold to even say let's create a union. The day you try, that is the day you will go to your house. TAW 14

Table 3. A comparative analysis of the determinants of temporary agency and platform workers' voice

		Temporary Agency Workers	Platform Workers	Both categories
Determinants	**Individual forces**	*Victimisation Voice skill Transition opportunity Perceived relative equity*	*Self-identity conflict Job attitude*	*Ignorance of working terms Perceived labour market conditions*
	Organisational structural forces	*Agency ownership Agency-client relationship Demotivation from line managers Employment status*	*Algorithmic management Power imbalance Union recognition Job insecurity*	
	External societal/institutional forces			*Economic conditions of the environmental context not limited for market structure Inadequacy or absence of government regulations*
Response				*Ignorance of protective legislations Career commitment Lack of alternative opportunity*

4.6.3 How do triangular workers respond to voice impediment?

Based on the findings, it is apparent that triangular workers are struggling to express their grievances and not recognised to offer suggestions at work. The few individual and direct voice mechanisms afforded workers by the management are inherently part of organisational structure and work processes. They are not entirely aimed at giving workers a say. Despite the management attitude towards triangular workers voice, as Hirschman stated, the workers have continued to display intended or unintended

loyalty due to *ignorance*, *career commitment*, and *lack of alternative opportunity* occasioned by the prevailing economic situation in a developing context like Nigeria.

As expressed earlier, the workers are ignorant of not only the terms and conditions of their engagement, but also the protective legislations and regulations available for them to explore. This ignorance contributes to the workers' inability to express themselves, fight for their rights and protect their interests. Hence, unintentional loyalty was demonstrated by workers as they would have spoken up if aware of the protective legislations. Besides, participants reported intentional loyalty to the firm as a function of their career commitment. Most of the participants who have taken triangular work as a career are perturbed about the lack of voice opportunity. Conversely, participants who take triangular employment as a buffer period to get a preferred job are less disturbed or concerned about the lack of effective voice. The latter workers demonstrated low career commitment to triangular work and deliberately unconcerned about their state of affairs. When asked why they are less interested in voice, participants stated:

It never came to my mind actually; I am not career driven about banking. I really don't have anything to do with banking, career wise. I have other ambitions I really don't know, and I am not bordered. TAW5

I am not really interested in talking. Clearly is not something I would like to do for a very long time. I have good thing I want to do. I have to be an employer of labour too. PW2

Workers also demonstrated intentional loyalty due to lack of alternative opportunity as occasioned by economic realities of the country.

> When they saw that there is no work in Nigeria, they know we will do it. That we don't have anything to do. That's why they are just doing anything they like the way they want it. PW18

In summary, we found that as workers struggle to voice, their influence on the organisational decision making remains low and many are giving high consideration to exiting the triangular employment web. Regarding exit, we identify intended and unintended exit outcomes. Triangular workers exit in the case of voice failure and inability to change their state of affairs following continuous loyalty through involuntary exit by dismissal or deactivation, or voluntarily when alternatives appear. Figure 2 provides an overview of the findings.
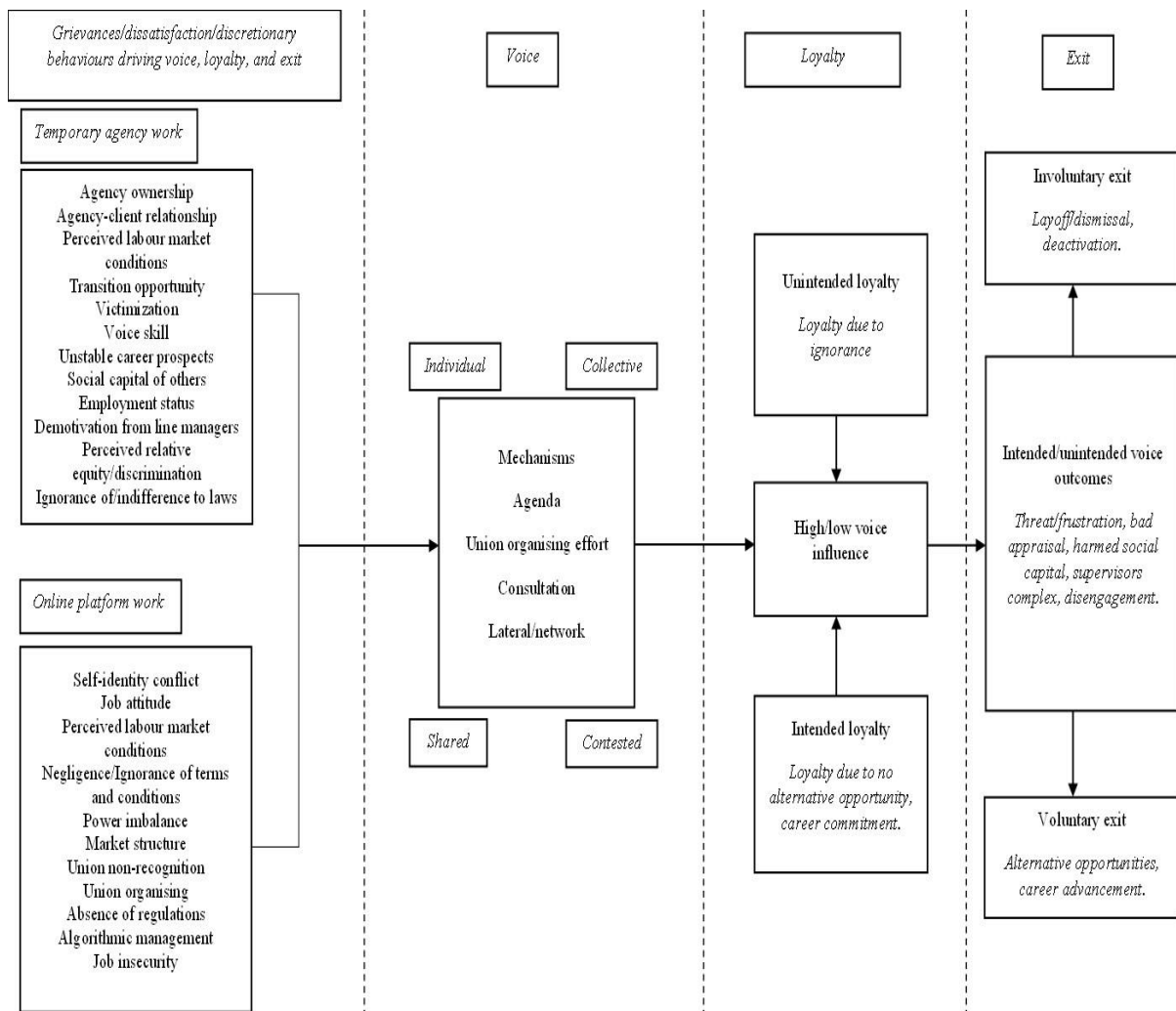
Figure 2: EVL theory-led conceptual framework of triangular workers' voice in Nigeria

4.7 Discussion

Kaufman (2015) acknowledged how different employment relations influence workers' voice. We add to the voice literature by examining the intra-variations in the voice experiences of two categories of triangular workers. We embarked on this study to explore the voice experiences of triangular workers in a developing context targeting both physically and digitally mediated triangular workers. We examined the voice mechanisms available to these workers and the issues that make-up their voice

agenda. Following revelations of workers' struggle to initiate voice mechanisms, we further examined the motivating/inhibiting forces for the triangular workers' struggle to voice. Further findings led to an exploration of workers' response to voice hindrances. We compared findings from these two strands of triangular workers to see if there were similarities or differences in their voice experiences. Building on the account of our findings as captured in figure 2, we extend the voice and triangular work literature by providing a framework of triangular worker voice.

First, contrary to previous studies (e.g., Rybnikova, 2016) that found triangular workers less willing to voice, we found that triangular workers are in an incessant struggle to voice by initiating both individual and collective voice mechanisms. Platform workers are continuously organising themselves collectively to influence platform decisions and actions. Their quest to voice was evident in the proliferation of unions and associations to fight for their rights and interests. Following the radical frame of reference (Fox, 1974), PEDPA plans to create an e-hailing app where drivers can be given full rights at work and afford participation in decision making. Conversely, temporary agency workers are not as aggressive in their quest to speak up and rely more on individual and direct voice mechanisms provided by management and on lateral voice (Walker, 2021). Agency workers exhibit non-confrontational voice behaviours and engage in seeking support and validation from their peers; however, this quickly transitions into collective voice (Jing et al., 2022) due to the drivers' determined resolve.

Second, we extend the voice literature by illuminating how temporary agency workers' voice experience differs from platform workers' and what motivating forces shape these distinct voice experiences. Individual, organisation structural, and

external societal/institutional forces motivate or inhibit triangular workers consideration for voice. Although there are similar forces, temporary agency and platform workers differ in the motivators/inhibitors of their voice. Across the three level of forces, our findings are in line with previous studies (e.g., Emelifeonwu & Valk, 2019) which have found that ignorance of working terms and labour legislations, and labour market conditions play a role in influencing both temporary agency and platform workers' voice. With respect to ignorance, Dyne et al. (2003) in their initial framework of voice and silence suggested ignorance as one of the motives of employee voice. In line, we reveal that triangular workers' ignorance of the terms of their work and available protective labour legislations impact their voice. Also similar for standard workers, the Nigerian labour market conditions highly characterised with negative indices, as experienced and inferred by triangular workers, influence their voice behaviour (Emelifeonwu & Valk, 2019).

At the individual level, temporary agency and platform workers differ in what drives their voice. Temporary agency workers' personal decision to voice was influenced by victimisation, voice skill, opportunity for transition, and perception of relative equity. Beyond victimization and transition opportunity (Winkler & Mahmood, 2015) which have been found to be influencers of temporary agency workers' voice, our study also reveals the relevance of workers' voice skill and their perception of relative equity with standard workers. For platform workers, identity has been a major challenge as it is not out of place to find these workers identifying as employees or freelancers. Our findings are in line with Meijerink et al. (2020) who discussed that self-identity conflict influences how platform workers use voice with those who self-

identify as employees willing to express themselves more than circumstantial drivers who self-identify as independent.

For organisation structural factors, common with findings from previous studies (e.g., Gegenhuber et al., 2021; Rybnikova, 2016; Schreyer, 2021), the study demonstrates that both client organisations and platform organisational structure play a major role in influencing triangular workers' voice. Although consistent with the previous research, demotivation from line managers and employment status were identified for temporary agency workers, our study initially extends these findings by revealing that the agency-client relationship and the nature of agency ownership impact workers' voice. This is unique as the influence of agency-client relationship of triangular workers' voice have not been acknowledged in the literature. However, for platform workers, algorithmic management, power imbalance between drivers and riders, non-recognition of drivers' union, and indiscriminate deactivation influence voice (Duggan et al., 2020; Schreyer, 2021).

Third, we extend the work of Emelifonwu and Valk (2019) that while assertiveness and confrontative voice behaviour are embedded in western cultures, they are creeping into non-western contexts (such as Nigeria). Our study revealed that platform workers are assertive and engage in upward voice behaviour. However, the cultural inclination of being cautious when speaking to superiors, the fear of retribution and victimization still greatly influence temporary agency workers' voice behaviour.

Fourth, in line with arguments from recent scholars (e.g., Barry & Wilkinson, 2021) that, in the event of voice impediment, workers tend to be loyal rather than exiting the firm, our study illuminated that triangular workers' decisions regarding

loyalty and exit following experience of voice hindrance were influenced by ignorance of working terms and protective legislations, career commitment and lack of alternative opportunities.

4.8 Conclusion, Limitations and Future Research Directions

Our study showed that temporary agencies rely more on management-initiated voice mechanisms compared to platform workers who are constantly initiating means of expressing their grievances to the platforms. Platform workers are in an incessant struggle to express their concerns while platform management turns a deaf ear. We substantiate that beyond individual factors, organisation structural and external societal forces drive triangular workers struggle to be heard. Further, we demonstrate that triangular workers, in their struggle remain loyal in the face of obvious precariousness, can exit voluntarily or otherwise. Hence, we extend the voice research by offering an initial EVL-led conceptual framework of triangular workers voice capturing the subtle differences in the drivers of voice between physically and digitally mediated workers and showing how their voice experience led to outcomes of loyalty or exit.

Our study has some limitations. We illuminate our research aims from the workers perspective, missing opportunity to get the perspective of the clients/client organisation and of the agency/platform management. Future research can compare the dynamics and perspectives of temporary agencies and platforms management in providing workers' voice mechanisms. Future enquiries can address questions relating

to – what role do clients and client organisations play in temporary agencies and platforms providing workers with voice?

4.9   References

Barry, M., & Wilkinson, A. (2021). Employee voice, psychologisation and human resource management (HRM). *Human Resource Management Journal*. DOI: 10.1111/1748-8583.12415

Bashshur, M. R., & Oc, B. (2015). When voice matters: A multilevel review of the impact of voice in organizations. *Journal of Management*, *41*(5), 1530-1554.

Borghi, P., Murgia, A., Mondon-Navazo, M., & Mezihorak, P. (2021). Mind the gap between discourses and practices: Platform workers' representation in France and Italy. *European Journal of Industrial Relations*, *27*(4), 425-443.

Bryman, A., & Bell, E. (2003). Breaking down the quantitative/qualitative divide. *Business Research Methods*, *2*(1), 465-478.

Cieslik, K., Banya, R., & Vira, B. Offline contexts of online jobs: Platform drivers, decent work and informality in Lagos, Nigeria. *Development Policy Review*.

Danesi, R. A. (2012). Contract labour and the right to freedom of association in the oil and gas industry in Nigeria. *International Relations and Diplomacy*, 623.

Donaghey, J., Dundon, T., Cullinane, N., Dobbins, T., & Hickland, E. (2019). Managerial silencing of employee voice. In *Employee voice at work* (pp. 113 -128). Springer, Singapore.

Duggan, J., Sherman, U., Carbery, R., & McDonnell, A. (2020). Algorithmic management and app-work in the gig economy: A research agenda for employment relations and HRM. *Human Resource Management Journal*, *30*(1), 114-132.

Dundon, T., Lucio, M. M., Hughes, E., Howcroft, D., Keizer, A., & Walden, R. (2020). Work, power and politics. In *Power, Politics and Influence at Work* (pp. 1-16). Manchester University Press.

Dyne, L. V., Ang, S., & Botero, I. C. (2003). Conceptualizing employee silence and employee voice as multidimensional constructs. *Journal of Management Studies*, *40*(6), 1359-1392.

Emelifeonwu, J. C., & Valk, R. (2019). Employee voice and silence in multinational corporations in the mobile telecommunications industry in Nigeria. *Employee Relations*, *41*(1), 228-252.

Fapohunda, T. M. (2012). Employment casualization and degradation of work in Nigeria. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, *3*(9), 257-267.

Fox, A. (1974). *Beyond contract*. London: Faber

Gegenhuber, T., Ellmer, M., & Schüßler, E. (2021). Microphones, not megaphones: Functional crowdworker voice regimes on digital work platforms. *Human Relations*, *74*(9), 1473-1503.

Gioia, D. A., Corley, K. G., & Hamilton, A. L. (2013). Seeking qualitative rigor in inductive research: Notes on the Gioia methodology. *Organizational Research Methods*, *16*(1), 15-31.

Håkansson, K., Pulignano, V., Isidorsson, T., & Doerflinger, N. (2020). Explaining job insecurity for temporary agency workers: A comparison between Sweden and Belgium. *Economic and Industrial Democracy*, *41*(2), 254-275.

Hickland, E., Cullinane, N., Dobbins, T., Dundon, T., & Donaghey, J. (2020). Employer silencing in a context of voice regulations: Case studies of non-compliance. *Human Resource Management Journal*, *30*(4), 537-552.

Hirschman, A. O. (1970). *Exit, voice, and loyalty: Responses to decline in firms, organizations, and states* (Vol. 25). Harvard university press.

ILO (2016). *Non-standard employment around the world: Understanding challenges, shaping prospects.* Geneva: International Labour Office.

ILO (2021). *World Employment and Social Outlook: The role of digital labour platforms in transforming the world of work.* Geneva: International Labour Office.

Itegboje, J., & Chang, K. (2021). Agency workers and their equivocal roles–wandering employees?. *Labor History*, *62*(2), 115-133.

Jawando, J. O., & Adenugba, A. A. (2015). Assessing the patterns of temporary employment in the food processing industry in Lagos, Nigeria. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, *50*(6), 732-749.

Jing, F.F., Wilkinson, A., Mowbray, P.K., Khan, M. & Zhang, H. (2022). How difficulties in upward voice lead to lateral voice: A case study of a Chinese hospital", *Personnel Review*, Vol. ahead-of-print No. ahead-of-print. https://doi.org/10.1108/PR-02-2021-0075

Kaufman, B. E. (2014). Explaining breadth and depth of employee voice across firms: A voice factor demand model. *Journal of Labor Research*, *35*(3), 296-319.

Kaufman, B. E. (2015). Theorising determinants of employee voice: An integrative model across disciplines and levels of analysis. *Human Resource Management Journal*, *25*(1), 19-40.

Kiaga A. & Leung, V. (2020) The transition from the informal to the formal economy in Africa. *Global Employment Policy Review*, *2*, December 2020, ILO: Geneva

Kougiannou, N. K., & Mendonça, P. (2021). Breaking the managerial silencing of worker voice in platform capitalism: the rise of a food courier network. *British Journal of Management*, *32*(3), 744-759.

Li, C., & Gelfand, M. J. (2022). The influence of cultural tightness-looseness on cross-border acquisition performance. *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, *195*, 1-15.

Maffie, M. D. (2020). The role of digital communities in organizing gig workers. *Industrial Relations: A Journal of Economy and Society*, *59*(1), 123-149.

Meijerink, J. G., & Arets, M. (2021). Online labor platforms versus temp agencies: what are the differences?. *Strategic HR Review*, *20*(4), 119-124.

Morrison, E. W. (2011). Employee voice behavior: Integration and directions for future research. *Academy of Management Annals*, *5*(1), 373-412.

Morrison, E. W. (2014). Employee voice and silence. *Annu. Rev. Organ. Psychol. Organ. Behav.*, *1*(1), 173-197.

OECD (2021). *OECD Employment Outlook 2021: Navigating the COVID-19 Crisis and Recovery*. Paris: OECD Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1787/5a700c4b-en.

Osterbrink, L., & Alpar, P. (2021). Silence of crowdworkers—reasons and implications for work conditions and quality. *International Studies of Management & Organization*, *51*(2), 136-161.

Oyetunde, K., Prouska, R., & McKearney, A. (2022). Voice in non-traditional employment relationships: a review and future research directions. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *33*(1), 142-167.

Pinder, C. C., & Harlos, H. P. (2001). Employee silence: Quiescence and acquiescence as responses to perceived injustice. *Research in Personnel and Human Resource Management*, *20*, 331-369.

Prouska, R., & Kapsali, M. (2021). The determinants of project worker voice in project-based organisations: An initial conceptualisation and research agenda. *Human Resource Management Journal*, *31*(2), 375-391.

Pulignano, V., & Doerflinger, N. (2013). A head with two tales: trade unions' influence on temporary agency work in Belgian and German workplaces. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *24*(22), 4149-4165.

Rybnikova, I. (2016). Employee voice and silence in temporary agency work. *German Journal of Human Resource Management*, *30*(3-4), 287-309.

Schreyer, J. (2021). Algorithmic management versus organising protest and co-determination? The case of Foodora/Lieferando in Germany. *Studi Organizzativi*, *1*, 105-128. 10.3280/SO2021-001005

Sluiter, R., Manevska, K., & Akkerman, A. (2020). Atypical work, worker voice and supervisor responses. *Socio-Economic Review*, *0*(0), 1-21.

Spreitzer, G. M., Cameron, L., & Garrett, L. (2017). Alternative work arrangements: Two images of the new world of work. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, *4*, 473-499.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). Basics of qualitative research techniques.

Walker, M. (2021). Peer-to-peer online voice as emergent collective action. *Journal of Industrial Relations*, *63*(5), 777-797.

WEC (2021). *WEC Economic Report 2021.* Brussels: WEC Publishing. [WEC-Economic-Report-2021.pdf (wecglobal.org)](#)

Wilkinson, A., Barry, M., & Morrison, E. (2020). Toward an integration of research on employee voice. *Human Resource Management Review*, *30*, 100677.

Wilkinson, A., & Fay, C. (2011). New times for employee voice?. *Human Resource Management*, *50*(1), 65-74.

Wilkinson, A., Knoll, M., Mowbray, P. K., & Dundon, T. (2021). New trajectories in worker voice: Integrating and applying contemporary challenges in the organization of work. *British Journal of Management*, *32*(3), 693-707.

Winkler, I., & Mahmood, M. K. (2015). The liminality of temporary agency work: Exploring the dimensions of Danish temporary agency workers' liminal experience. *Nordic Journal of Working Life Studies*, *5*(1), 51-68.

Wood, A. J., Lehdonvirta, V., & Graham, M. (2018). Workers of the Internet unite? Online freelancer organisation among remote gig economy workers in six Asian and African countries. *New Technology, Work and Employment*, *33*(2), 95-112.

Chapter 5

Conclusion, Limitations and Future Research Directions

5.1 Conclusion

Employee voice research has matured over the past decades as traditional employees are more likely to have access to voice mechanisms and participate in decision making. However, voice experience of workers in non-traditional employment arrangements is still modest and their lack of access to voice mechanisms and unionism still pose a challenge. For instance, triangular workers in mediated employment face a multi-faceted challenge to voicing their grievances due to the duality of employers, and legal ambiguity of the major e. Hence, studying the voice experiences and determining factors of these workers voice is germane to understand how organisations can benefit from the reservoir of ideas and suggestions these workers can provide for organisational improvement, ameliorate their grievances, and ensure industrial democracy and social justice for workers. Therefore, this thesis examines triangular workers' voice, with specific focus on temporary agency and platform workers, to understand the type of voice mechanism available to these workers, issues they are interested in voicing, their voice determinants, and outcomes.

Using a qualitative study of temporary agency workers in the banking, oil and gas industry, and platform workers in the e-hailing sector in Nigeria, I was able to understand triangular workers' voice and present frameworks/models depicting

determinants and outcomes of triangular workers' voice. Data from the study allowed me to compare the voice experiences of temporary agency and platform workers who are in physically mediated and digitally mediated work respectively.

Results from the study indicated that there is a significant difference in the voice experiences of temporary agency and platform workers. While temporary agency workers displayed loyalty amid their grievances and ready to speak less, the platform workers are in a constant struggle to be heard. Efforts from the platform workers include initiating both individual and collective means of expressing their grievances. However, temporary agency workers rely more on individual voice mechanisms as initiated by the management of the agency or client firms. Further findings also pointed to the workers' consideration of individual, organisational structural, and external institutional forces before speaking up at work. While the determining forces differ for temporary agency, and platform workers, workers' ignorance of the labour legislations, their perception of the labour market conditions, lack of government regulations, and deteriorating economic conditions were found to impact both categories of workers' voice.

5.1.1   Contributions

The overall contribution of this thesis is the advancement of the employee voice literature with a clear conceptual understanding of the voice experiences of workers in triangular employment arrangements. Specific contributions are outlined below:

First, following a systematic review of previous empirical non-traditional workers' voice studies, a framework was developed to map out determinants,

intervening factors that influence voice, and voice outcomes identified in non-traditional workers' voice literature. Prior to this framework, attempts at conceptually modelling voice determinants and outcomes have been limited to traditional work contexts. Besides Prouska and Kapsali's (2021) framework of project-based workers' voice determinants, no known work to the researcher has attempted to model voice determinants of non-traditional workers' voice. This is an addition to the voice literature as it advances voice theory and previous works (e.g., Kaufman, 2015) at conceptualising and understanding workers' voice. Furthermore, suggestions for future research with special calls for more empirical studies on non-traditional workers' voice were proposed.

Second, like Prouska and Kapsali (2021), I extend voice theory by identifying triangular workers' voice determinants based on the peculiarities of such employment arrangements. Triangular work in physically and digitally mediated arrangements have special features that cannot be found in other traditional or non-traditional employment types. For instance, because triangular workers stand between the agency/platform and clients/client organisations, it may be difficult to ascertain, especially where legislations have not specified, the legal employer with the responsibility of affording workers voice opportunity. In addition, I develop a model of triangular workers' voice determinants. This model contributes to voice theory by responding to the calls of Kaufman (2014) who argued that there are limited models and theories of employee voice. The developed model extends voice theory by identifying peculiar factors of triangular work and how they impact workers' voice. Identified in the model are external, employment-context, firm, and individual forces that impact voice forms, agenda, and influence. In specific terms, the model offers new determinants of voice

not identified in the previous literature. For example, voice skill, perceived relative equity, self-identity, transition opportunity, are factors that may likely affect triangular workers' voice. Additionally, these factors may also impact traditional workers' voice. Lastly, propositions were developed that may spur future empirical studies on triangular workers' voice.

Third, I identified the voice mechanisms available to workers in physically and digitally mediated work, the issues they are interested in voicing, the level of their voice influence, and the determinants of their voice. With respect to voice form, this study found in addition to previous empirical triangular voice research (see Gegenhuber et al., 2022; Rybnikova, 2016) that beyond management-initiated voice mechanisms, workers also initiate voice mechanisms that the management of the agencies and platforms are yet to acknowledge or ratify. However, with such mechanisms, triangular workers still express their grievances. Also, extending previous integrative models (e.g., Kaufman, 2015), I develop a framework of triangular workers' voice in Nigeria. As suggested in propositions from paper 2, the article identified voice skill, perceived relative equity, self-identity, transition opportunity as new determinants of triangular workers' voice. The context of the study is also a major contribution to voice research as studies on non-traditional workers from such developing contexts like Nigeria is still in its infancy.

Findings from this thesis expands theoretical understanding of workers' voice from the triangular employment relationship lens. Specifically, a conceptual model of triangular workers' voice was developed to extend our understanding of employee voice beyond traditional work. Model and frameworks developed from this study will add to Prouska and Kapsali's (2021) effort at modelling non-traditional workers' voice.

Specifically, I extend determinants of employee voice with factors such as perceived relative equity, self-identity conflict, voice skill, and perceived labour market conditions, as specific to triangular workers. The study is an essential contribution to ER/HR practice as agencies, platforms and client organisations can deploy model and frameworks developed in this study and the results to further understand workers' voice need, critically assess voice contributions of workers to ensure that anticipated ideas, suggestions, and feedback from these workers are not offset by the negative consequences that may result from their non-voice.

5.2 Limitations

This study has its inherent limitations. For example, in the first essay, only empirical studies in peer-reviewed journals were included. Grey literature such as conceptual articles, books, and book chapters, working papers, theses and dissertations were excluded. This is to ensure a quality systematic review was done. In addition, the number of studies reviewed could not account for the heterogeneous nature of non-traditional work. Also, the methodological differences in the studies reviewed were not accounted for.

The second essay also has identified limitations. For example, a few of the identified determinants could also hold for traditional workers' voice. The limitation of the third essay is that the research was conducted considering only workers perspectives. Perspectives from the clients/client organisations and management of

agencies and platforms could have provided further insights into the how and why of triangular workers' voice.

5.3 Suggestions for Future Research

Based on the findings from the essays presented in the thesis and the limitations established therein, the following directions for future research are suggested. In the first essay, insights from the systematic review informed a few future research suggestions. For example, the review shows that previous studies used both single and mixed samples of different variants of NTERs. While studies that examined a single type are more likely to take proper consideration of the peculiar attributes of the NTER type, other with mixed types are less likely to account for the employment specific attributes of each type of NTER studied (De Cuyper et al., 2008; Imhof & Andresen, 2018). Hence, future studies should consider how insights into peculiar attributes of a single NTER type in a study and/or possibly embark on comparative examinations of voice experiences of workers in different variants of NTERs. Also, beyond a comparative analysis of voice among TERs and NTERs workers as found in the review, studies examining the impact of non-traditional workers' voice behaviour on their traditional counterpart in an organisation with diverse workers with respect to employment relationship could offer interesting findings for effective HR policies and practices.

Additionally, the review essay acknowledged that there is a major research gap in voice research in the NTER context, most studies reviewed are domiciled among

part-timers despite the tremendous growth in triangular employment and gig work (Horney, 2016; Hudson-Sharp & Runge, 2017) in recent times. Scholars (e.g., Ciett, 2015; Hudson-Sharp & Runge, 2017) reported the increasing organisational use of triangular employees and the alarming entrance of young people into the platform and on-demand economy. The peculiar situation of these categories of employees poses future research questions for voice that is worth exploring. For instance, both temporary agency and project-based workers are seconded to work with different organisations and on different projects at different times by the employing agency or firm (Rybnikova, 2016; Turner, Huemann & Keegan, 2008). Future studies among temporary agency and project-based workers could investigate how this frequent change in organisational settings influence their voice experiences.

More research is needed on the determinants of employee voice in NTERs. Beyond gender, future studies should consider investigating how other socio-demographic attributes of workers in NTERs influence their voice behaviour and experience. Demographics such as education, employment duration, work experience, marital status, age, financial status, income, social status etc. could offer useful insights into individual and personal antecedents to employee voice behaviour. For instance, there is the possibility that a non-traditional worker with good financial status who decide to work for personal fulfilment, identity, care for others, or service (Budd, 2014) would exercise more voice compared to a financially unstable worker who views work as a commodity and/or disutility (Budd, 2014). Also, future studies looking at the voice behaviour and experience of migrant workers in NTERs will provide further insights into how immigration can impact voice. In addition, especially from the OB theoretical perspective following Morrison's voice model (Morrison, 2011),

more studies on individual and organisational level antecedents such as personality, job attitudes, role definition and clarity, perceived supervisor support, peer support, leadership style and behaviour, leader-member exchange (LMX), perceived organisational support, organisational climate, organisational ethical climate, etc. is needed to understand non-traditional workers' voice. For example, studies examining the influence of narcissistic leadership style and behaviour on voice of non-traditional workers who have been highly reported to be in a precarious and vulnerable situation could offer deep insights into how to ameliorate these conditions. Similarly, Kaufman's integrative model of voice determinants (Kaufman, 2015) offers employment-related determinants of voice both from the employers' and employees' angles, such as production technology, leadership and managerial quality, organisational culture, psycho-social dispositions, knowledge, employee skills and abilities, and the desire of employees/employers to supply or demand voice. Future studies on the impact of these factors on employee voice can offer a better understanding of the voice experiences of non-traditional workers.

Future research on the outcomes and consequences of voice and/or lack of voice among non-traditional workers is pertinent. This is relevant to rationalise the call for employee voice inclusion in workplace practices, especially for non-traditional workers as favourable consequences of employee voice have been verified in other contexts. Among traditional workers, voice has been linked to increased employee engagement (Rees, Alfes & Gatenby, 2013), higher performance and less involuntary turnover (Burris, Detert & Romney, 2013), improved psychosocial and physical health (Cortina & Magley, 2003) etc. This confirmed positive consequence affirms that investment in employee voice can offer economic and social benefits for workers and

their organisations alike. Hence, there is a wide research gap in the study of the influence of voice on work-related attitudes among non-traditional workers, and urgent attention is needed to bridge the gaps.

Despite reports from international labour and human rights organisations on the abuse of labour and the high level of precariousness experienced by workers in NTERs in the developing and underdeveloped economies (ITUC, 2019), little research has been completed on the voice experiences of workers in NTERs in these climes. For instance, the ITUC in its 2019 Global Rights Index reported an increasing number of nations excluding workers from having access to collective voice through unionism. The report further stated that most of the identified nations (mostly in Europe, Asia, South America, and Africa) impede union registrations and workers' access to collective bargaining. In addition, previous authors (e.g., Lamarche, 2015) have acknowledged the sparse literature on workers' participation and representation from low and middle-income countries. Considering this, studies from low and middle-income countries, and other emerging nations would provide a broad and wider understanding of the state of non-traditional workers' access to individual and/or collective voice. The review further highlights that previous voice research have shirked peculiar attributes of study contexts when analysing voice experiences of non-traditional workers. Peculiar country characteristics with respect to labour legislation, labour market institutions, political system, socio-cultural system, economic system, workers' and management ideology, union density, union organising effort, etc. not only shape the nature and features of NTERs available to workers but also inform and influence the orientation of both workers and management on the need and relevance of employee voice. For example, Belgium, France, Italy, and Spain have strong state

labour legislation that fosters union inclusiveness for all categories of workers. On the contrary, despite a code of statutes, regulation of temporary agency work in Sweden and Denmark are weak (Hakansson et al., 2017; OECD, 2013). While temporary agency workers are seen as employees of the agency and not the client firm in Sweden, there is strong legislation discouraging temporary agency work in Belgium, and the few workers have access to union and collective bargaining and representation. In Australia, due to low emphasis for statutory provisions, having a voice structure and mechanism in workplaces in Australia is now at the discretion of the management (Wilkinson & Fay, 2011). In the Middle East, religious and cultural factors influence labour legislations and voice experience of workers (Soltani et al., 2018). Likewise, Emelifeonwu & Valk (2019) reported the effects of power and cultural orientations on workers' voice from Sub-Saharan Africa. Hence, it would be of interesting to know more about how the distinct, peculiar features of countries' forms of NTERs studied impacts differently non-traditional workers voice situations.

Future research can focus on the method employed in studying voice among workers in NTERs. From the OB viewpoint, attribution, signalling, spill over and other theories could offer light into explaining the causal relationship between variables/constructs and employee voice among non-traditional workers. For instance, signals from the labour market, attribution employees give to labour market conditions at any one time, coupled with the alternative opportunities available to them may offer reasons as to why they speak up or remain silent at work. Additionally, our review showed the dominant usage of cross-sectional research design, survey and panel method of data collection in previous studies. More longitudinal studies exploring changing situations of non-traditional workers with respect to work duration within or

across firms, labour market conditions, terms, and conditions of a work contract, etc. could ultimately shed light on the effect of these structural changes on voice. Similarly, more qualitative studies using in-depth interviews, focus groups or case studies are needed to gain further and deeper insights into the voice experiences of non-traditional workers. Dyad and triad levels of data collection could also offer a better understanding of non-traditional workers' voice experience. For example, data can be collected from supervisors, peers, traditional and non-traditional workers for broader perspectives of employee voice in NTERs. Also, other methodological approaches such as Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA), suggested by Imhof and Andresen (2018) in their mapping review of wellbeing research, could offer additional value to understanding voice antecedents through the usage of multiple causal factors and evaluate how each factor can predict employee voice.

The second essay offers a conceptual model of triangular workers' voice with research propositions that can be tested highlighted. An empirical test of the model and its further development could provide a major agenda for future research. Also, beyond the identified determinants, a few other factors not found following the literature review could impact triangular workers' voice. Additionally, there could also be some interactions between the identified factors in explaining triangular workers' voice. An empirical study of these interactions could be a major avenue for future research. Lastly, as stated in the limitations, theoretical and conceptual studies on the role played by clients and client organisations in motivating or inhibiting triangular workers' voice is still highly limited. Future writings could conceptually or empirically examine client/user-firm related factors in understanding workers' voice. Their perception of voice mechanisms could also offer new insights on triangular workers

voice. From the third essay, a few research directions were suggested. For example, future research could compare the perspectives and viewpoints of the management of temporary agencies and platforms in offering workers voice. Also, as suggested for essay two, future empirical studies could also examine the role played by clients and client firms in offering triangular workers' voice.

5.4   References

Budd, J. W. (2014). The future of employee voice. In Wilkinson, A., Donaghey, J., Dundon, T. and Freeman, R. (eds), *The Handbook of Research on Employee Voice: Participation and Involvement in the Workplace*. Cheltenham: Elgar Press, pp. 477–487.

Burris, E. R., Detert, J. R., and Romney, A. C. (2013). Speaking up vs. being heard: The disagreement around and outcomes of employee voice. *Organisation Science*, 24(1), pp. 22-38.

Ciett (2015). *Economic Report*. Brussels: Ciett.

Cortina, L. M., and Magley, V. J. (2003). Raising voice, risking retaliation: Events following interpersonal mistreatment in the workplace. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 8(4), pp. 247-265.

De Cuyper, N., De Jong, J., De Witte, H., Isaksson, K., Rigotti, T., and Schalk, R. (2008). Literature review of theory and research on the psychological impact of temporary employment: Towards a conceptual model. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 10(1), pp. 25-51.

Emelifeonwu, J. C., and Valk, R. (2019). Employee voice and silence in multinational corporations in the mobile telecommunications industry in Nigeria. *Employee Relations*, 41(1), pp. 228-252.

Gegenhuber, T., M. Ellmer and E. Schüßler (2022). Microphones, not megaphones: Functional crowdworker voice regimes on digital work platforms. *Human Relations,* 74(9), pp. 1473-1503.

Håkansson, K., V. Pulignano, T. Isidorsson and N. Doerflinger (2020). Explaining job insecurity for temporary agency workers: A comparison between Sweden and Belgium. *Economic and Industrial Democracy,* 41(2), pp. 254-275.

Horney, N. (2016). The gig economy: A disruptor requiring HR agility. *People and Strategy.* [Online]. 39(3), pp. 20-27.

Hudson-Sharp, N., and Runge, J. (2017). *International trends in insecure work: A report for the Trades Union Congress* (Vol. 3). National Institute of Economic and Social Research.

ITUC (2019). *2019 ITUC global rights index: The world's countries for workers.* Belgium: Brussels

Imhof, S., and Andresen, M. (2018). Unhappy with well-being research in the temporary work context: Mapping review and research agenda. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 29(1), pp. 127-164.

Kaufman, B. E. (2014). Explaining breadth and depth of employee voice across firms: A voice factor demand model. *Journal of Labour Research,* 35(3), pp. 296-319.

Kaufman, B. E. (2015). Theorising determinants of employee voice: An integrative model across disciplines and levels of analysis. *Human Resource Management Journal,* 25(1), pp. 19-40.

Lamarche, C. (2015). *Collective bargaining in developing countries.* IZA World of Labor, No. 183. Institute of Labour Economics (IZA): Bonn.

Morrison, E.W. (2011). Employee voice behaviour: Integration and directions for future research. *Academy of Management Annals,* 5(1), pp. 373-412.

OECD (2013) *OECD Employment Outlook 2013.* Paris: OECD Publishing. Available at: http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/empl_outlook-2013-en.

Prouska, R., and Kapsali, M. (2021). The determinants of project worker voice in project-based organisations: An initial conceptualisation and research agenda. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 31(2), pp. 375-391.

Rees, C., Alfes, K., and Gatenby, M. (2013). Employee voice and engagement: Connections and consequences. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 24(14), pp. 2780-2798.

Rybnikova, I. (2016). Employee voice and silence in temporary agency work. *German Journal of Human Resource Management*, 30(3-4), pp. 287-309.

Soltani, E., Liao, Y. Y., Gholami, A. K., and Iqbal, A. (2018). Saying it without words: A qualitative study of employee voice in the Iranian building sector. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 29(5), pp. 1015-1055.

Turner, R., Huemann, M., and Keegan, A. (2008). Human resource management in the project-oriented organization: Employee well-being and ethical treatment. *International Journal of Project Management*, 26(5), pp. 577-585.

Wilkinson, A., and Fay, C. (2011). New times for employee voice?. *Human Resource Management*, *50*(1), 65-74.

Appendix A: Paper 1's Publication Journey

Submission 1

Journal: Human Resource Management Review (HRMR) (ABS 3)

Decision: Reject after review

Editor and Reviewers Comments:

VOICE IN NON-TRADITIONAL EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIPS: A REVIEW AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Dear Mr Oyetunde,

Thank you for submitting your manuscript to Human Resource Management Review.

I regret to inform you that the three reviewers recommend against publishing your manuscript, and I have decided to reject it. The reviewers' comments are below.

While the topic of non-traditional employment relationships is interesting, the reviewers did not consider that the timing for a literature review on this topic was appropriate due to the lack of available research to work with, since only 20 articles could be identified which reviewer 1 (comment 3) found to be inadequate and reviewer 2 came to the same conclusion (comment 2) which provided a very small number of studies for six different categories listed in the manuscript. Some of the content on contract employees was deemed inaccurate by reviewer 1 (comment 2) and which I as associate editor concur and who pointed out that the meaning of employment contracts differs between states in the USA and further employment contracts have different meanings in France and China, so it appears some of the inter- and intra-country differences in the meaning of an employment contract were lacking in the paper. In my opinion as associate editor it may have been too early to perform a literature review on voice in non-traditional employment relationships with few studies to work with and it is likely to be better to wait until enough time passes until more research has been published on this topic to base a literature review.

We appreciate you submitting your manuscript to Human Resource Management Review and thank you for giving us the opportunity to consider your work.

Kind regards,
Associate Editor

Human Resource Management Review

Editor and Reviewer comments:
Reviewer #1: Review of HUMRES-D-20-00111, "Voice in Non-Traditional Employment Relationships: A Review and Future Research Directions"

In this article, the authors seek to review extant literature on voice, an important construct in a variety of employment/worker literatures, as applied to "non-traditional employment relationships." There has been extensive research on voice in the more traditional employment area, so it would seem that today's non-traditional employment structures would provide a good opportunity to re-visit this construct. I do have some comments on this particular review, however.

1. First, I am concerned that the authors appear to use the words "employees" and "workers" interchangeably, because some of the relationships they discuss are not employee relationships at all. There are workers, but the workers are not employees (e.g., independent contractors, many gig workers). It would seem that there could be differences in voicing patterns for those workers who are considered employees, even if the work arrangement is non-traditional (say, for some gig arrangements) versus those situations where the workers are not considered employees (say, for independent contractors). These situations are difficult to separate, because they depend on legal definitions and countries/cultures. Even within the U.S., some Uber workers are considered employees while others are not (it depends on the state). All are gig workers. Independent contractors of some types may be considered "experts" (say, attorneys) and thus have much more voice on many topics than other independent contractors (say, babysitters in the U.S.). I think the authors need to clarify the categories of non-traditional work in a more fine-tuned way, defining each more clearly. Additionally, clear definitions are needed for "temporary," "seasonal," "multi-party employment," and "disguised employment," because the definitions can vary by legal or cultural designation.

2. Also, the authors make claims about traditional employment relationships that have not, or may not have been, true for a long time. The major one is about contract permanency. This depends in particular not only on time period, but also on nation. In the U.S., most workers are "at will" and have no formal contract, no implied contract, and no contract permanency. The law varies state to state, however, so that there are times when workers are found to have "implied contracts" even when the employer did not intend to create a contract. In France, the French Labor Code requires all employment contracts be in writing, and therefore cannot have implied contracts (as the U.S. sometimes does). In China, all full-time employees have a written contract. So, there is variation across countries as to the contractual nature of employment relationships. The authors need to note that the source of information is rather dated and may apply only to the U.S.

3. I personally find a review based on only 20 articles rather unreliable, particularly when drawing inferences for some categories containing only two articles. I realize that the literature is limited, but in such a case I would refrain from calling this a "systematic review." Instead, I think any contribution to the literature would benefit from a conceptual discussion of what the authors would expect regarding voice for non-traditional workers: how is it different from for traditional workers, for example. Given the extensive literature on traditional worker voice, and the many dimensions on which it has been studied, there would be plenty of room for the authors to make predictions or propositions about the nature of voice for non-traditional workers. I feel as though I learned little about voice for non-traditional workers from this "review."

4. The recommendations for future research could just have easily come from the literature on recommendations for future research on voice in the more traditional context, adapted to account for the differences in the two. In other words, it could have been based on a conceptual development that I suggest in #3 above.

5. Although I find the intentions worthwhile, the outcome is disappointing. The authors were limited, which necessarily hampers their efforts. But I don't find a sufficiently clear contribution in this manner of presentation.

Reviewer #2: Review: Voice in Non-Traditional Employment Relationships (20-0011)

I don't think this paper clears the bar for publication in HRM Review and also don't think there is potential for it to do so if an opportunity were extended for revision. So, my recommendation is Reject.

The author(s) put a lot of work into the paper on the front end but the learning/value-added contribution that comes out at the back end is pretty small. The front-end work is to do a very large literature search for articles that in some way examine worker voice in non-traditional employment relationships (NTERs), read each one for content, findings and implications, and synthesize/interpret what they find in the text and five substantial tables. The thin nature of the back-end contribution is indicated by the short one-paragraph, seven-line Conclusion which summarizes the two principal findings as a "sparse literature" and "inconsistent findings" across the studies.

The literature search yielded a total of 20 studies found in the fields of OB, HR/IR, and labour econ. I applaud that the authors did a broad, inclusive search across all of these fields but to only come up with 20 studies leaves them with a very small and heterogeneous set for their meta-review. Heterogeneity is then further exacerbated by the nature of the subject area - non-traditional employment relationships - for the very nature of non-traditional means it includes arrangements that are likely extra-diverse and structurally different from each other. Table 1, for example, shows 6 different NTERs, such as temporary employment, multi-party employment, and disguised employment.

It is thus not surprising that inconsistent findings are produced when the sample has 20 observations divided across six categories. The paper's main conclusion, therefore, is 'needs more research' which, I suspect, the authors would have been better served had they followed their own advice and saved the meta-review for a decade from now (sample of 30?) and instead done a more focused research study on voice in a specific NTER with perhaps a specific company or industry.

Perhaps because of the small sample size and heterogeneity, it seemed to this reader that the subject of voice in NTERs in this paper remained at a high, amorphous, disembodied level of discussion and provided very little in the way of concrete examples or case evidence to put some reality into the subject.

This observation leads me to a fundamental concern which the authors do not address, surely need to, but which I am rather sceptical has a satisfactory answer. Specifically, it has to be wondered if the two-some of employee voice and NTERs is not pretty much a non-intersecting set. I have a hard time wrapping my mind around the notion that workers (are they 'employees'?) hired through a third-party contractor for temporary project work are candidates for some form of voice arrangement, or at least something beyond telling the boss to shove it or I quit. This matter seems crucial to address and resolve in the affirmative, it isn't touched in the paper, and the sample of 20 papers leads me to think it is going to be a difficult case to make.

Author(s), I know you put a lot of time into this paper, but the study topic, design, and findings don't clear the bar and it is my job to report the unhappy verdict.

Reviewer #3: This paper reviews the literature on voice within a Non-Traditional Employment Relationship sample. My comments follow in approximately the order that they appear in the manuscript.

1. The material on p. 9 (according to my computer-the manuscript has no page numbers) regarding the difference between TERs and NTERs is totally redundant with the first few paragraphs of the paper. Indeed, a great deal of page space has been filled with the introduction. This can be streamlined and reduced to get to the meat of the paper more quickly.

2. P. 11-"empty reviews"? Reviews that review nothing?

3. "Finding, evaluating, analysing, synthesising and reporting previous studies in a field of research provides an opportunity to understand and conclude about what is known or not (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009), thereby allowing the opening up of the field for future research opportunities." This is just one of the many examples of unnecessary wordiness. I suspect readers of this journal know this already.

4. To classify part-time employment as an NTER seems to include that a difference between TER and NTER is the time spent at work. Part-time employees may be subject to contracts and strict control, lack the autonomy that other NTERs experience, and have more security. Other than the ILO considering part-time work as a NTER, can you provide more conceptual justification? This is an important point since many of your papers concern part-time employees.

5. What is your conclusion with respect to the review of studies concerning the form of voice. As I read this, I failed to see what the integrative aspect of this review. It seems like I was just reading a synopsis of the results of many studies without any analysis about these results.

6. With respect to employee voice agenda-is it really worth conducting a review if you only found six papers dealing with this issue?

7. One issue I had while reading through your review results was that it was sometimes difficult to determine who the comparison group was. For example, "Some studies (n=4) (e.g. Soltani et al., 2018; Rybnikova, 2016) reported the low level of upward communication among temporary employees, part-timers, temporary agency workers, even where they have access to collective voice (Wood, 2016)." Does this mean that the level was lower than comparable TERs? Or was it just "objectively" low?

8. On p. 22, you acknowledge the heterogeneity of the working conditions of NTERs. Perhaps this is why it has been difficult to find any clear insight into voice issues for this very varied sample.

9. It would be more impactful to provide more specific research directions.

Submission 2

Journal: International Journal of Human Resource Management (IJHRM) (ABS 3)

Decision: Accepted and published

Editor and Reviewers Comments (Review 1):

Dear Mr Oyetunde:

Thank you for submitting your manuscript, "VOICE IN NON-TRADITIONAL EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIPS: A REVIEW AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS" for consideration for publication in The International Journal of Human Resource Management. I have now

received comments from the reviewers. As you can see from their comments, we all believe that your research is interesting and intriguing.

The reviewers and I believe that your manuscript has a range of valuable features. However, they have also raised a number of significant concerns with your manuscript. Based on my own reading of the manuscript, I share most of the reviewers' concerns, as well as having a few of my own. While I am not able to accept this version of your manuscript at this moment, I would like to invite you to revise and resubmit your manuscript for further consideration. Your manuscript can be resubmitted by way of the following link:

*** PLEASE NOTE: This is a two-step process. After clicking on the link, you will be directed to a webpage to confirm. ***

https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/rijh?URL_MASK=d3e715501f874dc8a2e650dbf068777e

I will not repeat all of the reviewers' comments here although you will need to consider each of their concerns. Rather, I focus on several overriding issues that I feel are particularly important to address as you revise your manuscript.
•   There are several aspects of the paper in which it will be helpful for you to provide more explanation, e.g. non-traditional employment are not all pointing to bad jobs without voice or voice to be an important part of improving workers' employment conditions and outcomes, a clearer differentiation and specification of the scope of your sample would be good;
•   Search terms, you use employee voic*, but often those employed in non-traditional employment are not classified as 'employees' in legal terms as they may be self-employed, agency workers. An additional search using 'workers' voic*' may help. The sample is likely to be more than you have captured, esp. if you include articles that examine workers' voice or lack of it as part of the labour disputes, grievance studies;
•   Theory, you might wish to provide a deeper review of employee voice. Adrian Wilkinson et al have published numerous review articles and book chapters/books on the topic, which you have cited. However, the review came across rather superficial. Voice has been studied from an HRM, OB and industrial/employment relations perspective. They are not quite the same but overlap. I understand that you wish to focus on the latter, which is fine. But your engagement with the voice literature and its key argument needs to be on a deeper level, as the reviewers alluded to. A deeper engagement with the body of voice literature will also help you come up with a more solid discussion and future research direction, which is currently rather superficial;
•   Please make a clearer argument about the contribution of your study;
•   Please proof read your paper carefully before resubmitting.

As you revise your manuscript, please consider each reviewer comment carefully, since even relatively minor comments can sometimes trigger large improvements in a manuscript. In revising your manuscript, please carefully consider each reviewer comment and pay particular attention to the points mentioned below in this decision letter. We ask that you deal with all issues raised by the reviewers and the action editor while revising your manuscript and that you provide point-by-point responses to explain how you have done so. We believe that having you explicitly respond to all the issues raised by the reviewers and action editor puts you in the best possible position to achieve a favorable outcome. However, concisely explaining the actions you have taken is desirable in that such explanations save reviewers' time while ensuring that your responses highlight the actions you have taken to deal with their concerns.

Please note, your revised manuscript must include a Data Availability Statement, which should be located between the Conclusion and References sections. If this is not included then your revised manuscript will be returned to you for amendment. For more information about Data Availability Statements and template statements, please see: https://authorservices.taylorandfrancis.com/data-sharing-policies/data-availability-statements/

Because we are trying to facilitate timely revision of manuscripts, please upload your revised manuscript within 4 months of today or contact me in advance to negotiate an alternative deadline.

Thank you for submitting to IJHRM and best of luck with the revisions!

Regards,

Editor

Referees' Comments to Author:

Referee: 1

Comments to the Author
Dear Authors,

Thank you very much for the opportunity to read your manuscript. I enjoyed it overall and think it is a valuable contribution that helps in structuring the body of knowledge on non-traditional work, which I think is very helpful to ground the ongoing discussion particularly around gig work in its intellectual predecessors. I also think the manuscript has merits as an overview on voice as such, as I found your general structuring of the applicable voice literature helpful for the reader to get an overview. While reading your manuscript I had several observations which might help with further improving your manuscript, as follows:

When your introduce the definition of non.-traditional work (e.g. p.3), I thought that it focuses very much on vulnerable, contingent forms of work - I wondered, without having a ready solution at hand, how would your definition relate to (arguable) more higher-status work, such as freelancing, of high-skilled, sought-after professionals? I do not doubt that your definition could not be all encompassing, it was just an observation that I had at several occasions while reading your manuscript that a particular argument introduced earlier only 'clicked' with me later in the manuscript. Put differently, it seems to me that in several instances, you tend to present a very 'barebone' (not meant in a negative sense) mention of a concept, whereas one or two additional sentences that contextualise with material presented later in the manuscript could be very helpful for the reader.

One example for this comes in my opinion soon thereafter, where your write about the 'adaptation of voice to an organisational context by Freeman and Medoff (1984), p.4- Maybe in such instances, you could have a sentence or two to introduce slightly earlier than you would otherwise do why this definition in particular.

Similarly, also on p.4., you write about the integration of the OB vs. ER/HR conceptualisations of voice, maybe you could briefly add, which one is which, I think even a half-sentence could do the trick. While reading the following passage on the dimensions of

172

voice, I though similarly that a table or figure would be good to structure the complex information presented here. Of course, your later figure and table achieve that, but they are introduced later. I am not quite sure how to solve it, but would it maybe be possible to already have a very brief preview / mention of this then upcoming table/figure, and could those be mirroring the passage?)

I think you do a commendable job in your literature selection criteria, likewise, I found your presentation of the literature helpful and easy to follow. Regarding these later parts, I only had to minor observations, on

p. 9, you write that "expectedly, 28 of the studies were conducted in developed economies while only 3 in developing countries." I wondered whether it would make sense, very briefly around the introduction, already mention geographic aspects around voice (i.e. teasing that this aspect will be considered later)?

p.18, you write that "First, the majority of studies we reviewed are domiciled among part-timers in spite of the tremendous growth in triangular employment and gig work". Here I was not sure whether the formulation of 'in spite' is fitting due to the recent nature of gig work. I am sure that you do not mean it as such, but with this particular passage you might already go into the territory of future research, and could consider where you place this argument in your manuscript, or slightly reformulate the sentence.

These were my observations of a manuscript which I very much enjoyed, I wish the authors the best of luck in their efforts.

Referee: 2

Comments to the Author
This paper reviews the empirical literature published since 1984 on voice among workers in non-traditional employment relationships (NTERs). In their review of the literature the authors identify the forms of voice available to these workers and the issues they use voice mechanisms to address. They also assess the effectiveness of voice on influencing management decisions in NTERs and the determinants and outcomes of voice in these settings.

The author(s) of this paper contend that although the part of the workforce that is engaged in NTERs is growing, this workforce, and the workplaces they work in, are understudied. This article is intended to draw greater attention to this issue.

In the course of their review the authors point out particular "gaps" in the literature on voice among non-traditional workers and suggest a future research agenda to fill those gaps. In making the case for more research on this issue and pointing out the most significant deficiencies in the research to date, the authors perform a useful service for employment relations, organizational behavior, and human resource management scholars interested in better understanding both the increasingly important non-traditional workforce and workplace.

In my view, the authors do a very nice job of analyzing and organizing the literature on voice in NTERs. The paper is well-structured and well-written. While there are a few things the authors can do to strengthen the paper, I think it is in good enough shape that it could be published without too much further work. I recommend that the paper be accepted.

Strengths

As I suggest above, the authors make a convincing case for the rationale behind the study, i.e. that the issue of voice in NTERs is understudied. They also do a good job formulating and explaining their plan for the review and analysis of the relevant literature. In particular, they very clearly explain the criteria for the inclusion and exclusion of articles in the study.

Another strength of the paper are the research questions they employ to analyze the articles in their review. These questions are drawn from the literature and include the degree to which the articles address the forms of voice employed, the types of issues (the agenda) that are raised by workers when exercising voice, the resulting influence or impact of that voice on management decisions and actions, and the determinants and outcomes of voice for NTER workers. The findings are clearly explained and discussed.

The authors developed, and include in the paper, two tables and two figures. All four of these are well done and are very helpful in conveying key aspects of the study.

Issues for Consideration

There are several small improvements that I would suggest the authors consider.

--On p. 6 the authors indicate that their review of articles will include only empirical studies published since 1984. They do not state at that point why 1984 is the cutoff for articles to be reviewed. On p. 3 the authors write that "this paper addresses these questions…by evaluating previous empirical studies on employee voice in any form of NTER since the adaptation of voice to an organizational context by Freeman and Medoff (1984). This seems to be the reason for the 1984 cutoff, but I don't think it is clearly stated. My suggestion is that the authors give the specific reason for the cutoff on page 6 when they explicitly state that only articles published since 1984 will be included in the review.

--While the two tables and two figures are well done and provide significant insight into critical issues and areas of the article, the authors, for the most part, really do not explain these in the text of the article itself to any great degree. I would suggest they consider doing so, particularly in the case of Table 1 and 2.

--Consider clarifying the sentence on p. 8 beginning "The narrative synthesis method …."

--Lastly, while easily addressed, there are a number of typos throughout the paper. I would think they could have easily been caught before submission through the use of a simple spell check.

Editor and Reviewers Comments (Review 2 after revision):

21-Jun-2021

Dear Mr Oyetunde,

Thank you for revising and resubmitting your manuscript, "VOICE IN NON-TRADITIONAL EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIPS: A REVIEW AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS"

for consideration for publication in The International Journal of Human Resource Management. I have now received comments from two reviewers.

Both reviewers are very complimentary about your revised paper. They have recommended publication of the paper subject to minor revision. Thus, I am pleased to conditionally accept your manuscript for publication in IJHRM subject to the changes below. Congratulations!

I will not be returning your revised manuscript to the reviewers, but instead will be ensuring the remaining changes are made on their behalf. In terms of the remaining changes I'd like you to make, I believe that you will be able to address the remaining reviewer concerns with modest time and effort. Specifically, I would like you to address the following remaining issues:

1. address all the remaining concerns of the reviewers.
2. please take the opportunity to update the literature to 2021.

I will not be returning your revised manuscript to the reviewers, but instead will be ensuring the remaining changes are made on their behalf. In terms of the remaining changes I'd like you to make, I believe that you will be able to address the remaining reviewer concerns with modest time and effort. Please refer to the points raised by the reviewers to address these.

Again, I congratulate you on your interesting and well-executed research. I think your continued perseverance will result in a very fine end product. Can I ask you to provide me with a letter that outlines the changes that you have made in order to speed the process? Thank you. We appreciate that you sent your research to the IJHRM. Best of luck with the new revisions!

Best wishes,

Editor

Resubmission Instructions:
To submit your revised paper, please click on the link below:

*** PLEASE NOTE: This is a two-step process. After clicking on the link, you will be directed to a webpage to confirm. ***

https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/rijh?URL_MASK=f8c0981eb7314c15ad3032b177ec15fe

Your manuscript number has been appended to denote a revision. If you have started to revise your paper, you will then be able to find it in the 'Revised Manuscripts in Draft' queue in your Author Centre, or you can click on the link above to continue the resubmission process.

Please enter your responses to the comments made by the referee(s) in the space provided. You can use this space to document any changes you made to the original manuscript. Please be as specific as possible in your response to the referee(s).

Please note, your revised manuscript must include a Data Availability Statement, which should be located between the Conclusion and References sections. If this is not included then your revised manuscript will be returned to you for amendment. For more information about Data Availability Statements and template statements, please see: https://authorservices.taylorandfrancis.com/data-sharing-policies/data-availability-statements/

IMPORTANT: Your original files are available to you when you upload your revised manuscript. Please delete any redundant files before completing the submission.

Because we are trying to facilitate timely publication of manuscripts submitted to The International Journal of Human Resource Management, your revised manuscript should be uploaded within 4 months. If this is not possible please let me know.

Referees' Comments to Author:

Referee: 1

Comments to the Author
Dear Authors,

thank you for your revisions, which I found thoughtful and addressing my original concerns. I think your elaborations clarify a number of important points. Now I know that in the following I go a bit beyond the scope of my original review and comments, but while reading your manuscript anew I had some observations, that might be relevant for your later readers.

In your introduction, you mention the current pandemic situation, and I did not particularly like it having mentioned there. This is not so much a review point, and I readily admit that the point you make there might be true in reality, I just felt that your core argument does not really speak about the pandemic and the change to working arrangement per se, rather you make an attempt at relevance. I think however your topic is relevant as is, and would not tie it to a contextual strand which I think is not really part of your argument - put differently, I personally would tend to keeping your abstract lean, and focused on your core theoretical propositions you add to the voice literature when incorporating temporal employees to the discussion.

I think my next point likewise does not touch upon the content of your argument, with which I do not disagree with, but its delivery. It might now be an artefact of the revision process, but I find your introduction overaly safe. Put differently, you now introduce lots of definitional work early on (which I however feel is somewhat duplicated later in the manuscript anyways). Your second introductory paragraph is now more or less devoted to defining NTER, and I personally do not like it much, as it stalls your argument, and is a bit redundant to your literature section. Maybe you could consider streamlining your introduction further, essentially simply saying why common understanding of voice suffers if the challenges of temporary employees are not systematically mapped, resp. our current gaps in understanding in the literature are not pointed out.

Somewhat related, in the last paragraph of page 3, you summarize what the two different streams you observe have said, but to my mind you do not problematize enough here, you rather summarize (which the literature section already does well). My point here, maybe the introduction could be trimmed down further and really focus on why our current understanding might be incomplete (without your review).

The next point is again more one of personal taste, but I personally do not think that your first section on employee voice is really needed - I would guess the readers of the journal are somewhat familiar with voice theory (and you mention some key works anyways in the introduction already). In this context, I also found that table 1 did not transport too much meaning. Personally, I would be inclined to go straight into your NTER section, as you essentially cover voice then straight after in a more focused, and argument-centered manner, anyways.

As I wrote in my last review, I found the later literature work, together with the tables and figures helpful and informative, and I think your further additions, especially to the discussion, only help it further.

Overall, I again enjoyed reading your manuscript and commend your thoughtful revisions.

Referee: 2

Comments to the Author
IJHRM Reviewer's Comments

Voice in Non-Traditional Employment Relationships:
A Review and Future Research Directions

Employee voice is a critically important issue in understanding the employment relationship. And it is a largely universal concern for workers of all kinds in relation to their experience at work. As the author points out, there has been less research conducted on the issue of voice in non-traditional employment relationships (NTERs) than in traditional employment relationships (TERs). This paper, in the words of the authors, "addresses [this] gap and offers future research directions for theoretical advancement of the voice literature." They do so by conducting a review and content analysis of the limited number of empirical studies that examine employee voice in NTERs.

This review of the work to date on voice in NTERs is well-conceived and well-executed. Central to this examination was a decision about the dimensions of voice that would guide their review. This decision was critical to ensuring a strong foundation for the review and, in my view, the author's decision to use the dimensions identified by Kaufmann (2014)—form, agenda, and influence--was appropriate. The other major decisions about conducting the analysis, including the use of manual content analysis, the coding scheme, and the inclusion and exclusion criteria all seem to be sound.

The analysis of determinants and outcomes is solid and the presentation of the results is clear and straightforward.

The discussion about future research is also right on target. I concur with the author's suggestion that there is a great need for more research on the voice experiences of temporary agency, project-based, and gig workers and on individual level determinants. And I also am in agreement about the need for more longitudinal and qualitative studies of voice in NTERs.

The most intriguing recommendation in terms of future research on NTERs and voice was the author's recommendation that there is a pressing need for work on the voice experiences of the most marginal, precarious employees working in what we commonly refer

to as sweatshop conditions in underdeveloped countries. Most of the research that I am familiar with on these workers looks at things like the state of labor rights in those countries, the supply chain arrangements of the industry, and the efficacy of voluntary versus mandatory efforts to protect workers'. I am not familiar with any work that examines the interests of such employees in having a greater voice in the workplace or that provides insight into the kind of voice opportunities they actually have. Work on this issue in these kinds of workplaces would indeed make a significant contribution.

In sum, the author articulates a worthwhile goal for this paper and then largely accomplishes that goal. He/she correctly asserts that workplace voice in NTERs is a critical issue that is substantially understudied. The author identifies the work done to date on this issue and then analyzes that work in terms of key dimensions, outcomes, and determinants in a well-designed review of the work. Based on the study's findings, the author provides very useful insightful into the current state of research on this issue and a useful roadmap for scholars working on or planning to work this subject.

It is not often that I review a paper that is in such good shape that I do not have any substantive suggestions regarding the conception, execution, or findings of the study. But in this case, I do not. Nor do I have much in the way of editorial comments on the paper itself as it is very well organized and well written. My only suggestion in this regard is that the author might consider rewriting the paragraph in the middle of page 19 (below). Believe I understand the point being made, but I am sure the author could state that point a bit more clearly.

Mid para, p. 19:
Except in targeted protection cases, stricter employment legislation and protection for permanent workers enhance firms' use of non-traditional workers, leaving them unprotected and vulnerable (Pulignan & Signoretti, 2016).

Editor acceptance letter:

29-Jul-2021

Dear Mr Oyetunde:

Thank you so much for revising the paper to address the remaining concerns of the reviewers. I am now happy to accept your paper as it stands. Congratulations!

I believe that your perseverance, insights and dedication have resulted in a fine end product. Please consider us again with your next piece of exciting research.

Best wishes,

Editor
Instructions regarding next steps (e.g., copyrights):

You will receive proofs for checking, and instructions for transfer of copyright in due course.

The publisher also requests that proofs are checked and returned within 48 hours of receipt.

Appendix B: Paper 2's Publication Efforts

Submission 1

Journal: Human Resource Management Journal (UK) (HRMJ) (ABS 4*)

Decision: Reject after review

Editor and Reviewers Comments:

20-Jul-2021

Dear Mr. Oyetunde,

I write to you in regards to manuscript # 21-HRMJ-06319 entitled "VOICE FROM THE TRIANGULAR EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP LENS: CONCEPTUALISING A THEORETICAL MODEL" which you submitted to Human Resource Management Journal.

In view of the criticisms of the reviewer(s) found at the bottom of this letter, I am sorry to inform you that we will not be publishing your article in Human Resource Management Journal. In brief, should you wish to submit a revised version of your manuscript to another journal, I suggest you focus on a key concern raised by all three reviewers. All three reviewers remarked on the need for you to better define and develop the differences between traditional employees and those in non-standard employment relationships and then explain how these differences might affect existing theories of voice. All three reviewers note this aspect of your scholarship is underdeveloped as well as the conceptualization of key constructs of voice theories and the theoretical rationale for relationships proposed, which all ultimately affects your study's potential contribution to the literature on non-standard employment arrangements. As reviewer 3 makes clear, that although temporary agency workers and gig workers are in triangular employment relationships, this similarity is deceptive. There are likely more differences than similarities and these differences are relevant. Further although gig workers are in a non-standard employment arrangement, there still maybe many similarities to traditional employment relationships. In the future development of your work, it may be helpful to focus just on gig workers and draw on the literature on independent contractors or on the literature that contrasts independent contractors from temporary agency employees from traditional employees. While I realize that this is a disappointing decision, the reviewers offer a variety of constructive comments that I am sure will prove useful to you as you continue with this line of research.

Thank you for considering Human Resource Management Journal for the publication of your research. I hope the outcome of this specific submission will not discourage you from the submission of future manuscripts.

Sincerely,

Associate Editor, Human Resource Management Journal

Associate Editor Comments to Author:

Reviewer(s)' Comments to Author:

Reviewer: 1

Thank you for submitting your paper "*Voice from the Triangular Employment Relationship Lens:
Conceptualising a Theoretical Model*" to the Human Resource Management Journal. I thought
that your paper attempts to provide a new understanding of the conceptual relationship between antecedents to voice in the context of temporary and gig work. The authors' focus on voice in non-standard work arrangement counters the assumptions that silence rather than voice is predominant for these workers. I think the paper has the potential to add to our understanding of voice in non-standard work arrangements. However, at this point, I feel you need to address multiple concerns in your paper. I'll outline the key areas next. Good luck on your next steps with your manuscript.

1. I applaud your desire to examine workers in a growing percentage of the workforce. I agree that scholarly work should examine gig workers, especially those who work in platform mediated roles. However, I was unclear why you combined temporary workers and gig workers in your study. You can argue that both fall within the triangular employment relationship domain. However, there are gig workers who function more like self-employed independent contractors, as well. As such, in next steps you need to clearly define what you mean by gig work. It seems that a sole focus on platform-mediated gig work is a better fit for a triangular employment form.

2. Similarly, much of the research that considers non-standard work is limited by the failure to examine these different forms individually. From this vantage, it appears that conceptualizing the antecedents of voice for either temporary workers or platformmediated gig work is warranted. Otherwise, your work fails to discern the distinct differences across the various types of nonstandard work. See Flinchbaugh et al. (2020) and Kalleberg (2000) for more details. Furthermore, throughout your writing you include supporting citations from multiple forms of non-standard work in your proposition development, to include gig work, independent contractors, freelancers, and temporary workers. The use of various forms of nonstandard work fails to show the nuances between the work forms.

3. I was concerned about the limited definitions you included in the review of the literature. This concern was most problematic in your failure to clearly define the existing characteristics of voice. You provide a table that outlines the different theories of voice. This is good. However, you fail to define the attributes of voice that are included in your propositions. For instance, what is the difference between direct and indirect voice, strong versus weak influence, shared versus nonshared voice agenda, etc.? Providing definitions and examples for all of these forms should be included in a table.

4. Similarly, it seems that you are trying to provide too many propositions without the appropriate support from the extant literature. In some cases, you fail to make a connection to what you are proposing. For example, in your Proposition 3c development (pages 17-18), you provide describe the different forms of voice control in organizations. However, there you provide no support for why organizational control would lead to workers' direct voice

180

form and a shared agenda as you propose. Provide an improved logical sequence of extant literature and your paper's contribution for an improved conceptualization.

5. I wonder if voice skill (Proposition 4b) is best characterized as a function of different employment relationships. It seems that this might be an individual capability rather than a function of being a gig or temp worker. Provide more support for this proposition.

6. I was surprised by the limited content of less than two pages in your conclusion section. This is where you should tell the reader the implications of your propositions. This is where you can improve the "so what?" behind your paper's purpose.

7. You include a footnote that says you conducted a review of the literature to discern the antecedents of employee voice in nontraditional work from 1984 – 2020. Yet, you fail to provide any table describing the outcome of your review. Tell us how your review of the literature informed the use of the antecedents in your conceptualization.

Overall, I feel that you are looking at an important issue in a growing type of work form. I encourage you to narrow the scope of your paper in your next steps to include one form of nonstandard work and limit to number of antecedents in your model. Good luck in your next steps.

References:
Kalleberg, A. L. (2000). Nonstandard employment relations: Part-time, temporary and contract work. *Annual review of sociology*, *26*(1), 341-365.
Carol Flinchbaugh, Mortaza Zare, Clint Chadwick, Pingshu Li, Spenser Essman, The influence of independent contractors on organizational effectiveness: A review, Human Resource Management Review, Volume 30, Issue 2, 2020, 100681, ISSN 1053-4822, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2019.01.002.

Reviewer: 2

Comments to the Author
The paper engages with a very interesting area: gig/agency workers and their voice.

However I do not think in its current form the paper is ready for publication. For a start I am not convinced we need a 'model' to understand this area; particularly one based on a very generalised and descriptive account of the literature and which seems to do an injustice to the complexity and variety of this type of work. I don't think a compelling case is made for the value of the 'model' - I think this is also true in the conclusion. Some of the propositions are very unwieldy and would probably require greater precision and specification.

Ultimately I found the paper to be very descriptive and something of a pedestrian read. I'm not sure this a fruitful avenue of enquiry. Further studies of gig-agency worker voice dynamics are helpful but these need to be more context driven pieces of research rather than the pseudo precision of generic modelling frameworks.

In this regard, the author(s) might wish to take a look at Marchington et al. (2004) Fragmenting Work. I think some of the ideas in this book will be of interest to the authors.

Reviewer: 3

Comments to the Author
Dear authors,

Thank you very much for the possibility to read your manuscript entitled "Voice from the Triangular Employment Relationship Lens: Conceptualising a Theoretical Model". In my view, your work touches upon an important, yet ill-studied phenomenon: the type of voice mechanisms deployed in temp agency and gig/platform work as well as the influence that temp/gig workers have by means of voice activities. That said, I have several concerns that relate to the extent to which your work is truly temp- or gig-specific. Please allow me to explain by sharing my suggestions on how you could further your work.

First, it is not clear which contribution you intend to make with your work and/or which research problem you intend to address. In the introduction you do write that existing studies did not develop a "model depicting factors determining their [i.e. temp agency and gig workers] voice". It is not clear however why such a model would be needed. You argue that temp/gig work is on the rise, but this does itself not warrant a novel conceptual lens. To motivate the need for a triangular work-specific model of worker voice, I would recommend you to more clearly outline what is problematic about existing models of voice (by traditional employees) and why these models do not translate well to a triangular work context.

Second, you promise that you will "identify existing voice models. We critically analyse the key concepts and ideas in these models , identify the peculiar attributes of triangular workers, and incorporate them to build a model of the antecedents." In my view, this is precisely want needs to be done to motivate the need for a triangular work-specific model of worker voice. However, I am afraid your paper undersells on this issue. In fact, most of the propositions that you present also hold for 'traditional' workers who are in dyadic employee-employer relationships. For instance, one could also make the argument that (i) the higher the degree of availability at work, the more likely it will be for 'traditional' (or 'regular') workers' voice form to be direct (Proposition 2a), that (ii) the longer the duration of the contract of traditional' workers', the more likely it will be for their voice form to be direct (Proposition 2b), (iii) the more traditional' workers' are physically present at work, the more likely it will be for their voice form to be direct, and their voice influence to be strong (Proposition 2d) or (iv) that the more employers control traditional' workers' voice direction, the more likely it will be for workers' voice form to be direct (Proposition 3c). Moreover, some of your claims about triangular workers are not correct. That is, gig workers are reported to have limited control and autonomy and platform companies exercise high degrees of control over gig workers (p. 12). Research however shows that autonomy-control issues in gig work contexts are much more complicated, with platform firms needing to strike a balance between autonomy and control to avoid legal issues, address issues of institutional complexity and ultimately, to survive (see e.g. Frenken et al., 2020; Meijerink et al., 2020; Wood et al., 2019). Also, as independent contractors, platform workers are not allowed – under competition law – to engage in collective voice (e.g. collective bargaining) (Daskalova, 2018). Finally, platform workers may not be motivated to engage in collective voice as they compete with one another in online marketplaces – thereby creating collective action problems. In my view, it is precisely these issues (i.e. institutional complexity, cartel formation and collective action problems) which you do not discuss, but that make triangular/gig work different from traditional contexts. Moreover, there is heterogeneity among platform firms on how they balance e.g. autonomy-control issues, are clear on whether their workers are employees, and choice selected legal context to operate in. Hence my suggestion to outline how triangular working relationships are different from traditional working relationships and to develop propositions on the heterogeneity of voice mechanisms across platforms/temp agencies (rather than developing propositions that could also hold for regular employees).

Third, some of the propositions do not logically follow from the text. That is, for most of the argumentation behind your propositions, you compare triangular workers to traditional workers to make a case for propositions on triangular workers. In my view, this is also the reason why your current set of propositions also holds for regular workers (i.e. regular workers score differently on the proposed independent variables than triangular workers do). On the other hand, some of the comparisons between traditional and triangular workers do not always hold. For instance, similar to triangular workers, regular workers may also be seen as more or less employees by an employer (e.g. core versus peripheral employees) (Proposition 3a), work virtually (Proposition 2d) or have more/less autonomy control over their work (Propositoin 2c). As such, I would recommend not to compare traditional and triangular workers, but instead develop propositions on differences among triangular workers. As said before, there is heterogeneity in triangular work itself, that may serve as a start for your propositions.

Fourth, the three dimensions of your outcome variable (i.e. employee voice) are ill-defined. You do refer to these three types on page 6-7, by giving examples of voice form, agenda and influence. It is not clearly defined however what is meant by direct versus indirect forms of voice, or integrative or distribute agendas. Moreover, are there agendas other than those related to integration and distribution?

Fifth, it is not always clear how the independent variables in your conceptual model relate to each other, for two reasons. First, some variables seem to be similar in kind, such as availability at work (Proposition 2a) and presence at work (Proposition 2d). Moreover, Proposition 2d and 2e (on presence at work) are similar while they include the same independent and dependent variables and therefore can better be integrated. That said, I would recommend you to select independent variables, and include propositions, that are discriminatory to one another. Second, your propositions center on how the independent variables individually influence employee voice. In reality however it is more likely that these independent variables interrelate in explaining employee voice. For instance, the absence at work could be compensated for when platform workers have autonomy and control over their work. Moreover, in order for autonomy to materialize in voice, workers perhaps need to perceive inequity (motivating them to voice their concerns) and/or have high-levels voice skills. To that end, I would recommend you to propose configurations of variables to capture the heterogeneity of triangular work and how voice plays out under different scenarios and/or in different types of triangular work.

Finally, after reading your manuscript, I felt a disconnect between your research question (in the introduction) + aim of the study, and the remainder of the paper. That is, your research question does not necessarily require a non-empirical/conceptual study and suggests you set out to conduct an empirical study on the factors that determine worker voice. Moreover, on page 5 you write that your study aims to develop a model of voice for triangular workers, while on page 7 you imply to have conducted a systematic literature review of studies examining voice in non-traditional employment relationships. The latter is striking provided that you do not detail the methodology that was used to conduct the literature review and do not present the results a structured literature review. Instead, you formulate propositions which seems to echo with the aim to develop a conceptual model. That said, I would recommend you to be more clear and consistent on the aims of your paper.

References
Daskalova, V. (2018). Regulating the new self-employed in the Uber economy: what role for EU competition law?. German law journal, 19(3), 461-508.

Frenken, K., Vaskelainen, T., Fünfschilling, L., & Piscicelli, L. (2020). An institutional logics perspective on the gig economy. In Theorizing the Sharing Economy: Variety and Trajectories of New Forms of Organizing. Emerald Publishing Limited.

Meijerink, J., Keegan, A., & Bondarouk, T. (2020). Having their cake and eating it too? Online labor platforms and human resource management as a case of institutional complexity. The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 1-37.

Wood, A. J., Graham, M., Lehdonvirta, V., & Hjorth, I. (2019). Good gig, bad gig: Autonomy and algorithmic control in the global gig economy. Work, Employment and Society, 33(1), 56-75.

Submission 2

Journal: Human Relations (ABS 4)

Decision: Reject after review

Editor and Reviewers Comments:

18-Oct-2021

Dear Mr Oyetunde,

Thank you for submitting your paper to Human Relations. I read it with interested, but I am now writing to you to tell you that I have decided not to send it to review and I am rejecting it at this stage. I appreciate that this may be disappointing news, so please allow me to explain my decision.

My decision relates primarily to the extent of the work that would need to be undertaken to shape this into a contribution ready for publication in this journal. In my judgment, that would require fundamental thinking about the purpose of the paper that would be sufficiently extensive that it would actually change this into a different paper. In that situation, it is my strong view that an editor should reject the paper with sufficient feedback to allow the authors to reflect on what they want to do next.

I am confident that you will find a home for this paper because it is an interesting and important topic and there are many journals interested in this kind of conceptualisation (WES and HRMJ both come to mind). However, there are a number of important areas where the paper as it is currently written is either too vague or sufficiently imprecise as to warrant a significant further revision before submitting there.

Let's start with the core purpose of the article which is to introduce the framework presented as Figure 1. That is an admirable objective and there are a lot of concepts to introduce and explain in order to achieve that, so I can see how the structure of the paper has come about.

However, the result is very 'bitty'. Each concept and idea is introduced only briefly and, as a direct result, there is little space for critical reflection.

To achieve this objective effectively we need to know much more about why existing models are insufficient. And to do that, we need to know how you came to pick these voice models and not others. In other words, this paper needs a much stronger case for why we need a new conceptualisation of voice for workers in triangular work relationships, rather than, say, an extension of an existing one. Here the law of parsimony should be in your mind. Why do we need a more complex model?

Moving on, when presenting a new conceptualisation (or even an extension of an existing one) it is important that the reader has a sense of what has informed that. If it is empirical, then we need to know that. Even if that is briefly through cross-referencing to existing papers where empirical datasets have been explained. If it is through theorisation from first principles, then we also need to know that and that needs to be defended robustly.

My third main point about the focus of the model is that the focus of the national jurisdiction comes in and out of focus. Stepping back from the paper as a whole, it seems you are proposing this as internationally relevant in all jurisdictions? If so, then that needs to be argued very early on. What happens early on is that you use cases from the UK context, then broaden out to some very broad-brush EU and US data. And then you mention a few other countries along the way. If you are really seeking to present a conceptual model that covers the whole world, then that needs to be robustly explained. In my view, this would be a near impossible task because of the variety of voice regimes that have statutory underpinning in different jurisdictions. I would argue that you can't possibly take account of them all in 8000 words! If, by contrast, you are really only focusing on the UK (or maybe the UK in comparison to a small number of other countries) then we need much more detail about what we already know about voice regimes in the UK.

Relatedly: Proposition 1b requires a clear statement that it is the national legal context that you are looking at here.

So moving on to smaller, but also important issues that concern me.

I like the fact that you conceptualise worked silence as a alterative to worker voice, but I do query that you assert that as the default position. You present no theoretical reasoning to defend that position and it seems unlikely. Further, given the work on silence, I would expect to see reference to some of that.

Early on in the paper, you talk about the inevitable continuity of the trend towards increased triangular work relationships. But the data you provide to show there has been a trend is partial at best. And I remain unconvinced that there is an inevitable continuity to this. As cases around the world have ruled consistently in favour of workers on many points of labour regulation, it seems likely that the benefit of these work relationships to employers will find a limit somewhere. So this needs to be assessed and argued.

You talk about 'traditional' work and workers but with no definition. Implicitly you understand those employed in a triangular relationship as not being 'traditional workers' but you offer no sound basis for this assertion. Conceptually, what is it that makes them similar and different?

You introduce your research question very clearly on p5 and this is helpful. You include three key concepts which have not at that stage been introduced: form, agenda and influence. And it is another page or so before these are properly discussed. Even when we

do get to this discussion, it is very brief and given the centrality of these concepts to your framework, this seems light.

A consistent issue relates to your use of the word 'worker'. Given the legal focus of at least some of this discussion, it would be helpful to explain to the reader that you are using the word in a broader sense that its strict UK legal definition. This becomes particularly relevant in your discussion of proposition 4c.

Finally, when we look at Figure 1, I am not convinced that the factors highlighted in the propositions all work on the mechanism between motive and expression of voice as your diagram shows. Some also work on the motive. And some work on the form of voice. So there is scope to think deeply about how the diagram captures your intention as expressed in the text.

So while I have raised a great number of points here that concern me with the paper as it is currently presented, I do think that there is a contribution to be made here and if you narrow your focus, and explicitly explain why we need a new model, you may well work towards something that will be warmly received in another journal.

I know from personal experience what goes into conducting research and preparing manuscripts like yours, and am sorry that the outcome could not have been more positive. I want to emphasize that this decision does not imply a lack of interest in your research.

Thank you for submitting to Human Relations, and I hope that you will continue to consider the journal as a potential outlet for your work in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Associate Editor, Human Relations

Submission 3

Journal: Work, Employment and Society (WES) (ABS 4)

Decision: Reject after review

Editor and Reviewers Comments:

19-Feb-2022

Dear Mr. Kabiru Oyetunde

Re: WES-Nov-2021-ARTC-524 - WORKERS' VOICE FROM THE TRIANGULAR EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP LENS: TOWARDS A CONCEPTUAL MODEL

I have now collected together the reports of the reviewers and the consensus is that this work is not suitable for publication in this journal. I appreciate that this may be disappointing news. You will see from the comments that the reviewers' expressed some differing views.

In sum, the contributions that you state are not sufficiently new or substantial (see R2). Rather, your contributions echo those presented by Kabiru Oyetunde, Rea Prouska & Aidan McKearney (2022) Voice in non-traditional employment relationships: a review and future research directions, The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 33:1, 142-167, DOI: 10.1080/09585192.2021.1964093. While terms used in your model vary somewhat in name and number, your model is largely consistent with that provided by Oyetunde et al. (2022), albeit less comprehensive and less convincing. As noted by R2, adding a series of propositions to the model is not enough and it does not sufficiently set your manuscript apart from this other work. Subsequently, the contributions made in your manuscript are not sufficiently new, novel or substantial.

In addition, your use of key terms (including non-traditional workers versus triangular workers and agency versus platform workers) requires greater specification and precision (see R2 and R3) and the literature review needs to involve greater depth/detail and a more comprehensive analysis of the relevant literature, as pointed out by R2 and R3. A more focused analysis of the literature is needed to allow you to communicate explicitly: what you contribute to this body of theory and how, specifically; what is missing/unclear in that literature and how your study fills gaps/clarifies concepts; what are the wider implications ? In doing so, greater inclusion of relevant WES papers on voice is required to situate your work in the current debates related to sociology of work and employment as opposed to human resource management, for example.

Finally, your discussion needs to reinforce what your work adds to existing theory (including how it extends Oyetunde et al. (2022)), what is new here and why does it matter ? What are the implications of your study ? What policy recommendations would you suggest ? Articles published in WES need to make a significant theoretical contribution.

You will see that the reviewers have engaged thoroughly and constructively with your article and I hope you find their comments helpful in reframing the article to target a different journal. I am sorry not to be the conveyor of better news. I very much hope that you find a way to rework your data and redevelop your paper. I wish you all the best with this process and with your future research and publications.

Despite the outcome, I would like to assure you that we truly appreciate your choosing to send your manuscript to WES. I hope that you will consider WES as you develop your future research.

Best wishes

Editor, Work, Employment and Society

Reviewer(s)' Comments to Author:
Referee: 1

Comments to the Author
This is a well written review and theoretical development of worker voice from triangular employment lens. I believe the author(s) developing analysis on the different platforms and

temporary work agencies. The examination and review of four issues of non-traditional worker voice is considered and reviewed well outlining legal protection and external regulation. The second lens, contextual matters examine a range of propositions Providing examples of transport and food delivery and the opportunities for worker voice and virtual work and reducing voice. Links with duration of the process are also included in autonomy and control. The third issue of institutional complexity relates to the individual voice and stakeholders influences of platform operators to marginalise voice is explained clearly. This section also introduces worker silence and worker concern for future work in the platform as an important discussion.

Finally, the individual forces of equity and fairness and the triangular worker and stigmatisation of freelancer and their aspiration to become a `standard employee` worker and their aspiration to become a standard worker and engage in worker voice is well framed.

This will be a far stronger paper if the recent Draft Regulation by the European Commission be included for greater legal certainly relating to non-traditional workers voice (legal protection, extending legal rights and protections for non-standard workers in the triangular relationship lens). See Publishing long-awaited draft legislation on Thursday, the European Commission said the burden of proof on employment status would shift to companies, rather than the individuals that work for them. Until now, gig economy workers have had to go to court to prove they are employees, or risk being denied basic rights This review will require a slight update on section 1, (pages 6-11) for the non-traditional worker, with the consumer convenience should not be at the expense of workers. The review of costs and control can also be reviewed as with extending rights (including voice) for platform workers could extend voice for triangular workers in discussion in Table 1 and also moderating outputs in Figure 1.

I realise how frustrating this will be for authors in already providing an excellent theoretical framework of triangular employment work and the extensive work already provided but these considerations will make the paper stronger in the extending of triangular employment.

Its literature is already well researched, and debates are clear.

It also provides an interesting update on the voice debate to the conclusion on extending the forces of future voice in empirical testing and review of triangular effect and extension of and regulation theory of voice.

Referee: 2

Comments to the Author
I am grateful for the opportunity to review this manuscript. This conceptual paper focuses on employee voice in a triangular relationship of contingent (non-traditional) workers, agency and platforms, and arrives at several theoretical propositions concerning the determinants of worker voice. The paper draws on a large body of research on employee voice, arguing that 'triangular workers' have been hitherto neglected in conceptual models of voice.

This is an ambitious paper, and there is a lot to like about it. It is generally well-written; it draws extensively on previous well-cited theoretical studies on employee voice and silence. However, the manuscript has not escaped several fundamental limitations that, in my view, have to be addressed before this paper can be considered for publication in a journal like WES.

The main cause of concern is the lack of nuance and precision about the key concepts and terms introduced in the paper, alongside the lack of engagement with previous relevant studies on employee voice and representation of agency workers. From the onset, it is not clear what the authors mean by triangular workers that would deviate substantially from existing terms used in the studies of atypical, contingent workers (see MacKenzie, R., 2010. Why do contingent workers join a trade union? Evidence from the Irish telecommunications sector. European Journal of Industrial Relations, 16(2), pp.153-168; MacKenzie, R., Forde, C., Robinson, A., Cook, H., Eriksson, B., Larsson,

P. and Bergman, A., 2010. Contingent work in the UK and Sweden: evidence from the construction industry. Industrial Relations Journal, 41(6), pp.603-621). The reader might arrive at an educated guess that this sort of triangular employment relationship is mediated through online platforms or apps, but the specific role of these platforms and how they relate to employment agencies is never articulated. That makes it a difficult read even for an expert in non-standard employment. An attempt is made on page 2 of the introduction to summarise the distinctive features of the triangular employment relationship in question by referring to 'co-employment labour platform workers' (though again without properly defining the term) and drawing parallels with agency labour. However, this line of reasoning falls apart in subsequent sections where temporary agency work and platform labour are explored separately from one another. Thus, while in some areas the manuscript conflates agency and platform labour, eslewhere it treats them differently. This lack of nuance and precision makes it difficult to assess the original contribution of the study.

The conceptual issues highlighted above stem from an attempt to triangulate different streams of literature: on employee voice in a general sense, on voice and representation of contingent workers (agency labour to be more precise) and on platform labour. There is too much going on in this paper. And it does not explicitly engage with the previous theoretical or empirical studies. Relevant papers are mentioned in passing, for example, Howcroft and Bergvall-Kåreborn's seminal piece on platform crowd-work and Dundon et al.'s conceptual paper on voice, but it is not clear how the current study builds on these and other articles. Consequently, the propositions developed in the main body of the manuscript represent a trivial extension or repetition of the theoretical insights from existing studies on voice and worker representation. The authors admit in the introduction that while previous studies 'have examined voice among temporary agency and online co-employment platform workers, none developed a model depicting factors determining their voice'. So, the present study does not develop a conceptual model as such, as a coherent theoretical model explaining complex relationships between platforms, agencies and workers. Rather, it puts forth a series of propositions stemming directly from the established models and concepts of contingent employment and platform work. By authors' own admission, the present manuscript is an extension of their previous conceptual work that just articulates 'matching determinants with non-traditional work variants'.

Relatedly, the paper draws on a definition of voice that lack nuance and the level of detail relevant for such specific employment arrangements as platform work and agency labour. The notion of direct and indirect voice ought to be fully unpacked with references to union and non-union representation, collective voice and so forth, for, otherwise, the propositions made in the paper will not be empirically testable.

Overall then, though I applaud the authors for the amount of effort put into developing this manuscript, in my opinion, it falls below the standards required for publication in WES. Some individual points raised in the paper resonate with me as a researcher studying employee voice, for example, the claim that 'voice theory needs to develop to acknowledge variations in voice experiences among different types of workers'. That said, the paper needs to address some key structural limitations and engage more deeply with existing studies on platform economy, agency labour and voice to provide a substantial contribution to existing knowledge. I wish the authors all the best in their endeavours.

Referee: 3

Comments to the Author
Thank you for the opportunity to review the article 'Workers' voice from the triangular employment relationship lens: towards a conceptual model'. I enjoyed reading this article. The article presents a conceptual model of the determinants of triangular workers' voice. The article has

potential to make an important contribution. Below I make some suggestions to improve the article further.

One of the main issues for me is that it is unclear whether the authors intend to make a contribution to the literature on 'triangular' workers or the literature on employee voice. I expect it to be the latter, but this could be made much clearer in the article. And if this is the case, then I suggest that you start by defining employee voice and telling the reader why this is significant and why the reader should care about it. Your definition of voice (as it concerns triangular workers) comes very late, only on page 4. This means that the first time we encounter the concept, on page 3, we are 'expected' to be already familiar with it, which may not be the case. This means re-structuring the materials to increase clarity, which will also help emphasise the significance of the topic/article and area of contribution.

Another issue, related to the importance of emphasising employee voice, is that your explanation of the three dimensions of voice is under-developed. Frankly, I found it a bit confusing. I suggest using a diagram in order to illustrate the sentence 'These dimensions stretch along a line scale from far left of direct/shared/communication to far right of indirect/contested/influence of voice and a mix at different degrees at any point on the scale'. Again, unless one is already familiar with the concept and literature on employee voice, this is not entirely clear or accessible. Clarifying this area is important and necessary if readers are to understand and appreciate the propositions you put forward.

Finally, these issues are also connected to a suggestion on how to improve the conclusion. There is a need to synthesise the contribution and significance in this section.

I hope these comments will help the authors to take the paper forward.

Submission 4

Journal: British Journal of Management (BJM) (ABS 4)

Decision: Under Review

Appendix C: Paper 3's Publication Efforts

Submission 1

Journal: Human Resource Management Journal (UK) (HRMJ) (ABS 4*)

Decision: Under Review

Appendix D: Ethics Approval, Consent, Information Sheet, and Interview Protocols.

London South Bank University

Dear Kabiru Ayinde

Application ID: ETH1920-0132

Project title: Doctoral Research Project

Lead researcher: Mr. Kabiru Ayinde Oyetunde

Thank you for submitting your proposal for ethical review.

I am writing to inform you that your application has been approved.

Your project has received ethical approval from the date of this notification until 3rd April 2024.

Yours

Sara Hajikazemi

Ethics ETH1920-0132: Mr Kabiru Ayinde Oyetunde (Medium risk)

Exploring the voice experiences of triangular workers
Participant Information Sheet

September 2020

You are being invited to take part in a research study on **"Exploring the voice experiences of triangular workers"**. Before you decide whether to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

Why is this study taking place?
Employee voice has been highly reported to be beneficial to both workers and their organisations alike. Despite this, research has so far neglected to fully capture how voice is expressed in the non-traditional employment context. The study aims to explore workers' perceptions of voice in non-traditional employment relationships by interviewing individuals who are in this form of work in temporary agency work and the platform economy. The study will focus on exploring voice mechanisms and practices, determinants and outcomes of voice, effects of the employment contract on voice. The study aims to collect information from temporary agency workers and those working in the platform economy in Nigeria. It is projected that the data collection phase will last six months and will be completed by May 2021.

Why have I been asked to participate?
You have been invited to participate in this study because you work on a temporary basis for a user client and/or work in the platform economy.

Do I have to take part in this study?
You are free to partake or not in this study. If you opt in, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. You are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. To withdraw from the study, please contact Kabiru Oyetunde at oyetundk@lsbu.ac.uk by Monday 5th July 2021 when the data analysis will commence.

What will happen if I take part in the study?
Data will be collected through interviews. Each interview will last for approx. 1 hour and will be tape-recorded (with permission) to enable data analysis. To opt in for the study please contact Kabiru Oyetunde at oyetundk@lsbu.ac.uk.

Possible disadvantages/risks to participation
There are no disadvantages/risks or cost to you to participate. The interviews will take place at via telephone.

Possible benefits to participation
The preliminary findings of the research can be communicated to you for your own benefit should you wish to receive them. If you do wish to receive them, please contact Kabiru Oyetunde at oyetundk@lsbu.ac.uk.

Outline data collection and confidentiality
All the information collected about you and other participants will be kept strictly confidential (subject to legal limitations).

Data generated by the study will be retained in accordance with the University's Code of Practice. All data generated during the research will be kept securely in paper or electronic form for a period of 10 years after the completion of a research project.

Your privacy and anonymity will be ensured in the collection, storage, and publication of research material.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The results of this study will form the basis of an academic paper which the research team will pursue for publication. If you wish to receive a copy of the paper when this is published, please contact Kabiru Oyetunde at oyetundk@lsbu.ac.uk.

Who is organising and funding the research?
The research is conducted by Kabiru Oyetunde, a PhD student at London South Bank University Business School, under the supervision of Dr Rea Prouska and Dr Aidan McKearney. The lead supervisor is Dr Rea Prouska.

Who has reviewed the study?
The research has been approved by London South Bank University Business School.

Who to contact for further information?
For further information about this study or for any questions you may have, please contact Kabiru Oyetunde at oyetundk@lsbu.ac.uk.

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet.

Kabiru Oyetunde, PhD student, Management, Marketing and People Division, London South Bank University Business School, 103 Borough Road, London, SE1 0AA, U.K., Email: oyetundk@lsbu.ac.uk

Informed Consent Form

Research Project Consent Form

Full title of Project: Exploring the voice experiences of triangular workers.

Name: Kabiru Oyetunde

Researcher Position: PhD Candidate

Contact details of Researcher: oyetundk@lsbu.ac.uk

Taking part (please tick the box that applies)	Yes	No
I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet/project brief and/or the student has explained the above study. I have had the opportunity to ask questions.	☐	☐
I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without providing a reason.	☐	☐
I agree to take part in the above study.	☐	☐

Use of my information (please tick the box that applies)	Yes	No
I understand my personal details such as phone number and address will not be revealed to people outside the project.	☐	☐
I understand that my data/words may be quoted in publications, reports, posters, web pages, and other research outputs.	☐	☐
I agree for the data I provide to be stored (after it has been anonymised) in a specialist data centre and I understand it may be used for future research.	☐	☐
I agree to the interview being audio recorded.	☐	☐

_____ _____ _____
Name of Participant   Date   Signature

_____ _____ _____
Name of Researcher   Date   Signature

Project contact details for further information:
Kabiru Oyetunde

Email address: oyetundk@lsbu.ac.uk

Interview Guide

Exploring the voice experiences of triangular workers

1. Participants' demographic data (capturing information on age, gender, education, contract type, hours of work (fixed or flexible), position in the organization/role or service rendered on the platform, length of service in current organisation/platform, prior work experience)

2. Firms' demography (industry/sector, size in number of workers, ownership)

3. Do you see yourself as an employee or independent contractor/freelancer?

4. Do you believe this job can provide you the opportunity to transit into permanent position with the client firm/platform?

Section A: External environment

5. Is it the same firm that employs you that you work for? Could you describe how you were recruited into this firm?

6. Do you see the platform/agency as your employer or the clients? If yes, why?

7. Are you aware of rights and privileges you have as a worker according to the labour legislations in your country? If yes, could you please provide examples.

8. Do you believe you have legal protection as a worker? If yes, could you please provide examples.

Section B: Employment factors

9. Can you describe the nature of your work in terms of your availability? Must you be physically or virtually present at work? If physically, how often do you need to be available? If virtual, how?

10. Can you tell us your work location(s) and the frequency with which you report there for work?

11. Who determines the terms, conditions, and the pace of your work? Do you think you have a reasonable level of control over your labour/work processes (e.g. wages, working conditions, pace, and timing of work, etc.)? If yes, at what level and could you please provide examples?

12. Do you see yourself as experiencing freedom and choice in decision making as a worker? If yes, could you please provide examples?

13. Are there unions/professional associations you can join? If yes, are you a member? If no, why are you not interested?

14. In your workplace, are there workers on a permanent contract? If yes, can you describe the relationship you have with such workers? Do you see yourself as having equal rights and privileges with workers on a permanent contract?

Section C: Agency factors

15. How do you think the agency/platform perceives you (as an employee or freelancer)? Why?

16. Do you have the freedom to work for other platforms or agencies? if yes, how many do you work for presently? If no, why?

17. How would you describe the level of competition in the industry with respect to sourcing for workers?

18. Are there opportunities to transit into permanent employment within your organisation? If yes, could you please provide examples? Also, do you see yourself transiting?

Section D: Voice mechanisms and practices

19. When you have ideas, suggestions, opinions, issues, problems, and complaints about work-related issues, who do you speak to?

20. Do you have formal voice structure (e.g. union, consultative committees etc.) in your workplace? If yes, which type(s)?

    a. If yes, are they established by management or are they initiatives of the workers?

    b. Do you think these formal voice mechanisms are effective and allow workers opportunity to partake in decision making? If yes, why? If no, why not?

21. Are there any informal means of voice (e.g. discussions and conversations, email communication, employee feedback, social functions and meetings, WhatsApp groups, social media forum, etc.) in your workplace? If yes, which type(s)?

    a. If yes, are they established by the management or they are initiatives of the workers?

    b. Do you think, these informal voice mechanisms are effective and allow workers opportunity to partake in decision making? If yes, why? If no, why not?

22. Are you allowed as a worker to partake in taking decisions related to your job/task or overall organisational issues? If yes, how? Does the management welcome divergent views?

23. Are there issues you can/cannot raise with your managers? Could you please give examples of those issues?

Section E: Voice target, skill and will

24. How confident are you in speaking up to higher authorities?

25. What training have you acquired in speaking up for what you believe in?

26. Are there times when you feel the need to speak up, but you did not? If yes, why?

27. Has there ever been a time when you could not find the right words to express yourself clearly to your manager? If yes, why?

28. Do you believe you can express your ideas and suggestions without making your manager feel embarrassed or insulted? If yes, could you give specific examples.

29. Do you feel you can express yourself on problems/issues with your boss without being confrontational or resulting into conflict? If yes, could you give specific example(s)?

30. Are there times you have expressed your problems, concerns and issues to your colleagues without speaking up to your manager? If yes, could you give specific examples?

31. Have you ever spoken up to your manager to address issues that is of no benefit to you personally but to your colleagues? If yes, could you give specific examples?

Section F: Factors inhibiting/promoting voice at work

32. Are you always at ease speaking up to your manager about ideas, opinions, suggestions issues, problems, and complaints you have with respect to your job and the organisation? If no, why?

33. Has anything ever stopped you from speaking up to your supervisor/manager about any idea, opinion, suggestions, issues, problems, and complaints you have with regards to your work or the organisation?

   a. If yes, how frequent has this happened?

b. Could you please provide me with a specific example of a time where you have felt uncomfortable about speaking to your manager on any issue? Why were you uncomfortable? Do you think there would have been consequence(s) if you were to speak up?

34. Do you think that your colleagues are also uncomfortable to speak up to the manager about these issues or suggestions? If yes, why and if no, why not? Do you believe they will have the same reason with you for why they cannot speak up to the manager?

35. Do you think your boss may feel insulted or embarrassed when you offer ideas, opinion and suggestions on work related issues? If yes, why?

36. In situations where you do not share the same opinion with your boss and you know speak up may likely cause conflict, would you speak or be quiet?

37. Do you think expressing yourself at work on issues, complaints and problems can hinder your growth or make you lose your job? If yes, how are you dealing with such?

Section G: Voice Outcomes

At this stage, we would like to know how speaking up or not at work affect you.

38. Do you see yourself as having impact on the decisions that impact overall operations of your organisation? If yes, could you please give specific examples?

39. With your organisation's attitude to allowing workers to speak up, do you feel involved, recognised, and valued?

40. Are you always willing to use your energy, knowledge, and creativity for the organisation? If yes/no, why?

41. Are you comfortable working with your organisation or would you like to leave? Why?

42. Can you describe your social relationships and how engaged and interested are you in your daily activities?