



The Negative Effects of Labour Casualization In Nigeria: A Conceptual Review

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ABSTRACT

In Nigeria the scourge of casualization of employment is gaining grounds in an unprecedented proportion, intensity and scale. The increase in the spread and gradual acceptance of this labour practice in the Nigerian labour market has become an issue of great concern to stakeholders. This paper conceptually evaluates the negative effects of labour casualization in Nigeria as it concern the past, present and future. It also looked the historical evolution of labour casualization and meaning of labour casualization. This paper highlights the plight of casual workers in under casualization and causes of labour casualization in Nigeria as it presents the effect of labour casualization on the employee, labour union, employer and the economy at large. Finally, some way forward was suggested that, every person should be entitled to assemble freely and associate with other persons, and in particular form or belong to any trade union or association for the protection of his interests. Again the contract workers should be allowed to exercise their rights to organize and collective bargaining and they should be given priority whenever there is an opening for permanent employment. Policy makers must make laws to protect these workers from exploitation by their employers.

Keywords: Negative, Effects, Labour, Casualization.

INTRODUCTION

The Origin of Labour Casualization

Engagement of large attendants of the work force on the basis of casualization has become worrisome in the industries in Nigeria. On daily basis these workers are recruited at the gate and fired at will. In spite of the fact that these workers continue to generate enormous profits for the various establishment to work, they remain classified as casuals and subjected to deplorable and inhumane working conditions.

To management strategists and operators, casualization of labour has become a means of minimizing costs and sustaining jobs in the face of the concept globalization. Obviously, casualization of labour may have created a breathing space for many organizations to survive in the face of adverse economic downturn that has led to the closure of many companies and businesses. Nonetheless, the saying is not the fact that these categories of workers are working under spate of uncertainties; but the fact is casualization reveals a brutal work growth process similar to slave labour.

The obvious implication is as long as the labour laws continue to retain the concept of voluntarism or remained tailored towards neoliberal ideals, so will 'use and discard' strategies of management continue with attendant implication on overall well-being of workers and by extension social development in Nigeria. There is avalanche of opinions by scholars and social analysts that the growing trend in massive engagement of casual workers in place of tenured workforce, by many firms has become a major strategy aimed at reducing overhead cost, as well as absolving self from its traditional responsibility to their workforce.

Although, there are no clear-cut explanations in terms of its origin, beside the fact that the term was first used by a government enquiry into the dock workers practices in Britain in the 1920s, where the use of casual labour was the norm for unskilled workers; however, studies in recent times have shown that this distinctive work relation has come to embrace both the semi-skilled and highly skilled labour force (Encyclopedia of Marxism, 2014). Despite the lack of information, social analysts have placed the occurrence of casualization on globalization.

Atilola (2014) in her work opined that, the increasing wave of globalization and trade liberalization across the world continues to have impacts on employment relationship. The need to cut cost and remain competitive in the world market has thrown up new forms of work, with attendant effects on workers right.

This global trend she contends has led to the emergence of varying and diverse species of non-standard work arrangements, including casualization of labour. In expressing the relationship between the labour practices and globalization, Dayo Lawuyi, President National Employers Consultative Association (NECA) opines that casualization has become a means of managing increasing labour cost in the face of hot competition (Duru, 2001a). In order words, globalization unarguably is a major factor propelling this labour regime. This disposition owes its strength to the perceivable political, economic and social changes that has resulted in a more open and liberal world economy; as different national economies are now intertwined in the global economy and consequently the escalating level of competition existing among businesses operating in what has become an international market place.

To remain productively viable and competitive, organizations are forced to adopt various cost reduction measures to minimize overhead cost of business operations. Obviously to this school of thought, experiences have shown that keeping a large retinue of permanently employed workforce during period of economic down-turn could be perilous in turbulent times as a slump in the economy could instigate massive closure of firms, colossal loses to owners and in jobs; a situation no country or organization can afford.

On the other hand, a quick look at this labour practice and prevailing working conditions associated with it may suggest, 'after all one is not coerced to accept the terms of engagement or the stipends agreed on'; but the issue is not about the stipends paid in form of wages, nor the fact that casualization reveals a brutal work growth similar to slave labour.

The deplorable conditions under which these workers are subjected to in their workplace leaves much to be desired. More worrisome is the fact that like an evil growth, casualization of workers is spreading its tentacles to all sectors of Nigerian economy. Workers have continued to pay the price; on daily basis they are recruited, their labour maximally utilized and fired at the discretion of the business operators with no identifiable and effective legal option available to redress it.

The traditional industrial relations system based on the concept of full-time employees working within an enterprise is increasingly being challenged by the use of non-standard work arrangements by employers of labour in Nigeria. This changing nature of work has taken a new dimension with the adoption of flexible work arrangements by many firms globally. The theme running through many of the new approaches to management in today's globalized economy is the development of a more flexible workforce which has become employers new frontier in the management of human resources. However, these changing patterns of work (e.g. casual, contract, temporary, part-time employments, subcontracting etc.) occasioned by Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP), have created concerns for workers and trade unions alike, especially in Nigeria.

Job security, social security, terminal benefits and minimum conditions of work are some of the issues of concern. The new forms of work arrangements have led to the prospects of a kind of race to the bottom in labour standards, particularly in the developing nations.

Labour standards are often compromised by firms involved in casualization. Casualization as a form of labour practice is the process by which employment shifts from a prevalence of

full time and permanent positions to higher levels of casual positions. It involves employment of an irregular or intermittent nature. Casualization is gradually becoming a cankerworm in the flesh of the workforce in both developed and developing economies and especially in Nigeria.

THE PLIGHT OF CASUAL WORKERS IN AN ORGANIZATION

In Nigeria the scourge of casualization of employment is gaining grounds in an unprecedented proportion, intensity and scale. The increase in the spread and gradual acceptance of this labour practice in the Nigerian labour market has become an issue of great concern to stakeholders. Employers of labour are increasingly filling positions in their organizations that are supposed to be permanent with casual employees. The trend has been largely attributed to the increasing desperation of employers to cut down organizational costs. Casualization of employment is seen as an appropriate strategy for cost reduction. Casualization may on the side-line seem to be justifiable since reduced cost means higher profit which is the ultimate goal of every organization.

However casualization ultimately presents lots of challenges for the employees and organizations alike. Also behind this issue of casualization in the country is the high level of unemployment and accompanying poverty. These two issues have bred a dangerous work environment and have given much aid to the prevalence of employment casualization, as many desperate job seekers in the labour force are willing to take any job no matter how dirty or degrading it is. Casual workers occupy a precarious position in the workplace and society, and are effectively a new set of slaves and underclass in the modern capitalist economy.

The rise of casual employment is a global trend in the larger global picture where decent work as a path to broad based development is rejected and more jobs are created through outsourcing or labour agencies. Casual work is often temporary, with uncertain wages, long hours, and no job security. Nigerian workers are under pressure from corporate practices that seek to undercut their hard-fought victories at the bargaining table and replace good jobs (i.e. jobs with benefits, training, and security) with various forms of insecure and lower paid contract, short-term, and temporary work. This practice is called “casualization” and is an alarming trend, considering that working was once a hope for raising working and living standards in the country.

In nearly every economic sector, good jobs are falling prey to corporate cost-cutting moves at the expense of the working families. Too many jobs are being outsourced, contracted out, or reclassified under a barrage of legal definitions designed to keep pay down, benefits low, and unions out. Like workers all over the world, Nigerian workers are trying to hold the line. They are countering casualization with activism and strength, pushing back against the degradation of their work and organizing casual workers into unions to fight for their rights. Casualization however goes beyond trade union rights because it is enabled by the widespread poverty, joblessness, and the devastated natural resources of the country. It is just one manifestation of the “degradation of work” from formal to informal employment and from permanent to temporary and precarious forms of work.

The growth in irregular work has changed the nature of employment from a labour relationship to a commercial relationship, with the worker taking all the risks. There is now a sharp worldwide rise in casual employment and a parallel rise in the gap between wages and benefits of permanent and casual workers.

The use of casualization as a business model, involves the strategic substitution of fulltime workers with contract and or agency labour. The number of casual workers in Nigeria is hard to pin down. In every full-time work there are four casual workers. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO) (using trade union figures), the estimated ratio was about three to one. Formal workers, called “regular” company employees, are hired directly by the company. They receive contracts that explain work conditions, wages, hours, and benefits.

They have the right to form unions and bargain collectively to extend their voice in the workplace. In contrast, casual workers are often employed by third-party contractors under various types of part-time and or short-term work arrangements.

They perform many of the same technical and professional duties as regulars, but with no job security. They face frequent layoffs and long periods of revolving short-term contracts under a never-ending probation. Though they work at the facilities of the companies and their work is a large part of this company's productivity, they are legally the direct hires of smaller outside firms and their contributions are too often ignored. Most casual workers are not part of any union structure. They earn lower wages than the regular workers, receive fewer benefits, and can be fired at will. The ILO (2004) reports that companies in Nigeria tend to fire contract workers just before the expiration of their three, six or twelve month contracts, when they are about to become permanent workers.

LABOUR CASUALIZATION

The International Labour Organization ILO (2007) defines casuals as workers who have an explicit or implicit contract of employment which is not expected to continue for more than a short period, whose duration is to be determined by national circumstances. This ambiguous definition has led to varying definitions of casual and contract workers and their rights in different legal implications. Casualization is referred to in Europe and the United States as Non Standard Work Arrangements (NSWAs). Casualization involves a process whereby more and more of the workforce are employed in casual jobs.

It is the corporate trend of hiring and keeping workers on temporary employment rather than permanent employment, even for years, as a cost reduction measure. Casualization is a term used in Nigeria to describe work arrangements that are characterized by bad work conditions like job insecurity, low wages, and lack of employment benefits that accrue to regular employees as well as the right to organize and collectively bargain. In addition, workers in this form of work arrangement can be dismissed at any time without notice and are not entitled to redundancy pay. It is an unprotected form of employment because it does not enjoy the statutory protection available to permanent employees.

Basso (2003) observes that casualization may be linked to under-employment and has two main meanings. It is often used loosely in international literature to refer to the spread of bad conditions of work such as employment insecurity, irregular work hours, intermittent employment, low wages and absence of standard employment benefits. The term casual is however, becoming a more usual and constant language in employment relations. The meanings may vary, but there exist a common extend beyond in the meanings as may be used in different occasions. Bodibe (2007) affirms that traditionally, casual labour referred to work conducted for defined periods and during peak business periods when individuals are called to supplement full time workers in times of high business activity, particularly in retail, but the situation is different now. O'Donnell (2004) emphasizes that legally, a casual employee is seen as a worker engaged for a period of less than six months and who is paid at the end of each day.

The expectation is that this category of worker includes those engaged, for example, in piece work, short-term construction work, etc. This however, is not really the practice, casual jobs today are commonly understood as jobs that attract an hourly rate pay but very few of the other rights and benefits, such as the right to notice, the right to severance pay and most forms of paid leave (annual leave, public holidays, sick leave, etc.). Similarly, Okafor (2007) notes that losses suffered by casual employees include: terrible low wages, absence of medical care allowances, no job security or promotion at work, no gratuity and other severance benefits, no leave or leave allowance, freedom of association which is often jeopardized, no death benefits or accident insurance at work, no negotiation or collective bargaining agreement.

This treatment extends to job allowances, canteen services, pension plans, health and life

insurance schemes, transportation and leave entitlements etc. Sadly, the trend now is that casual workers work for many years without promotion and necessary entitlements, and sometimes they do what normal employees should do, but are not compensated for such. The emerging pattern of employment in Nigeria indicates that casualization is fast becoming the dominant form of flexible work arrangement particularly in the banking, telecommunications, as well as the oil and gas industries. There are two forms of employment under casualization in Nigeria namely casual and contract labour. The terms and conditions of employment of this category of workers are not regulated by the Nigerian Labour Laws in the sense that their status is not defined and no provisions are made for the regulation of the terms and conditions of their employment, hence the mass exploitation of these workers by employers. Employers use casualization of the labour force as an effective means of reducing cost, maximizing profit and de-unionizing the work force. Fajana (2005) notes that it is difficult to give accurate statistics about the number of casual and contract workers in Nigeria because there are no official statistics showing the extent and trends of casualization. Animashaun (2007) asserts that some organizations have been reported to have up to 60-90 percent of their workers as casual or contract employees. The Nigerian Labour Act does not define casualization and does not provide a legal framework for the regulation of the terms and conditions of this work arrangement.

However, Section 7(1) of the Act provides that a worker should not be employed for more than three months without the regularization of such employment. After three months every worker includes the casual or contract workers employment must be regularized by the employer by being giving a written statement is indicating the terms and conditions of employment including the nature of the employment as well as if the contract is for a fixed term and the date when the contract expires.

The lack of the definition of the status of this category of workers as well as the legal framework regulating the terms and conditions of their employment and protection probably explains the motivating factor for the increasing use of casualization by employers and why this category of workers are exploited by employers who engage them.

The prevailing arrangement in most organizations is a situation where people are employed as casual and contract workers for five years or more and are paid less than their permanent counterparts in terms of wages and benefits even though they possess the same skills, work the same hours and perform the same tasks as permanent employees.

It is also important to note a common distinction between casuals that are employed directly by the company and those that are supplied through outsourcing and subcontracting arrangement. Naturally, support services such as cleaning, catering and warehouses and in some cases transport, distribution and security are subcontracted. Many casual and contract workers are higher institution graduates or skilled technicians etc. most of whom have spent several years in their respective organizations but are still referred to and treated as casual workers. This type of situation can also arise in some cases as the entire or part of the business activity is often outsourced or casualized.

In such circumstances, it is always typical of employers to begin to create an invisible line between core and non-core activities as an excuse; while the slavery continues. Subcontracted and casual workers earn fewer benefits compared to permanent workers. Casual workers more often work late, on Sundays and even on public holidays. Companies dismiss casuals and subcontracted workers more easily than permanent workers. They find it easier to hire and dismiss them during and at their own wish. This is a mechanism to evade the legal provisions relating to the hiring and dismissal of permanent employees.

Bodibe (2007) notes that some casual workers work for seven days and get an hour break. Casual employees do not have any other working conditions except for the pocket-sized remuneration they receive at the end of the day or month. Also labour laws concerning employment, minimum wages, conditions of employment and employment benefits hardly

apply to casual employees. Cheadle (2006) posits that “the various contractual and institutional forms of this kind of new employment mean that many workers do not fall within the common law conception of contract of employment and accordingly are not subject to protective reach of labour legislations. Some fall within the definition but their employment is so insecure, indirect or informal that they become invisible for recruitment into trade unions or for protection through law enforcement. A casual employee is hardly guaranteed legal minimum wage, any job security, and allowances for lunch, travel, and housing nor would they ordinarily receive benefits like paid vacation, paid sick leave, funeral assistance, or terminal benefits (e.g., gratuity). They are not positioned to receive pension benefits when their employment comes to an end.

THE CAUSES OF LABOUR CASUALIZATION IN NIGERIA

Increase in capital mobility and the deregulation of the labour market are some of the major causes of casualization. Trade liberalization made way for competing imports into the economy; this consequently resulted to lots of instability in the product market. In response to this challenge, employers became tempted to adopt cost-cutting measures, including downsizing, cutting back on employment and use of permanent employees; the offshoot being the current predominance of casual workers.

Okafor (2007) argues that continuous trade and capital liberalisation led to the growth of the informal sector, which engages workers under unfair labour practices like casual or contract employment and deplorable working conditions and environment. Okafor adds that the inability of labour to flow or migrate to other work organizations or parts of the world for improved standards of living as part of globalization worsened the labour situation. Added to this is the increasing absence of substantial infrastructure and enabling environment for businesses to successfully operate as organizations are forced to fend for such needed infrastructures as power and many others.

All these factors have an overbearing effect on the overhead costs of organisations thus leading to harsh cost reduction approaches in which the welfare status of the workforce unfortunately becomes a prey. Other causes of casualization include globalization, technological changes and abundance of labour supply. Globalization came with the deregulation of both the product markets and the labour market and promoted outsourcing, which today is highlighted as one of the major causes of casualization. Arising from globalization, outsourcing provided an easier way to cut costs and run off competition. Where an employer outsources labour or production components, less numbers of permanent employees are needed. The popular practice is to cut the number of permanent employees and replace them with casuals. The high level of unemployment and abundance or excess supply of labour also plays a major role in fuelling casualization. This situation results partly in the treatment meted on employees, as employers believe that they will always have people willing to work for them irrespective of the conditions.

Again there is the desperate attitude of potential or existing employees in getting or retaining jobs at any condition or cost. As noted earlier, non-standard work (NSW) arrangements is a global issue. Kalleberg (1999) observes that in advanced economies due to globalization and trade liberalization, many enterprises have resorted to the engagement of contract labour, part-time work, temporary work etc. in order to cut cost and remain competitive in the global market. In addition, employers argue that this growth is influenced by demographic changes in the composition of the labour force. Many women want to work part-time in order to combine family care and work; this is the flexibility that NSW gives them. Therefore, the changing economic conditions such as greater instability and uncertainty necessitated the use of nonstandard workers as a response to the market by entrepreneurs.

The difference between Nigeria and the advanced economies is that an increasing number of workers have found themselves outside the standard purview of collective relations. Whereas in

advanced economies, the situation has necessitated a re-adjustment of the collective labour relations rules and practices so that the workers concerned can enjoy the fundamental collective labour relations rights of collective bargaining and union representation, as well as protection against exploitation.

Also motivating casualization is the lack of clarity in government labour laws concerning legal employee categories. There is only one category of worker defined in the Labour Act and that is a worker. The Act defines a worker to mean: "Any person who has entered into or works under a contract with an employer, whether the contract is for manual labour or clerical work or is expressed or implied or oral or written, and whether it is a contract of service or a contract personally to execute any work or labour." The definition does not recognise workers in non-standard work arrangements. This can be adduced to the fact that the current labour Act was enacted in 1971 when non-standard work arrangements were unfamiliar to our industrial relations environment. Uvieghara (2001) argues that the definition is narrow because it is apparent that it is not every employee at common law that is a worker under the Act. Thus for Part 1 of the Act to apply to an employee under the common law he or she has to fall within the definition of the term worker.

The term employee is not defined by the Labour Act, therefore we rely on the common law definition which states that an employee is a worker who has a contract of service. This is distinguishable from an independent contractor or a self-employed person who are said to have a contract of service. This distinction is arrived at through the various test used under the common law such as control, mutuality of obligation, integration and multiple test. The consequences of this however, is that the casual worker does not fall within the purview of the protection and rights available to permanent employees covered by the Labour Act.

This form of work arrangement is therefore characterised by instability, lack of benefits and lack of right to organize and collective bargaining. In advanced economies, the current trends have necessitated the re-adjustment of collective labour relations rules and practices so that the workers concerned can enjoy the fundamental collective labour relations rights of collective bargaining and union representation, as well as protection against exploitation. Unfortunately, in Nigeria the legislation has since not been reviewed to address the current realities on ground.

Also there is the feeling that labour laws make excessive demands to pay terminal benefits to employees. Many employers thus decide that they simply cannot afford to hire workers on permanent bases because they will have to pay huge pension benefits. Casualization is also encouraged by the numerous loopholes that exist in labour laws, allowing employers to hire casual employees continuously to fill permanent positions. For instance, while labour laws may cover almost all workers, there are serious challenges of enforcement. Occasionally, government lacks the resources and in some cases the will to enforce labour laws to ensure that workers enjoy the protection granted in law and labour laws often conflict with government investment promotion activities.

THE ORIGIN OF LABOUR CASUALIZATION IN NIGERIA

According to Otobo (1988), from 1900 to 1939 there was a coalescence of ideas about the labour policies adopted by the colonial administration. The pacification of Northern Nigeria in 1906 created the first opportunities for the colonial government to formulate and implement its labour policies. The former situation where labour regime was uncoordinated based on 'voluntarism' (voluntarism implies given free rein to the natives to choose whether to work for the government or not), gave way for a more proactive and coordinated labour policy.

The new labour dispensation coincided with the coming of Lugard as the colonial governor of Nigeria. Lugard in order to ensure effective utilization of the impoverished labour force, introduced forced labour, which then was meant to induce interest of the natives in wage labour which became necessary in order to facilitate the laying of rail tracks across various parts

of Nigeria, following the opening of Jos and Enugu tin and Coal mines in 1912 and 1915 respectively which require a large impoverished work force.

The outbreak of World War 1 in 1914 changed the prevailing colonial labour policy at the time. Faced with enormous cost in prosecuting the war, the use of forced labour became demanding. This was predicated on the need to have a labour force that could be readily deployed at short notice and one which could be converted to a reserve army to serve the colonial army in the prosecution of the war. The end of the war and demobilization of the native army that followed created unanticipated labour problems.

First, there was need to resettle the demobilised colonial native military personnel, and check the growing labour that is becoming too expensive to maintain. Faced with the labour dilemma, the colonial government abandoned forced labour policy and introduced a new labour regime based on piece-meal payment system, which entails placing majority of the workers on part-time contract. Thus, some of the workers were engaged to perform sundry work and at the end of the day are paid stipends calculated either hourly or daily.

According to Ubeku (1984) the government resorted to the use of daily paid workers, particularly in the technical departments. Perhaps this explains why most of labour unrest at the time came from artisans and labourers in the construction, building and engineering departments. The most celebrated case was that of the staff of public works department who complained of having their salaries unceremoniously slashed overnight by the colonial Governor, Sir Mccallum, who argued that the existing wages was still too high (Ubeku: 1984).

The introduction of this piece-meal payment structure marked the beginning of casualization of labour practices in Nigeria. Today decades after independence, this treatment of workers has intensified in varying degrees as casualization has continued to change in various forms and nomenclature across all sectors of the economy.

However, knowing the exact origin of casualization of employment in Nigeria and couple with the earlier practice by the colonial masters, it can also be traced to the introduction of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) in 1986 (Kayii & Dagogo,2017), as well as the IMF and World Bank loans and their conditions. The combination of these factors led to a fall in the economy. Many factories shut down, some operating below minimum capacity and many organizations found it difficult to compete in the globalized economy which is tilted more in favour of the developed economies.

Globalization and trade liberalization added to competition from imported goods, have forced enterprises in Nigeria to reduce their staff strength and replace them with contract and casual workers in order to cut costs of production and remain competitive. The Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) was geared toward less government involvement in the economy and more private sector participation. The revitalization of the private sector was aimed at attracting the much needed Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into the country. While it attracted some FDI especially in the oil and gas industry it has led to the lowering of labour standards at the same time.

Aladekomo (2004) asserts that casualization as a form of predominant employment practice in Nigeria was occasioned by the collapse of the oil-boom and the introduction of the structural adjustment programme, a development which eventually led to the downsizing and mass retrenchment of skilled people particularly in the urban centres and resulted in numerous cases of unemployment.

Largely, in search of a means of survival, many of these retrenched workers whose status cuts across graduates and non-graduates engaged themselves in trivial jobs along the streets with very insignificant pay. This practice continued and gradually started to become popular, as employers saw it as a very cheap means of getting work done. Today, this form of employment relationship has become the in-thing. The bulk of workers in the telecommunications, oil and gas sectors and other sectors of the economy are casual employees. Increasing numbers of workers have found themselves outside the standard

purview of collective relations as against advanced countries where the situation has necessitated a readjustment of collective labour relations rules and practices so that the workers concerned can enjoy the fundamental collective labour relations rights of collective bargaining and union representation, as well as protection against exploitation.

THE EFFECTS OF LABOUR CASUALIZATION IN NIGERIA ECONOMY

The effects of casualization can be viewed from four perspectives as its effects the employee or casual worker, labour unions and on the employer and the economy. The employees are the direct victims of casualization but beyond that, the effects they suffer transcends through a flow-on process to the other actors in the country.

Employee: For the employees, casualization exerts downward pressure on the wages and working conditions of those employees who are viewed as permanent workers. This is partly because pay systems and employment conditions are always operated in a process that engenders comparison among the entire workforce. Again, casualization threatens the direct or indirect replacement of permanent workers by casual workers. In both cases, the negative consequences for individual employees readily extend out to negative effects on families and the society.

Again, since casual workers do not get benefits, employers do not contribute to their pension and gratuity funds. Hence in the event of an accident or death, workers and their dependents are left destitute because they cannot claim for injury on duty or work place acquired diseases. This is compounded by the fact that such workers cannot afford private insurance due to the low wages. Casualization has increased the ratio of unpaid to paid labour and the intensity of work. It has increased the number of unprotected workers; most of the workers who are casually employed can no longer be part or members of unions.

This has reduced job security, forced workers to negotiate their positions on their own and made them vulnerable to exploitation. In addition instability leads to economic insecurity for the workers and their families. Hence, in the event that a worker is a breadwinner and earns below the poverty line, and if there is no other person working or receiving some income to augment what comes in, then the entire family is placed at risk. Such precarious situation affects a worker experience at work, how he or she makes decisions about work and political issues and how such individual relates to the broader labour market.

Many employers especially within the private and public companies champion the continuous use of casual workers, thus introducing lots of casual workers in their workplaces, sometimes structuring almost the entire workforce to be casual workers believing that casualization has numerous benefits such as increased flexibility and lower overhead costs. Employers want the freedom to pay low wages; change the numbers of workers and how and when work is conducted.

The Casual workers Luwoye (2001) expounding on the effects of this out of the ordinary work arrangement on casual workers opines; the effect of casualization on workers can better be imagined than explained. The effect is many and varied, ranging from insecurity of employment due to fixed term contract, poor quality output, dissatisfaction and frustration due to Job security, stress related illness, wasting time at job hunting, cyclical misery of search for new contract. (PENGASSAN: 2002).

Cheeka (2000), describing the living conditions of casuals contends, "there is nothing inevitable about the rise of diseases in such places where these workers live", Tony, a security worker in one of the oil-servicing firms in Port Harcourt describes vividly the sense of depravity, misery and hopelessness of the living condition of casuals workers; that in most of these houses, a tall person cannot stand upright, the ceiling are so low. The walls are cracked with crevices with the plasters peeling off. When it rains the roof let in water. It is not uncommon to find a family often in one tiny cubicle called a room (Anumide, 2003).

Hyman (1984) gave a clearer picture of how these demeaning of labour is being carried out. In

what he called “coercive pacification” of the work force, changes were made in trade union law and increasingly rate of unemployed weakened the bargaining power of workers so that they had little choice but to cooperate with management to accept their demands if they can be replaced easily and have little chances of finding a new job if sacked (Haralambos & Horborn, 2004; Kayii & Dagogo, 2017).

Labour Unions: Okoisor (2007) contends that one of the most enduring trends of the 21st century is that the whole world has become interdependent, as changes in circumstances elsewhere have continued to dictate the pace of local events'. The labour force was not insulated from this development, many firms had majority of their workforce casualised to remain competitive in the global market. The consequences of these changes have left workers and the trade union impotent in the face of anti-labour practices.

Onyeonuru (2003), states, “this is a global trend targeted at the workers union; as the trade union now faces almost total elimination as a significant social institution”. The weakness of the trade union, stem from a gradual decline in union membership, union compactness, union fund and union influence as a result of casualization.

Employer: Casualization however brings in numerous consequences on the employer. One of it is job dissatisfaction which Udeozor (2007) identifies as the bane of poor employee commitment and lower productivity. It could also lead to increased level of indiscipline on the side of the employees. The rise in fraud perpetrated in banks in the country could be connected to the rampant cases of casualization of staff by the financial institutions. Again, casualization could also lead to employee turnovers.

The effects of casualization to an employer will also include; high cost of recruitment, interviewing and hiring. Shelley (2008) estimates that it costs about 33 per cent of any new employees’ salary to replace a worker who left. This implies that employers will spend huge sums from time to time as turnover costs. Also high turnover can create a lack of staff to complete essential daily functions of an organization resulting in overworked, frustrated employees and dissatisfied customers.

It also creates the challenges of continuity and process inconsistency as turnovers will mean constant distortion of organizational activities, socialization of new employees and their training as well. These processes as short as their duration may seem will create gaps in the organization’s activities with its attendant cost.

As far as the national economy is concerned, the modern slavery called casualization can destroy an economy gradually. Its long and predominant usage produces individuals who have over-worked themselves with little earnings and consequently little or no savings for retirement, resulting in the emergence of an over-worked population who still depend on the government for survival, thus overbearing the government welfare strength and living at the mercy of the society.

THE ECONOMY

Hall (2000) also submits that casualization may have negative effects on important aspects of national economic performance such as skill formation and development. Within such framework, the labour force of the nation will continue to suffer and be greatly affected. Anti-labour practices such as casualization can derail advancements in economic progress because there would always be agitations, industrial actions and breakdown in production and services. Casualization may also increase the rate of brain drain and capital flight in the country, since the nation labour force will begin to run to other countries with perceived better employment conditions and working environment as has been witnessed in Nigeria.

More so, it renders the citizens who are supposed to be the major beneficiaries of economic investments impoverished and completely hopeless. Again, it leads to disparity among households over time.

According to Yaqub (2003) “casualization do not contribute to the economy because what they earn was not taxed, it is not subjected to any form of tax, and so they do not contribute to economic development of the country” (Enoghase: 2007. Furthermore, Casualization creates cyclical poverty and disruption of family life. Most youths finding themselves in and other of regular jobs resort to social vices that could expose them to mortal threatening diseases like HIV/AIDS. Apart from this some of the affected unable to find means of livelihood withdraw their wards from school who is then unleashed in our streets as hawkers, which exposes these children to other avoidable social problems

Collective bargaining is under threat as there is increased job insecurity and one can be easily fired without any notification. Issues of survival have thus taken centre stage, and labour standards have been severely compromised. Businesses are resorting to multi-tasking as a way of reducing employees, but at lower rates of pay. Companies have also scaled down education and training as a way of cutting costs. This results in skill reproduction insecurity, which will affect industry and the whole economy in the long run.

Casual workers are not only vulnerable to exploitation by management only but by other workers (permanent) and up performing multiple tasks. Permanent workers may see casuals as a threat to their positions and hence the hostile relationship between the two groups. Enough is known about the characteristics of casual employment to identify a range of problems, such as lack of training, consultation and task variety and lower satisfaction and organisation commitment (Walsh & Deery, 1999). Casualization has affected workers in more ways, which are not only work related but also their lives (social lives). Some have been casuals for more than 10 years and have failed to reach their self-actualization stage.

The division between casual and permanent employment has led to an increased level of labour market segmentation. The increased labour market segmentation has created inferior and stereotyped jobs. This has created dissections between workers where some now consider their jobs more important than others. This has affected the morale of the workers (casual) and subjecting them to ill treatment and isolation. Peer support and cooperation has also suffered due to possible resentment by casual staff against the superior industrial conditions enjoyed by others. There is some evidence that increasing precariousness of work (of which casualization forms a part) leaves workers more vulnerable to workplace bullying, and certainly to more managerial control.

CONCLUSION

Nigeria has gone a long way in her attempt at economic development and social advancement, hence what she needs now is hardly such depleting virus as casualization, but rather, rapid economic development. Casualization as perpetuated in Nigeria is a threat to the desired level of economic growth and development.

The casualization model enables employers to ignore workplace standards and workers social needs and to create a strong barrier against workplace organization. The push towards casualization in Nigeria is the evidence of a continued effort by government and corporate elites to maximize profits at the expense of long-term job policies, transparent governance, and shared economic development.

For the Nigerian workers, the future depends on their capacity not just to stop the degradation of work, but to exert the strength necessary to promote developmental alternatives based on democracy, freedom of association, a clean environment, and broad-based access to higher wages, good paying jobs, education, and health care for every worker. There is a need for concerted efforts among stakeholders to ally with the government to stamp out all forms of exploitation of Nigerian workers through genuine advocacy work and information sharing. The workers themselves must open up so that bad practices can be exposed and expunged.

The Way Forward

This paper posits that while there may be sometimes that the need for contract employees may arise for services that are not considered core to the main business of an organization, their remuneration should be fair and comparable to that of permanent workers. Most of the casual and contract workers are highly skilled and usually perform the same tasks as permanent employees but get lower remuneration and poor terms and conditions of employment generally and are denied the right to organize and benefit from collective agreements. This is obviously unfair and violates the principle of equal pay for equal work without discrimination on any ground whatsoever.

Every person should be entitled to assemble freely and associate with other persons, and in particular form or belong to any trade union or association for the protection of his interests. Again the contract workers should be allowed to exercise their rights to organize and collective bargaining and they should be given priority whenever there is an opening for permanent employment. Policy makers must make laws to protect these workers from exploitation by their employers. Casualization of labour is against the campaign of full employment and decent work for all and an assault on workers' rights.

In the face of increasing casualization, labour unions have a significant role to play. Casualization is a big challenge for unions in their bid to protect and advance workers' rights and foster decent work. They must develop and explore new strategies to organize and fight for the rights of casual workers or its outright eradication.

The long-term success of Nigeria unions will hinge on their capacity not only to fight the degradation of work, but to broaden their struggle to increase job opportunities and living standards. Nigeria wealth must be used to build broad-based economic stability and support equitable economic development, with decent jobs for all. Trade unions must take the lead in the campaign against casualization of labour and the restoration of decency and dignity to work in all its forms and categories.

On their part, employees should also engage themselves against employers with all the strengths, energies and alliances that they can muster collectively and individually.

On the part of government there must be the political will to address the loopholes in labour laws and stop employment practices that encourage casualization of labour. Through collective alliance, government, employees, unions and other stakeholders must campaign against this cankerworm with the specific aim of pushing for fairer and better working conditions for workers on casual contracts, including involving them in the benefit plans of organizations; stopping casual employment out-rightly and increasing the use of permanent contracts for the many professional workers employed on casual contracts across the country.

Resisting vulnerable employment, including the imposition of zero hours contracts, bogus self-employment, pay lower than that of colleagues doing comparable work, detrimental variable (minimum) hours contracts; and to seek equal treatment for all workers with alternative to employment range.

To oppose selection for redundancy on the basis of being on a fixed-term and or part-time contract; to transfer workers on casual contracts to full-time or fractional contracts with the same terms and conditions as permanent, full-time salaried staff; and to increase the activism within organizations of those on casual contracts, and to encourage their voices to be heard by encouraging union participation.

Government policies must be geared towards stopping casualization or at least curtailing it. This should be pursued vigorously and actualised through collaboration with the organized labour, and the Civil Society Organizations.

This paper therefore with all sincerity, argues that casual workers should be entitled to the same rights as permanent employees no matter the duration of their employment. Some employers regularly lay off their employees every three months and ask them to re-apply for re-engagement while majority of them have become what is termed permanent casuals.

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