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Influence of Labour Casualization on Employee Performance in Government Establishments in Nigeria

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Abstract

In recent time, one of the most challenging and highly prevailing issues in the global labour market has been the threat of labour casualization. Its widespread has not spared any society on the globe. Consequently, Nigeria has witnessed a phenomenal rise in the practice of labour casualization with its prevalence permeating all the sectors of the economy. Given the above, the study examined the influence of labour casualization on employee performance in government establishments in Nigeria. The study is a theoretical discourse so it adopts a qualitative research method and depends on secondary data sources such as journal articles, government publications, books, and web-based studies on labour casualization. The study was influenced by the Social Systems Theory founded by Talcott Parsons which best analyses system models. The findings reveal a peculiar workforce that is characterized by a deplorable level of casualization in public establishments with a generally low level of performance. The paper concludes that one of the impediments to high-performance levels in government establishments in Nigeria is casual employment. The paper, therefore, recommends that the Nigerian government at all levels should prioritize efforts towards the creation of decent employment opportunities for the populace. This can be done through the establishment of secondary sector and agro-allied industries which can enhance the creation of job opportunities.

Keywords: Labour casualization, examine, widespread, impediments, high-performance

Introduction

The casualization of labour has become a worldwide manifestation that has prompted concerns among various stakeholders across the globe. Its widespread has been evident in different parts of the world including highly

industrialized countries such as Britain, USA, Germany, and China, amongst others, as well as in developing nations such as South Africa, Ghana, Liberia, and Nigeria, just to mention a few. Thus, an understanding of this issue remains critical to general labour reforms and employee protection as its prevalence has become consistently high in Nigeria, and this is accompanied by various implications; one of which is the concern for workers' general welfare (Otuturu, 2021).

The term 'casualization' is used by Okafor (2010) to refer to a non-standard work arrangement occasioned by the impact of globalization and trade liberalization which is facilitated by technological improvement in communication and information technology. Casualization is referred to in Europe and the United States as Non-Standard Work Arrangements (NSWAs), and these refer to fixed contract work, on-call work, part-time, and temporary work engagement (Oyadiran, Dare, Faskari & Success, 2018). Other categories include day work, outsourcing, sub-contracting, homework, self-employment, and zero-hour employment. The common characteristic of non-standard jobs is that they differ in terms of hours worked, job security, and payment system from the traditional full-time or permanent employment which has been a dominant feature of industrial relations in many developed economies and developing industries for much of the twentieth century.

Rasak (2017) reveals that there are different reasons for employing casual labour or workers, and the different sections of the labour force targeted by different organizations lead to more general observations about the nature of labour casualization in Nigeria. Engagement of large attendants of the workforce based on casualization has become a burden in the industries in the country. Workers are recruited at the gate and fired at will daily. Even though these workers continue to generate enormous profits and revenues for their various establishments, they remain classified as casuals and subjected to deplorable and inhumane working conditions.

Furthermore, most unemployed people struggling to get decent jobs choose to fight poverty and inequality by becoming casual workers in either the private or public sector of the economy. Casualization as a recruitment practice where people are engaged without a permanent appointment contract is currently highly prevalent in Nigeria. The lack of decent job opportunities for educated and qualified people in Nigeria makes it one of the unequal societies producing high levels of poverty. Globalization and trade liberalization made way for competing imports into the economy which consequently resulted in lots of instability in the product market. To cope with this challenge, employers resulted in adopting cost-cutting measures, including downsizing, cutting back on employment, and use of permanent employees; the offshoot being the current predominance of casual workers (Bayo, 2019). Also, many women want to work part-time 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 non-standard workers as a response to the market by entrepreneurs.

A recent study by Musti and Mallum (2020) concludes that the human resource of any country is the most critical asset for the achievement of organizational growth and National development. Furthermore, Fapohunda (2012) stated that the real treasure of any country is its workforce. The quantity of labour force available for any country consists of all those able and willing to work, including the self-employed and employed workers, as well as the unemployed. This perhaps explains why most highly developed nations pay thoughtful and active attention to this factor when compared to other factors of production: Land, Capital, and Entrepreneur (Rasak & Babatunde, 2017).

Currently, many African countries are taking steps towards economic self-sufficiency. Governments all over the continent have taken steps to ensure attractive and investor-friendly policies, which are sometimes to the detriment of the indigenous workers. In 2012 alone, there was a spike in news reports in the continent about workplace violations such as workers' exploitation, physical abuse, and indiscriminate disengagements, amongst others, which were committed by foreign employers in the manufacturing industries in several African countries. Although many of these narrations tend to focus on the transgressions committed by Chinese firms due in large part to increased Chinese economic activities in Africa which according to some estimates is expected to be worth at least \$50 billion by 2015. Allegations against other foreign investors from countries like Lebanon, India, and Germany mistreating their African employees have also been documented around the continent (Tamunomiebi & Bagshaw, 2018).

It is very unfortunate that in the face of widespread unemployment and growing economic hardship in the continent, employers of labour have brought a new twist to employment in the name of labour casualization. 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 (NSWAs) by employers (Eyongndi, 2016). 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 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 (casual, contract, temporary, part-time employment, subcontracting or outsourcing) 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 (Fapohunda, 2012).

Therefore, it is obvious that the practice or concept of full-time, permanent, or standard job placement is being threatened by the use of Non-standard work arrangements (NSWA) by employers including government establishments. Also, the shift from full-time or permanent work to Non-standard arrangement came by when employers began to avoid the mandates and costs associated

with labour laws which are designed to protect permanent or full-time workers in standard employment. Employers have persisted in filling positions in their establishments that are permanent with casual workers.

Several studies in Nigeria by Okafor (2010); Animashaun (2012); Fapohunda (2012); Kalejaiye (2014); Solaja (2015); Ibekwe (2016); Rasak and Babatunde (2017); Ogebe, Olugbunmi and Okorode (2019); Musti and Mallum (2020) were undertaken on casualization of labour but they were skewed towards labour casualization in the private sector without sufficient examination of the problem within the public sector. The expansive views of some of these scholars show that while Okafor (2010), Kalejaiye (2014), Solaja (2015), Ibekwe (2016), Rasak and Babatunde (2017) situate their studies around multi-national firms, mostly within the South-South region of the country (Niger-Delta) and focus their analyses mainly on the rise or causes of casual work in Nigeria, Animashaun (2012) gives an overview of the contract nature of casual engagement to highlight its implications within the context of the Nigerian Labour Laws.

Furthermore, most of these studies have focused on labour casualization in the industrial cities with emphasis on private establishments in the southern parts of Nigeria, without substantial studies on government establishments. From the foregoing, therefore, the paper assesses the influence of labour casualization on employee performance in government establishments in Nigeria. It also examines the causes, and implications of labour casualization on employee performance to the effective running of government establishments.

Theoretical Framework

The paper was guided by Social Systems Theory. The broad foundation for Social System Theory was laid in the early 1960s by Talcott Parsons with immediate modification done by Niklas Luhmann. Most sociological scholars like Niklas Luhmann, Margaret Mead, and Ludwig von Bertalanffy, amongst others, appreciate Talcott Parsons' earlier sophisticated structural functionalism which they fault as consciously conservative or inadvertently affirmative. For Luhmann, all structural functionalist theories unavoidably possess the criticism of foreclosed genuine systems thinking, essentially because they hardly address the most central question of "social order" and the "constitutive differences" between social, psychic and biological systems. In brief, structural functionalism is criticized for neglect of the main object of study of society – the "social systems" (Luhmann, 2002).

As narrated by Luhmann (2002) in his Introduction to System Theory, Talcott Parsons conceived of a social system as a network of a plurality of individual actors interacting with each other in a situation which has at least a physical or environmental aspect. Actors who are motivated in terms of a tendency to the "optimization of gratification" and whose relation to their situations, including each other, is defined and mediated in terms of a system of culturally structured and shared symbols. Again, Luhmann maintains that

psychic systems (human subjects) are a necessary condition of social systems. Despite its operational autonomy, the self-reproduction of a social system depends on the continuation of life and consciousness. This material dependence lies at the bottom of the seemingly “natural” notion of the autonomous “subject” as the basic unit of human existence (Moeller, 2006).

The central argument of the social systems theorists like Talcott Parsons, Niklas Luhmann, and Margaret Mead holds that the social realm is a system "all of its own" which consists of interrelated and multifunctional parts called "component elements". Thus, all the essential parts of a system must be positioned to function optimally and in unison. A social system model may be a society, an organization, or an institution. Thus, where a society or government has failed to address the social issue of unemployment, a high prevalence of labour casualization is conversely inevitable. It is also a malfunction or a failure on the part of lawmakers both at the national level as well as the states not to have come up with the appropriate legal framework to control labour casualization in all sectors of the Nigerian economy.

One of the most fundamental tenets of the systems theory states that the social sphere is constituted as a *sui generis* reality (as Emile Durkheim explains) only utilizing communication as its basic process. From a social constructionist perspective, society as *sui generis* reality implies that society is an objective reality (unified element) apart from the individuals within it. Once communication, described by Luhmann as the unity of utterance, information, and understanding is set into motion, "the materialization of an integrated social system can hardly be avoided." Consequently, only action or unfulfilled promises do not meet the requirements for functioning as a system-producing type of operation, therefore "decomposing" the process of communication into actions is a convenient way of reducing its complexity and thereby enabling it to "steer itself". Again, the leadership ambit of the society either at the state or federal levels remains an essential part of societal component elements which functions relatively with the rest elements of the social system (Tamunomiebi & Bagshaw, 2018).

The study adopts the social system theory as its theoretical basis for the following reasons. Firstly, Social System Theory allows for an understanding of the interrelationship between various component elements of the organization and how they interact with one another. Also, the theory helps to examine organizational dynamics such as organizational behaviour, organizational development, and organizational change. Again, the unifying and centralism of social system theory highlights the unevenness of labour casualization. Social Systems Theory also explains homeostatic systems which represent structures in which feedback-controlled regulation processes occur. Social System Theory evaluates social phenomena within the context of a complex interrelationship of component elements towards system efficiency.

Also, the failure of the government at all levels to prioritize the provision of decent job opportunities for qualified citizens which is evident in the current general high level of unemployment in Nigeria translates to systemic failure.

One of the core responsibilities of a good government is to provide jobs for its citizens which represents its efficiency as a part element of the society as a Social System and where and when this is lacking high level of unemployment is inevitable.

Materials and Methods

The study relies mainly on secondary data sources obtained from relevant articles, publications, and texts, as well as web-based studies on labour casualization in Nigeria. The paper is a hypothetical discourse hence it adopts a qualitative study approach. The qualitative research approach as adopted and recommended by Tracy (2013) is useful for understanding a range of social issues. Also, Yin (2014) described qualitative research as the process of collecting the research data while embracing a blend of orientations and methodological consideration through a possible multiplicity of interpretations of human events; the inherent uniqueness of these events; and the methodological variations available.

The Issues

Concept of Labour

Labour refers to the aggregate of physical, mental, and social exertion required for the production of goods and services in an economy. Labour provides the expertise, manpower, and service necessary to turn raw materials into finished products and services (Mollo & Emuze, 2017). The skill-level category of labour is the most common category of labour, where labour is measured by workers' expertise in their jobs. The most basic type under this category is unskilled labour which does not require any form of formal training. This is mostly associated with manual jobs and craftsmanship like farm work or service work such as custodial staff. The other category is the semi-skilled which may require some level of education. An example of this sort of labour is in the manufacturing industry. Skilled labour refers to various jobs across several industries in an economy in which special knowledge, training, and learning of efficiency are required (Chinwendu & Edeke, 2016).

Also, the labour force as the aggregate of the current active population refers to all persons above a specified age who were employed or unemployed during a short reference period. Usually, the current active population comprises all persons above a specified age whose main activity status, as determined in terms of several weeks or days during a long-specified reference period (such as the preceding 12 months or the preceding calendar year), was employed or unemployed. The current active population may be subdivided into employed and unemployed under the main activity (International Labour Organization [ILO], 2011). Throughout this study, the term labour will be used in its broadest sense to refer to some kind of mental or physical exertion undertaken with a motive to earning money.

Labour Casualization

Several studies, including Okoye, Okolie and Aderibigbe (2014); Yen, Platt, Yeoh and Lam (2015) consider casualization as a recruitment approach adopted by most employers in different parts of the world including Nigeria to create less secure and attractive jobs. Under this practice, workers are contracted on an occasional or short-time basis instead of being offered a permanent contract. Amidala (2011) adds that labour casualization is a method of employing people without issuing a permanent contract in public, private, and informal sectors. Basso (2003) observes that casualization may be linked to under-employment. It is often used loosely in the 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.

Bodibe (2007) affirms that traditionally, casual labour refers 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. Sadly, the trend now is that casual workers work for many years without promotion and necessary entitlements, and sometimes they do what normal full-time employees do but are not compensated for their services.

To ILO (2016), labour casualization is a recruitment approach by which workers are engaged on non-permanent basis with employment that is not expected to continue for a long period and whose terms of contract is characterized by low wages and inhuman working conditions. This ambiguous definition has led to varying definitions of casual or contract workers and their rights in different jurisdictions.

Houeland (2015) conceptualized a casual employee as a worker who is paid lower salaries, given lesser benefits, lacks job security, and is faced with stiff challenges of basic labour rights. She further reveals that junior workers are usually the main target for casualization which in her opinion can be described as the neo-colonization of the workforce in Nigeria because it breeds a structure that is anti-employee union and very insensitive to workers' welfare. Houeland also submitted that a large number of casual employees or casual workers in Nigeria are subjected to a lengthy period of temporary engagement for up to 15 years and above, whereas labour laws stipulate that an employee's appointment should be regularized within six (6) months of engagement.

Also, Mollo and Emuze (2017) see causal labour as the product of a system by which people gain employment without a proper or clear written contract. This form of engagement, according to them, is usually designed for a specified short period, or in some cases, no time frame may be stated by the employer. Where the latter condition is the case, such workers may work for a longer period temporarily hoping for regularization or confirmation of appointments that may never come.

Bayo (2019) in his study of the negative effects of labour casualization in Nigeria, while giving an account of the nature of labour casualization in the country, observed that collective bargaining in the Nigerian industrial workplace is threatened by a high level of job insecurity occasioned by growing prevalence of casualization. One of the central issues in Bayo's study bothers on existing 'multi-tasking' inherent in the contemporary Nigerian industrial landscape as a measure for attrition (gradual but deliberate reduction in staff strength). This unhealthy practice has also seen several companies (both private and public sectors) cut down on human capital investment, a development which as Bayo puts it, 'will affect the entire Nigerian economy in the long run.

Similarly, one key finding from Bayo's study discloses that the obvious unprecedented rise in labour casualization in the country now enables employers to ignore their traditional employment contract responsibilities as regards reasonable labour wages and commiserative staff welfare. As a way of recommendation, the study suggests that government policies towards stamping out casualization of labour in the country should be pursued with vigour and all sense of sincerity through pragmatic synergy between government, the private sector and organized Civil Society Organizations.

Employee Performance

Employee performance can be expounded as the outcome of employees' labour at a given time and scope as given by the organization. The term employee performance refers to the extent to which an employee carries his/her duties depending on what is expected by the employer in line with his/her capabilities, experience, time and seriousness in performing the given task (Handayani, 2019). Employee performance can be measured both in tangible and intangible manner whereas quantity and time can be used as indicators for tangible measurement on other hand loyalty, quality of work, sincerity, teamwork, competence and skills involved can be used as intangible indicator to measure performance.

Okoughbo (2004) categorizes stages of performance cycle as follows: Planning, observing, developing, assessment and rewarding that involves setting performance targets, developing performance actions to meet the intended targets, setting the time frame enough to meet the intended performance objectives, evaluating performance, assessment and feedback and compensation of effort. Also, constant supervision and follow-ups provide the opportunity to evaluate whether employees are in line with predetermined performance standards (Rasak, 2017).

Evaluating performance from time to time is one of the key tasks in effective performance management cycle where an employee is provided with key performance indicators and targets at the beginning of the period which will be used to monitor his/her performance throughout the period and will also be used to measure and reward them accordingly (Peluso, Innocenti & Pilati, 2017). The percentage of work output that needs be reprocessed or removed,

the percentage of loyal and involved customers and stakeholders, the percentage of benchmarked time used to finish a task, and the percentage of employee absenteeism from work are a few key performance indicators that any organization can use to measure and standardize performance objectives (Ubeku, 1984).

Nature of Labour Casualization in Nigeria

The current nature of the labour system in the country can be traced back to the colonial era when the colonial governor of Nigeria, Lord Lugard, to ensure effective utilization of the impoverished labour force, introduced forced labour, which then was meant to induce the interest of the natives in wage labour which became necessary 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 penurious workforce (Bayo, 2019).

Again, the outbreak of World War I in 1914 and its end in 1918 necessitated the need to rebuild the shattered infrastructural landscape. This made the colonial government introduced a new labour regime based on the piece-meal payment system, which entails placing the majority of the workers on part-time contracts to perform sundry work and for paid stipends calculated either hourly or daily (Bayo, 2019).

In current times, the casualization of labour 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 (SAP) in 1986, a development that eventually led to a fall in the economy where several factories got shut down, some operating below minimum capacity and many organizations found it difficult to compete in the globalized economy. It also led to the downsizing and mass retrenchment of skilled people, particularly in the urban centres and resulted in numerous cases of unemployment (Aladekomo, 2004).

Further, in recent decades, there has been a dramatic increase in nonstandard jobs due to such factors as massive unemployment, globalization, the shift from the manufacturing sector to the service sector, and the spread of information technology (Okafor, 2012). These changes have created a new economy that demands flexibility in the workplace and as a result, causes a decline in standard employment relations and a dramatic increase in precarious work (Kalleberg, 2000; Adewumi, 2008). The nature of the job; whether it is short-term or long-term, offered on a full-time or part-time basis, or its status is recognized under industrial best practice, differs between types of casual jobs. The characteristics of the ideal recruit, and his or her willingness to participate in the casualization process, will differ between casual job types (Bamidele, 2017).

In Nigeria, the problem of nonstandard employment is very common in many establishments whether in indigenous, transnational, or multi-national firms, either in public or private industry, including telecommunications, oil

and gas, banking (both old and new generations) educational sectors, amongst others (Okafor & Rasak, 2015; Idowu, 2010). In some companies in Nigeria, one can get as many as over one thousand, five hundred workers who are on temporary appointments in an industry of about two thousand workers. In some local industries in the formal sector, it is possible to get a situation whereby virtually all the employees are either casual or contract staff. This category of staff may have either professional or administrative skills (Adenugba, 2003).

Similarly, as reported by the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) in 2018, 45 per cent of the entire Nigerian workforce are casual staff. Since 2018, casualization has also become a prominent employment practice in government establishments with reports indicating a disturbingly high prevalence trend at both state and federal levels (Agbakwura, 2021). Several State House of Assemblies such as Nasarawa, Kogi, and Benue states, amongst others consist of a high level of casual workforce. The Nasarawa State House of Assembly (NSHA), Lafia, has a workforce of 71.5% casual staff and 28.5% permanent staff (NSHA Records Unit, 2020). Other states such as Kwara, Bauchi, Ondo, Cross River and Bayelsa, just to mention a few, have also been reported to possess an unacceptable level of a casual workforce. A petition from the casual workers of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) was sent to the National Assembly in May 2022, where the protesting workers numbering about 336 staff members of the Warri Refinery demand urgent regularization (Abdullahi, Layi & Mazuma, 2022).

Causes of Labour Casualization

Globalization and trade liberalization made way for competing imports into the economy; this consequently resulted in lots of instability in the product market. To cope with these challenges, employers resulted in adopting cost-cutting measures, including downsizing, cutting back on employment, and the use of permanent employees; the result is the current prevalence of casual workers (Bayo, 2019).

For management strategists and operators, the casualization of labour has become a means of minimizing costs and sustaining jobs in the face of the concept of globalization. The Casualization of labour may have created a breathing space for many organizations to survive in the face of an adverse economic downturn that has led to the closure of many companies and businesses. Nonetheless, casualization is a bad wind that blows nobody any good. Apart from the fact that this category of workers works under a spate of uncertainties; it is no gainsaying that casualization reveals a brutal work growth process similar to slave labour (Bamidele, 2017).

Other causes of casualization include technological changes, the abundance of labour supply, deregulation of both product and labour markets, and unprecedented promotion of outsourcing. Arising from globalization, outsourcing provided an easier way to cut costs and run off competition. When an employer outsources labour or production components, it is assumed that fewer numbers of permanent employees are needed.

Influence of Labour Casualization on Employee Performance

Engagement of large attendants of the workforce based on casualization has become a burden in the Nigerian industries. Workers are recruited at the gate and fired at will daily. Although these workers continue to generate enormous profits for their various establishments, they remain classified as casuals and are subjected to deplorable and inhumane working conditions (Bamidele, 2017). The implications of labour casualization are multi-faceted and heterogeneous. The workers may be the direct victims of casualization, but the effects they suffer transcend through a flow-on process to other actors in the economy. Collective bargaining is under threat as there is increased job insecurity and one can be easily laid-off without any notification (Abdullahi *et al.*, 2022). The effects of casualization on an employer will also include; the high cost of recruitment, interviewing and hiring. Shelley (2008) estimates that it costs about 33 per cent of any new employee's salary to replace a worker who left. On the economy, Hall (2000) submits that casualization may have negative effects on important aspects of national economic performance such as skill formation and development.

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 subjected them to ill-treatment and isolation. Peer support and cooperation have also suffered due to possible resentment by casual staff against the superior industrial conditions enjoyed by others. There is some evidence that the increasing high prevalence of casualization has subjected workers to more vulnerable workplace bullying, and certainly to more managerial control, hence lack of confidence and loss of self-worth in the work place justify casual workers' natural low performance demeanor (Bayo, 2019).

Emerging Trends in Labour Casualization in Nigeria

Labour casualization has continued to permeate both the public and private sectors in Nigeria. The negative effects of this trend are even more worrisome as it concerns public establishments. The gradual acceptance of the practice of casualization of labour has become an issue of great concern to labour and industry stakeholders in Nigeria and every other part of the globe. It is also very disturbing to note that the practice is currently found amongst such key government establishments as the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), National Assembly (NASS), Nasarawa State House of Assembly (NSHA), Lafia, Kogi State House of Assembly (KSHA), Lokoja, Benue State House of Assembly (BSHA), Makurdi, just to mention a few (*Premium Times*, 2021).

A couple of efforts have been made to douse the steady rise in labour casualization in Nigeria. At the national level, a bill for the prohibition of labour casualization in all forms of employment in both the private and public

sectors in the country got a boost on Thursday, February 18, 2021, as it scaled second reading in the Senate. The bill was thereafter referred to the Senate Committee on Employment, Labour, and Productivity to report back in four weeks. This was a sequel to the consideration of the general principles of a bill sponsored by Senator Ayo Akinyelure of PDP-Ondo Central, in a plenary session (Umoru, 2021).

The bill (Establishment Bill 2021 {SB, 329}) is titled “A Bill for an Act to provide for the prohibition of labour casualization in all forms of employment in the private and public sector in Nigeria and related matters”. As contained in the submission of the bill, Casualization is described as a working arrangement that is not permanent and does not fall within the traditional standard which promotes employers’ and employees’ relationships. In his lead debate, Senator Akinyelure who noted that the bill was read for the first time on the floor of the red chamber on March 4, 2020, said that the labour casualization of Nigerian citizens in the labour market had become a subject of great concern. He said, “This is as more workers continue to groan under the immoral strategy of cutting costs by employers, rendering them inferior to their counterparts in other countries of the world (*Premium Times*, 2021).

Also, at the national level, on Tuesday, October 26, 2021, the Minister of Labour and Employment, Senator Chris Ngige chaired a federal government one-day public hearing on three (3) labour bills by the senate committee on Labour and Employment. The bills include the National Directorate of Employment Act 2004, Labour Act CAP 11, LFN 2004 (Amendment Bill, 2021 {SB, 469}), and Prohibition of casualization in Nigeria (Establishment Bill, 2021 {SB, 329}). The Minister, who spoke on behalf of the federal government maintained that the casualization of labour is a very volatile issue that goes against the international best labour practices. In his final submission, the minister remarked, ‘the time has come to stop casualization of any form in every sector of the Nigerian economy’. According to him, private entrepreneurs and other employers of labour must make gains to keep their businesses afloat but they must not enslave their workers (Agbakwura, 2021).

Similarly, at the state level, using Nasarawa State as a reference, at the end of the second plenary session of the fifth Assembly of the Nasarawa State House of Assembly (NSHA), Lafia, the then Speaker of the House, Ibrahim Balarabe Abdullahi who got re-elected as Speaker of the sixth Assembly at the inauguration on June 10, 2019, announced that the Nasarawa State House of Assembly would offer a permanent and pensionable appointment to all its casual staff to guarantee job security for the workers. Hon Abdullahi said, “we are aware that a large number of our workforce are casual staff, this means that apart from not having the security of tenure, they are in no position to enjoy pension or gratuity by the time they are too weak to discharge their duties.” He said, “for this reason, efforts were being made to ensure that casual staff working within the assembly would be given a permanent and pensionable appointment in the shortest possible time”. Abdullahi also appealed to the organized labour in the state to exercise patience and show more understanding

with the government to resolve the lingering labour crisis in the state (NSHA Records Unit, 2020).

Discussion

On the influence of labour casualization on employee performance in government establishments in Nigeria, the study revealed that the rising prevalence of casual employment that's currently evident in our government establishments has created greater employment uncertainty and job turnover which generate a generally low level of performance among casual workers. The results present a depressing job situation for casual workers due to the rarity of opportunities for confirmation of appointments from casual to permanent employment.

These results build on the findings of Ogbe, Olubunmi, and Okorode (2019) in the results of their study on the "influence of casualization on workers' performance in organizations" when they revealed that nonstandard employment was very common in many establishments in the public sector of the Nigerian economy and since confirmations for this sort of employment is usually hard to come by, the overall organizational performance of casual workers is as irregular and precarious as their employment status.

The results of this study also build on the findings of Okoughbo (2004) and Idowu (2010) in the when they revealed that nonstandard employment was very common in many establishments in either the private or public sectors of the Nigerian economy and that confirmations for this sort of employment were usually hard to come by.

Conclusion

The casualization of labour has remained a daunting problem especially as it concerns employees' welfare and commitment to organizational goals and survival. Despite the concerted attention to labour welfare through an increase in the minimum wage, legislation on the prohibition of labour casualization, and research by international and national governments, donors, and scholars in the social sciences, humanities, and administration, it's still widespread in Nigeria. Also, with the increasing knowledge about the associated loss of productivity and labour exploitation, the casualization of labour has remained consistently prevalent and has continued to permeate both the public and private sectors in the country. Based on the findings, the following recommendations are put forward to curtail the current rise in labour casualization in Nigeria.

Recommendations

The study recommends that the Nigerian government both at the state and national levels should prioritize efforts towards the creation of decent employment opportunities for the citizenry. This can be done through the establishment of secondary sectors and agro-allied industries which can enhance the creation of job opportunities. It is believed that when gainful

employment is provided across all the economic sectors in all parts of the country, much fewer people will accept casual employment.

All employers of labour in all sectors of the Nigerian economy should be urged to adopt the six (6) month probation period for confirmation of employment. Thus, regularization of casual workers should come into effect after six months of the first appointment except where certain casuals are found not worthy of full-time engagement. This will eliminate all forms of defects and ineffectiveness that casual workers are characterized by in organizations where they exist.

Employers in both private and public establishments should be made to fulfill their promises to their irregular workers. The Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) and its 29 affiliated unions should be part of the negotiating process for all forms of non-standard job placement so that in the end, any erring organization that reneges on its promises and responsibilities to casual employees can be held accountable. The commonest trick used by employers to perpetuate the unwholesome act of casualization is by reneging on their assurances.

A robust legal framework on labour laws and an urgent review of the Labour Act in Nigeria needs concerted efforts from all stakeholders. All forms of employment contracts need to be clearly defined in terms of the nature, rights, and obligations of all parties. As a matter of national interest, the National Assembly Committee on Labour and Productivity and the Ministry of labour and Employment should be more sincere and pragmatic in their resolve for the eradication of all forms of labour casualization in Nigeria

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