

# Role of Trade Union in Manpower Development: A Study of Nigerian Labour Union (NLC)

Nwumeh Uchenna Juliana

Department of Public Administration  
Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University (COOU),  
Anambra State  
[ucnwumeh@gmail.com](mailto:ucnwumeh@gmail.com)

**Abstract :** *In Nigeria, labour disputes have increased in frequency, and trade unionism is routinely misused. Low productivity as a result of such union abuses and disputes undermines the economy's demand and supply chains. Because the rules of the nation are consistently broken, unions strike as a last resort rather than negotiate, which frequently disturbs industrial peace and academic activities in Nigerian universities. However, this study investigate role of trade union in manpower development – a study of Nigerian Labour Union (NLC). The Nigeria Labour Congress NLC provided a total of 75 survey respondents, who were selected using simple random and purposeful sampling approaches. Documentary evaluations, questionnaires, and interviews were used to gather data. The quantitative analysis of the data was supported by the qualitative analysis, which was based on tables, charts, and percentages. Since workers claim that their issues persist in the workplaces even if NLC is present, the study's findings demonstrate that NLC has not fulfilled its responsibility to the extent that reasonable and prompt compensation are paid, and that manpower development and their rights are safeguarded. According to the study, if employees' difficulties could be resolved, a satisfied work environment would result, which would strengthen working and employment connections. Therefore, NLC's poor performance causes employee unhappiness, which in turn causes a high absenteeism rate and employee turnover. According to the study, in addition to workers ensuring the election and appointment of committed leaders to their union who can stand firm when defending the interests of their members to their employers, regulatory framework of employment and labor relations acts should be revised by the government. Employee satisfaction and improved work performance will follow from this.*

**Keywords:** Trade union, manpower development, Nigerian Labour Union (NLC)

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Since Nigeria's independence, one of the fundamental issues that has drawn the attention and concern of succeeding governments in that country is manpower development. The Federal Government of Nigeria realized in 1981 that for independence to have a significant impact on the general well-being of its citizens, it needed to be swiftly followed by an economic change that led to self-sufficiency. The first focus of efforts to achieve rapid national growth was on the establishment of formal educational institutions at all levels, with the expectation that the end result would have the knowledge and attitudes necessary to satisfy the demands of the crucial sector of the economy. It has been determined that a country's biggest resources are its people—men and women, young and old—who are capable of engaging in labor that is productive, as well as its natural resources, capacity for international trade, etc. Government, business, and industry all realized that in order for the nation's economy to expand and advance, it was necessary to hire skilled workers and professionals with executive abilities to offer specialized services of various kinds.

Most countries nowadays are concerned with development. Less developed nations are at war with poverty, disease, ignorance, and the domination of more developed ones. They are no longer prepared to solely depend on the might of their colonial overlords for their future. Even the developed countries are dedicated to growth, and the faster the better. These advanced nations are achieving larger feats, such as the exploration of other planets and space. The increasing desires for social, economic, and political advancement drive this worldwide search for expansion. It is founded on the hopeful belief that man can advance knowledge in this day and age by leaps rather than steps.

In essence, the disparity in human resource quality of nations may be seen in the levels of economic growth of those nations. The core idea of this claim is that a nation's economic development is largely determined by the values, attitudes, general orientation, and quality of its population. Human resources are now an essential component of the well-being and development of the country due to the shift from manufacturing to services and the rapid speed of technological progress. Additionally, the effectiveness of human resources in terms of quality, quantity, and utilization is crucial in service-oriented companies like banks and railways.

A country with plenty of physical resources won't benefit from them unless human resources use them. As a result, only human resources are capable of using natural resources and transforming traditional economies into contemporary, industrial ones. The underorganization of human resources is largely to blame for a country's backwardness. People who live in poor countries are

underdeveloped as well. It's common knowledge that people are an organization's most valuable resource. Such assertions are made in the mission statement of the organization's annual report.

### **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

Over the years, the cruel nature of Nigerian business people has been reflected in their emphasis on high profitability without due consideration of the employee training that will enable this. This is evident in the Nigerian banking sector where employees' personal lives are put in danger while working to meet the management's high expectations and targets. The economy isn't helping matters at all, and young university graduates who are unaware of what is going on in the industry frequently fall into this trap.

The purpose of this study is to assess the trade union's initiatives as a potential alternative route for manpower growth in the nation. It's past time to address the issue of inadequate manpower development and offer a viable solution.

### **1.2 Objectives of the Study**

The following can be used to describe the study's goal:

1. To emphasize and defend the extent of labour union towards assisting employees in wage negotiation with their employers in getting high wages.
2. To assess the contribution of labour union in insuring good working condition to employees.
3. To examine the contribution of labour union in assisting employee training and other development cases.

## **2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Theoretical Literature Review**

There are various theories to explain the reason or objectives for the formation and existence of NLC. These theories provide objectives and goals of NLC which provide us with benchmarks for evaluating them and how to go through in assessing their contributions towards creating manpower development.

#### **Revolutionary Theory**

In his books *Poverty of Philosophy* (1847) and the *Communist Manifesto*, Karl Marx (1848) developed the theory. The theory is also known as "class war and dialectical materialism" theory. According to Karl Marx, the NLC exists to overthrow capitalism. Marx also holds that in order to achieve economic equality, every labor union or member of the proletariat must actively participate in politics, whether they realize it or not.

NLC are therefore the tools used in the class struggle between capitalist businessmen and proletarian workers. Its immediate goal is to eliminate labor market competition, and its long-term goal is to overthrow capitalist businessmen. Proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains in the class struggle that is the labor union, and they have the entire world to gain. According to Marx, the NLC should strive to create an equal society by pursuing political power through revolutionary watch work in addition to abolishing the wage system. This means that the labor union should cease serving as a wage-bargaining representative (Shiva, 1970).

As far as the theory is concerned, Marx focuses on the two opposing parties of employers and employees, where the former are the ones who run the state (Government) and who establish powerful legal frameworks that weaken workers' working conditions such as low pay, lengthy working hours, and subpar tools.

The capitalists are the ones who control the modern business world. In accordance with this theory, workers should work to increase their NLC's influence as a proletariat class by getting involved in politics, forming parties, and winning the right to rule. This will help to make the workplace a safer and more favorable legal environment for workers. Working under a political and economic system that is controlled by the working class itself could therefore solve the problem of manpower development.

#### **Evolution Theory**

The "theory of industrial democracy" is another name for this concept. Sydney and Beatrice Webb's created it. They contend that labor unions are an extension of the democratic principle in the industrial sector. In other words, according to Webb's (1920) argument, a labor union serves as a tool to equalize the bargaining power of labor and capital rather than as a tool to overthrow capitalism as claimed by Karl Marx. NLC offer a way for employees to oppose managerial autocracy, express their opinions, and empower their participation in decision-making in workplace groups.

On the other hand, the NLC, employers, or employers' associations have established various Workers Participation in Management (WPM) models through the terms of collective agreements. These consist of Board representatives, Consultative Committees, and

---

Joint Consultations Councils. In turn, this has increased worker involvement, industrial democracy, and workplace peace and harmony.

When we put the theory into practice, NLC should act as a body that controls differences between workers and employers and focuses on promoting worker participation in management as a means of enhancing industrial democracy. Allowing employees to jointly participate in managerial decisions and discussing their interests with their employers will improve working relationships. By doing this, the problem of manpower development will be resolved, resulting in job satisfaction.

### **Lenin's Theory**

According to Lenin, "the economic battle is a collective struggle of the employees against the employers for better terms in the sale of their labor force, for better living and working conditions. Because working circumstances vary so drastically from craft to trade, this is unavoidably a labor union struggle. Lenin departs from Marx here and claims that the working class will develop labor union consciousness as a result of their inherent needs, but that political consciousness requires outside assistance; therefore, the intellectuals' contributions are necessary to raise the workers' political class consciousness. He orders that the intellectuals lead the working class's struggle for the abolition of the social structure that forces the class of people without property to sell itself to the wealthy as well as for better conditions for the sale of labor power. Lenin believes that in order to have a favorable development of the labor force, the workers' goal should be expanded to include political power rather than economic struggle or the abolition of the wage slaver (Shiva, 1970).

It is important to take into account the theory that the NLC cannot successfully overthrow the current socio-political system that undermines their working rights on their own. As a result, the NLC could affiliate with other political parties by allowing intellectuals from these parties to join a labor union in order to grow into a powerful political party. The political party will, in turn, have control over the political system, resulting in the construction of employee-friendly labor development. Therefore, because it is in the nature of labor unions to fight for the overthrow of the current system, the problem of manpower development will be resolved.

### **Gandhian Theory**

Kankha (2003) Mahatma Gandhi proposed this strategy. According to this method, Marx's theory of class struggle and collaboration is the foundation of labor unionism. The objective is for workers to receive their fair share from capitalism through NLC-led transformation and self-awareness. He therefore views labor unions as having moral and intellectual as well as material implications. Similar to how NLC largely supports increased social and economic wellbeing in a capitalism or liberalized business environment rather than opposing capitalism as a system of economy.

According to theory, NLC must work hard to educate workers about their legal rights at work because many workers are unaware of the employment and labor laws and other safeguards for their welfare. Only then can workers work cooperatively with employers and contribute fairly to capitalist production and other economic systems. Therefore, by acquiring a stake, they will be able to participate in the entire process of managing money as the means of exploiting workers and resolving their workplace issues.

### **Union Control of Industry' Theory**

Cole's proposed the hypothesis. The Marxian conception of the class struggle underlies the labor union movement. He gave his thesis a methodical form in his book "The World of Labour" published in 1913. He contends that unionization is a kind of class conflict and that, contrary to Marx's predictions, the ultimate goal is for workers to govern the industrial sector. Cole's strategy is a syndicalist one that encourages employees to pursue more than just pay and take over industry in collaboration with the government. Cole believes that the labor union should be involved in both political and economic activities, including the regulation of industry. He asserts that the NLC's primary function is to manage the industry, not the state.

According to the notion, in order to achieve control of the industry, the employee must, through their NLC, concentrate on intensifying their economic conflicts. The argument is strong because it predicts that making employees the owners of businesses and combining that with political activism will lead to problems at work.

Harold Laski His opinions on labor unionism can be seen in his 1950 essay "Labour Unionism in the New Society." He demands that the NLC's fight against capitalists be informed by long-term philosophy. The highest job of labor unions, in Laski's opinion, is to raise the bar for employees, and as a result, it is the responsibility of their leaders to formulate economic policies from a political vantage point that allows for their successful implementation. Political philosophy is required for this. Laski's labor unionism is a lot more politically charged than other labor unionism. By political labor unionism, he did not imply that the NLC would join political parties, but rather that it would develop as a political party in its own right. He contends that the socialistic mindset must take the place of capitalism. Workers therefore require the socialism concept in order to combat the strong capitalism (Singh, 2004).

When we follow Harold's theory, the NLC must develop independently in any difficult context in order to become a powerful political party and formulate a long-term economic and political philosophy to transform a society from capitalism to socialism. The exploitation practiced by employers is the primary contributor to manpower development; therefore, manpower development might be resolved by adopting socialistic philosophy, which promotes equality for all.

## 2.2 Literature Review

The issues facing Nigeria's fourth republic are examined by Okolie and Agbefe (2020) utilizing the Marxist theory of class struggles as their theoretical analytical framework. A qualitative research approach was chosen, and its content was examined in light of the paper's intended audience. The paper notes that the main issues that trade unions in Nigeria currently face include a lack of committed leadership, a lack of internal democracy, government intervention, tribalism and nepotism, internal factionalism, apathetic attitude, a poor economic environment, and non-affiliation with foreign unions. Similar to this, Ngwama, Anyim, and Nnamd (2020) looked at domestic workers' unionization and the effects it had on socioeconomic growth despite their exclusion from other social partners. The study looks at ways to recognize domestic workers in light of their accomplishments in an effort to expand on the organizing paradigm. We used both quantitative and survey methods. A platform for offering domestic workers rights and protection, organizing has a tremendous impact on socioeconomic development. Lowering the unemployment rate, empowering women, raising taxes, and lowering crime. Despite the enormous benefits to socioeconomic growth, developing countries pay less attention to the legal framework for organizing domestic employees.

Obiekwe and Obibhunun (2019) looked at the labor union's contributions to Nigeria's industrial progress and unity. It states that strong and unified labor unions are necessary for every country's industrial and national growth. The maintenance of the employee-employer relationship and the promotion of members' welfares were mentioned as some of the trade unions' objectives. The study found that workers join unions for a variety of reasons, including the need for a stable job, adequate pay and benefits, group bargaining power, and a social need. Nigerian labor unions face a number of difficulties, including division, weak finances, a weak collective bargaining process, and dishonest leadership. The study came to the conclusion that the development of strong and stable unions, which is a crucial component of friendly industrial relations, is seriously hampered by trade union division and politicization. A strong and progressive labor union is also essential for a successful industrial relations system and helps to advance labor union interests. Similar to this, Onwochei, Uzoigwe, and Ajino (2019) investigate how labor unionism affects academic excellence and industrial harmony in university education programs in Cross River State, Nigeria. For this study, a survey research design was used. The primary officers in the management and administrative cadres of the public universities in Cross River State made up the study population. All of the universities' principal officers were chosen using a purposeful sampling strategy because the population was controllable. 363 out of a total of 380 instruments received a favorable response. The respondents were surveyed using a tool called the Managing Labour Unionism for Industrial Harmony and Academic Excellence in University Education Programmes Questionnaire (MLUIHAEUEPQ). The collected data were examined using straightforward linear regression. Findings showed that, in terms of stable school calendars, staff productivity, and efficient employee communication, collective bargaining and labor negotiation had a significant impact on industrial harmony and academic excellence in university education programs.

Ekpoi (2018) examined the employment terms and conditions and how the process reflected the power dynamics between employers and trade unions. The people must continue to serve as both the means and the ends of economic development, according to the Congress. In this situation, protecting and creating jobs is the top priority for national development. This essay comes to the conclusion that the ability of labor to achieve its various goals, ensure organizational unity, and maintain vibrancy depends on how it participates in Nigeria's socioeconomic development, which calls for good governance based on internal democracy. The Nigerian Labour Congress, which represents the majority of the workforce, cannot afford to be excluded from this process. In a similar vein, a study on the "role of labor unions and the enforcement of minimum standards" was conducted by the Centre for Employment and Labour Relations Report in 2014. The research was carried out in Australia. The study sought to empirically examine the degree and manner in which NLC in Australia monitor and enforce the nation's minimum wage, employment hours, and leave laws. The study's preliminary findings are presented in the report. In-depth, semi-structured interviews with elected officials, industrial/legal officers, and organizers from each union were conducted as part of the study's qualitative case studies of five Australian NLCs. Additionally, relevant materials provided by the unions were analyzed. According to the report, a key duty of the NLC is to ensure that employers comply with legal requirements regarding minimum wages and working conditions. As a result, the study was conducted in the context of Australian labor unions in 2014, and we will continue the study at the appropriate time and location.

The study came to the conclusion that unions participate in human resource development by working to educate and train workers in addition to seeking benefits for their members under collective bargaining. As a result, the study places a strong emphasis on protecting employee performance at the workplace while ignoring other employee benefits. Consequently, we can advance the study.

## 3.0 Research Methodology

Survey research method shall be used to gather information from respondents concerning their opinions on manpower development in Nigeria with reference to the role of Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC). The questionnaire to be used shall be carefully administered and a total of one hundred (100) people would be selected, for the purpose of this analysis. The sampling shall be done randomly so that the respondents shall cut across different works of life in Anambra State. This could to some extent give a basis for generalisation.

The data, which would be collected from the questionnaire, will be analysed using the simple percentage method and chi-square, goodness of fit. This will make the analysis of the data more concise and simple. The scope of this study will be limited to the role, which the Labour union plays in manpower development in Nigeria. The research work was limited because of the limited availability of data and time. It will also cover some of the publications of the Nigerian Labour Congress.

#### 4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

##### 4.1 Data Cleaning

According to Chapman (2005), the phrase "data cleaning" refers to the process of determining which data are erroneous, incomplete, or inappropriate and then enhancing the quality of the data by correcting the errors and omissions that have been found. Checks for errors such as limit checks, reasonableness checks, format checks, completeness checks, and limit checks may be included in the process, in addition to an evaluation of the data. According to Burrough (1998), the requirement for data cleaning is centered around increasing the quality of data in order to make them "fit for use" by users. This can be accomplished by minimizing errors in the data, enhancing their documentation, and improving their presentation.

It is essential, on the other hand, that errors not only be removed, but that corrections be documented and changes be followed back to their source. In this study, the sample size consisted of 75 respondents, and there were also 75 questionnaires generated. In reference to each ministry, 25 questions were answered, and the total number of respondents was 62. This is because some of three questionnaires were not returned, and 10 were left because of inaccuracies in the questionnaires.

##### 4.2 Reliability of Questionnaire

The cronbach's reliability test was utilized in order to ascertain the dependability of the surveys. The following alphas were determined by this test for the variables in the investigation.

Table 4.1: Cronbach's Reliability Test

Variables	Cronbach's Alphas
Wage negotiation	0.92
Health and safety	0.8
Training and development	0.76

Source: Field Data (2022)

According to the result shown above, every variable possessed a reliability coefficient (alpha) that was greater than 0.7; hence, the instruments provided a trustworthy measurement of the variables under investigation.

##### 4.3 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The presentation of the demographic characteristics of those who participated in the study was a very essential feature of the research. According to the findings, approximately 32% of workers in the Ministry of Finance under NLC were male, while 68% of workers in the Ministry of Education under NLC were female. On the other hand, 56% of workers in the Ministry of Finance under NLC were male, while 44% were female. Men made up approximately 52% of the workers in the health ministry under NLC, while women made up approximately 48% of the workforce. The proportion of female respondents was 53.3%, while the proportion of male respondents was 46.7%. This suggests that the proportion of female employees who are subject to NLC is significantly higher compared to that of male employees.

In terms of the ages of those who participated in the survey, the vast majorities, or forty percent, were between the ages of twenty and twenty-nine. Again, respondents in the age group of thirty to forty made up 28.3% of the total, while those older than forty made up 18.7% of the total. In terms of the level of education, the majority, which made up 66.6% of the population, had attained the level of degree. While only 8% of respondents had completed their secondary education or lower, 25.4% of respondents had degrees or higher in their field of study. This suggests that the study was carried out and included employees with varying levels of working experience, both in terms of their age and the amount of education they had received. Table 4.2 contains all of the relevant information.

Table 4.2: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Categories		Labour Union Workers %			Average
		Ministry of Finance	Ministry of Education	Ministry of Health	
Gender	Male	32	56	52	46.7
	Female	68	44	48	53.3
Age	20-29	44	36	40	40
	30-39	36	13	36	28.3
	Above 40	20	12	24	18.7
Education	Secondary	0	8	16	8
	Degree	68	72	60	66.6
	Above Degree	32	20	24	25.4

Source: Field Data (2022)

#### 4.3 Position of Labour Union in Assisting Employees in Wage Negotiation with Employers

Respondents were given a statement that related to labor union involvement in wage negotiation, and they were asked to respond either in an affirmative manner or in a negative manner in order to facilitate the evaluation of the position of labor unions in terms of assisting employees in wage negotiation with their employers in order to obtain high wages. An in-depth analysis of their responses revealed that the position of Labour union on the issue was extremely low, particularly among the employees working at the Ministry of Finance.

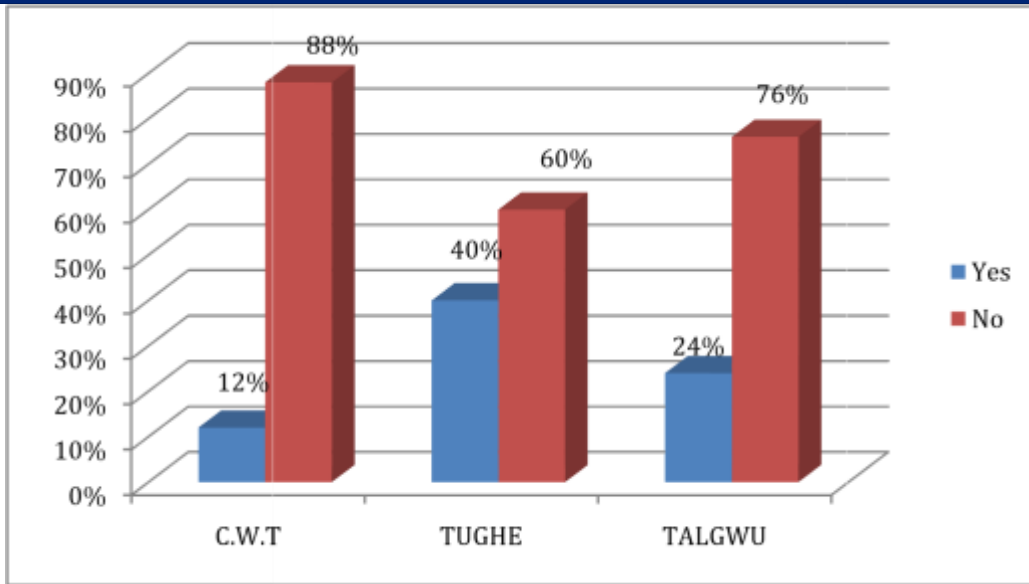
For instance, 88 percent of respondents from the ministry of finance and 76 percent of respondents from the ministry of health reported that labor unions do not assist employees in wage negotiation with their employers. However, only 60 percent of respondents from the ministry of education reported the same, and the difference was statistically significant ( $P=.003$ ). This suggests that, despite the fact that many respondents have faith in their NLC, the NLC is not making sufficient efforts to negotiate salaries for its employees (see Figure 4.2). Because of this, the majority of salary increment is decided by the employer (the government), and employees are always expected to bear the burden of the decisions.

Table 4.3: Association of Variables on the Position of Labour union in Assisting Employees in Wage Negotiation with Employers

	Value	df	Sig
Pearson Chi-Square	16.691	15	.003
Likelihood Ratio	14.071	15	.000
N of Valid Cases	75		

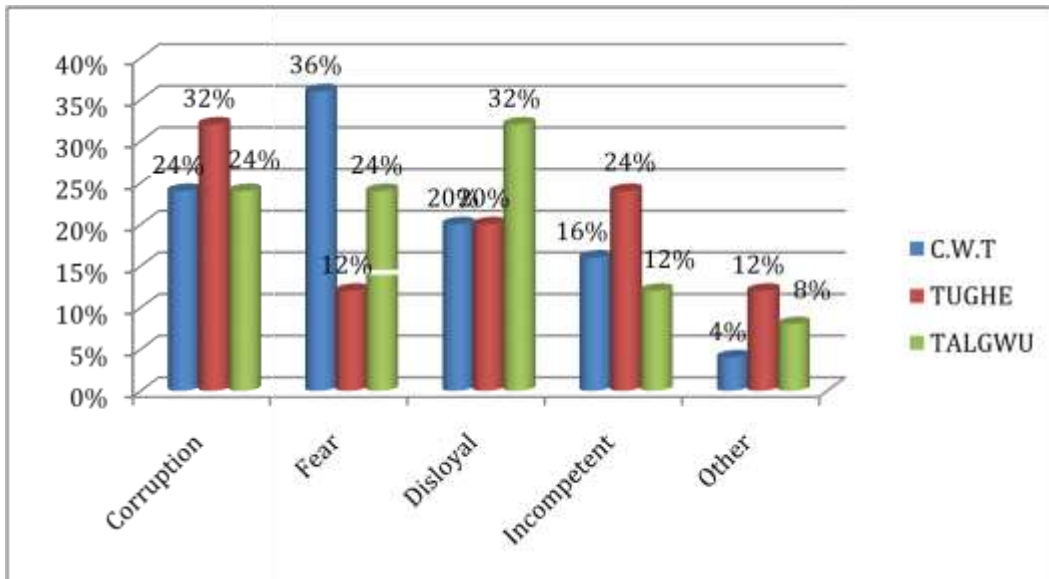
Source: Field Data (2022)

Additional questions were posed to the respondents, one of which asked them to explain why their labor union does not provide much assistance to employees during pay negotiations with their employers. According to the collected data, around 27 percent of respondents named corruption as the reason why labor unions do not aid employees in pay bargaining with their employers. This may be the result of the fact that the majority of NLC leaders do not prioritize the needs of their organization's members; consequently, NLC employees have resorted to unscrupulous practices in order to quiet those leaders. 24 percent of respondents cited fear and disloyalty as the reason why labor unions have little capacity to deal with employers over wages.



Source Field Data (2022)

**Figure 4.1: Labour Union Assisting Employees in Wage Negotiation**



Source Field Data (2022)

**Figure 4.2: Why Labour union not Assisting Employees in Wage Negotiation**

Fear was brought up because some employers threaten the NLC and particularly their leaders when they demand their rights. As a result, some NLC leaders fear for their jobs and their lives in general if they continue to advocate for their members' rights. Incompetence of leaders was stated as the explanation by other respondents as to why labor unions do not aid employees in wage bargaining with their employers.

In addition, field data from each labor union shows that approximately 36 percent of respondents from the ministry of finance identified fear as the reason as to why the NLC has low bargaining power for assisting employees in wage negotiation with their employers. Other respondents from the ministry of finance identified corruption (24 percent), disloyalty (20 percent), and incompetence (16 percent) as the reason for low law bargaining power for assisting employees in wage negotiation with their employers.

Other respondents from the ministry of education identified incompetence (24%), disloyalty (20%), and fear by (12%) as the reason to why labour union has law bargaining power in assisting employees in wage negotiation with their employers. Data from workers at the ministry of education labour union identified corruption by (32%) as the reason to why labour union has law bargaining power in assist employees in wage negotiation with their Employers.

In addition, field data revealed that 32% of members of the Ministry of Health identified disloyalty as the reason why labor unions have law bargaining power to assist employees in wage negotiation with their employers. In contrast, 24% of respondents from the Ministry of Health identified corruption, 24% identified fear, and 12% identified incompetence as the reason why labor unions have law bargaining power to assist employees in wage negotiation with their employers. Incompetence was identified as the reason why labor unions have law bargaining power to assist Figure 4.2 will provide further explanation. During interviews with leaders of labor unions, it was discovered that their employer, which is the government, makes threats at them whenever they attempt to find a solution for their members. They emphasized, however, that they are taking the necessary efforts to ensure that the welfare of workers is taken into consideration by their employer. One example would be the secretary of the ministry of finance having to say something along the lines of, "We are working under tough conditions, but we will continue to demand our right until the government realizes and appreciates the significant work we are doing for this country." This opinion is shared by a majority of other labor union leaders to a greater or lesser extent due to the fact that businesses are always reluctant to offer what is asked of them by their employees.

**Corruption**

According to the findings of the study, 27 percent of respondents cited corruption as one of the causes for the weak negotiating strength of NLC. Nevertheless, 32 percent of those polled by the Ministry of Education mentioned it. This is higher compared to other NLCs, whereby 24% was mentioned by the ministry of health as well as was realized each year. Corruption is one of the reasons for this, and it is one of the reasons why. This suggests that workers believe that their leaders are being influenced by corruption, which prevents them from engaging in tough wage negotiation. Nevertheless, when interviewed by a representative of the labor union, they categorically denied any role in the receiving of any bribe from the employers.

**Fear**

According to the collected data from the field, an average of 24% of respondents cited fear as one of the reasons for legal firms' increased negotiation strength for salary increases. However, this was strongly identified by respondents from the Ministry of Finance at a rate of 36%, it was stated by workers from the Ministry of Health at a rate of 24%, and members of the Ministry of Education identified themselves at a rate of 12%. Because of this, the NLC had very little bargaining leverage when it came to aiding employees in pay negotiations with their respective employers. There are a lot of people who are members of labor unions, but they don't demand their rights because they are afraid of losing their jobs. Nevertheless, over the course of the interview with a labor union representative, fear was not a primary concern. Instead, they argued that the only obstacle to the discussion of salaries is the insensitivity of employers to the requirements and preferences of their workforce.

**Disloyal and Incompetence**

According to the data collected in the field, an average of 24 percent of respondents described being disloyal as well. Despite this, respondents from the Ministry of Health identified it at a high rate of 32%; members of the Ministries of Finance and Education also cited it at a rate of 24%; and Ministry of Education members identified it at a rate of 20%. During the process of collecting the data, it became clear that approximately 67% of respondents did not have faith in their union officials. This demonstrates that it is significantly more difficult for members of a group to protest for their rights if they do not trust the leaders of the group.

Field research suggests that approximately 17 percent of respondents indicated incompetence of labor union officials on average. This pertains to the topic of incompetence. On the other hand, this was strongly identified by 24% of respondents from the Ministry of Education, it was also stated by 16% of members from the Ministry of Finance, and it was identified by 12% of members from the Ministry of Health.

**4.4 Contribution of Labour Union in Insuring Good Working Condition to Employees**

According to the research data presented in the Table 3, Respondents revealed various Contribution of labour union in insuring good working conditions to employees. The following are the contribution of labour union as identified by respondents; 20.6% (n=75) Collective Bargaining, 22% (n=75) Representation, 29% (n=75) Employee Welfare, 13% (n=75) Fair Practices and 15.3%, (n=75) Manpower development.

**Table 4.4: Contribution of Labour Union in Insuring Good Working Condition to Employees**

Labour Union Workers %	
Contribution of Trade	Average



Union to Employees	Ministry of Finance n=25	Ministry of Education n=25	Ministry of Health n=25	N=75
Collective Bargaining	24	20	18	20.6
Representation	20	22	24	22
Employee Welfare	25	30	32	29
Fair Practices	13	16	10	13
Manpower development	18	12	16	15.3

Source: Field Data (2022)

### Collective Bargaining

According to the findings presented in Table 4.4, employees who are members of labor unions are eligible for a number of benefits, one of which is collective bargaining. The total number of respondents who provided this response was 75. The NLC was established to provide workers with equal bargaining power with their employers, who, historically, had the sole authority to choose the terms and conditions of employment, including compensation and hours worked. Workers within an industry are represented in bargaining discussions by their unions, which are held with their respective employers. Because it is composed of multiple employees, the union has a more powerful voice than would be the case if workers spoke with their employers on an individual basis.

The social partners have been able to minimize the conflicts and confrontations that so frequently characterize the relationship between employers and workers as a result of their participation in collective bargaining (Khabo, 2008). Collective bargaining is the process of setting standards to govern employment and labor relations. It is often referred to as "union organizing." Workers' representatives are given the opportunity to make claims to a proportionate part of the fruits of their labor through the process of collective bargaining. It makes communication between capital and labor easier, which enables both parties to better understand the difficulties and goals faced by the other. As a result of collective bargaining, an agreement is reached on matters such as wages, working hours, benefits, job grading, promotions, and dispute settlement, amongst others. Employees benefit from their status as members of the bargaining unit, which leads to the formation of the collective agreement. According to the findings of the survey respondents, this places employees in a position of power over the working environment.

### Representation

According to Table 4.4, an average of 22% (n=75) of respondents mentioned that representation is among the contributions that labour unions provide in ensuring that employees have access to good working conditions. The NLC looks out for the members' best interests despite the fact that a significant number of workers are subjected to an atmosphere that is both hazardous and disheartening. For instance, nurses at the Sekou Toure Referral Hospital are required to state this during the interview process.

*"Sometimes we are working without gloves or gumboots, which is something that is really hazardous to our health, and no one takes care of it, despite the fact that our labor union leaders are aware of this."*

The fundamental rationale for workers to band together in unions is based on the fear, whether real or perceived, that individual workers are unable to match the power of employers when it comes to protecting their interests in the employment relationship. This fear motivates workers to seek protection through collective action. Workers who organize themselves into unions or join existing ones do so in the hopes of achieving power parity in the workplace and of improving the protection of their own interests.

There are a few different approaches that worker representation could take. Workers are legally obligated to have a representative in pay talks as well as agreements for broader conditions of employment, such as the working environment, which includes working tools, health and safety conditions, and other related topics. Because hostile employers are becoming more common, it is essential for workers to have legal representation in order to protect their rights. They are required to have legal counsel present at disciplinary hearings. First and foremost, workers have a need for representation at the national level, which includes state enterprises and organizations such as the administration of social security.

In the majority of African countries, the NLC has battled for the rights of workers to be represented in disciplinary proceedings either by their union representative or by a representative chosen by the person or group of workers themselves. An individual member of the union who is having a grievance or disciplinary problem can receive the services of the union if they choose to have their case handled as individual representation. This form of representation is one of the forms that representation can take.

Collective representation, in which unions represent employees as a group during disciplinary hearings, is another form of representation that may be available. In most cases, collective representation is utilized whenever there is a risk of layoffs being imposed over an entire workforce as a consequence of a company undergoing organizational reorganization. In situations like these, labour unions have traditionally represented their members during the negotiation process for their severance packages. In Africa, the National Labour Congress (NLC) has a strong track record of successfully representing the interests of workers in the reorganization of several enterprises. This was especially true during the days of structural adjustment policies, when workers in the public sector were subjected to mass layoffs. In most cases, grievances and disagreements are to be addressed according to the terms of the collective agreement. Workers have the possibility to have their unions either represent them or accompany them during disciplinary procedures because, for the most part, these processes take place internally and are not subject to judicial review.

At the national level, the NLC also represents the workers' interests in a number of state-run businesses and government institutions. One area where labor union involvement has been seen across Africa is in the administration of social security. The National Labour Congress (NLC) is represented on boards in this area solely to ensure that the interests of not only their members but also the workers in general are protected.

### **Employee Welfare**

According to the findings of the research, which are presented in Table 4.4, 29% (n=75) of respondents believe that one of the benefits achieved by employees who are members of Labour unions is an improvement in employee welfare. Unions have been effective in their efforts to improve working conditions and terms for their members. They represent the interests of workers and have been successful in securing a variety of benefits for those workers, including higher wages for unionized employees, a work-life balance that is characterized by reasonable work schedules, job security, and protection from arbitrary action by employers.

According to Dessler (2001), the fact that discrimination in the workplace has been criminalized and that workers have access to health care, safe working conditions, and guaranteed Social Security is also partially attributable to the activities of labor unions. Workers have been given dignity in the workplace thanks in large part to the efforts of unions, which also continually support improvements in welfare and standards.

### **Fair Practices**

Table 4.4 shows that an average of 13% (n=75) respondents said that NLC contribute to fair practices in the workplace. An employer's unfair labor practices are dealt with by the labor union. According to Nigerian labor law, it is illegal for employers to control a union, discriminate against employees who participate in union activity, and victimize employees who bring legal action against them before the labor court. Every employee is entitled to the freedom of association, which includes the ability to (a) create and join a labor union and (b) take part in the organization's legitimate operations. (Employment and labour relation act of 2004,s act 09(1). (1).

The union can speak with the board on behalf of the workers if the employer engages in any of these illegal actions. For instance, the union for engineers and technical staff at Boeing Co. filed complaints against the business for interfering with personnel engaging in organized union action. In order to address unjust treatment of employees, the labour court may issue orders to cease and desist from further action or to restore the employee. If employers disregard labor court rulings, unions can file an appeal in federal court to force them to comply with the law.

### **Manpower Development**

The field data in Table 4.4 show that 15.3% (n=75) of respondents believed that unions are essential for creating the labor force needed for strong worker protection. The campaign for regulation in areas that affect workers at work is spearheaded by the unions. They advocate for the establishment of manpower development programs and tell the staff about them. The Social Security Act and the Occupational Safety and Health Act, for example, were enacted as a result of union efforts to improve working conditions. To make sure they are properly implemented, unions keep track of how employee welfare and manpower development programs are progressing.

Furthermore, the research's findings show a substantial correlation between NLC membership advantages and significance ( $r=0.859$ ,  $P=0.01$ ), indicating that many people perceive labor unions to be very helpful at work and that they play a big role in ensuring that employees have decent working conditions.

This result is consistent with Ian's (2009) assertion that NLC ensure that all people have access to a decent life and decent work in a healthy environment, access to high-quality public services like health, water, and sanitation, and access to high-quality education and skills training as a means of landing a decent job. Therefore, the primary reason for creating or joining a union and engaging in collective bargaining is to balance or at the very least lessen the power imbalance between employers and employees.

---

By doing this, unions are able to promote social and economic justice, as well as equality, fairness, respect for human and workers' rights, not only at work but also, and maybe more significantly, in society at large. And this is founded on the understanding that workers are not resourceful or strong enough to demand their rights at work on their own. Additionally, it is acknowledged that the cohesion and collectivism of workers are powerful.

**Table 4.5: Relationship between NLC and Manpower development**

	Value	df	Sig
<b>Pearson Chi-Square</b>	18.451	15	.001
<b>Likelihood Ratio</b>	13.821	15	.030
<b>N of Valid Cases</b>	75		

Source: Field Data (2015)

#### 4.5 Contribution of Labour union in Creating Manpower Development

Respondents were asked to describe how labor unions helped employees with various initiatives for manpower development made by employers in labor-related instances in order to react to this purpose. Figure 4 shows that respondents provided a variety of contributions, as follows: 21% (n=75) Reconciliation Participation, 24% (n=75) 20% of participants (n=75) in arbitration 34% (n=75) of participants in mediation and 34% (n=75) of those in workforce development. This suggests that the NLC helps employees who are involved in labor conflicts that require legal action by enrolling them in training and development programs.

#### 5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of the first research objective, which looked at how labor unions support workers in wage negotiations, show that a significant portion of workers believe that labor unions are not doing enough to help with wage negotiations because the demanded salary scale level has not been reached and the salary level increment is set by the employers (government). This has been seen when a significant portion of respondents do not value the efforts made by their NLC to negotiate with their employers. The employees' continued complaints about the current NLC are a result of its inadequate bargaining power.

A huge number of employees claim that they are still working in very poor working conditions, which makes it difficult for labor unions to help employees ensure good working conditions. This is also true as it relates to the second purpose. Therefore, it may be said that the labor union is not helping them as much as the goal. Furthermore, the discussion demonstrates that NLC provides only rudimentary assistance to workers in various labor cases and other areas of manpower development because a sizable percentage of respondents claim that some disciplinary actions are still administered to employees without the help of the appropriate labor union. As a result, NLC offers fewer services to help workers resolve their labor-related disputes.

In conclusion, NLC are the primary and essential link for the development of the working relationship. It is a useful tool for assisting workers who deal with various work limitations. Employees are able to find individual or group solutions to challenges at work and develop the necessary interests. NLC has a history of advocating for the financial and social interests of not just their members but also of employees and their families. The goals of unions are to raise wages and improve working and hiring conditions for their members. By doing this, NLC contributes to a world and society riddled with outrageous inequity and injustice while also promoting working and employment fairness.

In order to secure benefits for their members, such as increased wages, bonuses, various allowances, insurance benefits, overtime payment and non-financial benefits like job security, a comfortable workplace, recreational facilities, and a decrease in employer apprehension through collective bargaining, the NLC has reportedly not pursued these core objectives in the necessary range. For instance, due to law negotiating power, NLC has not been able to fully achieve for employees a number of significant social benefits that are employer-funded within the scope of the collective bargaining process. These include, but are not limited to, provident funds, housing/accommodation loans or subsidies, burial grants, interest-free loans, and educational scholarships, often known as study with pay for workers. In fact, it appears that these unions' duties include protecting the welfare of its members inextricably. Government structure and money are the major obstacles facing unions as they attempt to increase services and benefits for their members. Historically, unions have relied on collective bargaining and union dues to provide these services and benefits. In addition, the unions' finances are being negatively impacted by the declining membership, which prevents them from offering services and benefits outside of the context of collective bargaining.

The findings, however, led to the following suggestions.

### 1. Recommendations to NLC

The NLC should frequently provide education and training to the employees about their working rights and their rights from being a member of a union. This will prepare them enough for good grounds for demanding where their rights have been denied by their employers. There should be strong NLC that can resist policies and programmes that seek directly or indirectly to reduce their power in order to constantly help members to prosper.

Establishment of a reporting system which allows for timely monitoring and follow-up of manpower developments also which gives up-to-date as well as to and flow information about financial stand of the labour union, different legal and other regulatory employment framework changes, and other information's related to their members both individually and collectively. Creation of a good platform through which employees could participate or involved in day to day collective decision making of the labour union apart from being represented.

Establishment of Evaluation Framework for Services and Benefits .The study established that though services and benefits were offered, there were no effective means to evaluate the satisfaction of such services and benefits. It is therefore recommended that user satisfaction surveys be instituted to evaluate the impact of the various services and benefits currently offered in the NLC. External independent customer satisfaction surveys could be one way to do this.

### 2. Recommendations to Employees

To avoid needless delays in finding solutions, employees should always bring their issues to the union as soon as they can. To eliminate fear, corruption, disloyalty, and untruthfulness among union members, workers should ensure the election and appointment of committed leaders to their union who could stand firm whilst defending the interests of members to the employers.

### 3. Recommendations to the Government

The counsel from the labour union should always be heeded by the government. By doing this, the welfare of the employee will be enhanced, and work performance will improve for the growth and sustainability of the nation. Reforming the employment and labour laws is necessary to improve the NLC's independence because some of the leaders of the labour movement are presidential appointments. For instance, the president appoints the general secretary of TUCTA, all other NLC members, and some members of the commission for mediation and arbitration (C.M.A), which limits the flexibility of the unions. Additionally, this will lessen riots and strikes, which have a negative impact on both employee productivity and government resources.

High-quality labor relations are essential to managing economic change and lowering its costs, assisting in employee and corporate adaptation while shielding them from short-term shocks. Positive economic and social effects result from good employer-worker relations, even during periods of sluggish economic growth.

## REFERENCES

- Burrough, P.A. & McDonnell, R.A. (1998). *Principals of Geographical Information Systems*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Chapman, A. D. (2005). *Principles and Methods of Data Cleaning – Primary Species and Species- Occurrence Data*, version 1.0. Report for the Global Biodiversity Information Facility, Copenhagen.
- Dessler, G. (2001). *Management: Leading People and Organization in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. Harlow: Prentice Hall.
- Ekpoi, E.J. (2018). The Nigeria Labour Congress and national development (1993 – 2000). *European Journal of Political Science Studies*, 2(1),172-193
- Khabo, F.M. (2008). *Collective Bargaining and Labour Disputes Resolution-Is SADC Meeting the Challenge*. Issue Paper 30. The International Labour Organization Sub-Regional Office for Southern Africa, Harare, Zimbabwe.
- Ngwama, J., Anyim, F. & Nnamd, R. (2020). Trade Union Organising Domestic Workers and its Effect on Socio-Economic Development in Nigeria. *ACTA UNIVERSITATIS DANUBIUS*, 16(3),74-88
- Obiekwe, O. & Obibhunun, L. (2019). The roles of labour union in nigeria industrial harmony and development. *International Journal of Sustainable Development & World Policy*, 8(1),10-20
- Okolie, U.C. & Agbefe, S. (2020). A Critical Study of the Key Challenges of Trade Unionism in Nigeria's Fourth Republic. *International Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Studies*, 7 (11), 16-24
- Onwochei, N. N, Uzoigwe, M. C. & Ajino, O. (2019). Managing labour unionism for industrial harmony and academic excellence in university education programmes in Cross River State, Nigeria. *Global Journal of Human Resource Management*, 7(4), 1-15