

ASSESSMENT OF FACTORS AFFECTING TRADE UNION IN NIGERIAN CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

Benjamen Adeyemi

Department Construction management and Quantity Surveying,
University of Johannesburg, South Africa.

adeyemibensunkanmi@yahoo.com

Clinton Aigbavboa

Department Construction management and Quantity Surveying,
University of Johannesburg, South Africa.

caigbavboa@uj.ac.za

Abstract:

Trade union is a structured organization of construction workers created to defend, share ideas and information among themselves in the construction industry. This study assessed factors affecting trade union in Nigeria construction industry. The factors affecting trade union are union's strikes, arbitration, job stability, solidarity, decision making, organizational context, union wages situation, minority, conformity, competition and conflict, leadership. Descriptive survey was used in this study. The study targeted construction trade unions in Akure, Ondo state of Nigeria. A total number of sixty (60) questionnaires were administered to Construction workers such as bricklayers, carpenters, electricians, plumbers and welders. All administered questionnaires were completed and returned. The data obtained were analysed using descriptive statistics tools such as frequency, mean as well as percentiles. The study revealed that union strike is the major factors affecting trade union in the construction industry. This study recommends that there should be a quick response to construction trade union needs in orders to minimized union strike.

Keywords

Trade Union, Construction Industry, Construction Workers, Factors, Union Strike.

1. INTRODUCTION

Trade union involves various members that represent the exact concern of workers in the construction (Tar, 2009). However, Nigerian construction trade unions have symbolized welfares for the members in the organization. According to Adefolaju (2013) trade unions are usually planned alliances of construction workers which relate together with employers on numerous problems linked to the circumstances of engagement of their members. In Nigeria, the controls of construction trade unions has been extended as fresh order which gives them influence to

undertake the responsibilities of defensive and guiding workers' rights, wellbeing with awareness.

Keane (1992) recommended that power of construction trade union is based on some factors which are frequently giving the yearly fees to the organization, participants eager to contribute in the decisions decided by other union members, and the extent of the trade union itself.

Moreover, from the previous literature review on construction trade union capacity, the mass of trade union participants or the development of trade unions does not seem to upset the wider qualitative feature of union ability (MacKenzie, 2010). This could be imaginable by which construction trade unions with a huge number of members are pathetic due to members can be inactive due to the trade union's actions or could not partake in union's actions (Gall, 2005).

Trade unions however effort is to advance the relations as well as circumstances of service of their participants by the client or government with the procedure of shared collaboration. The trade unions' roles varies from "financial, governmental, communal wellbeing, emotional benefits as well as the chances to contribute in decision-making purposes in the construction industry" (Fajana, 2000). Trade unions are realized to be in corporation along with firms though it has been with component of realism, distinguishing that the innovative unionisms appear to be reasonable and mollifying to uphold sustenance from firms. Beardwel and Claydon (2007) struggle that the perception of common organization might be interrogated if not helpful of the directors in various construction firms.

The significance of trade unions in the construction industry, despite the fact of giving assistance to their participants, has additional been placed in their responsibilities in discussing some inherent differences in the construction industry.

Ebbinghaus and Visser (2000) pronounced that construction trade unions have improved from "social mutual support associations, mere negotiating mediators or just supplicants" and are now fully involved in a common measure whereby the employed members in the construction industry has upheld mass equality. This study contributes to the knowledge of understanding in various factors affecting construction trade union.

2. LITERATURES REVIEW ON TRADE UNION IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

2.1 Overview of Nigerian construction industry

Construction industry in Nigeria is highly composite due to the extensive diverse categories of clients and professionals. It comprises of public as well as private clients, contractors, and universal construction firms, little technology firms and erudite experts together with the entire variety of construction professionals associated in the industry (Adamu et al 2015). The construction industry also comprises of trade union workers such electricians, bricklayers plumbers, and welders. The construction industry In Nigeria remains as the foremost energizing in the nation's financial development as well as expansion. This robust affair among the economy with the construction industry additional supports the essence to guarantee that project preparation and organization are lucrative (Mansfield et al, 1994).

Roodman and Lennsen (1994) stated that one tenth of worldwide economy is devoted to building, functioning and preparing structures, and this actions account for 40% of substantial flow inward of the world economy, with abundant of the other intended for transportations, bridges as well as automobiles to link the structures.

Nigerian construction industry consists of trade union that is working collectively to improve the industry. Nigerian construction trade Union effort encompasses a diversity of members that protect the exact workers welfare. They involve in hostility for the wellbeing of union members, precisely for good earnings as well as improved circumstances of service, where consultations fail to accomplish the wanted outcome, trade unions are well-known for optional to essential accomplishment which are work to rule, protests and street complaints (Anyim et al, 2013) .

2.2 Factors affecting trade union in the construction industry

According to Cote (2013) construction trade unions force establishments to upsurge wages, company management which must be answered by ensuring that they acquire extreme income from labor if they have to decrease costs of labour. However, regarding the factors affecting trade union in the construction industry. Kneitshel (1986) suggested some challenges influencing the capability of construction trade unions which are solidarity, freedom of the labor

union, democracy, unity, and obligation. Additionally, Miller and Form (1951; 1964; 1980) also categorized issues firming the trade union into two which are external and internal issues. These external issues contain a lawful method which defends the trade union with the reception by employees that “trade union is seen as the genuine organization” (Wilawan, 2007). However, some other factors affecting trade union in the construction industry are union strikes, arbitration, job stability, decision making, organization context, union wages situations, minority, conformity, competition and conflicts, leadership.

Bendix (2015) described union strike as a momentary, cooperative suppression of trade union which aim to discontinue or obstruct the furtherance of organization and also to gratify the firm to take notice of the workers’ requests. Bendix (2015) additional stated that despite the fact that strike is an impermanent measure, it is also essential. However, workers board on industrial action to provisionally refuse their services from the organization so as to enable the employer to discuss issues with them. While the internal factors may comprise the assets or incomes possessed from the trade union (Miller and Form 1951; 1964). Alena (2012) solidarity among the union members come up based on welfares, goals, standard and compassion in the construction industry. While Adewumi (2004) sated that leaders should be well acquitted with decision making. Adrian, (2004) stated that job stability is one of the fundamental issues affecting trade union.

According to Adefolaju (2013) Trade unions remain to encounter numerous issues that are posing a hazard to its capability to establish as well as to assist their members. Innovative of constructions works and locations hostile to construction union actions has consequently developed, such as casualization of work, freelance tasks, out-contracting, engaging women to exchange men but paid inferior wages, lack of wages payment and non-remittance of check-off dues.

3 Methodology

This is the factual part for data collection and interpretation. It clarifies procedures to survey before arriving at the thoughtful of the phenomenon. Primary source of data collection of a well-

structured questionnaire, which was administered to the appropriate construction workers (bricklayers, carpenters, welders, plumbers and electricians in Akure, Ondo State of Nigeria.

3.1 Sample Size

The sample frame for this study consist of the list of electricians, plumbers, carpenters, bricklayers and welders based in Akure of Ondo state Nigeria (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1

S/N	Trade Unions	Population
1	Carpenters	30
2	Plumbers	25
3	Electricians	36
4	Welders	25
5	Bricklayers	34
Total		150

The sample size for the study was analysed for construction trade unions in Akure, Ondo state. A total of sixty (60) questionnaires were administered to the respondents. The sample size was gotten through the use of Yamani formula;

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where;

n = Sample size

N= Total population

e = level of precision (0.05)

3.2 Data collection

The instrument used for the gathering of data was a well-designed questionnaire administered by the researcher using programmed questions. The first section of the question captured the background information of the respondents while the other section focused on matters relating to the research.

4 Data Analysis

Suitable methods of data analysis are highly important to allow accurate process of data collected. In this study, the data was presented in tables. The data was analyzed using percentile, and mean. A total of sixty (60) questionnaires were administered to the respondents to solicit for close ended responses, all administered questionnaires were completed and returned.

Table 4.1 Respondent data

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Bricklayer	14	23.3
Carpenter	12	20.0
Plumber	10	16.6
Electrician	14	23.3
Welder	10	16.6
Total	60	100.0

Table 4.1 shows the trade of respondents whereby 23.3%are Bricklayer, 20.00% are carpenters, 16.67% are plumbers, 23.33 are electricians and 16.67% are welders.

Table 4.2 Years of experience

Response	Frequency	Percentage
1-5years	9	15.0
6-10years	10	16.7
11-15years	11	18.3
16-20years	8	13.3
21-30years	13	21.7
Above 30years	9	15.0
Total	60	100.0

Table 4.2 shows that the year of experience of respondents. 21-30 years of respondents experience has the highest percentage of 21.7%. 11-15 years has 18.3%, while 6-10years has 16.7%, 1-5years has 15.0%. Also from the table 30years has 15.0%, 16-20 years has 13.3%. It means that were all qualified to provide accurate information required.

4.3Years of Joining Construction trade union

Years	Frequency	Percentage
1-5years	12	20.0
6-10years	17	28.3
11-15%	15	25.0

16-20%	11	18.3
21years above	5	8.5
Total	60	100

Table 4.3 shows the year of joining construction trade union by which 6-10% of joining construction trade union has the highest percentage of 20%, 11-15 years has 25%, 1-5years has 20%, 16-20years has 18.3%, 21 years and above has 8.5%.

Table 4.4 Benefits expected from joining construction trade union

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Free legal protection	33	55
Better wages and working condition	15	25
Cheaper purchasing of construction materials	6	10
Helps in Education	6	10
Total	60	100

Table 4.4 Shows benefits expected from being a member of construction trade union in which free legal protection has the highest percentage of 55%. Better wages and working condition has 25%. Then, better purchasing of construction materials which has 10% as well as also help in education also has 10%

Table 4.4 Factors affecting construction trade union action

Factors affecting construction trade union	Mean	Rank
Union strike	3.95	1
Arbitration	3.93	2
Job stability	3.88	3
Solidarity	3.83	4
Decision making	3.73	5
Organizational context	3.7	6
Union wage situation	3.67	7
Minority	3.57	8
Conformity	3.55	9
competition	3.48	10
Leadership	3.33	11

Table 4.4 show factors affecting construction trade union in which union strike has the highest mean of 3.95. Follow by the Arbitration which has 3.93 of mean, Job stability has 3.88 as mean, Solidarity has 3.83 as mean, followed by the decision making of 3.73 as mean.

5 Results and Findings

According to the data analysis, this study has been on different opinion, on the basis of factors affecting trade union in the construction industry. Firstly, the result shows the trade of respondents whereby 23.33% are bricklayers and also 23.33% are electricians. This shows that bricklayers and carpenters have the highest percentage.

The results also show the year of experience of respondents in which respondents with 21-30years of experience has the highest frequency. This meaning that they are highly qualified to provide the accurate information required. The year of joining construction industry was also assessed. It was realized that 6-10years of joining construction trade union has the highest frequency. The result also shows the benefits expected from being a member of construction trade union. It was shown that legal protection of union members has the highest percentage of 55%. Meaning that, as a construction union member there is higher tendency of been protected against any form of conflicts in the construction industry.

From the result, it was discovered that union strike has the highest mean of 3.95. Marindany, (2012) stated that strikes caused by trade unions result to work stoppages which usually lead to loss of performance in the construction industry.

The result shows the factors affecting trade union actions in the construction industry. It was discovered that Arbitration has 3.93 of mean. Secondly, Job stability has 3.88 as mean. Adrian (2014) states that one of the fundamental issues for trade union leaders and members are long term job stability. Also the result shows that solidarity has 3.83 as mean, followed by decision making. According to Alena (2012) solidarity is agreement in a group that produces based on interests, purposes, common understanding among the union members.

6 Conclusions

This study has been able to evaluate some factors affecting trade union in the Nigerian construction industry. From the study, various factors affecting trade union in the construction industry has been assessed such as union strikes, arbitration, job stability, decision making, organization context, union wages situations, minority, conformity, competition and conflicts, leadership. From the findings in this study. It was discovered among the trade union member that union strike is the major factors affecting trade union in the construction. However, this study recommends that there should be a quick response to trade union needs in orders to minimized union strike.

7 Recommendations

- i.) Further study can assess ways to improve construction trade union performance in Nigerian Construction industry
- ii.) Further study can evaluate the impacts of strike actions on trade union effectiveness in Nigerian construction industry

REFERENCES

- Adamu M, Bioku, J.O, and Kolawole, O. B. (2015) Assessing the Characteristics of Nigerian Construction Industry in Infrastructure Development. *Journal of Engineering Research and Technology (IJERT)*. Vol 4 issue 11, Page 546-555
- Adewumi F. (2004). Ideological posturing and Trade union leadership in Nigeria (The story of Comrade Ali Chiroma). Hure Prints, Ibadan.
- Adefolaju T. (2013) Unions in Nigeria and the Challenge of Internal Democracy. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences* Published by MCSER-CEMAS-Sapienza University of Rome
- Adrian J.J, (2004). Five leadership skills for implementing productivity improvement. *Construction Productivity newsletter Adrian international, LLC, VOL. (20) NO (3)*.
- Alena (2012), Solidarity in contemporary Biotics- Towards a new approach *Bioethics (26/7):343-350*
- Beardwell, J., & Claydon, T. (2007). *Human resource management: a contemporary approach*. Pearson Education
- Benidx, S. (2015). *Labour relations a Southern Africa perspective*. Cape Town: Juta& Co. Ltd.
- Cote, M. (2013), Productivity and labor unions. *CA Magazine, 146(4), 56*.
- Ebbinghaus, B. and J. Visser(2000). *The Societies of Europe: Trade Unions in Western Europe Since 1945*. Basingstoke, Macmillan Reference Ltd.
- Gall, G. (2005). Organizing non-union workers as trade unionists in the “New Economy” in Britain. *Economic and Industrial Democracy, 26(1), 41-63*.
- Fajana, S. (2000). *Industrial Relations in Nigeria Theory and Features*; Lagos, Labofin and Co.

- Keane, J. (1992). *Disorganized capitalism: Contemporary transformations of work and Politics*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Mansfield, N.R., Ugwu, O.O. & Doran, T. (1994) "Causes of Delay and Cost Overruns in Nigerian Construction Projects". *International Journal of Project Management*, 12(4), Pp.254- 260.
- Marindany, K. (2012, January 30), Strike over as Portland staff goes back to work. *The Star*. Retrieved from <http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/article-32221/strike-over-portlandstaff-go-back-work>
- McKenna, E. and Beech, N. (2002). *Human resource management*, Prentice Hall
- Miller, D.C., & Form, W.H. (1964). *Industrial sociology*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Wilawan, K. (2007). *Labor relation* (translated from Thai title). (10th ed.). Bangkok: Winyuchon Press.
- Nwoko, K. (2009). Trade unionism and governance in Nigeria: A paradigm shift from labour Activism to political opposition. *Information, Society & Justice*, 2, 2, pp. 139-152.
- Roodman MD, Lennsen N. Our buildings, ourselves. *World Watch*. 1994;7(6):21-29.
- Tar, U.A (2009). *Organized Labour and Democratic struggles in Nigeria*. *Information society and Justice* (Textbook) pp22.

BIOGRAPHIES

Benjamin Adeyemi is currently a fulltime Masters degree student in the department of Construction Management at University of Johannesburg, South Africa. **Benjamin Adeyemi** holds a Bachelor of Technology in Quantity Surveying from Federal University of Technology, Akure.

Clinton Aigbavboa is an associate professor at University of Johannesburg. He is currently the Dean of Post graduate study at University of Johannesburg. **Prof. Clinton Aigbavboa** holds a PHD degree in Engineering management from University of Johannesburg. He has received national and international recognition in his field of research.