



An Assessment of Globalisation and the Future of Trade Unionism in Nigeria

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Abstract. Globalization today appears to be the current important phenomenon shaping the environment for development. It arose from the debris of previous theories whose failure gave lead to the search for new developmental paradigms. It has become the most pervasive and important phenomenon in turning around the world economy. It generally espouses a number of inter-related features of the world economy such as rapid advances in communication and transportation technologies, expanding spatial scope for private organizations and financial institution business activities, among several other opportunities. It is part of the continuous efforts towards restructuring of state and economy in ways that the expanded markets and the spread of the use of technology and ideas will lead to increased productivity and a higher quality of life for the people. Evidences abound that globalization is creating a high level of homogeneity in the needs and desires of the world. With globalization, economies and communities become integrated into a centralized arrangement of ideas especially for developed countries' markets and technology. However, the phenomenon also bears negative impact on various economies especially the developing ones whose economies rather than growing continue to think. One area of negative consequence of globalization is in the activities of trade unions. This paper therefore looks at the phenomenon and the extent to which its impact on trade unionism in Nigeria and proffers mitigating efforts.

Keywords: Globalisation, Economy, Development, Trade Unionism, Nigeria.

1. Introduction

Countries all over the world continue with the quest for rapid and enduring socio-economic development. This has triggered various developmental paradigms. These countries leverage on this with the expectation of increased loyalty, commitment and level of productivity which would in turn enhance the level of development. Nigeria, as a case study, has longed for industrial development and thus had always sought the appropriate method to attain this. This is with a view to increasing the national output, generating revenue, attaining equitable development and reducing her dependence on other countries. It is obvious that industrialization provides the key to development in contemporary societies with industrial organisations becoming critical in resolving the complex social and economic problems facing most countries. According to Imhonopi and Urim (2013), industrial development indicates the progress attained in the expansion of the economy and commercial activities in the country through extensive industrial production of goods and services. It is also expected to drive the transformation of raw materials to consumer goods, new capital goods that would enhance the production of consumer goods and social overhead capital. Furthermore, industrialization leads to the engagement of both human and mechanical resources in transforming raw

materials for immediate consumption or for further production. Mobarak (2001) opines that industrial development is central to the establishment of production base and the maximization of the export capabilities of the economy. This he believes will lead to the establishment of new technologically competitive industries and the expansion and renovation of existing industries in a bid to increasing their productive capacity.

For Adefolaju (2017), industrialisation creates employment opportunities which lead to poverty alleviation among the citizens. This motive has led Nigeria to introduce various programmes aimed at employment generation and uplifting the standard of living of the people. However, the implementations of these economic blueprints especially within the context of globalization have affected various institutions' and individuals' economic prosperity. One of the institutions affected by this liberal economic policy is the trade union movement. Before dwelling on this institution, the next section will endeavour to put globalization into perspective.

2. Globalization: Elements and Issues

Globalization continues to be an important phenomenon that is still shaping and directing the path towards economic development. The concept has been defined severally. Ehiabhi (2004) sees it as the process of unifying world's resources for the good of humanity". It may also be seen as "the economic interdependence of countries worldwide through the increasing volume and variety of cross border transactions in goods and services and of international capital flows and also through the more rapid and widespread diffusion of technology" (International Monetary Fund (IMF), 1997). For Orubuloye (2004), it is the capitalist enterprise envisioning the whole world as a unified system of the area and the peripheries with the latter aspiring to adopt the political economy of the former and with gradual internalization of the Euro-American socio-political, economic and technological failures. It is a concept of un-interrupted social, political and economic relations of nation of the world (Omotosho and Adefolaju 2010). The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in its 1997 report sees globalization as:

Encapsulating both description and a prescription. The description is the widening of international flows of trade, finance and information in a single integrated global market. On the other hand, the prescription is to liberalize national and global market in the belief that the free flow of trade, finance and information will produce the best

outcome for growth and human welfare" (UNDP, 1997).

The seemingly popularity of globalization as a concept today stems from two major reasons. Firstly is its scale and its speed and the way that technology – especially telecommunications and transportation is changing the world (Mallot, 1998). Secondly, the concept is the latest economic fact that has become widely accepted as changing the international environment and turning the whole world into a global village.

Globalization generally summaries a number of inter-related features of the world economy, rapid advances in communication and transportation technologies, expanding spatial scope for the business activities of private corporation and financial institutions, the integration of market across national borders and a higher degree of uniformity that set the rules of the game for economic actions and interaction on the part of private agents based in various countries. Globalization thus has the promise of new opportunities for expanded market and the spread of the use of technology and ideas. All of this holds out the promise not only for increased and greater productivity, but also in a higher standard of living for more people.

Guillen (2001) defines globalization as a process leading to greater inter-dependence and mutual awareness among economic political and social units in the world, and among actors in general. The starting point of the process is a controversial issue. Citing many authors, Guillen (2001) has identified three groups with assertions on the timing of the process.

The first group asserts that globalization is a recent phenomenon, as recently as the experience of the West. The second group mostly historian believes that the process started with the first circumnavigation of the Earth in 1519-21. The World System theorists are of the opinion that the expansion of European capitalism in the 16th century marks the beginning of globalization. For some economic historians, the starting point is the turn of the century which was the height of international trade and investment. A third group identifies the end of World War II which heralded the nuclear age, the emancipation of colonies, the renewed expansion of trade and investment and the economic rise of Northeast Asia. Guillen (2001) however concludes that globalization started with the dawn of history.

Guillen (2001) also sees no uniformity in its trend but a fragmented, incomplete, discourteous, contingent

and in many ways contradictory and puzzling process. He states that existing theoretical and empirical research on globalization is organised around five key issues. These are:

- Is it really happening?
- Does it produce convergence?
- Does it undermine the authority of nation states?
- Is it globally different from modernity? and,
- Is a global culture in the making?

Guttal (2000), opines that the process is serving and promoting free and unregulated markets as primary arenas of exchange for goods, services and money. The market is controlled by economic financial and political institutions such as multi and transnational corporation, financial spectators, investment firms and western countries who have benefited from political and economic gain of free market capitalizing. According to him, the elements of globalization are:

- The expanding role of international financial institutions (IFIs) such as world bank, IMF, ADB, WTO and the imposition of structural adjustment policies, sectoral reforms, etc.
- The internalization (globalization) of production.
- Increased dependence on export-led economic growth.
- Formation of transnational entities such as European Union, ASEAN, Mercosur, etc.
- Growth and expansion of multinational and transnational corporations,
- Influence of foreign governments in determining domestic policies in recipient countries through the use of Official Development Association (ODA),
- Neo-liberal economic and political reforms which began with the creation of Bretton-Wood Institutions.

The collapse of the centrally planned economies of the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc which hitherto offered an alternative platform to the free market economies of the west led to the expansion of globalization. Economic globalization is manifested today through three main neo-liberal policy prescriptions:

- **Deregulation:** A general withdrawal of the state from providing control or oversight over economic and financial transaction, the removal of all government or public intervention that might affect the free functioning of the market. For example, removal of price control on goods and services, dismantling a public subsidies etc.

- **Privatization:** Increased role of the private sector in providing all types of goods and services, transfer of ownership and management of public enterprises to private companies, change in operational aspects of public/state companies with increased stress on full cost recovery.
- **Liberalization:** Giving up domestic control our essential sections such as trade and finance, permitting foreign companies to own key enterprises such as national banks, easing control on foreign investment and capital, reducing trade tariffs, duties, restrictions and barriers etc.

The above-stated neo-liberal reforms imply an overall withdrawal of the state from its traditional roles of sovereign economic decision making, providing essential public services, developing and implementing policies aimed at promoting equity and ensuring adequate public protection for economically, socially and politically vulnerable population. Thus, they tend to increase the role and power of the private sector and a surrender of most economic transactions to the market in the belief that free and unfettered markets will somehow lead to the most efficient allocation of resources and eventually result in economic equality and improved quality of life for the populace. One crucial element of globalization is its drive towards reforms. One of these is privatization which usually reduces the role of the public sector and deregulation which encourages states withdrawal from its overbearing influence in the nation economic sphere. These portend far-reaching implications for labour relations in the country.

The consequences of this according to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) (1996) are the following challenges:

- Loss of policy autonomy by developing countries arising from economic liberalization policies and stringent multinational discipline;
- Financial openness and risk of instability and disruption due to the development sentiments of external investors and;
- The marginalization of developing countries by the developed ones especially Less Developed Countries (LDCs) who are unable to meaningfully participate in globalization due to supply-side weakness and debt.

These prescriptions were intended to leap-frog the developing nations especially to the state of industrialization. It is apparent however that these

promises have been exaggerated. For example, the privatization policy was tagged the vehicle to:

- Reduce the government's financial and administrative burden, particularly by undertaking and maintaining services infrastructure,
- Promote competition, improve efficiency and increase productivity in providing services,
- Stimulate private entrepreneurship and investment to accelerate economic growth, and
- Help reduce the public sector's presence and size with its monopolistic tendencies and bureaucratic support (Sundaram, 2018).

However, Sundaram (2018) contends that these expectations are from reality and the presumptions were 'naïve', confusing the question of ownership with that of promoting competition.

It is obvious that the neo-liberal policy has rather compounded the economic woes of many developing countries. Recently, in Nigeria, a labour leader called for the review of the privatization exercise in the power sector due to its failure (The Vanguard, 11/01/18).

In 2013, the Nigeria government privatized and handed over the assets of the defunct Power Holding Companies of Nigeria (PHCN) to new investors now known as Distribution Companies (DISCOs) and Generation Companies (GENCOs). However at its 5th Quadrennial and 10th National Delegates Conference, the President of the National Union of Electricity Employees (NUEE), Mr. M. Musa lamented that since privatization, the new investors in the power sector had not added any improvement to the sector, but had been milking the citizenry dry" (The Vanguard, 11/09/18)

Earlier, the Secretary General of the Union, Comrade Joe Ajaero had described the privatization of the power sector as a 'fraud'. He notes that "the privatization exercise had made electricity generation and consumption in the country ineffective" adding that the payment of over N200 billion to the private sector by the government after the privatization exercise leaves much to be desired and therefore called for its review.

2.1 Trade Unionism in Context

Trade Unions are organized collectivities of workers that interact with employers on various issues that

relate to the condition of employment of their members. They are a consequence of the industrial revolution which led to the development of industrial workers to seek an improvement on existing working conditions through collective action. They exist to perform certain functions for their members. These range from social welfare, economic, political, psychological benefits to providing opportunities to participate in the managerial functions of the industry. Through their collective efforts, they have acted as catalyst bringing about changes in the areas of labour standard, workers fundamental human rights and pay equity. According to Ebbinghaus and Visser (2000), trade unions emerged from social self-help associations and mere bargaining agents to become social movements through which the working class entered and promoted mass democracy. The significance of the group was highlighted by the International Labour Organization (ILO) (1998) when it asserts that:

Unions play important roles in guiding and upholding democracy and as defenders of social justice in particular by encompassing women, minorities, consumer groups, the unemployed and the growing ranks of working poor in the sphere of action.

Trade Union action is based on a class struggle between the capitalists and workers with opposing interests. On the one hand the capitalists attempt to increase their profit margins by cutting down wages and increasing loans or intensity of labour, the workers on the other hand attempt to increase their wages and to shorten their hours of work. A trade union is therefore an organization of workers which collectively deals with employers on behalf of employees, (Adewumi, 1997, Fajana, 2000, Visser 1991, Kolagbodi, 1995). The Trade Union Act (1973) in Nigeria defines a trade union as:

Any combination of workers or employees whether temporary or paramount, the purpose of which is to regulate the terms and conditions of employment of workers, whether the combination by reason of its purposes in restraint of trade and whether its purpose do or do not include the provision of benefits for its members (Fajana, 2000)

Trade unions thus engage employers in efforts to improve the terms and conditions of employment of their members through the process of collective bargaining. Furthermore, they as a collective confront issues that affect working people, including rights on the job, unemployment, precarious work, poverty and inequality. Godard (2003) opines that trade unions' functions are in the categories of

- The economic function;

- The democratization;
- The social democratic function; and
- The class conflict or revolution.

Being an important stakeholder in an organization and society generally, a union ensures that the creation and perpetuation of a conducive environment for both employees and employers to attain their respective objectives. Hence, according to Ratnam (2007), an effective trade union:

- Enrols all workers in the organization and is thus, representative of the target group of workers.
- Ensures job income and social security and career progression for its members.
- Improves the productivity of the enterprise or industry or economy; and
- Meets the expectation of the members in serving their interest.

Recent activities within the labour movement worldwide have focused on issues such as seeking reforms in labour legislations, promoting worker safety and health, improvement in the quality of life as well as product quality and more workers participation in the affairs of the organization.

In spite of being a veritable vehicle for addressing fundamental issues affecting their members (Briskin, 2000), trade unions are today faced with various challenges both internally and externally. At the internal front, they are confronted with poor leadership, inadequate union funds and their mismanagement, inactivity and insensitive to members' interest and internal squabbles (Fashoyin 1984). On the other hand, Ade-Ajayi (2003) believes that trade union have not lived up to societal expectations.

The greatest challenge trade unions are facing are in the area of external relations. The inevitable interaction with its environment/society poses the greatest impediment to union growth and development. This has been manifested in recent times in the globalization process and the enabling legislations/activities that accompany it. It is obvious that the main source of labour power has been the strike weapon.

Worldwide, this weapon has been witted down through various legislations of sovereign states and activities of business corporations. These corporations have installed new structure of production which makes them not to depend on one factory and one workforce for production any longer (Sklair, 1995). Furthermore, the new international

division of labour as foisted by the Transnational Corporation (TNCs) has become more flexible such that capital migrate in search of cheap labour while preventing labour from holding capital to ransom through a strike action. This has considerably reduced the power of unions to effectively organize locally. Scholte (1993) opines that the TNCs have succeeded in this because they are not accountable to the government. Their sovereign status enables them to deploy their capital for maximum profits and the type of employment policy they prefer. In addition, the TNCs have strengthened themselves by creating an adaptable or flexible workforce that can quickly respond to changes in market demands.

Within this context, therefore, workers are expected to accept job rotation and multi-skilling. With this, workers are unable to resist technological changes perceived to threaten job or to question management prerogatives. The TNCs also regard strong trade unions and tough laws protecting workers from unemployment as hindrances. They try to cheapen labour by relocating the more intensive aspects of their business to 'safe' labour areas with low wages and unorganized workers.

The process of globalization has therefore questioned the stability of tenure of workers as they can be more easily substituted for each other internationally. The TNCs further ensure that lower labour costs are attained by reducing the proportion of workers that are eligible for regular wages increase by virtue of their long period of service or who are entitled to enjoy pension, sickness and unemployment benefits, among others. As these categories of permanent employees get reduced, they are substituted with casual workers comprising part time, temporary and seasonal workers.

This casualization of workers has led to segmentation and oftentimes confrontation between permanent workers and the casualised majority. The casualised worker generally does enjoy few, if any, rights, and is also exposed to the constant risk of unemployment. Casualization of workers is very common in the oil, manufacturing and gas industries in Nigeria. It is characterized by:

- Bad work conditions, like job insecurity,
- Low wages,
- Lack of employment benefits that accrue to regular employees, and
- Loss of right to organize and collectively bargain (Kalejaiye, 2014).

The TNCs also subcontract more of their manufacturing processes to other specialized firms.

They sometimes lease or outsource some of their operations- for example- transportation to smaller agencies. They do also loan the patent of their products to smaller organizations (Grint, 1998). Notz (2004), states that the urge of TCNs towards ever cheaper workforce and ever-larger profit margins have led to a corporation mobility in the past few decades that is unprecedented in history.

The globalization process has spawned several factors that have adversely impacted on work itself, the worker and collectivities within the workplace. For some it has meant job losses, reduced hours of work and increased work-load. This has created a situation such as part time work, out-sourcing, employing women to replace men but paid lower wages, non-payment of wages and non-remittance of check-off dues. The process (automation and information as presently executed, is capable of permanently displacing workers from the manufacturing and service sectors. The implication of this transformation (globalization) otherwise known as 'Postmodernism' are:

- A decline in trade union membership, density and influence across the capitalist world;
- Absolute or relative decline in number of male, manual, full-time industrial workers and the use of female, non-manual part-time and service workers leading to a long term erosion of the traditional base of the labour movement.
- A decline in trade union movement as a political actor which seeks to represent the interest of more or less class conscious members alienated from society by relative deprivation and lack of skill. (Oechslin, 1997; Kelly, 1998)

Nigeria had in the 1980s adopted the policy recommendations of neo-liberalism which essentially meant the dismantling of the "remains of the regulationist welfare state". (Enwere and Khalil-Babatunde, 2014). These recommendations are the deregulation of business, privatization of public activities and assets, elimination of or cut backs in social welfare programmes, free trade benefits, among others. The adoption of the neo-classical strategies by the government was expected to pave way for the country's socio economic and industrial development. The failure of this strategy after some twenty years of practice led to the adoption of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) with the promise of turning the economy around and to promote industrial growth (Enwere and Khalil-Babatunde, 2014). SAP engendered the removal of

subsidies, deregulation of the financial sector, privatization of public-owned companies, and deregulation of upstream and downstream oil sectors "aimed at reducing the role of the state in stimulating industrial activities while increasing the relevance of private investment" (Enwere and Khalil- Babatunde, 2014).

Nigeria thus adopted the privatization policy believing that it will kick-start the journey towards industrialization and development and the eventual improvement in the quality of life of the citizenry. Towards this end, the Privatization and Commercial Act of 1988 and the Bureau of Public Enterprises Act of 1993 were promulgated respectively by the government. These documents define privatization as "the relinquishment of part or all of the equity and other interests held by the Federal Government or any of its agencies, in enterprises whether wholly or partly owned by the Federal Government". Similarly, Jerome 2008, cited in Kalejaiye A. O, Adebayo, K. and Lawal, O. (2013), sees privatization as a range of policy initiatives designed to alter the mix in ownership and management of enterprises away from government in favour of the private sector.

Basically therefore, the policy means the transfer of government-owned shares and interests in public and private concerns to private shareholders.

With the launching of an economic reform program between 2003 and 2007, named the National Economic Empowerment Development (NEEDS), Nigeria envisaged a raise in the country's standard of living through a variety of reforms that included deregulation, liberalization, macro-economic stability and privatization. These would eventually lead to the creation of over 7 million new jobs, diversify the economy, boost non-energy exports, increase industrial capability utilisation and improve agricultural productivity (APRM, 2008).

This was government's response to the problems faced by the government-owned corporation. According to Kalejaiye, Adebayo and Lawal(2013), *"these corporations annual profit plummeted due primarily to corruption and inefficiency, defective capital structures, lack of effective control and supervision by the government, outdated technology, nepotism, international competition etc."*

Ultimately, the exercise was expected to:

- Curb corruption, promote operational efficiency and effectiveness through better corporate governance;
- Generate employment through private sector-driven expansion;

- Cut down on public debt and control public spending;
- Develop the capital market, increase the stake of individual citizens in public enterprises through share ownership and encourage activities in other sectors of the economy (Kalejaiye , Adebayo, and Lawal, (2013)

That Nigeria has reaped the benefits of privatization remain contentious. Sulaimon (2013) contends that the programme in many developing countries including Nigeria has failed to yield the economic expectations. He believes that it was a contraption by business and political elite as well as regulatory agencies to use privatization as a tool for self-sustenance. One area where the impact of privatization has been recorded is the power sector where according to Kalejaiye Adebayo and Lawal (2013) “the process of fully-privatising the power sector has been riddled by the fact that some people who purchased the sector were acclaimed by the masses as corrupt ex-public servants”. This has led to strident calls by labour unions in the sector for its review.

The failure of the privatization programme and by extension globalization in Nigeria is exemplified in the manufacturing sector. This sector has continued to face rather difficult competitive challenges from foreign rivals because the citizens were dumping the locally made products for imported ones and these threaten their survival. The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) (2004) has also confirmed that “Nigerian manufacturers operate under the environment characterized by aggregated demand, high cost of production, deficit infrastructure facilities low investment, poor electricity supply and decreasing bank lending”. This invariably has led to low capacity utilization in the sector and concomitant reduction in employment through lay off of employees.

3. Globalisation and Trade Unionism in Nigeria: A Limiting Relationship.

Government had fingered public sector low performance for the new economic strategy. However it soon became obvious that the private sector-led economic drive could not achieve due to high cost of doing business in the country because of the need to duplicate essential infrastructure, lack of due process, the crime situation and non-transparency economic decision making process. All these impacted on the whole economy including the labour movement. Labour had always opposed measures that they

perceive would adversely affect its members (Zayyad, 2007). Labour views globalization as the purveyor of worker downsizing and out-sourcing which invariably lead to unemployment. More importantly, labour opposes globalization because it believes it will lead to de-centralization or abolishment of collective bargaining. Where this happens, it would weaken minimum wage regulation; promote individual over group contract and the neglect of tripartite decision making organization. According to Atzeni and Ghigliani (2007): *Capitalist restructuring have posed serious threats to trade unions worldwide since the mid-1970s. De-industrialisation, labour market, flexibility, managerial assault on labour process, virulent and anti-union policies are embedded in new managerial practice and unfavourable labour laws. This context has been conducive to a process of atomization and segmentation of the labour force that has severely affected trade union capacity to recruit and mobilize workers and represent their interests both at the workplace and in society*

In Nigeria, the activities of both government and employers have succeeded in limiting the ability of labour to organize and grow. In its 2011 annual report on Nigeria, the International Trade Union Congress (ITUC) states as follows:

- Anti-union attitudes persists in the oil industry;
- Union members lost their jobs as part of cost-cutting exercises;
- Collective bargaining ignored in many sectors;
- Electricity workers arrested for protesting against privatization plans;
- Law does not specifically protect workers from anti-union discrimination;
- Right to collective bargaining recognized by law but strictly regulated;
- Restrictions on the principle of free and voluntary bargaining;
- Authorities approval of freely concluded Collective Agreements required;
- Every agreement in the private sector must be registered with the government;
- The right to strike is recognized by law but strictly regulated;
- Excessive long prior notice/cooling off period as union must give 15 days’ notice for a planned strike;
- Compulsory recourse to arbitration;
- No strike in essential services;
- No strike or lockout for 10 years after a company begins its activities in a given Export Processing Zone (EPZ);

- PENGASSAN and NUPENG (Oil industry unions) report that prominent oil and gas servicing companies resist union attempts to obtain re-cognition for the respective unions with a view of negotiating collective bargaining agreement;
- NUPENG members were made redundant, while some others were dismissed in January 2010;
- Striking health workers were threatened with dismissal in February 2010 by Kaduna State government;
- Chevron sacked union leaders
- 43 teachers dismissed (15/10/2010)

The stifling of trade union activities was re-enforced by the Nigeria government with the passage of the Trade Unions (Amendment) Act. (2004). This law among its provisions criminalizes strike action to protest against government social or economic policies. Furthermore, under the fiscal, monetary, income, trade and debt policies, the Nigeria government had stated that "efficiency in the use of resources by effective privatization, rationalisation, elimination of wasteful expenditures and the proper channelling of scarce resources to the most rewarding areas of the economy shall be the practice" (FGN, 2000). The consequence of this is that many organizations in both public and private sectors resorted to reducing their work force under the guise of "right-sizing" and "down-sizing". According to various news reports:

- Access Bank sacks 1, 500 (The Punch, 2012)
- Airtel dismisses 3000 (Nigerian Tribune, 2011)
- Federal government to harmonise ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) reduce workforce by 28, 000 in 2013 (The Nation, 2012).

Furthermore the implementation of the federal government monetization policy led to several lower cadre employees such as drivers, cooks, cleaners, messengers, among other being retrenched. This becomes very critical to the labour movement when realised that the Federal Government is the highest employer of labour. To labour, this means a considerable loss of membership by the unions concerned and the consequent reduction in union income and capacity for mobilization.

In recent times trade unions have responded to these waves of 'attack' on their capacity to organise by picketing many organisations with various anti-labour practices which include:

- Management's refusal to obey the rule of law and laid down procedures towards amicable settlement of lingering labour issues;
- No conditions of service;
- No Collective Bargaining Agreements;
- Ban on union meetings and activities;
- No workplace democracy;
- Practice of out-sourcing, job contracting and casual employment;

4. Concluding Remarks

Globalisation as the new developmental process adopted by Transnational Corporations (TNCs) was designed to hasten the economic integration of nations of the world. While opposition has forcefully trailed it, its proponents continue to forge ahead in its implementation. Employers believe that it would facilitate capital inflow to the advantage of the economy while others note that the process has led to a reduction in the workforce. In Nigeria the implementation of the process has not yielded the desired results and consequently the productive sector of the economy has lagged behind leading to rationalisation of resources including the human element. With the retrenchment of many workers and the resort to outsourcing and casualization, it is obvious that trade unions are seriously challenged as they have lost many of their members and therefore the power to organise effectively. As the process appears entrenched in the economy it is for labour to find a way around it by being more resourceful in managing its affairs. Trade unions should also emphasise less of adversarial relationship with management by engaging it in more positive paths. For instance accepting re-training and multi-skilling for its members will open new frontiers in resource management. As this leads to further stability of the parent organisation, it will have multiplier effects on the union. Another surviving strategy for the unions is to organise the 'unorganised' workers in the informal sector and mainstream more women workers who are seen as the future face of trade unionism into their activities.

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