



## Exploring the Relationship Between Employee Casualization and Workplace Productivity in Selected Manufacturing Firms in Edo State, Nigeria: A Contemporary Sociological Analysis

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**Abstract.** The essence of organization productivity is profits maximization. Achieving this requires the efficiency of staff output and in cases where more hands are needed, casual workers are engaged to increase production output and this can only be sustained when there are good relationships within the organization space. Therefore, this study seeks to examine the relationship Between Employee Casualization and Workplace Productivity in Selected Manufacturing Firms in Edo State. The Labour Market Segmentation theory by Michael Piore and Peter Doeringer were adopted for the study. Been a cross-sectional study, a sample size of 405 respondents were systematically selected for the study and both qualitative and quantitative instrument were used complementarily for the study. Finding from the study revealed that employee is associated with generally high levels of perceived productivity, largely sustained by supervisory support, motivation, and cordial management–employee relations. Motivation and harmonious relations enhance efficiency but persistent concerns about job security and unequal treatment remain. Based on this, conclusion and advocacy were deduced.

**Keywords:** Casual Workers, Casualization, Management, Productivity

### 1. Introduction

Employees constitute a critical form of human capital through which organizations attain improved performance, competitiveness, and long-term sustainability. Consequently, enhancing employee productivity has remained a central concern in human resource management and organizational studies. This sustained scholarly attention is grounded in the

understanding that workforce productivity significantly shapes organizational efficiency, competitive advantage, and overall performance outcomes (Omotayo & Omiunu, 2019). Within organizational contexts, employee productivity (often referred to as workforce performance) denotes the efficiency with which individuals or groups transform work inputs into measurable outputs within a specified period (Massoudi & Hamdi, 2019). Conceptually, productivity is understood as both an individual and organizational phenomenon. Hirt et al. (2011) describe it as the level of work accomplishment attained by an employee following the exertion of effort, emphasizing its individualized dimension.

Meneze (2006) views it as employees' capacity to deliver goods and services in accordance with, or beyond, employer expectations. In organizational analysis, productivity is commonly assessed by comparing total output with the labour and material inputs utilized in production processes (Naqvi et al., 2013). Given its central importance to organizational performance and continuity, identifying the factors that influence employee productivity remains imperative. Existing studies highlight several interrelated determinants, including job stress, workplace environment, organizational culture and structure, institutional policies, motivation, leadership styles, employee skills, and individual personality traits (Lawrence, 2010; Hirt et al., 2011; Duru & Shimawua, 2017). These factors operate within specific socio-economic and institutional contexts to shape employee morale, commitment, engagement, and quality of output.

Among these determinants, employee casualization has emerged as a particularly

salient feature of contemporary work arrangements, especially in developing economies such as Nigeria. Casualization refers to employment practices in which workers are engaged on temporary, part-time, seasonal, or contract bases, often without legally recognized long-term employment relationships or access to standard employment benefits (Solaja, 2015). Sociologically, casualization reflects the growing expansion of non-standard work arrangements driven by globalization, technological advancement, labour market flexibilization, and organizational cost-reduction strategies.

Empirical evidence suggests that casualization exerts significant effects on employee morale, commitment, and productivity. Eke and Onuoha (2020) observe that casual employment often undermines workers' sense of job security and organizational belonging, with adverse implications for motivation and performance. Fapohunda (2012) further conceptualizes casualization as a deliberate organizational strategy involving the substitution of permanent employees with contract or agency labour to reduce wage costs and enhance operational flexibility. Although precise national statistics remain uncertain, available evidence suggests that casual workers frequently outnumber permanent employees within Nigerian organizations (Eke & Onuoha, 2020).

In Nigeria's manufacturing sector, casualization is commonly justified by employers as a mechanism for managing labour costs and responding to fluctuating production demands (Fapohunda, 2012). However, from the employees' perspective, casualization is often associated with job insecurity, low wages, limited career advancement, restricted access to training, weak union representation, and exclusion from employment benefits such as pensions and compensation schemes (Okafor & Rasak, 2016; Olanipekun & Aborisade, 2019). From sociological and psychological perspectives, the temporary and expendable nature of casual employment may weaken organizational commitment, reduce morale, and ultimately diminish productivity. Moreover, the coexistence of permanent and casual workers within the same workplace can generate tension and perceptions of job insecurity, thereby fostering unfavourable work environments (Fapohunda, 2012).

Against this backdrop, examining the relationship between employee casualization and workplace productivity in selected manufacturing firms in Edo State provides a

critical sociological lens for understanding how contemporary employment practices shape worker experiences, organizational outcomes, and labour relations in Nigeria.

### 1.1 Objectives of the study

- To assess the level and patterns of employee productivity within selected manufacturing companies in Edo state
- To critically examine employers' motivations, perceptions, and organizational rationales underlying the adoption of casual employment practices in selected manufacturing companies in Edo state
- To analyse the extent of the relationship between employee casualization and workplace productivity in selected manufacturing companies in Edo state

### 1.2 Theoretical Framework

The study is explained using the Labour Market Segmentation Theory advanced by Michael Piore and Peter Doeringer (1971), they explain that the labour market is divided into primary and secondary segments with unequal conditions. The primary sector offers job security, career mobility, and incentives, while the secondary sector is characterized by casualization, low wages, and instability. In relation to employee casualization and workplace productivity, the theory suggests that sustained productivity may be achieved in the short term, but long-term efficiency and commitment are undermined when workers remain trapped in insecure and marginalized employment conditions.

## 2. Methodology

The study employed a cross-sectional research design focusing on three selected manufacturing companies in Edo State, namely a beverages company, a palm oil processing company, and an aluminium manufacturing company. While primary emphasis was placed on employees engaged on a contractual basis, permanent staff members who had spent a minimum of five years in the respective organizations were also included to provide comparative and contextual insights. A total sample size of 405 respondents was drawn using a multi-stage sampling technique to ensure adequate representation across the companies and employment categories. Data were collected through a mixed-method research instrument that combined quantitative

and qualitative approaches. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version

22.0, while qualitative responses were subjected to content analysis to enrich and complement the statistical findings.

### 3. Findings

**Table 1:** Section A: Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents (N=405)

	Response	Frequency	Percentage
Age as at last birthday	18-27 years	56	13.8
	28-37 years	108	26.7
	38-47 years	112	27.7
	48-57 years	82	20.2
	Above 57 years	47	11.6
Sex	Male	322	79.5
	Female	83	20.5
Educational qualification	Primary 6	109	26.9
	SSCE	247	61.0
	OND	33	8.1
	HND	08	2.0
	Bachelor's degree	05	1.2
	Master's degree	03	0.7
Religious affiliation	Christianity	169	41.7
	Islam	203	50.1
	Others	33	08.2
Marital status	Single	95	23.5
	Married	253	62.5
	Cohabiting	47	11.6
	Separated	08	2.0
	Divorced	02	0.5
Mode of service	Temporary staff/ casual worker	182	44.9
	Permanent staff	223	55.1
Years of service	Below 5 years	212	52.4
	5-10 years	62	15.3
	10-15 years	73	18.0
	Above 15 years	58	14.3

The socio-demographic profile of respondents reveals important patterns relevant to workforce composition. With respect to age distribution, respondents are largely within the economically active age brackets. The majority fall between 28–47 years, with those aged 38–47 years constituting the highest proportion (27.7%), closely followed by 28–37 years (26.7%). This indicates that most respondents are in their prime working age, while the least represented age group comprises those above 57 years (11.6%), suggesting lower participation of older workers. In terms of sex composition, the workforce is predominantly male, as 79.5% of respondents are male, compared to 20.5% female. This reflects a marked gender imbalance, indicating that most positions are occupied by men, while women constitute the minority of the workforce.

Regarding educational qualification, the data show that the majority of respondents possess secondary-level education. Those with SSCE qualifications account for 61.0%, followed by respondents with primary education (26.9%). In contrast, respondents with tertiary qualifications—OND, HND, and university degrees—collectively form a small proportion, with master’s degree holders being the least represented (0.7%). This suggests that the workforce is largely low- to moderately skilled, with limited representation of highly educated personnel. Religious affiliation indicates that Islam constitutes the majority religion among respondents (50.1%), followed by Christianity (41.7%), while respondents affiliated with other religions are the least (8.2%). This distribution reflects religious diversity, with a slight dominance of Islam within the study population.

Concerning marital status, most respondents are married, accounting for 62.5%, indicating a predominantly family-oriented workforce. Singles represent 23.5%, while cohabiting respondents form 11.6%. The least represented categories are separated (2.0%) and divorced (0.5%), suggesting relatively stable marital structures among respondents. With respect to mode of service, permanent staff constitute the majority (55.1%), while temporary or casual workers account for a substantial minority (44.9%). This reflects a dual employment structure, with a significant reliance on non-permanent labour. Finally, analysis of years of service shows that most respondents have below five years of service (52.4%),

indicating a relatively recent or high-turnover workforce. Those with above 15 years of service are the least (14.3%), suggesting limited long-term retention.

**Assess the level and patterns of employee productivity within selected manufacturing companies in Edo state (N=405)**

	<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Do you think your product output is sufficient	Yes	320	79.0
	No	20	04.9
	Maybe	65	16.1
How will you rate your level of productivity	High	247	61.0
	Moderate	123	30.3
	Can't say	35	08.7
Why? State reasons	I have always met target	68	18.4
	I have been highly scored	54	14.6
	Our team have been top	79	21.3
	Won staff of the month	82	22.2
	I have been promoted	87	23.5
How often	Always	64	17.3
	Sometimes	183	49.5
	Numerous times (lost count)	123	33.2
In what capacity do you feel you have excelled	Leadership position	81	20.0
	Team work	73	18.0
	Goal setting	92	22.7
	Deliveries	68	16.8
	Regular assessment	91	22.5

The data from the above table assess the level and patterns of employee productivity among respondents in the selected manufacturing companies in Edo State. The findings reveal a generally high level of perceived productivity among employees. A clear majority of respondents (79.0%) reported that their product output is sufficient, indicating that most employees believe they are meeting expected performance standards. In contrast, the least proportion (4.9%) indicated that their output is not sufficient, while 16.1% were uncertain. Regarding self-rated productivity, most respondents (61.0%) rated their level of productivity as high, followed by 30.3% who described their productivity as moderate. The least proportion (8.7%) could not clearly assess their productivity level.

In explaining their productivity, the majority of respondents cited promotion (23.5%) and recognition such as winning staff of the month (22.2%) as key indicators of performance, followed by strong team performance (21.3%). The least cited reason was being highly scored (14.6%), although it still reflects notable performance evaluation outcomes. Concerning frequency of outstanding performance, most respondents (49.5%) indicated that they sometimes excel, while 33.2% reported numerous instances of excellence. The least proportion (17.3%) stated that they always excel. Finally, in terms of areas of excellence, the majority identified goal setting (22.7%) and regular assessment (22.5%) as key strengths, whereas teamwork (18.0%) and delivery-related capacity (16.8%) were least emphasized. Overall, the findings suggest a predominantly positive productivity pattern among employees in the selected manufacturing companies.

In complementing the above response, some respondents gave a corresponding response while some said something contrary to the general opinion. As one of the respondents said:  
 Since i started working as a contract staff (Casual worker) i have often supported by my unit head, especially during my night shift at the packaging unit. He even recommended me during our monthly appraisal. This has really boosted my production capacity and efficiency. (IDI-Casual staff- Beverage company-2024)

Another respondents said:  
 Where i work, the rate of appreciation show that my productivity capacity is top notch. Most times, when coil of aluminium are brought to the company, the company sometimes rely on me to do the reeling and cutting as i have become an expert on the job. This has given me an edge when the company will open for vacancy. Often times, me and my team win gift from the head of unit. (IDI-Casual staff- Aluminium company-2024).

Different from the other respondents, a respondent gave quiet a different response when she said:  
 Casual workers are often treated as if they don't exist but they are always saddled with herculean task that are sometime backbreaking. Management uses middlemen to reach us and the middlemen exploit

our strength to meet target. Even when output are exceeded, the next task is often higher. My brother we are tired but no job anywhere. (IDI-Casual staff- Palm Oil-company-2024).

**Examine employers’ motivations, perceptions, and organizational rationales underlying the adoption of casual employment practices in selected manufacturing companies in Edo state (N=405)**

	Response	Frequency	Percentage
Have you ever been motivated	Yes	381	94.1
	No	20	04.9
	Sometimes	04	01.0
By who?	Team leader	204	53.0
	Management	56	14.5
	Unit head	125	32.5
What were you motivated with?	Cash	62	16.1
	Monthly award	51	13.2
	End of the year package	82	21.3
	Increase staff strength in my unit	46	12.0
	Staff recognition	28	07.3
	Salary/wage increase	55	14.3
	Promotion opportunity	61	15.8
How many times were you motivated? 405	Just once	102	25.2
	More than once	90	22.2
	Numerous times	185	45.7
	None	20	04.9
What is your perception of the motivation level of the organization you work for	Very good	157	38.7
	Good	130	32.1
	Fair	65	16.0
	Not too certain	33	08.1
	None to write home about	20	04.9

The data presented in the table examine employers’ motivations, perceptions, and organizational rationales underlying the adoption of casual employment practices in selected manufacturing companies in Edo State. The findings indicate that motivation practices are widely experienced among employees. A clear majority of respondents (94.1%) reported that they had been motivated at one point or another, suggesting that most organizations adopt motivation as a key managerial strategy. In contrast, the least proportion of respondents (4.9%) indicated that they had never been motivated, while only 1.0% reported being motivated occasionally. Regarding the source of motivation, the majority of respondents (53.0%) identified team leaders as the primary agents of motivation, indicating the significant role of immediate supervisors in influencing employee morale. This was followed by unit heads, as reported by 32.5% of respondents, while management-level motivation was least reported at 14.5%, suggesting limited direct engagement of top management in motivating employees.

With respect to the forms of motivation received, most respondents identified end-of-the-year packages (21.3%) as the dominant motivational incentive. This was followed by cash incentives (16.1%) and promotion opportunities (15.8%). Salary or wage increases accounted for 14.3%, while monthly awards (13.2%) and increases in staff strength within units (12.0%) were less emphasized. The least cited motivational factor was staff recognition (7.3%), indicating relatively low emphasis on non-monetary recognition. In terms of frequency, the majority of respondents (45.7%) reported being motivated numerous times, suggesting sustained motivational efforts by employers. This was followed by those who had been motivated just once (25.2%) and more than once (22.2%), while the least proportion (4.9%) reported never receiving motivation. Finally, perceptions of organizational motivation levels were generally positive.

Most respondents rated the motivation level of their organization as very good (38.7%) or good (32.1%), reflecting favourable views of employer practices. A smaller proportion perceived motivation as fair (16.0%), while the least proportion were either uncertain (8.1%) or felt there was none to write home about (4.9%). Overall, the findings suggest that manufacturing organizations in Edo State actively deploy various motivational strategies, largely mediated by supervisory structures, to sustain employee engagement within casual employment arrangements. While the quantitative data reveal some motivating factors underlaying staff productivity, the qualitative response from the respondents gave an insight. As a respondents said:

On several occasion, i have been rewarded with cash gift and office recognition. My team leader is a very good man, always there to help and assist when targets are not met. He ensures we are all happy and that target set are achieved. (IDI-Staff- Aluminium company-2024)

Another respondent said:

In my place of work, both casual staff and temporary staff are treated as one, as we all engage on same task and production success are equally shared by all staff. Management reward staff by giving anyone that merit it award of service monthly and in most cases, the casual workers are given permanent employment after 2 years. So we are all on same good page. (IDI-Staff- Beverage company-2024)

**Analyse the extent of the relationship between employee casualization and workplace productivity in selected manufacturing companies in Edo state. (N=405)**

	Response	Frequency	Percentage
Do you have cordial relationship with management	Yes	382	94.3
	No	10	02.5
	Sometimes	13	03.2
Has that improved the productivity of the company	Yes	348	90.4
	No	22	05.7
	Sometimes	15	03.9
In what capacity has it cause changed in productivity?	Regular meeting of all staff	55	15.8
	Regular staff recognition	61	17.5
	End of the year package	75	21.5
	Staff recognition	47	13.6
	Good welfare benefit for all staff	60	17.2
	Compensation for extra time	50	14.4
Where do you want management to place more emphasis on. (348)	Staff welfare	102	29.3
	Job security	142	40.8
	Permanent casual workers	64	18.4
	others	40	11.5
Overall, how will you rate the relationship between temporary and permanent workers	Very cordial	165	40.7
	Cordial	95	23.5
	Fair	122	30.1
	Not to cordial	23	05.7

From the table above, the data examines the extent of the relationship between employee casualization and workplace productivity in selected manufacturing companies in Edo State. The findings indicate a largely positive interaction between management and employees. A clear majority of respondents (94.3%) reported having a cordial relationship with management, suggesting that most workers experience cooperative management–employee relations. In contrast, the least proportion (2.5%) indicated the absence of a cordial relationship, while 3.2% reported that such relationships exist only sometimes. Regarding the effect of this relationship on productivity, most respondents (90.4%) affirmed that cordial relations with management have improved organizational productivity. Only 5.7% reported no improvement, representing the least group, while 3.9% perceived productivity improvements as occasional.

In terms of specific ways productivity has improved, the majority of respondents identified end-of-the-year packages (21.5%) as the most influential factor, followed by regular staff recognition (17.5%) and good welfare benefits for all staff (17.2%). Regular meetings of all staff (15.8%) and compensation for extra time (14.4%) were moderately reported, while staff recognition (13.6%) constituted the least cited factor. Concerning areas where management should place greater emphasis,

most respondents (40.8%) indicated job security, highlighting its centrality in addressing challenges associated with casualization. This was followed by staff welfare (29.3%) and the need to permanent casual workers (18.4%), while other areas were least emphasized (11.5%).

Finally, with respect to overall relations between temporary and permanent workers, the majority of respondents described the relationship as very cordial (40.7%) or cordial (23.5%), indicating generally harmonious workplace relations. A considerable proportion rated the relationship as fair (30.1%), while the least proportion (5.7%) perceived the relationship as not cordial. On the qualitative side, a respondents said:

The relationship in where i work is very cordial, cooperating and united. As the success of the company is the sole responsibility of all staff. Every year, the management reward all staff with the profit irrespective of the position and level of the staff. (IDI-Casual Worker- Aluminium Company-2024)

Another respondent said:

Though the relationship inherent in our company is cordial but there is some level of segregation. During meetings, management share items to everyone and give us positive report whenever we had success but sometimes, we the casual workers feel cheated and

sidelined. But on the surface, we are good. (IDI-Casual Worker-Palm Oil Company-2024)

#### 4. Conclusion and Recommendations

The findings demonstrate that employee casualization in selected manufacturing companies in Edo State is associated with generally high levels of perceived productivity, largely sustained by supervisory support, motivation, and cordial management–employee relations. Quantitative results indicate positive productivity outcomes driven by incentives, recognition, and welfare measures, while qualitative accounts reveal both empowering and exploitative experiences among casual workers. Although motivation and harmonious relations enhance efficiency, persistent concerns about job security and unequal treatment remain. Addressing these structural gaps is crucial for sustaining productivity and equitable workplace relations. On the basis of these, the study advocates that:

- Manufacturing firms should establish clear and transparent transition frameworks that enable high-performing casual workers to attain permanent employment after defined periods.
- Management should standardize both monetary and non-monetary incentive schemes to ensure equitable recognition of casual and permanent workers' contributions.
- Organizations should train and monitor team leaders and unit heads to prevent exploitative practices and ensure supportive, performance-enhancing supervision.
- Employers should extend basic welfare benefits and communication platforms to all categories of workers to promote trust, morale, and sustained productivity.

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