

CRITICAL REVIEW OF TRADE UNION MOVEMENT IN AFRICA: CHALLENGES, PROSPECTS, AND THE FUTURE OF WORK

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Abstract

Over the years, trade unions across the globe have continued to play an important economic role, especially in organizing workers under a trade union and ensuring the rights and interests of such workers are protected through the principle of collective bargaining. This study critically reviewed the trade union movement in Africa, challenges, prospects, and the future of work. This study found that the large workforce in the informal sector in Africa has majorly limited the expected growth rate of trade unions in Africa. Other issues like casualization of work, inconsistent labour policies, and the inability of trade unions to effectively collaborate act as impediments to trade union growth in Africa. The study concluded with a serious call for the issues promoting the informal sector and casualization of workers in Africa to be addressed as quickly as possible while the study made some critical recommendations that can help drive the growth of the Trade unions movement in Africa.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Trade Union, Africa, Collective Bargaining, Challenges, Prospects.
Jel Codes: J51, J52, J83

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AFRİKA'DAKİ SENDİKAL HAREKETE ELEŞTİREL GÖZDEN GEÇİRME: ZORLUKLAR, BEKLENTİLER VE İŞİN GELECEĞİ

Öz

Yıllar boyunca, dünya genelindeki sendikalar, özellikle işçileri bir sendika altında örgütlemeye ve bu tür işçilerin hak ve çıkarlarının toplu pazarlık ilkesiyle korunmasını sağlamada önemli bir ekonomik rol oynamaya devam etmiştir. Bu çalışma, Afrika'daki sendikal hareketi, zorlukları, beklentileri ve geleceğini eleştirel bir şekilde gözden geçirmektedir. Bu çalışma, Afrika'daki kayıt dışı büyük işgücünün, Afrika'daki sendikaların beklenen büyüme oranını büyük ölçüde sınırladığını ortaya koymuştur. Geçici iş, tutarsız çalışma politikaları ve sendikaların etkin bir şekilde işbirliği yapamaması gibi diğer sorunlar, Afrika'daki sendikaların büyümesine engel teşkil etmektedir. Bu çalışma, Afrika'da kayıt dışı çalışmayı ve işçilerin geçici istihdamını teşvik eden konuların mümkün olduğunca çabuk ele alınması için ciddi bir çağrıyla sona ermekte ve Afrika'daki Sendika hareketinin büyümesini sağlamaya yardımcı olabilecek bazı kritik önerilerde bulunmaktadır.

Keywords: Sendika, Afrika, Toplu İş Sözleşmesi, Zorluklar, Beklentiler.

Jel Kodları: J51, J52, J83

INTRODUCTION

Trade Union (also commonly called Labour Union) is generally seen and perceived as the association of workers sharing a common interest and in a related craft like trade, organization, an industry with the sole aim of protecting the right of its workers, ensuring improvement in their wage and general working conditions, also improving the political and social status of the trade union members through the use of collective bargaining (Barchiesi, 2019; Bernards, 2017). Trade unions worldwide are also seen and classified as the formation of a union movement whose main aim and purpose is to fight for the common goal of its members, protect their rights, and negotiate for improved conditions of services through collective bargaining (Munck, 2013). Trade unions also differ from one country to another as the structure, complexity, and administration process may not be the same, but usually similar in their operations and mode of engagement when pushing for the rights of their workers (Ojonemi, Onechojon, & Attai, 2013).

Globally, history has shown that Trade unions from the time of inception till the present day, the reality has shown that Trade unions all over the world have continued to improve and intensify their struggle to ensure better living conditions and better conditions of work for their members as they use every available opportunity for collective bargaining to negotiate improved general conditions for their members. Trade unions have also been actively involved in protecting their members from unjust and unfair dismissals at work and creating channels through which conflicts can be amicably resolved between workers and their employees. Trade unions have continuously put all their resources into place to ensure their members enjoy harmonious working relationships with their employers to ensure the mindset of the members is well balanced to deliver effectively and efficiently at their workplace. The origin and formation of trade unions globally came to be traced back as far as the year 1824 when the increasing number of factory workers begin to recognize their strength through their increasing numbers as workers in the factory and then decided to form what was called an association (Union) to consolidate their strength, push for better working conditions for the workers and to be able to negotiate for better salaries and wages for its members (Waterman, 2004).

The Trade Union Movement in Africa has followed the same trajectory similar in other countries and continents around the world. Trade unions in Africa have also continued to push and fight for the protection of their members, negotiating better working conditions, wages and general welfare of their members as most unions see injury to one member as injury to all. The major instrument used by the trade union in Africa remains the principle of collective bargaining as most trade unions in Africa believe this will achieve more amicable results than the confrontational approach (Konings, 2003).

Trade unions in Africa have also moved a step further by engaging in the lobbying of political office holders and other government agencies to influence their legislations and policies that are favourable to their members and their families since the welfare of the employee's family members also plays a critical role in the performance of individual employees at their workplace. Most workers in Africa also see joining trade unions as an opportunity to speak with a stronger force when negotiating with their employers and as an opportunity to get their rights as employees protected (Collins, 2013). Issues relating to unfair treatment, unjust dismissal at work, witch-hunting of employees by employers, harsh working conditions, the inability of employees to get wages as when due, health insurance covers for employees, retirement benefits and opportunities for further self-development of the employees are issues still toying agendas among Trade Unions in Africa. Trade unions in Africa have gone through a lot of struggles and different stages of formation, but that has not diminished or reduced the continuous and invigorating drive of the trade unions to forge ahead, continually protect their member's rights, and continue the process of lobbying and collective bargaining to drive good conditions of work for their members.

The fantastic role played so far by Trade unions in Africa's development cannot be overemphasized, Trade Unions in Africa have extended beyond just their traditional role, they have also played a critical role in the economic, political and social development recorded so far in the African continent as Trade Unions continually push for the improved economy across Africa, better social-cultural atmosphere and a peaceful, working political scene necessary to enable the safety of the Union members and to ensure the Union members can deliver on assigned duties at work without threat to their lives and family members. Trade Unions were also actively involved in gaining independence in many African countries as they provided the needed platform for people to air their views and contribute their voices to that of the Trade union calling for their country's independence from colonial rule. After independence in most African counties, Trade Unions have continued to push for good governance from the political class, they have also pushed for equity, social justice, respect for human rights, fairness and also respect for the rights of workers (Twala, 2012; Okolie, 2010).

Africa as a continent has faced a series of challenges and Trade Unions in Africa have also experienced a myriad of these challenges especially as it relates to freedom to form Trade unions, the challenges related to getting people in government to put in place enabling laws that promote the protection of employees right, and the challenge that comes with preventing the government from using their political powers to shut down Trade unions when Unions are not willing to dance to the dictates of the government especially if it conflicts with the Union interest and interest of the union members (Webster, & Buhlungu, 2004; Webster, 1992). The problem faced by many Trade Unions in Africa can be considered systematic as the system in most

African countries is yet to see Trade Unions as partners in progress and issues that could be easily resolved are sometimes left to linger more than necessary. Pockets of crisis between Trade Unions and Government in many African countries is still been recorded from time to time as confrontations and breakdown of negotiations occur sometimes leading to the inability of trade unions to be able to fully enforce the rights of their members (Weiss, 2019). While some studies on Trade Union especially from the African context have made attempts to address some of the issues related to the Trade Union and their mode of operations, this study will be doing a holistic appraisal, of the likely challenges and proffering solutions to some of the issues. Thus, this study will take a holistic attempt by doing a critical review of the labour union movement in Africa examining the challenges faced, prospects and the future of work in Africa.

Literature Review

This section of the study addresses issues relevant to the trade union movement in Africa, examining the six African countries under study, the challenges and prospects of the trade union movement in Africa, theoretical background and theories relevant to underpinning the study including hypotheses development for the study.

Africa Trade Union Movement

Trade Union movement in Africa can be traced back to the early 1880s among the British West Africa colonies, Africans in the north and Africans in the South. The establishment and major commencement of organized Trade Unions among indigenous African workers were known to have majorly started after the end of the second world war after both the British and French administrations after second world war put in place some form of legal frameworks and laws which later paved way for the gradual establishment and formation of trade union workers at this period. Due to the absence of any major manufacturing industry at that time, most known and recognized trade unions were formed and established in the public transport sector which comprises workers in the port and railway industry, then, Trade Unions were also established in the public service because of the high number of civil servants as at that time and closely formed and established was also the teacher's trade union. Other Trade unions formed in some African countries also included the formation and establishment of trade unions in the mining and export sector and later, more Trade Unions were also formed and established in the farm plantations of Eastern African countries. All of these signalled the formation and establishment of most of the strong Trade

Unions in Africa today as most of the Trade unions have also undergone different stages of restructuring while they continue to forge ahead in their quest to continue to defend and protect the right of their members to decent work, fair and adequate wages for service they render to their employers daily.

The study will make use of six trade unions in six African countries namely Nigeria, South Africa, Ghana, Egypt, Kenya and Ethiopia representing the West, South, East and North of the African continent. These countries trade unions were selected because of their big size and relevant roles played in trade union development in Africa.

Trade Union Movement in Nigeria

The Trade Union movement in Nigeria can be traced back to the year 1897 when the industrial action of the workers in Nigeria was first recorded. The Trade Union movement did not start or emerged on a platter of gold because the growth, formation and establishment of the Trade Union started in Nigeria through the resistance to harsh treatment and unfair conditions at the workplace by workers. The establishment of the first, formal and recognized Trade Union in Nigeria happened on the 19th of August, 1912 paving the way for the growth and development of the Trade Union movement in Nigeria (Okolie, 2010; Olowu, 2006). The first registered Trade Union in Nigeria was known as the Nigeria Civil Service Union, though the Union was not recognized and suffered a lot of persecution and inhuman treatment from the political class-leading to several records of intimidation and arrest of the Trade Union members, members of the Trade Union were not deterred and they continue to forge ahead in their struggle to ensure improved wages for their members and better working conditions that guarantee the right of the members. After years of struggle and fight to have a formidable and recognized Trade union in Nigeria, in the year 1938, the Trade Union Ordinance was enacted as a law which finally paved the way for the full recognition of Trade Unions in Nigeria and also led to the formation of other Trade Unions which acted and represented the interest of its members (Ojonemi, Onechojon, & Attai, 2013). The Trade Union movement in Nigeria has gone through several restructuring phases in its quest for better representation and protection of the right of its members. In the year 2016, another major restructuring occurred in the Nigeria Trade Union movement as over twenty-five affiliate Unions left to establish what was called the United Labour Congress (ULC), but in the year 2020, they later went back to join the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), bringing the affiliates Unions under the Nigeria Labour Congress to over forty-three affiliates in the year 2016 and with over four million members of the Union in Nigeria. There are many affiliates of Trade Unions in Nigeria, but by classification, the two major Trade Unions in Nigeria are the Nigeria Labour Union commonly known as NLC and the Trade Union Congress

commonly known as the TUC in Nigeria (Ojonemi, Onechojon, & Attai, 2013). Trade unions have continued to play a critical and significant role in Nigeria's growth and development while continuously pushing for better welfare, wages and improved working conditions for their members. Like other Trade Unions around the world, Trade Unions in Nigeria have continued to use the principle of collective bargaining and lobbying the political class wherever necessary to achieve better conditions of work and service for their members.

Trade Union Movement in South Africa

The Trade Union movement in South Africa as a country can be traced back to the 1880s indicating that the Trade Unionism movement started early in South Africa compared to some other African countries. The issue of Unionism among workers in South Africa was stated to have been triggered by the racial disunity that was occurring in South Africa at that time which makes workers feel oppressed necessitating the need for the workers to come together to form a union that can fight for their right and put an end to the racial discrimination at the workplace (Barchiesi, 2019; Chun, & Williams, 2013). The earliest Trade unions in South Africa were predominately dominated by white workers in South Africa. Their black counterparts felt marginalized and oppressed, necessitating the call for more trade unions that could be said to be fully representational of both races. The period 1948 to 1991 was a turbulent period for Trade Unions in South Africa as the unions played a critical role in the political and economic development of South Africa; their strong role also led to the full transition to democracy in South Africa (Rathzel, Cock, & Uzzell, 2018; Sithole, & Ndlovu, 2006). Just like most African countries, the Trade union movement in South Africa has gone through various stages of formation and restructuring as they continue to push for the protection and right of their members. Trade unions still play a critical role in the economic, social-cultural, and political development of South Africa as trade unions in South Africa boost having over three million members which represent about twenty-six (26%) of the workers in the formal sector of South Africa (Twala, 2012). In South Africa, there are three major Trade unions with many also having affiliate unions under them, but the biggest and largest Trade union in South Africa is the Congress of South Africa Trade Unions (COSATU) which has close to two million members. Trade unions in South Africa have continued to use the principle of collective bargaining in their quest to ensure the right of their members and also in ensuring their members get the best working conditions and wages that are commensurate with the work they do.

Trade Union Movement in Ghana

The Trade Union movement in Ghana can be traced back to 1866 when the National Labour union was established as a response to the yearnings and call by workers at that time to have a notable representative that can push for the interest and protection of the workers. Lots of unions also sprang up in Ghana after the period and in 1945, all the unions operating in Ghana were formally registered under the Trade Union Ordinance law which was enacted in Ghana in 1941. Many union members also came together in 1954 to put forth a proposal for all the unions to be amalgamated, the proposal was approved, paving way for all the local unions to be amalgamated to have a stronger and more formidable trade union in Ghana (Weiss, 2019). This amalgamation paved the way for the continuous growth and development of the trade union movement in Ghana. The Unions in Ghana have also contributed immensely to Ghana's political and economic landscape. Trade Unions in Ghana have since undergone various levels of formation, organization, and restructuring to make the union stronger and to make it more formidable in their quest to continually push for the interest of their members, ensuring improved wages and better working conditions for their members. Trade Unions in Ghana have continued to also strive to establish a harmonious working relationship with the political class, and government agencies and also engage the principle of collective bargaining in their negotiation process with employers and government to demand the right of their members.

Trade Union Movement in Egypt

The Trade Union movement in Egypt can be traced far back to the 20th century, while organized trade union actions can be said to have commenced in the year 1882 when the first form of organized labour action occurred as workers went first on strike during this period to voice their displeasure with the conditions of work and the kind of wages they were paid. When Egypt officially gained its independence in 1953, all the trade unions in Egypt at that time were incorporated to have state structures while having one main national centre officially recognised by the government. In the 1970s in Egypt after various government reforms, Trade Unions officially gained the recognition they deserved and became independent and organized. Trade unions also played a critical role in the much talked about Egyptian revolution in the year 2011, this also signalled the formation and growth of more trade unions in Egypt. The coup d'etat that occurred in Egypt in 2013 led to a change of government, the new government changed labour laws which were not as favourable as expected, this development worsen the situation for trade unions in Egypt as the new government in 2018 gave the over one thousand trade unions existing in the country just sixty days to reregister or

face been shut down, at the end of the sixty days ultimatum given by the government, only one hundred and twenty-two trade unions were able to meet the reregistration deadline bringing the number of trade unions in Egypt from one thousand to just one hundred and twenty-two (Schillinger, 2005; Kalusopa, 2021). Despite the harassment and constant backlash from the political class, the Trade union movement has continued to witness stronger growth, contributing to the political and economic development of Egypt while engaging in collective bargaining and lobbying where necessary in their demand for better and improved working conditions for their members and adequate wages for their members.

Trade Union Movement in Kenya

Kenya is a country located in the eastern part of Africa. The Trade Union movement in Kenya can be traced back to the early 1930s, but involvement at the time was passive until the year 1947 when involvement by Kenyans in Trade Unions became more active due to the increasing number of violations and harsh treatments received by workers from employers in Kenya. The harsh treatment and violations led to the famous strike action by trade unions recorded in 1947 in the port of Mombasa which also led to the loss of jobs on the part of the workers and the destruction of properties in Kenya. After this incident, the government of Kenya set up a panel of inquiry to find out the cause of the crisis, after receiving and reading through the report of the committee, the Kenya government realized the prompt need to put in place a mechanism to ensure such occurrence does not occur again, the Kenya government, therefore, established the Kenya Federation of Labour (KFL), this gesture from government further gave workers the needed stimulant leading to the birth of trade unions in Kenya. Labour laws in Kenya continued to witness review and in 1965, the Kenya Federation of Labour (KFL) was replaced with the Central Organization of Trade Unions (COTU) which acted as the central and main body for all Kenya's trade unions. In Kenya, the protection and right began to be protected by the Central Organization of Trade Union (COTU) and other affiliate unions (Schillinger, 2005). The growth and development of the trade union movement in Kenya can be said to have also aided the growth and development of Kenya's economic and political structure. Trade Unions in Kenya has also witnessed tremendous growth over the year as unions Kenya continue to push for the protection of the right of their members while engaging political office holders through negotiations and collective bargaining in demanding the right of their members.

Trade Union Movement in Ethiopia

The Trade Union movement in Ethiopia came a bit later than expected mainly because of the small size of the industrial working populace in Ethiopia as of 1957 with the number of industrial workers a bit above fifteen thousand and also because the government in Ethiopia at that period viewed the formation and establishment of a trade union as an act of rebellion and revolution against the government (Hardy, & Hauge, 2019). A constitutional review took place in 1955 in Ethiopia, the constitution gave the right for workers to form and join an association of their choice, this constitutional review birth and confer workers with the right to join trade unions, but, the entire situation only got better when the government of Ethiopia issued the trade union relations decree in 1962 which further recognized and empower trade unions. In 1963, the Ethiopian government finally recognized the Confederation of Ethiopian Labour Unions (CELU), an amalgamation of twenty-two trade union groups in the country. In 1973, trade unions affiliated in Ethiopia grew to one hundred and sixty-seven representing approximately eighty thousand members which represent just about thirty per cent of the workforce at that period in Ethiopia. The members of the trade union were also mainly constituted of workers from the railway industry, the plantation industry, the general transport industry, and the Ethiopian Airline industry (Chege, 1979). Trade Unions in Ethiopia have continued to evolve over the years and continued to use the principle of collective bargaining also using lobbying was necessary for their quest to protect the rights of their members, negotiating for better wages and improved conditions of work for their members. The Trade Unions in Ethiopia have also played an important role in the economic, socio-cultural, and political development of the country while ensuring a stronger and more formidable trade union in Ethiopia.

Challenges and Prospects for Trade Unions in Africa

Trade Unions across African countries have undergone various stages of revolution and reformation to meet the modern demands required of trade unions. While doing everything possible to ensure the right of their members are protected, most Trade Unions have encountered and continue to encounter various challenges that have prevented the trade union movement to grow the way it should.

One of the major challenges facing Trade Unions in Africa is the inability of trade unions to be fully independent as they should be, most trade unions in Africa still experience strong interference from the government from time to time as the government still wants to dictate to trade unions and also influence most decisions within the trade unions, this has continued to hamper the growth of Trade unions in Africa.

Casualization of jobs in Africa is another major challenge facing trade union growth in Africa as most casual workers do not have the right to join trade unions which ultimately reduces the number of workers that can join the trade unions. The lack of a conducive working environment in some African countries also contributes to some of the challenges faced by trade unions as this affects the willingness of workers to join trade unions.

Lack of funds and limited resources is another form of the challenge faced by trade unions in Africa as the needed funds and resources needed to execute major projects are not available, thereby limiting what the trade unions can do and also limiting them from achieving many results desired. Finally, some trade unions in some African countries are still fighting and doing everything possible to gain recognition from both the government and workers as the government in some of these African countries are still making it difficult for trade unions to operate at full capacity and to be able to attract more workers into their unions.

While the challenges listed can be a daunting task, some of these challenges have not prevented trade unions in Africa from pushing for the rights of their members and these moves have also given room for some prospects when it comes to trade unionism in Africa, some of the prospects include the possibility of having more active members in the trade unions in Africa because the current population classification in Africa shows that Africa has a young population, this young population are expected to join the workforce in the nearest future and also contribute to increasing the number of overall union members across Africa.

Another major prospect for the trade unionism movement in Africa is the improved education and job experiences that will likely come with it in the nearest future. As more young people get a better education, take up job positions and build more experience, this is expected to drive the growth and development of trade unionism in Africa since most of them are likely to bring the education and job experience acquired into the trade union, making the union to have a pool of educated and experienced workers that can also be a veritable tool to be used in driving growth and better status for trade unionism movement in Africa.

Theoretical Background

The study mainly focused on the critical review of the trade union movement in Africa while examining the challenges, prospects, and future of work. To give this study a theoretical backing, two major theories related to trade unions and the need for trade unions will be used to give this study the needed theoretical background.

Alienation Theory

Alienation theory was propounded by Karl Marx, the theory emphasized that workers are more interested in joining trade unions because of job dissatisfaction and unfair conditions at the workplace. The theory also states that workers who also feel lonely and with the inability to push for their rights alone, tend to look for unions that share a common interest with them and they ultimately join the union since such union will advance their interest. The theory also states that workers who found themselves abandoned with their rights unprotected are also likely to look for each other, come together and also form a union that carries the common interest of the members, thereby ending the alienation of the members and giving them a stronger voice needed to further push for the interest of such members, again, the union will be able to fight for the interest of the members without individual workers direct involvement to avoid problems with their employers.

Scarcity Consciousness Theory

The theory was propounded by Selig Perlman, the theory states that if workers perceived jobs to be scarce and also with the possibilities of being sacked unfairly from their jobs, the theory states that such workers will be interested and will willingly join a trade union to protect their employment and to protect them from arbitral sacking from their employers. According to the theory, the need to join a union for the workers to protect their jobs in a period of job scarcity becomes more desired by workers as these workers will willingly join the trade unions, they perceived will be able to help them secure their jobs, prevents unfair treatments from their employers and also help to push for better working conditions. This theory is still relevant today as workers continue to willingly join a trade union of their choice in order to protect their jobs considering the global scarcity of jobs.

These theories examined above are still very relevant even in today's modern-day trade union movement as the theories give credence to the reasons for the formation, establishment, and joining of a trade union by workers, the theories examined gives credible theoretical support to this research study and also explains the call and clamour by workers to have a trade union they willingly belong to and a union that protects their common interest, while pushing for improved wages and better conditions of work for the union members.

Conceptual Model / Research Model

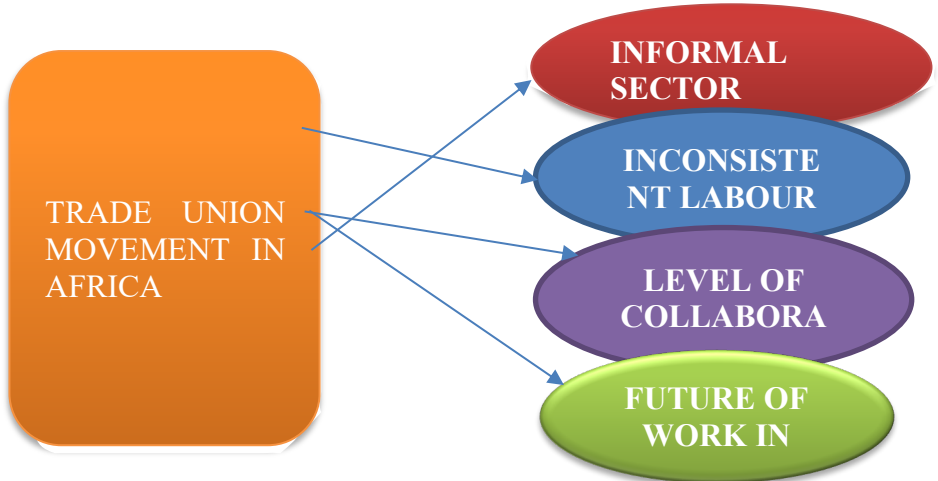


Figure 1. Developed by the Researcher, 2022.

Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses Development

This section of the study focuses on the hypotheses to be developed for the study as the study attempts to formulate hypotheses that seeks to test the impact of the informal sector, inconsistent labour policies, level of collaboration, and future of work in the trade union movement in Africa.

Informal Sector in Africa: The composition of work across many African countries can still be said to comprise a high number of workers in the informal sector. Most studies and statistics coming from still indicates that the majority of the active workforce in Africa are still in the formal sector and making it impossible for them to be organized and be under the umbrella of a recognized trade union in Africa. According to International Labour Organisation (ILO), over seventy per cent of jobs in Africa still falls within the informal sector making it difficult for workers in the informal sector in Africa to be organized and join trade unions. What is the impact of this on the trade union growth in Africa and if this issue is not quickly addressed, what will be the future impact of this on the growth of trade unions and membership of trade unions in Africa? This birth the first hypothesis of this study as an attempt is made to examine the impact of the high number of workers in the informal sector on the growth of the trade unions movement in Africa.

Ho1: The growth of labour unions in Africa is significantly affected by the high number of workers in the informal sector.

Inconsistent Labour Policies in Africa: The laws and policies guiding issues related to labour and also policies related to joining trade unions, formation and establishment of a trade union are prone to constant changes and these changes usually disrupt some of the gains recorded by trade unions over the years as some of the trade unions have also been made to either shut down or go through the process of registration again. The rate at which labour rules and policies also change can be said to sometimes destabilize some established trade unions. How do these constant changes witnessed in labour policies affect the growth and stability of trade unions in Africa, this leads to the formation of the second hypothesis for this study.

Ho2: Trade unions' growth in Africa is significantly affected by inconsistent labour policies.

Level of collaborations: There are many trade unions in Africa with several affiliated unions to these trade unions. What has been noticed is that the level of collaboration among various trade unions in Africa is still minimal preventing some smaller unions to be able to draw from the strength, resources and experience of the bigger unions. This has kept some labour unions apart from others and also prevented the togetherness idea behind unionism. How does this level of collaboration affect the growth of the trade union movement in Africa? This led to the formation of the third hypothesis for this study.

Ho3 The growth of trade unions in Africa is significantly affected by the low level of collaboration among trade unions.

Future of Work in Africa: Africa is blessed with lots of resources, talents, and a young workforce population. Africa has a large landmass, a fast-growing economy and a combined Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of over \$2.6 trillion with over \$1.4 trillion in the consumer spending capacity consumers in Africa. The future of work is drastically changing and will continue to further change considering the level of globalization and the huge potential believed to be in Africa. Working remotely is becoming popular in Africa and there's the possibility of huge changes as to how work will be done in Africa in the nearest future, and how will this affect trade union movement and growth in Africa. This led to the fourth hypothesis for this study.

Ho4: The growth of trade unions in Africa will be significantly affected by the nature and future of work in Africa.

Methodology

The study focuses on doing a critical review of the trade union movement in Africa, examining the impact on the informal sector, inconsistent labour policies, level of collaboration and the future of work on the growth of trade unions in Africa. The study adopted a quantitative approach, which is seen as the appropriate methodology to drive the desired result for this research study. After an extensive study of literature related to the phenomena, a quantitative approach will align the study more in terms of data analysis and reporting findings for this research study.

A Research instrument (Questionnaire) was designed for the study while the research items were adopted from empirical studies to ensure the items in the questionnaire measure what they are meant to measure. The research instrument (Questionnaire) used to collect data from the trade unions in the selected African countries was put in the google form and the link was sent to the participants to fill out the questionnaire. Though this process made it easy for participants in the selected trade unions to easily open the link and fill out the questionnaire, yet, it took constant reminders to get the participants to participate in the survey. The data gathering took close to six months to get a significant number of responses needed for analysis. The study made use of six trade unions in six African countries namely Nigeria, South Africa, Ghana, Egypt, Kenya and Ethiopia representing the West, South, East and North of the African continent. These countries trade unions were selected because of their big size and relevant roles played in trade union development in Africa, though the data gathering took longer than expected because of participants' delayed responses, participant selection was based on stratified random sampling. Study participants were cut across trade unions and also comprised both senior members and other members of the trade unions in Africa. A total of three hundred (300) responses were expected from the questionnaire link sent across the selected trade unions, but only two hundred and ten (210) questionnaires were returned by participants after a long wait. Row scores for the data collected were coded and inputted into the analysis software while Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) was the major analysis tool used to analyse the data. Regression analysis was used and the output from the analysis was classified and interpreted and a report of findings was reported for the research study.

Findings: Data Analysis, Results and Discussions

Table 1. Respondent's demography

		Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative %
Gender	Male	169	80.5	80.5
	Female	41	19.5	100
	Total	210	100	
Age	Less than 25yrs	26	12.4	12.4
	25-30yrs	35	16.7	29
	31-40yrs	94	44.8	73.8
	Above 40 yrs	55	26.2	100
	Total	210	100	
Marital Status	Single	56	26.7	26.7
	Married	148	70.5	97.1
	Others	6	2.9	100
	Total	210	100	
Educational Qualification	None	31	14.8	14.8
	Bachelors	135	64.3	79
	Masters	38	18.1	97.1
	PhD.	6	2.9	100
	Total	210	100	
Position in Trade Union	Senior member	27	12.9	12.9
	Middle member	150	71.4	84.3
	Junior member	33	15.7	100
	Total	210	100	
Years of Employment	Below 2 yrs	11	5.2	5.2
	2-5 yrs	48	22.9	28.1
	6-8 yrs	118	56.2	84.3
	Above 8 yrs	33	15.7	100
	Total	210	100	
Years in Trade Union	Below 2 yrs	43	20.5	20.5
	2-5 yrs	42	20	40.5
	6-8 yrs	116	55.2	95.7
	Above 8 yrs	9	4.3	100
	Total	210	100	

The participant's demography is very relevant and was captured for this study to give information about the participants and the categories of the participants in the study. The frequency distribution in the position in the trade union category showed that 84.3% of the participants fall within the middle member category while 12.9% fall in the senior member category of the trade union. In the years of experience category, 84.3% of the participants had between 6 years to 8 years of employment experience in the trade union while 55.2% of the participants have been in their various trade unions for over 6 years to 8 years. All these indicated that the participants who participated in the study majorly fall within the middle and top members of the union and thereby are expected to have filled the questionnaire based on their years of experience and positions in the trade unions.

Hypotheses Testing

Table 2. Ho1: The growth of labour unions in Africa significantly affects the number of workers in the informal sector.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R ²	ANOVA		Unstandardised coefficient		Standard coefficient	t
				F	Sig	B	Std. error	Beta	
1	.159 ^a	.025	.020	5.371	.021	5.845 -.349	.652 .151	-.159	8.959 -2.318

Predictor: Labour Unions

Dependent: Informal sector workers

The table explains that there is a positive correlation between labour union growth in Africa and the number of workers in the informal sector (R-value .159). The table also shows that the labour union growth in Africa accounts for 2.5 per cent of the growth in the number of workers in the informal sector, going by the R Square value at .025. The adjusted R² value is .020, which will produce a difference of .005 when subtracted from the R square value of the model (.025), that is, $.025 - .020 = .005$. This means that if the model were to be applied to the entire population as opposed to a sample; it would account for 0.5 per cent less variance in the outcome. That is to say, the sample is a good representation of the population.

The table also shows that the model has an *F*-ratio of 5.371 and it is significant at a 5 per cent level of significance. The *b*-values further explain the relationship between the labour union growth in Africa and the number of workers in the informal sector. Labour union growth *b*-value = $-.349$ means that for every unit increase in labour union growth, there will be a corresponding decrease in the number of workers in the informal sector by .349 units. The standardized beta value for labour union growth is $-.159$; meaning; labour union growth does not have relevance in predicting informal sector worker's growth. This means that for every unit increase by the standard deviation in labour union growth, there is a .159 decrease in the standard deviation of the number of workers in the informal sector. The result of the model is significant at a 5 per cent level of significance at .000. Therefore, the hypothesis states that the growth of labour unions in Africa significantly affects the number of workers in the informal sector is retained.

Table 3. Ho2: Trade union growth in Africa significantly affects the inconsistent labour policies.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R ²	ANOVA		Unstandardised coefficient		Standard coefficient	t
				F	Sig	B	Std. error	Beta	
1	.076 ^a	.006	.001	1.207	.273	3.440 .163	.644 .149	.076	5.341 1.098

Predictor: Labour Unions

Dependent: Inconsistent labour policies.

There is a positive correlation between labour union growth in Africa and the inconsistency in labour policymaking (R-value .076). The result shows that the labour union growth in Africa accounts for .6 per cent of the inconsistency in labour policies, going by the R Square value at .006. The adjusted R² value is .001, which will produce a difference of .005 when subtracted from the R square value of the model (.006), that is, .006-.001=.005. This establishes that the sample was a good representation of the population by accounting for 0.5 per cent more variance than the population would have.

The table also shows that the model has an *F*-ratio of 1.207 and it is insignificant at a 5 per cent level of significance. The b-values further explain the relationship between the labour union growth in Africa and the inconsistency in labour policies. Labour union growth *b*-value = .163, this means that for every unit increase in labour union growth, there will be a corresponding increase in the inconsistency of labour policies by .163 unit. However, the model reveals an insignificant result at a 5 per cent level of significance at .273. Therefore, the hypothesis which states that trade unions' growth in Africa significantly affects inconsistent labour policies was rejected.

Table 4. Ho3 The growth of trade unions in Africa significantly affects the level of collaboration among trade unions

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R ²	ANOVA		Unstandardised coefficient		Standard coefficient	t
				F	Sig	B	Std. error	Beta	
1	.007 ^a	.001	-.005	.009	.922	-.011	.109	-.007	7.615 -.097

Predictor: Labour Unions

Dependent: Collaboration among trade unions

The growth of trade unions in Africa and the level of collaboration among trade unions recorded a positive correlation, as revealed by the R-value of .159. The table shows that the labour union growth in Africa accounts for .1 per cent of the level of collaboration in trade unions, going by the R Square value at .001. The adjusted R² value is -.005, which will produce a difference of .006 when subtracted from the R square value of the model (.001). This means that if the model were to be applied to the entire population as opposed to a sample; it would account for 0.5 per cent less variance in the outcome. That is to say, the sample is a good representation of the population.

The table also shows that the model has an *F*-ratio of .009 and it is insignificant at a 5 per cent level of significance. The b-values further explain the relationship between the labour union growth in Africa and the level of collaboration in trade unions. Labour union growth *b*-value = -.011 means that for every unit increase in labour union growth, there will be a decrease in the level of collaborations among trade unions by .011 units. The result of the model is insignificant at a 5 per cent level of significance at .922. Therefore,

the hypothesis which states that the growth of trade unions in Africa significantly affects the level of collaboration among trade unions was rejected.

Table 5: Ho4. The growth of trade unions in Africa significantly affects the future of work in Africa.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R ²	ANOVA		Unstandardised coefficient		Standard coefficient	t
				F	Sig	B	Std. error	Beta	
1	.248 ^a	.062	.057	13.633	.000	6.263 -.581	.682 .157	-.248	9.188 -3.692

Predictor: Labour Unions

Dependent: Future of work in Africa

The R-value of .248 shows that a positive correlation exists between the growth of the labour union in Africa and the future of work in Africa. The R square value of .062 establishes that the labour union growth in Africa accounts for 6.2 per cent of the future of work. The adjusted R² value is .057, which will produce a difference of .005 when subtracted from the R square value of the model (.062). Indicating that the variance in the outcome of this study is minimal compared to the entire population if it were used. In essence, it tells us that the sample is a good representation of the population.

The table also shows that the model has an *F*-ratio of 13.633 and it is significant at a 5 per cent level of significance. The *b*-values further explain the relationship between the labour union growth in Africa and the future of work. Labour union growth *b*-value at -.581, suggests that for every unit increase in labour union growth, there will be a corresponding decrease in the future of work by .581 unit. The standardized beta value for labour union growth is -.248; indicating that labour union growth may not help in the short term in achieving the ideal workplace in Africa. This means that for every unit increase by the standard deviation in labour union growth, there is a .248 decrease in the standard deviation of the future of work. The result of the model is significant at a 5 per cent level of significance at .000. Therefore, the hypothesis which states that the growth of trade unions in Africa will be significantly affected by the future of work in Africa is accepted.

Recommendations

The study did a critical review of the trade union movement in Africa while looking at the challenges, prospects and future of work in Africa. Recommendations were made after a careful review of the literature, data analysis, and study findings. The recommendations are as follows:

1. Trade unions in Africa must continuously engage and seek ways to get people in the informal sector to become organized groups who can then join trade unions thereby ensuring a more organized workforce

- and reducing the number of workforces in the informal sector in Africa.
2. There is a serious need to build stronger trade unions in Africa that can resist inconsistent labour policies and government programmes that may directly or indirectly slow the growth pace of employees and trade unions in Africa.
 3. The future of work in Africa is projected to go digital. Such digitalization will require trade unions to be better prepared for such a coming era and prepare its members as failure to do this may lead to the loss of more members and would-be members.
 4. Trade unions in Africa must engage more in the field and various workplaces by engaging the workforce through education, sensitisation, creating awareness about trade union activities, the benefits of joining trade unions and the gains that would be enjoyed when workers join a trade union, this will increase awareness and interest of more people to willingly join trade unions in Africa.
 5. Casualization of workers and jobs in Africa is another major issue that trade unions in Africa must do all they can to put an end to it or bring it down to the lowest minimum as this also prevents such workers from having the right to join trade unions.

Conclusion

This research article made valid contributions to the existing literature on Trade union-related issues, the challenges faced by these unions and the prospects inherent in being part of the trade union movement, especially from the African perspective. The article critically examined the movement of trade unions in Africa and the role played by the informal sector, inconsistent labour policies, level of collaboration and how the future of work in Africa will likely impact the growth of trade unions. While the study found that the challenges faced by trade unions in Africa might be similar, the experience and processes taken to resolve the challenges differ from one trade union to another because existing labour laws differ in each country of the trade union's operations.

The informal sector in Africa still accounts for a large number of the workforce who would have been part of the trade union if they were organized and thereby contribute to the growth of trade unions in Africa. The study concluded that the high number of workers in the informal sector and casualization of workers in Africa still prevent the expected growth of trade unions in Africa, also, the nature of inconsistent labour policies, the inability for trade unions to fully synchronise and collaborate coupled with the likelihood of some employees not seeing a good reason to join and be part of trade union poses a great challenge for the future growth of trade unions across the Africa continent.

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