



## Trade Unionism and Worker's Productivity in Nigeria: A Study of Nulge in Two Local Governments in Delta State

Abel, Precious Babatunde<sup>1</sup>, Professor Akpomuvire Mukoro<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup>Department of Public Administration, Delta State University, Abraka Delta State, Nigeria

### ABSTRACT

*The relationship between employers and employees ought to be "cordial" and based on the principles of humanism and respect for the sanctity of human integrity and aspiration; the reverse is the case between the Nigerian government and municipal workers. This study examines trade unionism and worker's Productivity in Ughelli North and Patani Local Government Areas in Delta State. In achieving the specific objectives of this study, two research hypotheses were raised to guide the study. The structural-functional theory was adopted. The cross-sectional research design was used and considered isomorphic to the topic, in testing the hypotheses stated, the Chi-square statistical tool was employed. Based on the analysis of data, it was revealed that NULGE has not done enough for workers productivity. The study also showed that lack of internal democracy, intra-union rivalry, financial weakness, lack of unity, lack of credible leaders, corrupt practices and government reluctant attitude towards providing workers welfare has posed serious challenges to workers performance in Ughelli north and Patani local government areas. The study recommends that Government and its agencies should provide workable templates that would stimulate and encourage the workers to achieve productivity rather than applying divide and rule tactics to deviate workers attention from being active engagement with the government. The study's contribution to knowledge is hinged on the opinion that the internal crises within the union is as a result of government's divide and rule strategies that sways away worker's attention in order to prevent workers from forming a formidable front to demand for fair treatment and good work conditions from government among others.*

**Keywords:** Trade Union, Collective Bargaining, Local Government, Local Government Employees, NULGE

### INTRODUCTION

In the modern-day work environment, particularly in the third world countries like Nigeria, trade unionism has turned out to be an indispensable tool in safeguarding industrial harmony and peace subsisting between the employee and his employer as this emerged so as to advance not only the working conditions of the workers, but to as well enhance their living standards. Globally, trade unions are considered the main agents of class struggle and socio-economic transformation that represents the workers' interest against the frequent mistreatment of the capitalists (Egbemughia, 2021). The survival and existence of a strong, united and recognized trade union is a pre-requisite to the industrial harmony and development of any nation. Today, there is a high and developing interest and recognition of individual freedom to freely associate with groups or association of one's interest (Aiyed, 2020). This right has also been recognized in industries as workers now freely elect or choose to join groups and associate with unions and to be engaged in collective bargaining with employers (Okonkwo and Rina, 2020). This right has also been provided for by different countries in various ways in order to bring about enduring industrial harmony and national economic development. The development of trade union is as a result of reactions to management's use of its decision-making powers that are workers anti-friendly or excessive (Coleman, 2018). These reactions of workers have centered on basic economic issues and other resource interest.

Trade unions, according to Griswold (2020), are groups of employees who come together to promote and further specific goals, such as preserving the integrity of their industry, ensuring workplace safety, possessing favorable working conditions, and achieving higher pay packages because doing so frequently creates a platform for negotiations with employers. Collective action is the only accessible countervailing strategy to effectively attain these essential human demands, hence unions typically arise because its members are dissatisfied with their ability to accomplish critical goals on an individual basis (Heneman et al, 2020). In other words, in order to reach the same goals for the individuals, collective pursuing is essential because individual persuasion of management does not produce the desired or anticipated effects. Following the early industrial revolutions, employers operate and behave as lords who have the final say in all decisions affecting the employees at work. Employers and managers have so much authority that they can decide someone's fate even if that person is unable to resist or object to the management's arbitrary actions on their own. As a result, workers band together to establish their terms and conditions of employment. Group demands and negotiations for better terms and conditions of employment in industrial settings are significantly more important than individual demands and negotiations (Charles, 2018).

Trade union movement and their activities are vital part of industrial relations. The coming together of employees to seek for improvement on their terms and condition of employment by the employers is today a major role of trade union. In pursuance of this and other roles, a friendly harmonious industrial relationship has been a critical concern of any responsible labour union. Trade union emerged in Nigeria at a time when representative political democracy

was not even in existence (Okojie, 2019). Okojie further pointed out that the British Colonial Government began making formal inroads on the field of labour relations in the thirties after the trade union ordinance of 1938. Therefore, trade unions represent a voluntary association whose membership comprises of salary earners, employees and union leaders. Peter (2018) observes that the major concerns of Unions have been improved living standards, equity and justice to workers. The achievement of this objective and other intentions of coming together as a union however, depend on the unity and strong influence that trade union have, and how they are seen by the employers in the industrial setting. The importance of trade union is mainly in the fact that they are utilized as a representative voice when dealing with employers in workplace, and thus attempt to improve the employments conditions of their members through the collective bargaining procedure (Addison and Schnabel, 2019).

A trade union is an association of employees who have banded together to pursue common objectives, such as preserving the integrity of their industry, obtaining better wages, hiring more people, and improving working conditions. Workers and union leaders who are unified to defend and advance their shared objectives and interests make up the membership of a trade union. (Okoro, 2018). To accomplish their objectives, trade unions use strategies include collective bargaining, negotiation, strike actions, protests, and industrial activities. The improvement of members' working conditions is the goal of all trade union activity. The National Union of Local Government Employees, the Nigerian Medical Association, the Nigerian Labor Congress, the Nigeria Union of Journalists, and others are notable Nigerian trade unions.

Traditionally, trade unions were founded to protect and advance the interests of employees (Fashoyin, 2010). Nonetheless, as an important social partner in the system of industrial relations, workers unions have made significant contributions to protecting and projecting the opinions, interests, yearnings, and aspirations of workers in order to improve their working circumstances and terms. These are accomplished through the use of negotiation and collective bargaining techniques, which are recognized as efficient and modern tools for ensuring industrial peace and harmony at work as well as a tool that is made available to normalize the relationship between workers, management, and government.

According to Abercrombie et al. 2017, cited in Nwadiro (2020), collective bargaining is a mechanism for establishing working conditions, wages, and other aspects of employment through negotiation between employers and the representatives of employees organized collectively. It is viewed as a tool used by workers to enable them to participate in industries, to extend their citizenship rights into the economic sphere, and to resolve conflict within organizations. The end outcome of this approach is collective agreement. That is the underlying tenet upon which the trade union system is built. It establishes procedural rules for good faith bargaining but does not require either party to consent to a concession proposal (Abel, 2014).

Collective bargaining, one of the industrial relations processes, serves a variety of purposes at work. Both an industrial democracy and a method of industrial jurisprudence could be considered. On the basis of mutual understanding between staff members of trade union leaders and their members, it promotes industrial harmony at the workplace. It leads to greater understanding, which in turn makes communication easier. It serves as a method for settling disputes between management and labor at the workplace as well as an evaluation of the terms and circumstances of employment (Ayim et al, 2021). The National Union of Local Government Employees is a union made up of all civil servants working at the local level. The major objective of the union is to engage the government in collective bargaining when the need arises in order to improve the condition of service at the local government level.

---

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The activities, programmes and realization of the objectives of most trade unions or labour unions have been affected by lots of factors that pose significant challenges to their policies and programmes. In most cases, members of trade union through their actions tend to frustrate the collective goals and objectives of the union. At times, leaders of unions sabotage their members by accepting bribe from government. When this happens most objectives of trade unions may not be realized. The need for a conducive work environment, cordial relationship between the three actors in industrial relations (labour, management and the government) and how best to promote and maintain employee job satisfaction and productivity has engaged the attention of the management of both public and private organizations. This is because; it is a fact that these variables are very crucial to the survival of every organization.

A close look at these variables suggests that Labour - management relations is a crucial factor that may determine or influence the other variables. One basic feature of the components of an organization is varying interests. Every stakeholder in an organization has his/her interest which normally may differ from other stakeholder's interests. The extent to which these interests are harmonized and satisfied determines the extent to which the organizational climate/environment is conducive for team work and maximum production. These interests are often realized through collective bargaining - an instrument in labour/management relations which allows both management and workers to discuss issues and take joint decisions that will ensure the survival of the organization.

The Nigeria local government system is the third tier of government and hierarchically found below the state government. It is a level of government established to bring government to the grassroots for mass mobilization of rural dwellers for rural development. However, there have been growing sensitivity and concern over the dismal performance of the Nigerian Local Government system, thus, the number of reforms aimed at repositioning it - giving it a greater capacity to perform. In spite of these reform measures, there has continued to be the unlikelihood of the attainment of the purposes for which the local government system was established. On the other hand, there is a strong conviction of the role the Nigeria Union of Local Government Employees can play in enhancing the performance and repositioning these local government systems.

However by acts of commission or omission, the National Union of Local Government Employees (NULGE) has not done much in enhancing organizational performance. Unions like National Union of Local government Employees (NULGE) should be ideally mobilizing their members toward higher productivity. While this condition holds in the private sector, it hardly does in its public counterpart. Unions in the public sector generally ignore

the productivity side of the equation in favour of workers welfare and remuneration. Consequently, the system gets repeatedly ruined. Enormous research has been undertaken in regard to issues on trade union, collective bargaining and organizational productivity but little attention has been dedicated to assessing and examining impact of trade unionism and collective bargaining in the Local government System in Nigeria, especially, the National Union of Local Government Employees in Ughelli North and Patani Local Government Councils in Delta state.

---

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The general objective of this study is to examine Trade Unionism and worker's Productivity in Delta State. The specific objectives of this study are to:

- i. examine the effect of NULGE on Workers' Productivity in Delta State
- ii. identify the Challenges of NULGE for improved workers' performance in Delta State

---

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions guide the study:

- i. What are effects of NULGE on Workers' Productivity in Delta State
- ii. What are the Challenges of NULGE for improved workers' performance in Delta State

---

## RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

- i. H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant relationship between NULGE and Worker's Productivity in Ughelli North and Patani Local Government Area in Delta State
- ii. H<sub>02</sub>: There is no significant relationship between the Challenges of NULGE and improved Workers Performance in Ughelli North and Patani Local Government Area in Delta State

---

## Review of Related Literature

### *Trade Union (NULGE) and Workers' Productivity in Delta State*

Trade unions, such as the National Union of Local Government Employees (NULGE), have played significant roles that were influenced by both the environment and its characteristics. In terms of providing incentive programs or motivational schemes to raise members' morale and encourage them to put forth sufficient effort in achieving the desired organizational outputs, NULGE has played important roles in their productivity and welfare. These responsibilities are crucial to fostering positive workplace interactions. Otobo and Omole (2021) list five important functions that unions in Nigeria perform. The welfare of their members, industrial harmony, democratic procedures, productivity, and economic and social advancement are some of these duties. In addition to improving the working environment, job opportunities, and pay for employees, this role also increases employee competency and productivity. The National Union of Local Government Employees (NULGE) has a vital role to play in helping workers advocate for improved working conditions and, as a result, higher productivity by offering suitable templates that produce the much-needed satisfaction among workers. The National Union of Local Government Workers engages in the following activities to fulfill its goals:

#### *Purposeful Representation of the Employees' Interests to the Employers:*

In general, effective unions, like the National Union of Local Government Workers (NULGE), are always engaged in activities that advance the overall productivity and welfare of the members. The officials of the union make sure that their members are meaningfully or purposefully represented to their employers. Armstrong (2019) states that this may be accomplished by collective bargaining or mutual consent with the management of the company where the union is created.

**Possession of Formidable and Common Front:** A major function of the National Union of Local Government Employees (NULGE) is to give its members a collective voice so that their needs and aspirations may be heard by employers and understood.

**Engagement in Diverse Exercises to Press for Workers' Demands when Negotiations Fail:** According to Griswold (2019), labor organizations like the National Union of Local Government Workers (NULGE) occasionally don't think twice to take part in certain exercises they feel important to quickly call the management teams of the organizations' to their requests. They frequently take the shape of planning protests, starting strikes, and other actions intended to get the management's attention. After all other union initiatives have failed, these are the course of action chosen.

**Determine Job Standards:** According to Griswold (2019), labor unions are powerful forces within the organization that have a significant impact on setting workplace employment standards that are solely in their members' best interests. According to Muya and Simotwo (2020), NULGE serves as an

unintentional accelerator for the development of a harmonious workplace. In order to avoid employer-employee conflict, this function is always beneficial when ongoing negotiations are conducted with employers regarding matters pertaining to employees' working conditions. This function fosters self-respect and confidence in union members while also making sure that all parties to the agreement fulfill their obligations.

**Contribution to member's welfare:** Ootobo and Omole (2021) observed that the role of unions can be considered in terms of contributions to the welfare of their members, industrial peace, democratic processes in industrial relations, and productivity to social progress. Singh (2020) stated that trade union roles has been to protect jobs and real earning their members, secure better conditions of work and life, and fight against exploitation and arbitrariness to ensure fairness and equity in employment contexts. This view is supported by Singh and Kulkarni (2019) and Barrientos and Smith (2017), when they note that unionization has become instrumental in improving the quality of life of workers. Trade unions thus negotiate improvements to better pay and working condition for their members.

#### ***Improvement of organizational productivity:***

When labor/management disputes are settled amicably, this occurs. In other words, the settlement gives the employees more self-assurance, which motivates them to work harder to increase organizational production. It is important to remember that labor unions play a significant and important role in resolving labor-management issues. In other words, when labor-management disputes are addressed, employees become more self-assured and exert more effort to increase organizational productivity. According to Addison and Schnabel (2013), trade unions also serve as the employees' representatives and increase worker productivity or efficiency. They also endeavor to improve worker discipline, promote workplace harmony, and participate in management decision-making. This occurs because trade unions advocate for employees and act as their voice in the workplace and in society, giving them an identity.

#### ***The Challenges of Trade Unionism (NULGE) for improved Workers' Performance in Delta State***

In the Nigerian setting, it has been apparent over time that labor and management have antagonistic relationships and routinely undercut each other's efforts. For their own nefarious purposes, the union leaders destroy the interests of the union. Although management denied the workers' access to their benefits, pay, favorable working conditions, and strict policies. Certain behaviors in the workplace, such as dishonesty among union officials, low productivity, a shortage of supplies and tools, poor management, and many others, have been influenced by the mindsets of both union leaders and management. Due to these difficulties, the union is now less effective and efficient in fulfilling the purposes for which it was established.

According to Rajesh and Manoj (2015), the main concerns with trade unions are unequal growth, leadership problems, intra-union conflict, financial fragility, a lackluster collective bargaining procedure, and chameleonic leadership styles. Also, Nigerian labor unions face issues with the improper trade union mentality or a lack of internal union democracy (Okojie, 2019). Gangurde (2014) identifies the main issues facing trade unions as lack of unity, low priority policymakers, the unorganized sector, and the informalization of labor relations. Lack of internal democracy and a lack of competent leaders as a result of internal party strife are two of the main issues cited by Okojie (2019) as issues facing trade unions in Nigeria. Political interests of some union leaders are another significant issue for the union.

Because of this, some unions are controlled by leaders who care little or nothing about the situation of the workers and instead wish to utilize their positions to advance their own political ambitions. Ojo (2018) observed that the politician-leaders who pose as labor leaders do not represent the interests of the workforce. Due to such political leadership, negotiations with employers—in both the public and private sectors—often end in failure because the interests and welfare of the workers are frequently disregarded, particularly when they are promised lucrative ministry appointments or are heavily financially enticed.

According to Damachi and Fashoyin (2016), the management of the government has been known to pick leaders who are not union members. The lack of full-time union employees is the primary cause of political leaders' dominance on the major. These outsiders or political leaders give little time and effort to trade union operations because they are ignorant of the fundamental ideas and practices of organized labor. When this occurs, union members will lose faith in the leaders and view them as adversaries of their well-being as well as pawns in the hands of government management. Experience has shown that these hired outsiders who do not understand the sentiments of the workers will defend the interests of their appointed masters rather than that of union members (Adewumi, 2019).

Trade unions nowadays are split along many different axes, including political and tribal affiliations. As trade unions began to work with some political parties to openly criticize government policies and decisions at demonstrations and events hosted by ruling or opposing political parties, this has become very obvious. As it is in Nigeria today, the Nigerian Labour Congress, the umbrella organization for all labor unions, has presented two distinct National executive officers at various points, each group claiming to speak for Nigerian workers' interests. In some cases, the various executive groups will designate various union national programs or activities at various locations.

For instance, in 2016 another faction held the same event in Lagos while one faction celebrated workers day in Abuja. In fact, the majority of the Federation's 36 states exhibit the same lack of cohesion. For instance, when one faction of the Rivers State chapter of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) called for a strike in 2015 over the non-payment of roughly three months' worth of salaries for state civil service employees, another faction immediately urged the civil servants to disregard false reports that they were in talks with the state government to resolve the issues. Even worse, these many factions have been unable to find common ground on which to unite and fight for the concerns and difficulties affecting union members. In Nigeria, the main cause of thus much trade union discord is that union leaders do not allow for internal party democracy. Also, there is no space for union members to take

part in, choose, or vote on policy matters or to choose their union representative. They lead to the majority of the population being unwilling to participate in branch meetings, policy discussions, or elections. When this situation is present, disgruntled members will challenge the union leadership and try to have them removed through a vote of no confidence or by using a provision of the union byelaws. But, this will cause division since the officers' supporters will band together to defend them.

### ***Theoretical Framework***

Structural-Functional Theory was adopted to explain Trade Unions and Collective Bargaining in the local government system. According to this school of thought each of the two parties in Industrial Relations are important and functional partners. It compares the government in general and National union of local government employees in particular to a biological system that the organic being is composed of different parts of the body like the brain, heart, lung, blood circulation system, eyes, ears, brain, limbs, flash, skeleton, legs, hands, reproductive organs etc. The above theory is largely a 20th century trend in sociological thought pioneered by Takott parsons (Igwe, 2012). Others in this line of thinking are Barley (2001), Otite, (2002), Nye, (2014). They argued that each component of the biological system in a human body carries out particular tasks to ensure the success of the system as a whole. Any of these organic components that aren't functioning properly will undoubtedly have an impact on the entire system. In this way, each party to an industrial relationship is seen as having a part to play in preserving social harmony in the industrial sector. All parties are viewed as partners in progress who must cooperate to produce the greatest amount of work for the benefit of all parties.

Between the two world wars, fascism rose in Germany, Italy, and Spain, which is when structural-functional ideology first emerged. The concept assumes that there are various sectional interest groups organized within mutually recognized rules to safeguard and advance the interests of their constituents. Government, unions, and employers associations are undoubtedly the main interest groups involved, according to Robert Dahl (2003). As a result, each actor is acknowledged, acceptable, and allowed to perform a part that is consistent and comparable with its place in the labor relations. The interdependence of industrial relations' participants, according to structural-functionalists, will promote cooperation and multilateral problem-solving, which will deter extreme and violent reactions. Collective bargaining is also expected to blunt any labor protest of the revolutionary variety.

One must admit that the structural-functional theory lubricated the amicable relationship between the national union of local government employees and the government when it came to the study and comprehension of trade unions and collective bargaining in the Nigerian local government system in Ughelli North and Patani local government employees. One must also concede that trade unionism and collective bargaining have significantly contributed to keeping local government personnel employed despite subpar and inconsistent remuneration. Moreover, the structural-functional theory of collective bargaining and trade unions postulates that trade unions play a role in modernization. Effective and friendly interactions between employees and the government, as already said by Ackerman, buy influence and support.

It is therefore believed that if all parties can reach an agreement on solid ground, problems with late salary payments, arrears, a positive work environment, and the general welfare of local government employees in the local government system, particularly in Ughelli and Patani local government areas, won't occur. Also, the issue of protest and strike will not always emerge if the government and local government employees get along well. So, in order to achieve efficiency and productivity in local government, both parties need to have a synergy that would enable them to accomplish desired results without hostility and acrimony.

The structural-functional theory also asserts that the government must uphold its obligations under the collective bargaining and trade agreements with its workers, including the provision of a favorable work environment, prompt payment of salaries, and other benefits that can encourage them to perform better in their roles as local government employees. According to the structural-functional theory, all structures, including the national union of local government employees and the government, must work in a way that perfectly contributes to their survival and existence through a friendly relationship with mutual understanding and agreement to provide some basic social amenities that encourage them to exert more effort for a sustainable process.

Thus, the structural-functional theory of government explained that when the structure of government fails to function in terms of providing a favorable environment, prompt payment of workers' salaries, arrears, promotion, trading, and development, provision of accepted and adequate equipments to attain accelerated development, it may threaten the survival and existence of the local government. So, in order to come to a concrete agreement to resolve these organizational productivity and human resource concerns at the local government level, the government and local government employees must build a platform and synergy through collective bargaining.

---

### **Research Method**

The cross-sectional research design was adopted. The Cross-sectional design is one in which the researcher primarily uses postpositive claims for developing knowledge, i.e., cause and effect relationship between known variables of interest or it employs strategies of inquiry such as experiments and surveys, and collect data on predetermined instruments that yield statistical. Employees at Ughelli North Local Government are at estimated to be One Thousand, Three Hundred (1300), while employees in Patani Local government are One Thousand, Two Hundred (1200), making it a total of Two Thousand, Five Hundred(2,500) local government employees selected for this study. The simple random sampling technique was used to pull out the sample population from the total population. This technique was suitable for this study because it allows the assortment of a group of people from a population. Hence, the sample population of this study was determined using Taro Yamame (1967) Formula Below:

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

Where;

n = sample size

N = population under study = 2,500

e = the margin error (0.05)

Therefore,

$$n = \frac{2,500}{(1 + 2,500 (0.05)^2)}$$

$$n = \frac{2,500}{(1 + 2,500 (0.0025))}$$

$$n = \frac{2,500}{(1 + 6.25)}$$

$$n = \frac{2,500}{7.25}$$

$$n = 344.8$$

$$n = 344$$

## Analysis of Results

### Hypotheses Testing

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between the activities of National Union of Local government Employees (NULGE) and Workers' Productivity in Ughelli North and Patani Local Government Areas in Delta State

**Table 1: A Table of relationship between the activities of National Union of Local government Employees (NULGE) and Workers' Productivity in Ughelli North and Patani Local Government Areas in Delta State**

Source of Variation	Responses		Df	X <sup>2</sup> -Cal	X <sup>2</sup> -Crit.	Alpha Level	Decision
	Observed	Expected					
Strongly Agree (SA)	338	250	12	54.66	21.03	0.05	Significant
Agree (A)	265	250					
Strongly Disagree (SD)	183	250					
Disagree (D)	214	250					

Source: Field Work: 2022

As presented in the chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) summary Table above, the calculated chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) value of 54.66 is greater than the chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) table value of 21.03. The null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between the activities of National Union of Local government Employees (NULGE) and Workers' Productivity in Ughelli North and Patani Local Government Areas in Delta State is rejected. This implied that there is a significant relationship between the activities of National Union of Local government Employees (NULGE) and Workers' Productivity in Ughelli North and Patani Local Government Areas in Delta State

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between the challenges of National Union of Local government employees (NULGE) and improved Workers' Performance in Ughelli North and Patani Local Government Areas in Delta State

**Table 2: A Table of relationship between the challenges of National Union of Local government employees (NULGE) and Workers' Performance in Ughelli North and Patani Local Government Areas in Delta State**

Source of Variation	Responses		Df	X <sup>2</sup> -Cal	X <sup>2</sup> -Crit.	Alpha Level	Decision
	Observed	Expected					
Strongly Agree (SA)	347	250	12	82.66	21.03	0.05	Significant
Agree (A)	285	250					
Strongly Disagree (SD)	153	250					
Disagree (SD)	225	250					

Source: Field Work: 2022

As presented in the chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) summary Table above, the calculated chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) value of 82.66 is greater than the chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) table value of 21.03. The null hypothesis which stated there is no significant relationship between the challenges of National Union of Local government employees (NULGE) and Workers' Performance in Ughelli North and Patani Local Government Areas in Delta State is rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between the challenges of National Union of Local government employees (NULGE) and Workers' Performance in Ughelli North and Patani Local Government Areas in Delta State

## Discussion of Findings

The study revealed that there is significant relationship between National Union of Local Government Employees and Workers Productivity in Delta State. This result is consistent with the findings of Addison and Schnabel's (2013) study, which found that labor unions, such as the National Union of Local Government Employees, perform tasks related to worker productivity, such as boosting output, improving efficiency, and enhancing workers' discipline and workplace harmony. According to Nwankwo (2018), who agreed with the aforementioned findings, the National Union of Local Government Employees can support long-term positive employer-employee relations in the local government system by providing adequate employee incentive. According to Jaywant (2014), NULGE works to make sure that effective personnel rules are in place for employees at work. As a result, you might disagree with management's handling of hiring, choosing, training, promoting, health and safety, retirement, and death policies. Most frequently, through union representatives, unions advise personnel managers on personnel matters above and beyond the finest industrial norms.

According to Chand (2016), who agreed with the aforementioned conclusion, workers join unions because they anticipate to receive certain benefits, such as job stability, pay and benefits, good working conditions, just and fair supervision, a lack of power, and a desire to fit in. According to Okojie (2019), labor unions offer their members legal counsel and financial support when it is most needed. It aims to further the general welfare of its members by ensuring that the terms and conditions of their work are equitable and fair. Making sure there are sound personnel policies is another goal of trade unions like NULGE.

There is significant relationship between the Challenges of NULGE and Workers Performance in Delta State. This finding concurs with Rajesh and Manoj's (2015) study, which found that among the primary concerns facing trade unions are unequal growth, leadership issues, inter-union rivalry, financial fragility, a lackluster collective bargaining procedure, and chameleonic behaviors among trade union leaders. Problems with labor and unions in Nigeria also include incorrect trade union attitude and a lack of internal union democracy (Okojie, 2019). Gangurde (2014) identifies the main issues facing trade unions in Nigeria on his own, citing lack of unity, low priority policymakers, the unorganized sector, and the informalization of labor relations. Lack of internal democracy and a lack of competent leaders as a result of internal party strife are two of the main issues cited by Okojie (2019) as issues facing trade unions in Nigeria.

## Conclusion

National Union of Local Government Employees perform some crucial roles and function which making them important for workers. The successful and effective execution of the roles and functions of the union enhances the chances of peaceful and harmonious industrial settings in Nigerian local government system. Workers need strong and united trade union, but today, the future of trade unionism in Nigeria seems to be going towards fragmentation. The nation-wide labour union is suffering as it had come merely from national federations which workers are now disinclined to join. Given the multiple challenges facing trade unions in Nigeria, it is essential for National Union of Local Government Employees to harness the resources of all its members in order to sustain it growth and healthy development. This, of course can only be possible in the face of effective and honest internal democratic process within the union.

Freedom should be given to members to freely participate in all union programmes and in all important decision. It is when the society sees and realizes that there are true democratic processes in trade union activities like the NULGE will be taken seriously. In all, for a union to be successful, it must attend the primary concerns of their members. Moreover, members of trade unions should take devoted interest in their affairs. They should understand what

unionism all about and what demands it makes on individual members as well as feel the need to give the group required support for a common cause. Where this is not the case; trade unionism cannot be expected to make much progress.

---

## Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- i. Government and its agencies should provide workable templates that would stimulate and encourage the workers to achieve productivity in Ughelli North and Patani Local government Areas.
- ii. Government and labour management should provide welfare packages to the workers in order to attain the desired goal of the Union. When this is done, it would prevent protests, strikes and agitations for good conditions of service in the local government system.
- iii. Tripartite committee of government comprising, Nigeria Employee consultative Assembly (NECA) and Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) should be set up to consistently recommend the review of the existing labour laws, practice of industrial relation and national minimum wage.

---

## REFERENCES

- Abe, T. and Omotosho F. (2020). Local Government/Governance System in Nigeria: in Ajayi R. & Fashagba J.O., *Understanding Government & Politics in Nigeria (pp. 183-215)*. Kwara State, Nigeria: Landmark University
- Abel, E. (2014) Collective bargaining and conflict resolution. Retrieved on 9th September, 2018 from [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com)
- Addison, T. J. & Schnabel, O.I. (2019), "Non Representation in Germany", *Journal of Labour Research*, 20(1): 73–92.
- Adesina J & Onyeonou, B. (2020). State, Industrial Relations and Accumulation Regime in Nigeria: Reflections on some Issue of Governance. *Ibadan Journal of the Social Science* No. PP.1 - 2.
- Adewumi, F. (2019). "Responsiveness in Trade Unionism: *The Challenge of the 21st Century*" in, *Trade Unionism in Nigeria: Challenges for the 21st Century*. Adewumi, F. (ed) Lagos, Friedrich Ebert Foundation. Pp. 3-17.
- Adeyemi, O. (2021). "Local Government and the Challenges of Service Delivery: The Nigeria Experience." *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa*, Vol. 15, (7), 84 – 98.
- Adeyeye, M. (2020). The Dynamics of administration Reform: An Analysis of Nigerian Local Government. *Being Paper Presented at the Mid. Term International Conference organized by IPSA Rc 4 in Association with the Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria and Centre for Democratic Governance (AFRIGOV) Abuja.*
- Agagu, A. (2020). Continuity and Change in Local Government Administration and the Politics of Underdevelopment. In Agagu, A. & Ola, R. (eds). *Development Agenda of Nigeria State*. Ibadan: Fiag Publishers.
- Agalamanyi, C. U. (2021). Trade Unionism in Nigeria: The Role of Nigeria Union of Local Government Employees (NULGE). *Nigerian Journal of Public Administration and Local Government*. XII(1), 123-130.
- Agba, M.S. (2020). "Local Government and Social Service Delivery in Nigeria: A Content Analysis." *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, Vol. 2 (2), 455-462.
- Aiyede, E. R., (2020) 'United We Stand: Labour Unions and Human Rights NGOs in the Democratization Process in Nigeria' *Development in Practice*, Vol. 14, No.1/2, February, pp. 224-233.
- Akpala, S.O (2018). Industrial relations model for developing countries: *The Nigeria system*. Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishing Company Limited.
- Akpan, N.U (2019). Public Administration in Nigeria, *Ibadan: Longman publisher*
- Aremu. I. (2021). Trade union and the political process in Sokunbi, O. trade union and the democratic process in Nigeria. *Ibadan: NPS Education Publisher.*
- Awa, E.O. (2019). The Theory of Local Government. *Quarterly Journal of Administration Vol XV No.1 & 2 October/January.*
- Ayim, F. C., Elegbede, T. and Sherrif, G. (2021). Collective Bargaining Dynamics in the Nigerian Public and Private Sectors, *Australia Journal of Business and Management Research*, 1(5), 63 — 70.
- Barriento, S. & Smith, S. (2017). Do Workers Benefits from Ethical Trade?. *Assessing Codes of Labour Systems*. *Third world Quarterly* 28 (4) 713-929
- Bello-Imam, I.B (2020) Local Government in Nigeria: Evolving a third Tier of Government- *Ibadan: Heinemam Educational Books (Nig) Plc*
- Chand, S. (2016). Why Do Workers Join a Trade Union? (Reasons)
- Charles, S. (2018). The principles of collective bargaining. Retrieved on 7 October 2018 from: <http://journals.sagepub.com>



- Coleman, J., (2018) "Trade Unions" in James Coleman and Carl Rosberg, eds. *Political Parties and National Integration in Tropical Africa* Berkeley, University of California Press.
- Emezi, C. (2021). Local Government in Historical Perspective. *Nigerian Journal of Public Administration and Local Government*, 2(2): 50.
- Ezeani. O. E (2019), Local Government Administration Enugu: Zik-Chuks printing pres.
- Fajana, S., Nchuchukwe M & Ajolor B (2020). Industrial Relations in Nigeria Theory and Features; *Lagos: Labofin and Company*.
- Fashoyim, T. (2010), Industrial Relations in Nigeria: *Development and Practice Nigeria: Langman*.
- Fashoyin, T., (2019). Collective Bargaining with Public Sector in Nigeria. *Ibadan: Macmillan Press*.
- Gangurde, S.G. (2014). The Indian Trade Union Movement. *New Challenges. Indian Streams Research Journal*, 4 (8) 1-9
- Godard, J. (2019) Industrial Relations, The Economy, and Society. Ontario, Canada.
- Heineman, H.G, Schwab, D.P, Fossum J.A. & Dyer L.D. (2020). Personnel/Human Resource Management. *Honewood, Illinois: Richard D. Irwin Inc*.
- Igwe, O. (2012). *Politics and Global Dictionary*, Enugu.
- Ikejiani-Clark, M. and Ezeh F.C. (2019). *Local Government Administration in Nigeria; Current Problems and Future Challenges*, Lagos: Mangrove Publication.
- Jaywant, D. (2014), Politicization of Trade Union Movement in India Now having Its Backlash
- Lawal, S.(2020). Local Government Administration in Nigeria: *A Practical Approach in Ajayi, K (ed). Theory and Practice of Local Government. Ado Ekiti: University of Ado Ekiti Press Limited*.
- Mgbachi, G.. (2021) Foundation, Realities and Challenges of Local Government Administration in Nigeria. Owerri : Ambix Publisher.
- Muya, J. & Stimotwo P.C. (2020). Role of Trade Unions in the Enhance of Peaceful Work Relations for Efficient Conflict Management in Public University in Kenya. *International Journal of Science and Research*, 4 (9): 610-613
- Nwadiro, E.C.C. (2020). Collective Bargaining and conflict Resolution: the federal government of Nigeria and Nigeria Labour congress impasses: Retrieved on 9<sup>th</sup> September from <http://morecitescerx.ist.psu.edu>
- Nwankwo, B. C. (2018) "Strengthening Local Government Administration in Nigeria: The Expected Role of Nigeria Union of Local Government Employees (NULGE)", in *Nigerian Journal of Public Administration and Local Government*. Vol. 11, No. 1. (January) P70 – 91.
- Nyambi, N (2022). Three classification of Collective Bargaining: Retrieved on 28 September, 2018 from: [www.yourarticlelibrary.com/business-management/3-classification-of-collective-bargaining-as-suggested-prof-neil-chamberlain/2615](http://www.yourarticlelibrary.com/business-management/3-classification-of-collective-bargaining-as-suggested-prof-neil-chamberlain/2615)
- Ogunna, A. E.C. (2020) Handbook on local government in Nigeria, *Owerri, Versatile Publishers*.
- Ojeli U.K. (2020) different perspectives of employment relations. *management essay*. Retrieved on 5th September, 2018 from <http://www.ukessay.com/essays/management/different-perspective-of-employment-relations>.
- Ojo, T. M. (2018) Industrial Relations: Theory and Controversies, (Reviewed). *Lagos: Malthouse Press Ltd*.
- Okafor, E.E and Bode-Okunade (2021). An Introduction to Industrial and Labour Relations, *Ibadan*.
- Okojie, J. O. (2019). Organizational Behaviour and Management. *Osasu Publishers, University of Benin, Ekehuan Road Campus, Benin City, Nigeria first edition*
- Okonkwo, Rina, (2020) "The Nigeria Civil Service Union, 1919-1922" *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 3, pp. 609-622.
- Okoro, J. A. (2018). Collective bargaining: the Nigerian perspective. *Adamawa Journal of Management and Decision Analysis* 1(2), 12 – 20
- Otobo, D & Omole, M. A. (2021). "Understanding State Intervention in the Nigeria Labour Movement". *African Journal of Labour Studies* Vol. 2 No. 1 and 2.
- Oyediran, O. (2020). Local Government and Administration. In Oyediran (ed), *Nigerian Government and Politics under Military Rule 1996-79*. London: Macmillan Publishers.
- Peter, M. (2018). Industrial Relations: Theory & Practice (4th Ed), *London: Pearson Education Ltd*.
- Rajesh, S. & Manoj, P. (2015). Politicization of Trade Union and Challenges of Industrial Relations in India: A study with a Focus on Norther Karala. *International Journal of Business Administration and Research Review* 1(2) 45-57
- Singh, I. & Kulkarni (2019). Trade Union in India-Perceptions and future. *Indian Journal of Industrial Relations* 49 (1) 35-43

Skiai, P. E. (2020). Recent trend in collective bargaining in Nigeria. *Industrial Relations Journal*, 18(4), 47 – 55.

Summon, H. (2020). African Unions in the Struggle for Liberations. *Journal of the International Center for Trade Union Right*, 15(1).

Umunakwe, J. (2021). *Industrial Relations: A Development Dilemma in Africa*, Lagos: *Development Press*.