

Challenges of Work and Coping Strategies Adopted by Casual Workers in Some Selected Firms in Lagos, Nigeria

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Abstract

Casual workers in such sectors as telecommunication, oil and gas, power, banking, education and manufacturing both in private and public sectors in Nigeria have made significant contributions by helping in providing the manpower needed for economic development of Nigeria. Critical factors such as size (number of workers and operational branches) and age (year of incorporation) of firm usually affect the working conditions of CWs. Studies of CWs in the manufacturing sector have not adequately addressed how these factors affect the challenges of work and coping strategies adopted. This study, therefore, examined the challenges of work and coping strategies adopted by casual workers in some selected manufacturing firms in Lagos, Nigeria. A labour market segmentation theory provided the conceptual framework. The designs were both survey and exploratory. A two-stage sampling consisting of purposive and simple random techniques were used to select firms and respondents respectively. Three manufacturing firms of different sizes and ages were purposively selected. The study shows that size and age of firms affected the challenges of work and coping strategies of casual workers in the selected firms in Lagos State, Nigeria.

Keywords: Casual workers in manufacturing firms, working conditions,
coping

Strategies of manufacturing workers, Challenges of work

1. INTRODUCTION

The era of globalisation has given rise to profound changes in the way labour is utilised, specifically in terms of employment patterns as well as the related issues of earnings, job security, unionization and so on. In effect, the way the worker is used by the firms in the industry is determined solely by the dictates of capitalism, that is, the profit motive (Okafor and Rasak, 2015). Thus, neo-liberal globalisation, contrary to the often-benevolent impacts attributed to it, has brought about structural changes in the economy and alters consumer preferences, lifestyles and demands of citizens, as

well as changes in the working pattern of workers in the manufacturing industry in Nigeria.

The use of casual workers in both local and foreign firms in Nigeria has been on the increase, and this has made casual employment in the Nigerian labour market a subject of intellectual concern (Okougbo, 2004). Casual workers are filling positions that are permanent in nature. Related to employee vulnerability in Nigeria is the high level of unemployment and accompanying poverty (Okafor, 2010).

The existing literature uses different labels to refer to casual workers: they are, in some cases, referred to as “contingent workers”, “dispensable workers”, part-time workers, contract staff and non-core workers (Hampton, 1988). They are also known as “labour only” sub-contractors (Buckley and Endewuik, 1989), quoted in Hallenbradth and Cannon (1989), flexible workforce and peripheral workers (Williams, 1993). Bhorat and Hinks (2006) note the difficulty of defining casual employment, by pointing out that defining casual employment in a labour market is problematic. Issues of hours of work, type of employment contract, who pays the employee, non-pecuniary benefits and whether working in the formal or informal sector mean several definitions, can be adopted.

The traditional model of employment (permanent full-time employment with one employer until retirement) is steadily giving way to less stable (and often vulnerable) forms of employment (Cheadle, 2006). For the purpose of this study, the words “casual workers” are used to refer to employees whose services are dependent on the specific job or duty they were hired to carry out. They are laid off at the end of that particular ‘contract’ and can only be retained if another job comes on stream. The most notable characteristic of this category of workers is the fact that their employment is not permanent (Hamilton, 2006). As a result, casual workers can be retrenched without prior notification (Campbell, 2004).

The manufacturing industry, as notes, has the unique ability to facilitate development of the nation by providing directly for human needs or stimulating investment or by generating employment which can accomplish those objectives. The manufacturing industry is capital-intensive and “casual workers” cut across the range of professionals. Employment of casual workers is one strategy the manufacturing industry is using. Casual workers are either engaged directly by the organization that

requires their services, or hired and supplied by outfits whose function is to pay and administer their benefits, using money provided by the original contractor (Hampton, 1988). Based on these assertions, this research work is, therefore, directed towards improving existing knowledge about the challenges of work and coping strategies adopted by casual workers in selected manufacturing firms in Lagos State, Nigeria.

2. PROBLEM

Despite the fact that there has been considerable growth in casual employment in organizations across the globe, the growing body of research remains largely limited to employees (typically referred to as permanent employees) hired with an expectation, on the part of both employer and employee, of relatively long-term employment. Most studies on casual workers in the manufacturing industry have always treated their working conditions as a monolithic issue; no attention is paid to the impact of size variation and duration of existence of the organization as a determinant of how the organization treats its workers as well as the workers themselves evaluating how the organization treats them.

This is gap in knowledge which this study tried to fill, by examining casual workers in three manufacturing firms of different sizes in Lagos State, Nigeria. This research was guided by two questions. What are the challenges facing the casual workers and how do they cope with such challenges?

3. BRIEF REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Casual employment is variously referred to as “contingent” (Belous, 1989; Lips, 1998), “irregular”, “non-standard”, or “atypical” (Bourhis and Wils, 2001) employment. The terms refer to those who are employed in jobs that do not fit the traditional description of a full-time, permanent job (Brosnan and Walsh, 1996). Casual employment is generally understood to encompass casual employees recruited by short- term consultants or agencies which are external to the employer, or those hired directly by the company to be casual employees, contract employees, subcontractors, consultants, leased employees, part-time employees and the self-employed. As a distinct labour subset, however, “casual employment” is commonly defined as a job where the individual does not have an explicit or implicit contract for long-term employment, the casual nature of the job being recognized by both parties (Nardone, 1997).

The different descriptions and definitions of casual employment, and the linked uncertainty, offer a challenge to scholars of research as any educated guess of the size of the casual workforce depends on the definition that is used (Risher, 1997). Moreover, official statistical collections on labour market trends have often not kept pace with apparent changes in work (Callister, 1997). Casual employment has increasingly become part of the labour market in Nigeria (Okafor and Rasak, 2015). In spite of measurement problems, commentators are in accord that the casual workforce has become a significant employment option (Herer and Harel, 1998).

¹Casual worker as used in this study is an employee that does not have a standard contract of employment. Casual workers typically have no entitlements to superannuation, annual, long service, parental or sick leave and little or no industrial protection or security.

Socio-economic variations, including those related to globalization and faster innovativeness, have brought about changes in workforce structures that facilitated the growth in casual employment (Brosnan, 1996).

Casual employment is a means of job continuity in an era of restructuring, redundancy and unemployment. Such job continuity is replacing job security for many professionals and casual work is a way to stay continuously employed (Brosnan, 1996). Casual employment may open up opportunities for previously unemployed people to find employment (Callister, 1997), and it provides foot-in-the-door opportunities and experience for people (re)entering the workforce. Callaghan and Hartmann (1991) assert that some workers, such as parents caring for children, students, or retired people, might have a preference for casual employment that allows them the flexibility to work the hours that suit them without making a full-time, long-term commitment to a single employer.

Callister (1997) notes that casual employment can offer long-term advantages to some workers; for example, it can foster lifetime participation in paid work by women. Many casual employees voluntarily take up this form of employment for the flexibility and opportunities for skill advancement that it provides. Casual employment also provides people with the opportunity to “try out” new organizations, industries, and occupations without the long-term commitment (Lips, 1998). Moreover, casual employment is increasingly being used to facilitate the transition

from situations such as unemployment, studying, time-off work by women to have children, and redundancy, back to a permanent work situation (Lips, 1998).

Casual labour is an acceptable phenomenon in industry in developed economies because it is properly managed. The absence of a regulatory law has not helped labour unions and workers in Nigeria to fight exploitation to enable them to enjoy the dignity of labour like their counterparts in Europe, America and Japan (Okougbo, 2004).

4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this study the prevalence of casualization of workers in manufacturing firms is anchored on Labour Market Segmentation Theory. Conceptually, labour market segmentation theory argues that political and economic forces encourage the division of the labour market into separate submarkets, or segments, distinguished by different labour market characteristics and behavioural rules.

Segmented labour markets are thus the outcome of a segmentation process (Reich, Gordon and Edward, 1973). Segments may cut horizontally across the occupational hierarchy as well as vertically. The present labour market conditions can most usefully be understood as the outcome of two segmentation processes-primary and secondary segments.

The primary and secondary segments are differentiated mainly by stability characteristics. In primary segment, jobs require and develop stable working habits, skills are often acquired on the job, wages are relatively high, and job ladders exist; while, in the secondary segment, often discourage stable working habits; wages are low, turnover is high, and job ladders are few (Reich, Gordon and Edward, 1973). Moreover, primary jobs are rationed, that is, not all workers who are qualified for primary sector jobs and desire one can obtain one. Also, the sector of the labour market in which an individual is employed directly influences his or her tastes, behaviour patterns and cognitive abilities (Gordon, 1998).

In the case of casual workers, their actions can be expressed from the context of whether they will prefer to work as casuals or to remain unemployed. For some individuals, casual work may be the means of entering or re-entering the workforce, a stepping stone to more stable employment or a desired short-term employment opportunity. To gain adequate understanding of the current state of casual workers in

the manufacturing industry in Nigeria, focus should be on the aggregate of casual workers' perception which gives manufacturing firms in Nigeria its true character.

This refers to casual workers' reactions to the quality of services they receive from manufacturing industry operators; the utilisation, benefits and challenges of casual workers will determine whether or not the sector will be adjudged to be efficient. It is obvious that labour segmentation theory provides the clear picture of micro analysis of the macro level of the use of casual workers in manufacturing firms in Nigeria.

5. METHODS

The research designs for the study were both survey and exploratory in nature. The study was conducted in Lagos, Nigeria. Lagos State was created on May 27, 1967 by virtue of State (Creation and Transitional Provisions) Decree No. 14 of 1967, which restructured Nigeria's federation into 12 states. Prior to this, Lagos Municipality had been administered by the Federal Government through the Federal Ministry of Lagos Affairs as the regional authority, while the Lagos City Council (LCC) governed the City of Lagos (Lagos State Diary, 2011). Equally, with the formal relocation of the seat of the Federal Government to Abuja on 12th December, 1991, Lagos ceased to be Nigeria's political capital. Nevertheless, Lagos remains the nation's economic and commercial capital. Lagos being the commercial nerve centre of Nigeria, houses a lot of manufacturing firms. Lagos State was, therefore, purposively selected because of the high concentration of manufacturing firms in the state.

Using such criteria as length of involvement in the sector; national visibility, number of permanent workers and networking (NIPC, 2015), the following firms were selected using a scale of 10 in terms of capacity.

Table 1: Distribution of selected Firms by scale and capacity [Source: NIPC, 2015]

FIRMS	SCALE	CAPACITY	Nationality
A	Large	8 Point	Multinational / Foreign
B	Medium	6 Point	Multinational / Foreign
C	Small	4 point	National / Indigenous

The choice of the manufacturing firms is a product of the fact that the major firms in this sector are multinational concerns or foreign firms and are likely to have casual workers. Thus, one should expect to see the impact of casualization on casual workers as they are either expectedly run on dictates of their headquarters or on some

global template. In addition to the multinational firms, one indigenous manufacturing firm was selected in order to achieve some form of balance in opinion and establish validity. In order to gather the information required, the study targeted workers employed as casuals, the management staff in the selected manufacturing firms (representing management); middle cadre workers (representing supervisors and foremen in the selected firms); officials of the Trade Union Congress (TUC) (workers representatives) and Ministry of Labour and Productivity in Nigeria.

In this research work the researcher studied the above three firms engaged in Rubber shoe production in Lagos, Nigeria. The respondents chosen were purposively selected using the staff records at the personnel office. Records from the administrative and personnel departments of the firms showed that Firm “A” in Lagos had staff strength of 194 casual workers in all their factories; Firm “B” had 146 casual workers in all their factories; while Firm “C” had 50 casual workers in all factories as at the time of this research. The approximate sample size used for the study was 390.

² Pseudonyms (A, B, C) have been assigned to these three firms to conceal their real identities and maintain confidentiality of information obtained as required by the ethical consideration.

To address the specific objectives of the study, copies of the questionnaire were administered to 390 casual workers in the selected manufacturing firms and 19 in-depth interviews. Out of the 390 copies of the questionnaire, 283 copies were returned, which translates to 72.6% response rate. Out of the 283 copies returned, 77 copies were not duly completed and so could not be used for analysis. A total of 206 copies which were duly completed, were analysed for this study. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive analysis, while qualitative data were content analyzed.

6. RESULT OF FINDINGS

6.1 Socio-economic and Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

The result for the study, as presented in Table 2 below showed that 79.6% of the casuals were males, while 20.4% were females. This may be due to the fact that men are expected to be breadwinners in the family, also the type of work done in these firms require working with heavy machines, hence the preference for male over female casuals by the management of the selected firms. This finding supports the

existing literature and statistics on male dominance in most firms where casuals are employed, as observed by Okafor in his study on casual workers in three Asian firms in Lagos, Nigeria (Okafor, 2010).

Furthermore, majority of the sampled population were Yoruba (48.1%) despite the fact that Lagos State is a cosmopolitan city and a settlement for all ethnic groups in Nigeria. This could be attributed to the fact that it is within their territory these firms were located. However, the Igbo, another dominant and highly-migrant ethnic group in Nigeria, constituted 22.8%; the Hausa constituted 21.8%, while others, like the Ijaw, Edo, Efik and Urhobo constituted the remaining 7.3%. The study revealed that 68.9% of the respondents were Christians while 31.1% of the respondents were Muslims. Also, very few of the respondents 18.4% possessed university degrees.

This confirms the observations of Okougbo (2004) and Adenugba (2006) that some casual workers in Nigeria had university degrees and other higher qualifications that would have enabled them to get permanent jobs. This trend in the country could be as a result of the global economic and employment crisis that have continued to threaten the future of workers all over the world, particularly in developing nations, like Nigeria. The result further showed that sizeable amount of casuals 48.5% were earning a monthly income of N18, 000 and above, while the minority 11.7% earned less than N13, 000. This shows that the salary structure in the manufacturing firms is poor and this may likely be as a result of the manufacturing firms having to cut operational cost, especially salary and allowances of the casual workers in order to remain in business. By every standard, this amount is meagre, considering the cost of living in Nigeria.

Table 2: Distribution of the Casuals' Socio-economic and Demographic Characteristics by Firms [Source: Field survey 2015]

Table 3 below shows that low wages was generally perceived as common challenges faced by casual workers, in firm 'A' 63.4%; 'B', 58.1% and in 'C' 68.8% of the respondents agreed that their wages were low. The finding here was consistent with the findings of Adegboro (1992), who observed that most casual workers earns low wages. Respondents from firm A, 67.9%; B, 70% and C, 87.5%, perceived safety at work as "poor".

Supervision were jointly perceived by the casual workers in firm A, 78.6%, C, 84.4% were of the opinion that supervision at work was not rigid, except in B, 61.3% agreed that supervision was rigid.

However, majority of the respondents on the whole, 53.4% were of the view that job insecurity in the firms was not high, except in firm C, were majority of the respondents, 78.1% agreed that job insecurity was high. This implied that workers in most multinational manufacturing firms enjoyed better working conditions in terms of job security. This finding is contrary to the findings of Hampton, (1988), Buckley and Endewuik, (1989), Hallenbradth and Cannon (1989), Okougbo, (2004), Bhorat and Hinks (2006), Cheadle (2006) and Fapohunda, (2012). They observed that generally one major challenge of casual workers is job insecurity. This finding also shows that 68.8% of the respondents from firm A were of the view that they were subjected to long hours of work; while, 62.9% of the respondents from firm B and 37.5% of the respondents from firms C were also, of the view that they were subjected to long hours of work.

On the whole, 62.1% of the respondents indicated that they were subjected to

Variables	Firms (F= 112)	Frequency (F= 62)	Frequency (F=32)	Total (F= 206)
Sex	A	B	C	
Male	98 (87.5%)	46 (74.2%)	20 (62.5%)	164 (79.6%)
Female	14 (12.5%)	16(25.8%)	12(37.5%)	42 (20.4%)
Ethnic Group	A	B	C	
Yoruba	59 (52.7%)	27 (43.6%)	13 (40.6%)	99 (48.1%)
Igbo	28 (25%)	11(17.7%)	8 (25%)	47 (22.8%)
Hausa	19(16.9%)	15 (24.2%)	11 (34.4%)	45 (21.8%)
Others	6(5.4%)	9 (14.5%)	0 (0%)	15 (7.3%)
Religion	A	B	C	
Christianity	78 (69.6%)	38 (61.3%)	26 (81.3%)	142 (68.9%)
Islam	34(30.4%)	24 (38.7%)	6 (18.7%)	64 (31.1%)
Educational Qualification	A	B	C	
Secondary	63(56.2%)	24 (38.7%)	12 (37.5%)	99(48.1%)
OND/NCE	26(23.2%)	18 (29.0%)	9 (28.1%)	53(25.7%)
BSC/HND	17 (15.2%)	14 (22.6%)	7 (21.9%)	38(18.4%)
Others	6 (5.4%)	6(9.7%)	4(12.5%)	16 (7.8%)
Month Income	A	B	C	
Below N13,000	6 (5.4%)	11(17.7%)	5 (15.6%)	21(11.7%)
N13,001-N16,000	27 (24.1%)	18 (29.0%)	6(18.8%)	51 (24.8%)
N16,001-N18,000	20 (17.9%)	7 (11.3%)	4 (12.5%)	31 (15.0%)
N18,000 and above	57 (50.9%)	26 (42%)	17(53.1%)	100(48.5%)

long hours of work, while 37.9% of all the respondents were of the view that they were not subjected to long hours of work. This is consistent with the findings of Adepegba (2013), Adegboro (1992), Anugwon (2007) and Idowu (2010), who claimed that casual workers were subjected to long hours of work. In terms of whether casual workers were discriminated against, 69.6% of the respondents from firm A, 64.5% from B and 87.5% from C were of the view that they were discriminated against. On the whole, a total of 70.9% of respondents agreed that they were discriminated against by the management, while, 29.1% were of the view that they were not discriminated against.

The findings also revealed that the majority 71.4% of the respondents from firm A, 80.6% from B and 68.8% of respondents from C indicated that they were exploited. Altogether, 73.8% of the respondents were of the view that they were exploited by the management of these firms, while 26.2% were of the view that they were not exploited in any way by the management. These views support the already established position by various scholars (Okougbo, 2004, Okafor, 2010), that casual workers wherever found suffers exploitation in the hands of management.

In terms of whether the casual workers were harassed by the management, 58% of the respondents from firm A, 61.3% from B and 68.8% of the respondents from C were of the view that they were harassed by the management. In all, 60.7% of the respondents in all the firms said “yes”, while 39.3% said “no” they were not harassed by the management. This finding is in support of previous studies which were of the views that most casual workers in the multinational firms were constantly harassed by the management of those firms especially in firms that were managed by Asians.

Statement	Firms			
	A (F=112)	B (F=62)	C (F=32)	Total (F=206)
Casual workers' wages are low				
Yes	71 (63.4%)	36 (58.1%)	22 (68.8%)	129 (62.6%)
No	41 (36.6%)	26 (41.9%)	10 (31.2%)	77 (37.4%)
Casual workers safety at work is low				
Yes	76 (67.9%)	49 (70.0%)	28 (87.5%)	153 (74.3%)
No	36 (32.1%)	13 (30.0%)	4 (12.5%)	53 (25.7%)
Casual workers supervision at work is rigid				
Yes	24 (21.4%)	38 (61.3%)	5 (15.6%)	67 (32.5%)
No	88 (78.6%)	24 (38.7%)	27 (84.4%)	139 (67.5%)
Job insecurity for casual workers is high				

Yes	55 (49.1%)	16(25.8%)	25 (78.1%)	96 (46.6%)
No	57 (50.9%)	46(74.2%)	7(21.9%)	110 (53.4%)
Casual workers are subjected to long hours of work				
Yes	77(68.8%)	39(62.9%)	12(37.5%)	128(62.1%)
No	35(31.2%)	23(37.1%)	20(21.9%)	78(37.9%)
Casual workers are discriminated against by the management				
Yes	78(69.6%)	40(64.5%)	28(87.5%)	146(70.9%)
No	34(30.4%)	22(35.5%)	4(12.5%)	60(29.1%)
Casual workers are exploited by the management				
Yes	80(71.4%)	50(80.6%)	22(68.8%)	152(73.8%)
No	32(28.6%)	12(19.4%)	10(31.2%)	54(26.2%)
Casual worker are harassed by the management				
Yes	65(58.0%)	38(61.3%)	22(68.8%)	125(60.7%)
No	47(42.0%)	24(38.7%)	10(31.2%)	81(39.3%)
Casual workers are prevented from joining work based association				
Yes	80(71.4%)	47(75.8%)	23(71.9%)	150(72.8%)
No	32(28.6%)	15(24.2%)	9(28.1%)	56(27.2%)
Casual workers are vulnerable to seasonal unemployment				
Yes	69(61.6%)	40(64.5%)	19(59.4%)	128(62.1%)
No	43(38.4%)	22(35.5%)	13(40.6%)	78(37.9%)
How would you evaluate challenges facing casual workers in your firm				
High	56(50%)	35(56.5%)	21(65.6%)	112(54.4%)
Moderate	34(30.4%)	19(30.6%)	7(21.9%)	60(29.1%)
Low	22(19.6%)	8(12.9%)	4(12.5%)	34(16.5%)

Table 3: Casual workers' views on challenges of work [Source: Field survey, 2015]

The study also revealed that 71.4% of the respondents from firm A were of the view that they were prevented by the management from joining work-based associations, while 28.6% were of the view that they were not prevented from joining work-based associations. Also, 75.8% of the respondents from firm B were of the view that they were prevented from joining work-based associations, while 24.2% of the respondents were of the view that they were not prevented from joining work-based association.

Similarly, 71.9% of the respondents from firm C were of the view that they were prevented from joining work-based associations, while 28.1% of the respondents were of the view that they were not prevented from joining work-based associations. On the whole, 72.8% of the respondents agreed that they were prevented by the management from joining work-based associations or unions, while 27.2% were of the opinion that they were not prevented from joining work-based associations or unions. This is contrary to the response from a male casual worker who worked for firm B, during an IDI session. He asserted that:

We have union and we pay monthly due of N600.00 to the union, but I see this money as a waste, because this people (union leaders) do not come to our rescue whenever any of

us have an issue with the management
(IDI/Male/Casual/Firm B/2015)

Furthermore, a casual worker with Firm A said:

We have union, whenever there are issues concerning the workers and management, the first point of call is Personnel Manager, and if the worker is not satisfied, he/she will have to bring the union leaders in. Every Tuesday morning, we have our regular meetings and the union representative come over to address us concerning our rights (IDI/Male/Casual/Firm A/2015)

From the responses above, it is obvious that most casual workers in these firms considered themselves as belonging to work-based associations or unions, since they paid union dues. The finding here is not consistent with the findings of Bhorat and Hinks(2006), Cheadle(2006), Okougbo (2004), Buckley and Endewuik(1989), Hallenbradth and Cannon (1989) and Hampton (1988). They observed that casual workers were not allowed to belong to work-based association or union. Furthermore, 61.6% of respondents from firm A, 64.5% from B, and 59.4% from C were of the view that they were vulnerable to seasonal unemployment.

Generally, 62.1% of the casual workers indicated that they were vulnerable to seasonal unemployment, while 37.9% of the respondents indicated that they were not vulnerable to seasonal unemployment. These responses suggest that the casual workers are aware of the seasonal nature of work and, since no special medium of employment is necessary, workers are constantly needed and can easily be subjected to long hours of work, discriminated against, harassed, as well as exploited by the management of these firms. Thus, most of these casual workers could be described as transitional workers, who are either working in these firms out of necessity or bidding their time for a better working opportunity in some other companies.

The findings revealed that 50% of the respondents from firm A evaluated the challenges they faced as casuals as “high”, 30.4% evaluated them as “moderate”, while 19.6% evaluated them as “low”. Also, 56.5% of the respondents from B rated the challenges they faced as casuals as “high”, 30.6% rated it as “moderate” while 12.9% rated them as “low”.

It also revealed that, 65.6% of the respondents from firm C evaluated the challenges they faced as casual workers as “high”, 21.9% evaluated them as “moderate”, while 12.5% evaluated them as “low”.

From the responses above, it is clear that the precarious nature of their work as casual workers could lead to economic insecurity for the workers and their families, as observed by Fapohunda (2012). Hence, in the event that a casual worker is responsible for the livelihood of his family, the entire family may be placed at risk. Such precariousness affects a worker's experience at work, how he/she makes decisions about work and how he/she relates to the broader labour market.

In the course of IDI, with regard to how casual workers would evaluate challenges faced in these firms, a casual worker, who worked with Firm B, said:

I do not see myself working in this Chinese firm beyond next year. The work is too hard for someone like me, and the salary is not encouraging in the present economic situation in this country. This Chinese people are using us as slave in our own country and nobody is doing anything about it. Our government should come and investigate them
(IDI/Male/Casual /Firm B/2015)

Another casual worker, from Firm C had this to say;

Apart from poor salary, the work is too hard and dangerous. The kind of bus they use as staff bus is not different from what is used to carry chickens in Ketu Market. They don't treat us as human beings, and they threaten us with sack whenever we complain about the way we are treated. When you look at this my leg, you will see that it's swelling. I sustained this injury from the factory and the only thing they gave me was paracetamol. The only thing that is keeping me in this firm is that the company promised to compensate me. Immediately the month of December comes and I'm compensated, I will look for another firm. May God help me my brother!
(IDI/Male/Casual/C/2015)

The implication of this scenario is that, besides the large-scale nonchalant attitude that would be exhibited by the casual workers, it is detrimental to the firms. It also implies that most casual workers in these firms do not see their present work as a lifetime career, but as a "foot in the door" to futuristic activities, and this is most likely to result in a high incidence of labour turnover among the casual workers in these firms, which will invariably have effects on workers' performance and productivity (Ogunbameru, 2008; Okafor, 2010).

*Table 4: Strategies adopted by casual workers to cope with the challenges of work
[Source: Field survey 2015]*

Statements	Firms			
	A	B	C	Frequency (%)
I cut down my cost as much as I can on transportation				
Response	Frequency (F=112)	Frequency (F=62)	Frequency (32)	Total (206)
Yes	72(64.3%)	39(62.9%)	17(53.1%)	128(62.1%)
No	40(35.7%)	23(37.1%)	15(46.9%)	78(37.9%)
I work overtime to meet my needs				
Yes	64(57.1%)	45(72.6%)	22(68.8%)	131(63.6%)
No	48(42.9%)	17(27.4%)	10(31.2%)	75(36.4%)
We gossip about management during break time				
Yes	66 (58.9%)	35 (56.5%)	7 (21.9%)	108(52.4%)
No	46 (41.1%)	27 (43.5%)	25(78.1%)	98 (47.6%)
We depend on mutual aid and support				
Yes	55 (49.1%)	38 (61.3%)	8(25%)	101 (49%)
No	57 (50.9%)	24 (38.7%)	24(75%)	105 (51%)
I do other jobs after my closing hour				
Yes	51(45.5%)	19(30.6%)	17 (53.1%)	87(42.2%)
No	61 (54.5%)	43 (69.4%)	15 (46.9%)	119(57.8%)
I attend weekend classes in order to further my education				
Yes	38(33.9%)	10(16.1%)	11(34.4%)	59(28.6%)
No	74(66.1%)	52(83.9%)	21(65.6%)	147(71.4%)
In all, how would you evaluate your coping strategies				
Good	69(61.6%)	22(35.5%)	17(53.1%)	108(52.4%)
Poor	43(38.4%)	40(64.5%)	15(46.9%)	98(47.6%)

Table 4, presents the perceived level of casual workers coping strategies. The result showed that 62.1% of the respondents that cut across the three firms were of the opinion that they cut down cost on transportation as much as they could in order to meet some of their needs, while 37.9% of them were of the opinion that they did not cut down cost on transportation.

On whether the casual workers work overtime to meet their needs, 63.6% of them said “yes”, while 36.4% indicated that they did not work overtime. This implies that the whole duration of time spent in the factory working also accommodates overtime, that is, two hours of the workers’ working hours is regarded by the management as overtime and the workers are remunerated accordingly. This was corroborated by the Personnel Manager in firm B during an IDI session. According to him:

There is overtime and the company pays any worker who decides to work overtime, though it will be difficult for the workers to differentiate their normal working hour from that of overtime, since the general working hours for every worker to live the site with the staff bus is 6.00 pm. The normal closing hour is 4.00pm, while 2 hours is for overtime. The only place where overtime could be differentiated is weekends and public holidays, and any worker who decides to come to work is welcome and the company will pay for such hours spent (IDI/Male/PM/Firm B/2015)

The finding further shows that 58.9% of the casual workers in firm A, 56.5% in B, and 52.4% in C agreed that they gossip about their management during break hour as part of their coping strategies. A careful observation shows that majority of casual workers in firm A claimed to gossip about their management as compared to casual workers in firm B. This may be as a result of flexibility in supervision by the management of firm A. For firm C, is not the same, since most of casual workers, 84.4% were of the view that supervision was less rigid in the firm and so, reason for gossiping about their management could be as a result of low paid wages. In other words, though majority of the casual workers tends to agree on low paid wages, they differ in terms of style of supervision by the management.

In terms of whether casual workers depend on mutual aid and support as part of their coping strategies, 49.1% in firm A, 61.3% in B and 25% of the casual workers from C, were of the view that they indeed depend on mutual aid and support, while 50.9% of the casual workers in Firm A, 38.7% in B and 75% in C were of the view that they did not depend on mutual aid and support as part of their coping strategies. The finding shows that majority of the respondents in firm B, 61.3% who claimed to have depended on mutual aid and support, did so, due to the low paid wages by the management of the firm when compared with other firms as earlier showed.

The finding also revealed that 42.2% of the casual workers did other jobs after closing hour, while 57.8% of them indicated that they did not do other jobs after closing hour. Most casual workers in firm C, 53.1% were of the view that they did other jobs after closing hour. This confirms the observation of Okafor (1998), that multiple job holding has always been a feature of most Nigerian workers, especially in the 1980s and 1990s when the cost of Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) was more evident in Nigeria. This suggests that firms A and B had better working hours for their casual workers than C.

This may also be attributed largely to their size variation and duration of existence of the firms and the kind of incentives offered by the firm, which most of the casual workers described as good. This aspect of work was probed further in the course of IDIs. A 25-year old female casual worker, who had been working in the Transport Department of firm A for two years, said:

I do not do other jobs after my closing hour, with the kind of job that I'm doing. After getting home I have

no time to do some other things
(IDI/Female/Casual/Firm A/2015)

To buttress the experiences of casual workers in her Manufacturing firms, the Public Relations Manager of firm A, averred that:

Overtime wages are paid to workers who take part. Our working hours is 7am to 4pm, while 2 hour, that is, between 4pm to 6pm is said to be for overtime, the wages paid for workers are paid depending on status. In case there is conflict between management and the workers, the Personnel Department takes care of workers issues (IDI/Female/Manager/Firm A/2015)

These responses, suggest that the mode of reward by the firms determines whether or not the casual workers would be involved in overtime work as well as how they felt about their commitment toward the firms.

With regard to whether casual workers attended weekend classes in order to further their education, 28.6% said “yes”, while 71.4% indicated “no”. This means that the casual workers did not see the need for further educational qualification, since the kind of job they are engaged in may be considered as menial, which may not require higher educational qualification. This is contrary to the view of Adenugba (2006), that most casual workers possess better qualification that would have earned them permanent job.

In the course of in-depth interviews (IDIs) with some casual workers, most of the respondents argued that they had some level of education, in line with their area of specialization. For instance, a casual worker who had been in the employment of Firm C for three years, said:

As a casual in the security department, what kind of education do you expect me to have, since my job is to protect the company equipment. Do you need any training to do that? But for safety, we also join other workers to listen to what the safety officer has to say to us, despite the fact that we are exposed to danger (IDI/Male/Casual/Firm C/2015)

This suggests that casuials are recruited and trained based on their already acquired skills, and that the type of job these workers do, may be considered as menial. This corroborates Okafor (2010), who notes that the type of work done in these firms where casual workers are employed requires physical strength, demands energy and is

often dangerous. Furthermore, the study revealed that 52.4% of the respondents noted that their coping strategies generally were “good”, while 47.6% noted that their coping strategies were “poor”. This suggests that these coping strategies adopted by the casual workers have brought about better deployment and development of their labour power, as observed by Hall (2002).

7. DISCUSSION

Findings from this study confirmed the theoretical framework for the study. The theoretical positions of Labour Market Segmentation theory (LMS) theory is understood in the context of the findings. The study showed that, in Nigeria, jobs offered by employers in the manufacturing firms had increasingly differentiated standards of wages, working conditions and security.

For some workers, this has meant experiencing wages and working conditions that challenge the tradition that employment will be sufficient for avoiding poverty and securing the reproduction of labour. The two most significant developments in the manufacturing firms were (i) the rise in casual employment and (ii) the masculinisation of the industry. These two developments occurred in the context of prolonged decline in employment in Nigeria (Onyeonoru, 2004). Labour segmentation in the manufacturing firms was most evident in wages, hours of work and by employment status.

Analysis of labour segmentation in the firms studied revealed a dynamic relation between the degradation and segmentation of labour market standards. The disadvantages of casual employment relative to the advantages of permanent employment mean that its expansion contributed to segmentation. But employment decline and casualization (particularly through labour hire and outsourcing) were found to have placed pressure on the standards and working conditions of permanent workers (Okafor, 2010). So, degradation was evident.

Nevertheless, the decline in employment and the casualization of employment also made permanent work much more valuable because of its relative scarcity. This change in relativity between permanent and casual employment represents segmentation, regardless of the degradation in the standards experienced by permanent workers.

However, segmentation in the manufacturing firms is different from traditional labour market segmentation because labour market disadvantage is not limited to

those workers traditionally considered to have secondary or marginal status (Martinez and Garcia, 2005).

This finding support various studies which show that casual workers experience continuous failure on the part of the management in obtaining better conditions of work, like better salary, decent working standard and better safety and health standards (Friedman, 1988). The causes of segmentation, when considered, place most weight on the role of employers in line with the nature of the firms, when explaining labour market advantages and disadvantages.

Such an explanation, when also assessed relative to competing explanations and manufacturing firms, employers gives market forces and the choices of individual casual workers most weight.

Labour market segmentation theory, in this study, has been shown to provide a much plausible explanation of segmentation in the manufacturing industry on empirical ground. As seen in the study, manufacturing industry contributes immensely to the development of gross domestic product of the Nigerian economy and it is one of the major sectors of the national economy. Despite the immense benefits accruing from segmentation of manufacturing sector as promoted by the labour market segmentation theorists, the use of casual workers by the various manufacturing firms under the current dispensation has become a burden to the casual workers, the management of the firms, manufacturing workers' union and the government. This idea is well articulated in this study

This was particularly concerned with problems inherent in the utilization of casual workers. Findings showed that, with the effects of globalization, casual workers are especially at risk for exploitation and the nature of the job embarked on by the casual workers is hard (Okafor 2010).

8. CONCLUSION

The findings of the study revealed that most of the casual workers rated the challenges they faced as "high", and their coping strategies as "good". This rating suggests that the coping strategies adopted by the casual workers have brought about better deployment of their labour power. By using mostly casual workers in their operations, these firms are offering jobs to the teeming unemployed Nigerians, in the absence of any real alternative work. Also, the labour practices in the selected

manufacturing firms were generally inadequate. There is a serious lack of monitoring and enforcement of Nigerian labour law.

The government and its agencies have been weak in monitoring labour practices in most factory and enforcing the laws and regulations designed to protect the casual workers. The workers were generally not aware of their rights and entitlements under the labour law in relation to their terms of contract. Lack of monitoring and enforcement and lack of awareness on the part of the workers have allowed the manufacturing firms the freedom to choose how they wished to treat their casual workers and whether or not they would abide by the regulations of the government in this regard. In some factories, management chose to ignore the regulations governing the overall welfare of the workers. On most of the factories, the benefits to which the workers were entitled by law were not provided for by the managements. Such a situation can lead to labour unrest in the factories.

Finally, there were a few factories where labour practices were of a good standard. Workers were treated well and they received the benefits they were entitled to by law. The great diversity in labour standards found in some factories was an unexpected finding of the research. The fact that the multinational manufacturing firms practiced very different standards in the treatment of their workers raises important questions about the fairness of the competition. The lowest labour standards were operated by one of the firms owned by Chinese. This means that the success of the Chinese firm in winning an increasing number of tenders in Lagos State may, to some extent at least, be at the expense of the casual workers.

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