

Globalization, Changes and Strategies for Managing Workers* Resistance in Work Organizations in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT Globalization has become a dominant issue in work organizations all over the world. It has the potential to enrich not only the nation's economy but also the workplace as it can increase productivity, profitability and ease the performance of tasks. However certain changes such as privatization, deregulation, liberalization, subsidies removal, casualization, downsizing, rightsizing, rationalization, recapitalization, merger and acquisition among others, have made it very unpopular among workers in the developing countries. Understandably in the recent times the anti-globalization protests have increased all over the world as a form of resistance to the changes. Against this backdrop this paper examines the Nigerian situation by focusing critically on ways and reasons why workers react and resist changes emanating from globalization both within and outside the work organizations. On this note the paper identified some strategies for managing resistance to changes emanating from globalization in work organizations.

INTRODUCTION

Globalization has engendered changes in all aspects of human endeavor. Therefore, everywhere, people, institutions, roles, statuses, organizations etc, are changing. Changes are therefore inevitable consequence of globalization in any organization. It has been argued that change is the very essence of the environment in which an organization operates. A change is any deviation from normal situation and its management requires special skills to weather the change. To drive home the essence of change in organization, Drucker (1954: 24) identified three types of formal organizations vis-à-vis their responses to changes. They include; *those that make things happen; those that watch things happen and those that wonder what happened*. Hence he argued that less formal organizations are managed by change, the dynamic organizations manage change and the outstanding organizations create change themselves.

In the past few decades, all over the world, organization environment has undergone rapid and tremendous changes largely due to globalization. Globalization has resulted in huge advances in the areas of technology. This has completely reshaped the landscape of formal organizations all over the world, the less sighted

organizations operating in the same environment lost their fortunes and in some cases were faced with virtual extinction as a result of the inability to anticipate and adapt their operations to changes brought about by the latent forces of globalization in the society (Onyeonoru, 2005).

Globalization has enriched the world scientifically and culturally. It has also benefited most nations and peoples economically. It has been argued that globalization offers enormous potential to eradicate poverty in the 21st century (UNDP, 1999; World Bank, 2003). However, globalization has produced a whole series of consequences – economic, political, cultural and environmental. Unfortunately, some of these consequences have been negative to “many developing countries, people without assets, workers with few skills, small firms, workers, women and children, those dependent on public service” (Streeten, 1997; Isamah, 2002: 132). Of much concern about globalization is the way it has widened the gulf between the rich and the poor not only among the nations of the world but also within nations. While global wealth has undoubtedly increased, it has become concentrated in fewer hands and fewer countries. Consequently, while globalization has made wages continue to rise in some countries together with profits especially in the developed countries, it plays havoc with many workers lives in the developing countries (Giddens, 1994). Consequently since 1999 anti-globalization demonstrations by the workers and other vulnerable groups in the society have escalated (Slade, 2001).

*Although the terms workers and employees are used interchangeably, however the former is mainly used to refer to those at the non-managerial level while the latter is used to refer to those at the managerial level.

Change is a process that requires action and whichever way workers react to it, it has implicit and explicit implications for realization or non-realization of organizational goals and objectives. Nigerian work organizations are not insulated from changes emanating from globalization forces. And, since globalization presently appears irreversible, every organization in both public and private sectors must prepare its workforce in line with the frequent changes associated with globalization. In this view, this paper attempts to examine critically how and why workers react to changes and suggest strategies for managing workers resistance to changes in work organizations in this period of globalization with special reference to Nigeria.

THE CONCEPTS OF GLOBALIZATION AND CHANGE

Globalization has become one of the most prominent phenomena characterizing ending part of 20th century and of course has become the major force that will propel the direction of most organizational activities in the now emerged 21st century. Terms like a “global village”, “international competitiveness”, “liberalization”, “deregulation” “casualization” “downsizing” etc have almost become universal. Against this background it useful to explore briefly the meanings of globalization.

The International Monetary Fund, IMF, (1997: 25) defines globalization as “the growing economic interdependence of countries worldwide through the increasing volume and variety of ‘cross border’ transaction in goods and services and of international capital flow and also through the more rapid and widespread diffusion of technology” Moreover, Kwanashie (1998: 4) defines globalization as “a process of integrating economic decision-making such as the consumption, investment and saving process all across the world. It is a process of creating a global market in which increasingly all nations are forced to participate”.

Another definition advanced by Ojo and Obaseki (1998: 5) is that globalization is “the integration of national economies through trade and financial transactions, a process that has tended to reduce the ability of domestic economic policy to achieve its objectives without due consideration of the countervailing effects of competing policies adopted by other nations”. For Afonja (2003: 22) globalization literally “means the removal of barriers between countries so that the world becomes a global village”. He further

argued that it is a process of increasing inter-connectedness of individuals, groups, companies and countries.

From the above definitions, it is evident that globalization is the term used to describe the growing worldwide interdependence of people and countries. In this idea, globalization is a relative concept since it is related to value judgment and ideology in the sense that whereas it enriched other nations and for others it has impoverished them. According to Akande (2000) and UNDP (1999) the key feature that underlies the concept of globalization is the erosion and irrelevance of national boundaries in markets that can truly be described as global. Capital flows are being denationalized as a result; national sovereignty is becoming highly irrelevant. The main thrusts for the ever growing irrelevance of national boundaries in the financial markets are technological and economic development.

Historically, the concept of globalization began to strive shortly after the end of World War II when the allies led by the United States decided to support a worldwide “open” trading and investment systems. There is no doubt that progress has been made in the world since then and this of course is the evidence of the benefits of the system. There has been a constant growth of the globalization of businesses world over as a result of progress and advances made in the areas of information and communication technology. This has brought about increases in the trade of goods and services worldwide. This in turn has led to increased investment and competitions (Jones, 1994; Went 2000; Woods, 2000).

In a nutshell, globalization (both economic and cultural) thrives on the basis of global interdependence. The current situation is that countries are now more interdependent than ever in the history of man. The present structure of the world economy is such that resources movement around the world has become critical for its growth and sustained global welfare. Therefore the location and integration of an organization’s operations across several international boundaries are essential ingredients of globalization (Afonja, 2003). Forms of technology such as television, Internet, telephone and microchip have been identified as the major forces behind globalization. These technologies have revolutionized communication during the past decades. Access to people and information – practically anywhere in the world – has become quicker, cheaper and

easier (Mazrui, 2001; Ibrahim, 2001; Slade, 2002).

Opinions are divided among the scholars regarding the place Nigerian and indeed the whole African continent in the globalized world. For some scholars the process of globalization does not extend to most developing countries of Africa as a result of many inhibiting factors. In this case it has been argued that while most emerging markets have been able to access global capital market for low-cost funds, Nigeria is yet to make a mark. This poor performance could be adduced to several inhibiting factors that include, political, institutional, microeconomic instability, absence of functional institutional framework, lack of adequate and functional technological infrastructures and restricted legislation (Owolabi, 1998; Ajayi, 2001).

On the other hand, some scholars have argued that with democratization of polity, deregulation and privatization of public enterprises, globalization has indeed substantially co-opted Nigeria to its ranks. The argument is that although the forces of economic globalization in the world as whole may have deepened the marginalization of Nigeria, however the forces of cultural globalization on the other hand have substantially penetrated and assimilated much of Nigeria. Consequently the impact of globalization, which hitherto has been noticed in some few sectors such as banking, manufacturing and transportation, has spread to other sectors as education, health, trade and commerce (Mazrui, 2001; Slade, 2002).

Whatever the argument, it is important to note that the process of global integration is certainly irreversible. For instance, will Nigerian people turn off their TVs, throw away their mobile phones, destroy their computers and stop traveling to other countries, stop importing and using new technologies in the work organization? Will Nigeria as a nation isolate itself completely from the rest of the world, culturally, politically and economically? This seems most unlikely. Consequently no formal work organization either public or private would want to discard the benefits that may accrue from globalization especially as it relates to improving productivity and rendering of quality services in order to survive the competitive economic environment in which it is operating.

On the other hand, the concept of *change* refers to any deviation from the normal way of doing things. In relation to organization, change can be described as a significant alteration of

structure including consequences and manifestations embodied in the organizational culture and other components. Put in a simple way, organizational change refers to a total modification in the organization's dominant culture with varying consequences (Appleby 1981). For Palmer (1988) change simply is an alteration of an existing state or condition. According to him change in itself is neither good nor bad. It is merely an observed difference between a past and a present. However, Okafor (1982) had earlier disagreed with this idea by arguing that changes could either be positive or negative. It is positive if it sparks off technological innovations and inventions thereby leading to better living conditions. On the other hand it could be negative if it creates cultural lag or spark off other kinds of problems that are detrimental to human survival. Whatever the case change more often than not is irresistible, irreversible and irrevocable (Afonja and Pearce, 1986).

Globalization has created changes in the socio-economic and political environments in which work organizations operate and this has in turn engendered various types of changes within work organizations themselves. Such changes according to Nnebe (1991); Aribisala (2005) and Odulaja (2005) may include:

Technological Changes: This type of change encompasses new products, new techniques of production, up grading of quality of labour force, the introduction of new skills and improvement in the quality of management. It also includes invention and innovation. On daily basis new plants and machinery, new tools, equipment, new procedures are emerging as a result of change. Essentially these equipment may be cost saving devices that can render some workers redundant in their workplace thus forcing management to trim down the number of workers needed to accomplish certain tasks. In relation to this Eitzen and Maxine(2000) argued that today's technology would permit organizations to replace many workers with machines that increase productivity and profit, hence they typically reduce labor cost whenever possible by downsizing and keeping wages and benefits as low as possible.

Structural Changes: These consist of organizational structure, that is, system of communication, authority, work flow, planning, controlling, directing, motivating, leading etc. Moreover, alteration and modification of the structure of an organization e.g. the appointment of new Director, appointment of new Board, new Management

team, are all structural changes. Expansion or reduction of departments and the creation of new departments are also included here. For instance during the recent #25billion bank recapitalization in Nigeria, some banks that merged or were acquired by other banks had some of the workers demoted, retrenched, sacked, rationalized while some positions were scrapped entirely by the new management (Adeyemi, 2004; Okhomina, 2006; Oritse and Ekwujuru, 2006). In addition change situation occurs in an organization when there is a new organizational structure. The focus or goal of the organization might change with a new Board, new Management Team. The goals that may change include: societal goals, output goals, system goals, product goals and derived goals (Nwachukwu, 1988).

Market Changes: As new decrees, edicts, legislations, rules and regulations emerge they usually affect organizational activities, hence creating a change in the organization.

Environmental Changes: There are a lot of environmental factors that can exert pressure on organization such as economic, political, social, cultural, legal, religion, population, ecology, competition etc. These factors usually create new problems, risks, opportunities and threats for which organization has to mobilize resources before such changes make their impact felt.

Under the current globalizing era changes in the larger society and work organizations are inevitable. These changes could take the form of privatization, commercialization (either partial or full) restructuring, downsizing, diversification, freezing of wages, removal of subsidies and casualization, recapitalization, merger and acquisition. For instance, the recently concluded recapitalization of banking sector that produced only twenty five relatively strong banks, resulted into thirteen banks closing shops. In real terms this resulted into most workers of the affected banks losing their jobs including those banks where merger and acquisition had taken place (Oritse and Ekwujuru, 2006).

To further illustrate how changes that emanated from globalization have affected workers three main areas will be briefly examined namely; *the issues minimum wage contestation and casualization of labour and job losses*.

Since 1981 when national minimum wage in Nigeria was determined through collective bargaining, wage determination in Nigeria has been basically through government's award. An

attempt by the Babangida regime to use tripartite machinery in determining the minimum wage was not successful (Otobo, 1992). The effect has been that wage levels in the country often lack rational basis.

Barely one year into the Obasanjo administration, on the occasion of the May Day 2000 celebrations, the Government announced an increase in the national minimum wage from N3,000.00 to N5,000.00 for state government workers and from N3,500.00 to N7,500.00 for federal government workers. The award also specified certain states of the federation that were expected to pay their workers more than the minimum wage award for state government workers. These include the oil rich Delta State, Bayelsa State and Rivers State. Though there were no negotiations at the federal level before the wage awards were agreed upon and implemented, trade unions in each state of the federation were required to negotiate the wage outcomes with their respective state governments (NLC, 2000). This led to widespread conflicts such as industrial action in the various states of the country that took several months to resolve.

There are noteworthy issues that structured the minimum wage contestations. The first was that the wages were awards rather than a product of tripartite collective bargaining. The second was that despite their position as major employers in Nigerian public sector, the state governments were not involved in the deliberations that led to the wage increases. The conflicts that emanated from this were intense in some states of the federation as many governments at the state levels claimed financial incapacity to pay the new national minimum wages. The third issues relates to power play between some state governments and State Councils of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) that resulted from the wage conflicts and the significance of these for democracy in Nigeria – as such state governments were compelled to show a level of transparency in the negotiations that followed the award.

In response to the wage awards by the Federal Government, state governors held a meeting in Abuja (the country's capital) on Monday July 3, 2000, and resolved that no state government should pay more than N5,500.00 being the minimum award stipulated for state government workers. Several sections of the trade union movement on the other hand rejected the state minimum offer as inadequate. Following the

continued agitations by the labour unions the Obasanjo's government was alleged by the NLC to have conceded a 25% wage increase within 12 months of the 2000 wage award – an assertion which the Government refuted. On the occasion of the May Day 2002 the government nevertheless offered the NLC 40 buses as a palliative while committing itself to only 12% wage increase – payable at government's convenience. The NLC was not to contest this any further. On the occasion of May Day 2003, the government reiterated its commitment to the 12% pay rise, but added that this would mark the end of the dialogue between the federal government and labour on wage issues. Wage negotiation was to be deregulated (Onyeonoru, 2004; Okafor and Bode-Okunade, 2005).

As regards the problems of casualization it has been the long outstanding issue in the oil industry and multinational corporations. The National Union of Petroleum and Natural Gas Workers (NUPENG), an affiliate of the Nigerian Labour Congress has been at the forefront of the struggle against it since the early 1990s. The exploitative use of casual and contract workers in the oil industry is commonplace among big employers like Mobil, Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), Shell Development Corporation (SDPC), Chevron, and National Oil. In 1991 there were an estimated 14,559 casual or contract workers as against 23,065 junior workers on permanent job positions in the oil industry (Adenugba, 2003; Onyeonoru, 2004; Okafor, 2005).

It is important to note that most casual workers have various qualifications that would warrant permanent jobs - certificates, diplomas and degrees in such areas as engineering, computer science, telecommunication and accounting. Some of the permanent jobs where casual workers were being utilized in the industry include clerical jobs, plant operations, computer services, rig drilling operations, maintenance services, transportation, flow station operations, flow station guards, deckhands, forklift operators, typist and fire service men. The scope of the problem can be gleaned from the fact that in 1980, Mobil Oil Nigeria Limited (marketing) had 195 permanent junior employees. By 1991, however, there were only 28 of them. Mobil Producing Nigeria (Producing crude oil) had over 400 permanent junior employees in 1980. This figure declined to 80 by 1991 - with most of the jobs being performed by casual/ contract workers. In the Western Division (i.e. Warri Area) of Shell

operation alone, there were 110 labour contractors in 1991 employing 1,329 casual workers (NUPENG, 2003). By 2002, there was no single junior staff who was a direct employee of Mobil Oil Plc. However, the trade union, NUPENG had no single member from the firm (NUPENG, 2003). These were in violation of existing labour laws (Uvieghara, 2000; Adenugba, 2003).

Besides the issues of minimum wage contestations and casualization of labour, unemployment and consistent job losses are problems emanating from economic globalization that have continued to plague most work organizations thereby affecting most workers adversely. Records have shown that unemployment rate in the last three years was 60.4% in Nigeria (Adewuyi 2003). An indication of this could be deduced from the fact that more than 30,000 Nigerians applied for 300 vacant positions advertised by management of Mobile Telecommunications (M-Tel) in 2003 (Adenugba, 2003). The Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN) argued that the result of a survey it carried out in December 2001, showed that there had been a loss of 115,660 jobs in the sector. Further by December 2002 there were 50,247 job losses (MAN, 2003). The losses were attributed to structural reforms, which include trade and capital liberalization and privatization. Free trade or tariff dismantling has encouraged 'dumping' in terms of export of goods at relatively cheaper rates than locally produced goods. This has led to low capacity utilization of both manpower and locally sourced raw materials. Consequently, manufacturing sector that is labour-intensive has refused to employ and is merely managing to survive.

Moreover, the consolidation of the banking sector as a specific aspect globalization has some implications for human resource management in both consolidated and non-consolidated banks. In the first instance, the thirteen non-consolidated banks had been dissolved and their operating licenses withdrawn. The implication is that all their employees had lost their jobs. The number of those who lost their jobs in consolidated and non-consolidated banks was put at 45,000 employees involving all categories and cadres. Specifically, in the Skye bank (in which seven banks merged) more than 320 employees had been laid off. In IBTC-Chartered Bank (in which two Banks merged) 117 workers had been laid off. Moreover in the Wema Bank (in which Wema Bank acquired the National Bank), 450 workers had been laid off. Also in Union

bank (in which Union Bank acquired Universal Trust Bank, UTB) 500 workers have been laid off so far. In addition in SpringBank 300 workers have been retrenched (Fanimu, 2006; Oke, 2006 Oritse and Ekwujuru, 2006).

Besides the banking sector several job losses have been experienced in other sectors of the economy on the account of reforms and privatization associated with globalization. For instance, in the Federal Ministry of Finance (Public sector) 292 junior workers have been sacked, Privatized Petrochemical Industries (700); Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN) (500 since 2001) and Aviation (201) and privatized NICON (1500) (Akintunde, 2006; Amaefule, 2006; Olatunji, 2006; Olukunle and Olatunji, 2006; Subair, 2006). This may be considered high in an economy in which labour market is saturated and unemployment situation has remained very critical.

From the above discussion it is evident that low wages, casualization, unemployment, and job losses, downsizing and rationalization are all realities of changes that emanated from globalization.

HOW WORKERS REACT TO CHANGES

From the brief analysis above it is evident that most work organizations in Nigeria are operating under a very harsh economic and political environments hence the quest to survive and stay on in the business/operation. Meanwhile, to stay on or continue to operate changes are inevitable. When this happens employees are bound to react to these changes but certainly not the same way. Soley (1989); Jolaoso (1991); Ootob (1994); Onyeonoru (2004); and Okafor and Bode-Okunade (2005) have identified several forms workers may react when they felt threatened. These include:

Active Resistance: This is active opposition to a change. Active resistance to change may be as a result of ignorance on the part of workers, rumours, real or imagined fears, misconception or problem of poor communication between the management and workers. This invariably could lead to frustration, aggression, resignation, strike action and all kinds of labour protest. Strike is the most obvious form of active resistance by the workers in Nigeria. Strike may be official or unofficial, constitutional or unconstitutional, demonstration work stoppage, sympathy strike, work-to-rule, go slow and sit-down strike. For instance, available data from the Central Bank of

Nigeria (2001: 56; 2002: 53; 2003: 76) showed that in 2000 there were 49 trade disputes. In 2001, the number of trade disputes declared were 45 out of which 37 resulted in work stoppages. Also in the year 2002, the number of trade disputes were 42 and which all resulted into work stoppage. Moreover in 2003 there were 49 trade disputes declared out of which 42 led to work stoppages involving about 302,06 workers. The total man days lost to the work stoppages including the six months industrial action embarked upon by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) were put at 5.5 million.

Passive Resistance: This is a mild level of resistance to change. In this case an employee becomes less committed to the goals and objectives of the organization. He or she does not take any action or initiative that will advance the interest of the organization. He or she does only that the rules say he/ she should do.

Indifference: This occurs when an employee decides to sit on the fence. He or she neither gets involved nor oppose the change. However, he or she would not be bothered whether there is a change or not. An employee who adopts this kind of behaviour in an organization is apathetic.

Deliberate Sabotage: This is another behavioural reaction to changes in work organization. This is where the workers concerned are aware of the changes process but deliberately obstructing the path of progress. This is usually the case when employees are not included in the process of change, where management takes certain vital decisions relating to workers' jobs unilaterally and without consultation and imposing them on the workers.

Acceptance/Cooperation: It is wrong to assume that workers all the time oppose change introduced in either the organization or in the wider society. In other words, it is not all the time that workers confront either government or management. Sometimes workers cooperate with government and management. There are numerous instances in this present dispensation in which workers have supported government economic reforms programme. A typical example is the government's pension reforms scheme. In this behavioural reaction those affected identify with the change process and try to do all that is within their power to ensure the success and effective implementation of the change process. Often this is the case where workers are involved in initiating, deliberating and implementing certain changes.

WHY DO WORKERS RESIST CHANGES IN ORGANIZATION?

It has been suggested that the most effective way to introduce and manage changes in organization is to identify the basic reasons why employees resist changes. Some employees irrespective of their position, educational qualifications, or experiences tend to react to changes negatively and thereby resisting it. The most commonly identified reasons for resisting changes are:

Job Insecurity: According to Otobo (1994) the major cause of workers resistance to changes in a developing economy like Nigeria is job insecurity. He argued that in a capitalist system the status of labour as a commodity (or factor of production) has telling repercussions on workers security of employment. It is in the employers' interest given the dictates of the system to retain a worker in employment only when to use his labour than to manufacture his product in any other way. The consequence is that the worker's job is always at the mercy of economic and technological developments. And it is because the worker lacks any direct control over the future of his job that his desire to establish a right to his job is always potential source of conflict. In a nutshell workers always resist any technological innovation that would erode their job security.

Managerial Exercise of Power and Control: The status of labour as a commodity has equally grave implications. Implicit in employment contract is the false supposition of freely contract agreement between two parties employing a fair exchange. One of the parties needs the job to survive and when offered a job his bargaining power is resisted by prevailing rates. He or she is given a job title, a salary or wage rate but the amount of work to be accomplished for that wage is never specified. Although labour is human, this 'open-ended' contract and its status as a commodity enables it to be deployed as deemed fit by employers. Thus the employment relationship subordinates the worker to a structure of managerial control designed to maximize efforts which he devotes in exchange for his wages. What constitutes a fair day's work is thus problematic as groups of workers generate their own norms governing output as management allocates tasks in line with its own priorities. Thus the actual exercise of managerial

control can generate resistance even from workers who do not ordinarily question its legitimacy. The exercise of managerial power is a source of workers resistance.

Training and Environment: Training an employee conditions him/her to think, see, behave and act in a certain way. For instance, accountants are cost conscious and meticulous as to record keeping; engineers are trained to be precise in measurement. Also psychologists talk of human behaviour; medical doctors stress good health and cleanliness, etc. This training influences their activities towards certain circumstances. Their initial reaction to anything like new form of technology that may appear to contradict what they have been taught and are used to is resistance.

Habit: Habit can be defined as sum total learned responses of an organism towards an object. It can also be called established behavioural pattern of an individual. It has been said that human beings are creatures of habit (Morgan, 1986). They get accustomed to performing a task in a certain manner and resent any effort by any outside influence asking them to experiment with other methods. Habits make life comfortable because it is not threatening. Habits make people resent new and useful methods because they claim: "we have always done it this way and it works".

Personal Attitude: Attitude of people can vary. Some people can resist change more than others. People's attitude to change is usually influenced by their past experiences (Spear, 1988). An employee who knows those who lost their jobs in a particular organization where new information technology has lead to restructuring can oppose changes that could lead to restructuring. Therefore from one's frame of reference one builds a personal resistance to change.

Psychological Reasons: Some people have innate fear of failure. They may not have experienced real failure but somehow there is the feeling that it is around the corner. Changes, in some instances, may require a revision of behavioural process of perception. The change may require the interpretation of new stimuli and reorganization of behavioural process (Myers, 1989; Baron, 1980). In addition, low self esteem, fear of loss of influence and power can make a worker to resist changes.

Financial Reasons: If organization introduces a change it could affect workers' skills and productivity it is likely that workers will react. If

it is a piece rate job, an employee stands to sustain financial loss. New technology is known to have rendered certain skills obsolete. For instance, the introduction of data processing machine and mini-computers has reduced the number of accountants needed in large organizations. Labour unions have often fought the introduction of labour saving devices and have engaged in negotiation to ensure that employees' jobs are secured (Okoh, 1998).

It is also important to note that not only employees can oppose changes, sometimes managers may oppose changes for a number of reasons. According to Obisi (1996) and Nwachukwu (1988) some of the reasons are:

Fear of Unknown: Life is full of risks. When a change is introduced, nobody will predict with certainty the direction the change can go. It could lead to low demand for services and products of the organization, thereby leading to loss of jobs. It could also lead to restructuring of power and authority relations, thereby leading to loss of position and status.

Variance of Goals: Managers vis-à-vis the workers are responsible for a long proportion of resistance to change in many work organizations. While managers' interest center on policy issues like sales expansion, cost reduction, high turnover, industrial peace, etc, workers on the other hand are interested in enhanced salaries and allowances, job security, bonus, scholarship grants, recognition etc. The change process alters these expectations, hence the resistance. Therefore for change process to be successful, the two goals must be harmonized, (i.e. goal congruence).

Political Factors: Many Nigerian managers do resist change because it could alter or reduce their power and status. Attached to power and status are certain rights and privileges, so when changes occur which could undermine these right and privileges they are often resisted.

Way of Introduction: In spite of the benefits of change, managers tend to be non supportive if the change is not properly introduced. They tend to show publicly their disgust and dislike for the change. It has been argued that because of uncertainties surrounding changes, people do not prefer a radical or rapid change rather they prefer a gradual change. This gradual change usually affords them the opportunity to move along with the change (Nwachukwu, 1988).

STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING WORKERS RESISTANCE TO CHANGES AT WORKPLACE

It is important to note that while globalization continues to make inroad into virtually all organizations, resistance to changes engendered may not be completely erased but may be reduced. Some of the strategies to be adopted to achieve this include;

Regular Consultations, Bargaining and Dialogue with Workers: Consultation, bargaining and dialogue have been identified as the most potent way of managing workers in the period of rapid change as being witnessed in the country under the current democratic dispensation. It should be recalled that democracy as a system of government encourages consultation, open communication and dialogue. This should be allowed to permeate into the workplace in form of industrial democracy. Government and employers of workers should consult, bargain and dialogue with workers from time to time on pertinent issues relating to workers welfare and interest. The institution of collective bargaining must be respected by all the parties concerned and more importantly government and employers of workers should negotiate with workers in good faith devoid of hypocrisy and deceit that have characterized the manner government and employers deal with the organized workers since the inception of the current reform programme.

Training and Development: Training and development are one of the most important aspects in the management of people at work. Training improves skills and quality of labour. It also enhances employees' performance and creates a more conducive atmosphere in the workplace. Training and development entail the introduction of new methods, procedures, and techniques of doing things. If the workforce is well trained on any new methods and techniques of doing things, the employees' are likely to accept these new changes. Nevertheless, training and development should be a continuous process. In a nutshell all efforts must be made to upgrade workers skills, knowledge and expertise periodically and to make them fit into new changes taking place both within and outside their work organizations.

Setting Clear Objectives: Corporate objectives should be very clear and unambiguous. The employees should be in the picture as to the direction and vision of the organization.

Although it is the prerogative of top management to formulate objectives, but there should be an involvement of the employees since they are involved in implementing the objectives. In other words those who are going to be affected by certain decisions should be involved in the objective formulation process.

Gradual Introduction of Change: As already emphasized change should be gradual to give workers opportunity for adjustments. For instance, as a result of new information technology, computerization of organization's operations although desirable, should not be automatic and immediate. There should be time allowed for the complete shift, otherwise fear, anxiety and panic will grip the workers hence resistance to the new methods.

Education: There is a need to enlighten the workers and other categories of employees on the advantages and disadvantages of changes that accompany globalization. Emphasis on the advantages should outweigh the disadvantages for the employees not only to come to terms with the realities of the modern time but also to understand and appreciate the new methods. Educating the employees properly eliminates mistrust, suspicion, acrimonies, fears, among others, hence preventing sabotage as well as active and passive resistance to change. Workers and other employees should be educated on how changes will lead to increased satisfaction, performance and productivity and more importantly better working and living conditions both within and outside the work environment.

Involvement of the Workers in Decision Making: The workers who constitute the larger part of the organization should be asked of their views, ideas and opinions, and must from time to time be involved in making certain decisions that affect their own jobs either directly or through their trade unions. This calls for not only industrial democracy but also decentralization of decision making process and open communication between the management and the workers. Workers should be allowed to express their views, ideas or opinions freely. Management should be a good listener and should show understanding and sympathy for workers' fears and expectations.

Identify Group Leaders: This is very useful in unionized organizations. It is important to identify and recognize the opinions leaders or union leaders of a group and concentrate the

persuasion on them. Further, there is a need for management to educate them and volunteer information to turn them from agitators to 'good teachers' to their group members. Management should also try 'to sell' the desired changes to them; appeal to them to educate their members too on the prospect of changes as well what they stand to benefit from such. Attempts should also be made to alleviate the employees' fear so that rumour mongering would be drastically reduced.

On the whole, there is no hard and fast rule for managing workers resistance to change, however the time and timing of a change is very significant, as those proposing the change must be prepared and be receptive to constructive criticisms. Most organizational changes failed due to the quick tendency to implement the change. Some organizations tend to rush any change without actually giving sufficient room and time for adjustment and adaptation on the part of the workers. Moreover lack of coherent plan and strategy towards the implementation of the change can result in lackadaisical and faulty implementation occasioned by poor training and development as well as lack of commitment on the part of management and workers.

Managing changes in work organizations in this era of globalized economy is a special challenge that requires being constantly timed to current events and process monitoring. Granted the needs, aspirations and expectations of workers may differ from one sector to another and from one organization to another. For instance, the expectations of workers in the public sector may differ from those from the private sector in the same manner the expectations of workers from oil sub-sector will differ from those in the banking sub-sector. The same applies to what may have brought about changes in these sectors or organizations. Therefore each sector or organization will pose its own peculiar or special challenges. In view of this, managing workers resistance to change requires special skills such as sensing out the real problems, collation and collection of valid data, thinking before doing, building readiness and commitment, communicating the strategy and action, and sustaining the energy level. Hence the personnel managers must be adequately trained to be versatile to be able to deliver on this. With this all the workforce including the management, instead of resisting changes, should be change agents themselves (Okoh, 1998; Onyeonoru, 2005).

CONCLUSION

As the process of globalization appears irreversible, inventions and innovations will continue to dominate all work organizations. Any organization that is less sighted is likely to lag behind. Diversification, competition, computerization and automation will continue to ravage all public and private sector organizations in Nigeria thereby producing both desirable and non-desirable outcomes both for the organizations and workers respectively. Therefore managers will continue to manage surprises and resistance, as more and more workers are likely to become more educated and well informed. Consequently, efficiency and effectiveness and ability to manage crisis and workers discontentment will be hallmarks of progressive organizations, hence the need for corporate planning as a critical and clinical step toward survival.

Globalization will continue to reshape the organizations' landscape and dynamic organizations will continue to extend their frontiers in line with the demands of the environment. This calls for broadminded and democratic managers that will have capacity to conceptualize, synthesis and cope with ideas and changes through sustained intellectual efforts and flexibility.

With globalization, changes are on a very fast lane and to contend them, managers in Nigerian organizations must develop managerial confidence and capability to sense, articulate and implement them. As already emphasized, the most important factor in carrying this out is "workers". They are the ones that can forestall the turning of minor irritants and problems into major catastrophes. Workers if well managed could provide an inexhaustible treasure of ideas. Management should therefore at all times pursue with vigour the training and development of this vital component and important asset – *labour*.

As the future presents a lot of challenges, all the Nigerian managers will continue to have more responsibility for social aspects of the working environment. As globalization makes inroad into all work organizations both public and private, the Nigerian workers must be part and parcel of new methods and techniques for the organization to remain afloat. The workforce, individually and collectively must be agents of change.

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