Proposal

Technological Change and Employment Relations in Nigeria The Case of the Nigerian Dockworkers

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Introduction

Technological change has promoted structural transformation of the national economy leading to industry and firm improvement of their goods and service. It has also led to the new production system and employment relation in most the countries of the world. These improvements has posed greater challenges and threatened the employment relations that have sustained organisations in the past. This paper posit that effect of technological change on government employer and trade union need to monitored or assessed for them to move along with it and protect the interests of their members, organisation and nation. Most studies on the effect technological change on employment relation have concentrated on the technological change on organizational productivity improvement and profitability. Study on dockworkers responses to technological change is considered appropriate to understand the relationship between technological change and employment relations. Nigerian sea ports occupy and important position in the national economy, and of the major technology driven organization in Nigeria that have in the recent times affected by technology innovation in all its major aspects.

Objectives of the Study:

Most studies on the effect of technological change on Nigerian industries have not sufficiently discussed or analysed the effects of technological change on employment relations. This paper examines the influence of technological change on the labour management relations on the Nigeria dockworkers. It evaluates the relationship between technological change and organizational performance, employee performance, and employee retention and downsizing. It also assess employer and employee responses to technological change and the challenge it posses to the protection of the individual and collective interest of the dockworker.

Methodology:

Two hypotheses were formulated to test relationship between employee performance and technological change and between employer and employee responses and technological change. The paper employed multiple paradigms of functionalist interpretative and radical humanist methods. Diagnostic survey will be employed through questionnaire to
examine Nigerian dockworkers strategies in coping or managing technological change. Questionnaire will be distributed to stratified sample of dockworkers to assess their performance and their responses to technological change. Selected top managers of the Nigerian Ports Authority, Stevedoring, Clearing and forwarding companies will be interviewed to understand employers responses and of their relationship with trade unions in the industry. Pilot study will be conducted to establish reliability and the questionnaire will be assessed using regression analysis to test the two hypotheses.

Recommendations/Concluding Remarks

Appropriate recommendations for organizations, employers, employees and governments to respond positively to technological change are provided. The dynamic of technological change is scrutinized and the need for constant monitoring and innovation is reiterated.