

# Globalisation, Working Conditions, Cheap Labour and Employment Relations in Kenya

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**Abstract:** People perceive globalisation differently. Some consider it to be the internationalisation of local economies in terms of trade, foreign direct investments, agriculture, technology transfer and dominant culture, amongst others. However, globalisation, with its liberalisation and deregulation policies, seem to have created additional turmoil in the workplace as far as employment relations is concerned. The main objective of this paper was to investigate how globalisation has influenced employment regulations/deregulations in Kenya. The study adopted an explanatory mixed method approach. About 500 closed ended questionnaires were distributed to employees of the sampled companies, and of these, 483 were satisfactorily completed, which culminated in a 97% response rate. In addition, 10 key employment relations stakeholders were interviewed for the qualitative phase of the research study. The study revealed that the conditions of workers, in terms of health, have improved in Kenya since globalisation. It also reflected that working conditions, particularly regarding safety, have improved since globalisation. The study further showed that organisations in Kenya are exploiting children, who are part of their unskilled workforce, by paying them low wages, which reflects a recent, rising trend in the use of child labour in Kenya, particularly in manufacturing sectors. Thus, the study's findings show that there has been an increase in the use of cheap labour amongst Kenyan organisations. In addition, the study indicates that Kenyan companies favour foreign employees compared to local ones in terms of salaries and wages.

**Keywords:** Globalisation, Employment Regulations/Deregulations, Employment Relations, Cheap labour, Child labour.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Globalisation has aided the alignment of local business towards the global economy, which has resulted in the faster movement of economic activities. There has also been an increase in the movement of capital and people, in general (Bamber, Greg, Jody, Thomas, Kochan & Von Nordenflycht, 2009). Various factors have contributed to accelerating globalisation; amongst them are advanced technological innovations, increases in trade and investment, undertakings by businesses at an international level, and the movement of people (Sen, 2009). The interaction of Kenya's economy with the global economy, through foreign direct investment (FDI), is among the features of globalisation. Kenya has since liberalised its economy through the structural adjustment of policies, which were fronted by the IMF/World Bank since 2002, when the opposition, through the umbrella of the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC), seized power from the ruling party. Since then, the government has continued to undertake various reforms, including trade liberalization and the privatization of public entities. These have accelerated foreign cash inflow, which has helped to reduce unemployment in Kenya, to an extent.

In Kenya the main organs that determine wages are the government, which sets the minimum wage, as well as trade unions, through negotiations with employers on behalf of employees. However, the two entities have faced certain challenges, as their respective approaches are not based on any justification, which affects the rate of employment, since employers freeze recruitments by blaming increases on the Wage Bill. Empirical evidence from Card (1992) claims that wage increases can contribute to increases in job creation, which is a prediction that is in complete disagreement with most theoretical models. The findings confirm the situation in the Kenyan labour market, where collective bargaining mainly centres on wage and other monetary issues with little focus, if any, on other conditions of employment that would add to the improved welfare of workers and their general productivity.

Consequently, collective bargaining agreements impose greater labour costs on employers, and this has a tendency to curtail employment creation. In addition, since the dawn of globalisation, Kenya seems to have experienced work related turbulences, as measured by the volume of strike action, which affects production in terms of reduced outputs and damages to layouts. This in turn increases the cost of production, which may lead to losses and poor employment relations.

In fact, the new economic reality of globalisation seems to have created additional turmoil and polarising

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effects in Kenyan workplaces. Despite Kenya's elaborate employment legislations and adoption of international labour standards, as a signatory to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the country is still experiencing increasing work disruptions. This is a direct result of rising strike action, go-slows and lockouts, which are all signs of workers' discontent owing to poor wages, rising redundancies, rightsizing, retrenchments, and the employment practices of labour brokering, outsourcing, re-engineering, automation and the increasing use of child labour. Based on the above, the study was guided by a research question: How has globalisation influenced employment regulations/deregulations in Kenya?

Hence, the main objective of the study was to investigate how globalisation has influenced employment regulations/deregulations in Kenya. The study may be used to guide the Kenyan Government when they formulate labour relations policies. The study may assist to influence the development and amendment of labour laws in line with the dynamics of globalisation. The study may also be valuable to labour unions, as they will become more aware of some of the intricacies of the new economic system, which will guide them to articulate counteracting mechanisms to address some of the challenges that confront their members as a direct result of the current economic logics of globalisation.

## **2. BACKGROUND AND LITERATURE REVIEW**

This section below covers the study's background and literature review. The focus is on globalisation and employment regulations. In recent times in Kenya, employment regulations and relations seem to have followed the dictates of the global forces.

### **2.1. Globalisation and Employment Regulations**

According to Seidmann (2007), national labour policies have been influenced by global competition, which seems to have weakened national regulations. Egels-Zanden (2009) indicates that past labour relations were locally legislated through consultation with labour players. However, owing to globalisation, workers have been coerced to shift their expectations, as organisations now prefer temporary labour to permanent employees. This has also led to increased outsourcing, which has become the order-of-the-day. With globalisation employers who have a greater say in what to do and how to do it (Fichter, Helfen & Sydow, 2011) have eroded the power of workers in the production process.

The local way of dealing with labour seems not to be in conformity with the realities of global demand for deregulation and liberalisation (Thomas, 2010). This state of affairs has made trade unions and other labour organisations rationalise new ways of counteracting employers (Hennebert & Bourque, 2011). However, management has established measures to ensure that trade unions are weakened as much as possible, whilst strategies that unions adopt may not be effective across the board (Koch-Baumgarten, 2006). Trade unions always strive to protect their members, especially from employers' globalisation-related policies such as outsourcing and downsizing. Normally, trade unions work in the best interest of their members. Within the context of globalisation, which is reflected in freer labour mobility and the use of cheaper labour as a mechanism to reduce costs by multinationals, many trade unions have also initiated new measures to address these current globalisation dynamics (Telljohan, 2009).

In 1998 a global conference adopted the International Labour Organisation's Declaration policy, which relates to employees' rights (Waweru, 2007). This declaration identified four minimum core labour standards, namely to desist from forcing people to work, the disengagement of child labour, non-discrimination of employees in line with their race, gender, religion, age, sexual orientation, and so on, and the right of employees to negotiate for better pay and decent working conditions (Waweru, 2007). These standards are fundamental ordinances at work and they may be understood to reflect a minimalist, immutable core, which has been prioritized in recent times, and positioned as a response to a particular vision of economic globalisation (ILO, 2009).

The Labour Institutions Act of 2007, under section 11, emphasises the imperative of an Industrial Court, which is responsible for resolving trade disputes. Any trade dispute must be referred to this court, because it is the only court that has jurisdiction over these matters (Fashoyin, 2010). This means that the right to organise can be asserted through this court. Hence, Article 23 of the new Constitution of Kenya postulates that the High Court and other subordinate courts can hear an application for redress of an infringement or violation of a right (Nzuve, 2007). Therefore, a worker can go to court as a matter of right if his/her right has been infringed upon. The Industrial Relations Charter of Kenya also provides for the recognition of the right to organise, including the fact that there are agreed and detailed responsibilities of the government, employers

and workers concerning this specific right (Singh & Singh, 2011).

Kenya has strived to embrace international labour standards (Fashoyin, 2010). The new constitution clearly stipulates that any law that applies at international level will also apply to Kenya, and any law that has been adopted by Kenya will effectively become part of Kenya's laws (Irungu, 2011). Any resolution that is passed by international organisations does not become binding on Kenya, unless it is legislated (Siringi & Manaseh, 2010). Regarding the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), some of its resolutions were legislated and, therefore, has become binding on Kenya. One of them was adopted in the new constitution under article 20, which speaks to the freedom and rights of employees (Ikeanyibe & Onyishi, 2011).

In Kenya its capital city, Nairobi, hosts some of the best paying companies, as most multinationals and global NGOs are situated there (Irungu, 2011). Public institutions have offices in Nairobi, as well as liaison offices for foreign companies and embassies. Hence, the number of organisations that can remunerate their employees with good pay are located in the city centres (Aitken, Yeaman, Holliday, Wang & Curtis-McLane, 2008). Kenya is central in terms of connecting Africa to Asia. Thus, Nairobi hosts many transnational companies. In addition, it hosts one of the headquarters of the United Nations. To this effect, there are numerous foreign staff who work in these institutions (Ikeanyibe & Onyishi, 2011). Due to the number of well-paid employees that reside in Nairobi, life has become expensive, as international and national companies have set up businesses to tap into the available resources. Hence, shopping malls and other social amenities have flourished in Nairobi (Irungu, 2011). This state of affairs has attracted the

middle class from foreign countries to visit Kenya temporarily, either for work related visits or for leisure purposes (Wood & Brewster, 2008). The highest population numbers, like other African countries, reside in Kenya's rural areas. However, better life in the city has led to rural-urban migration (Irungu, 2011). This has always been the trend, even before independence. Even when there is no restriction on factors that have contributed to migration such as job mobility, liberalization continues to be on the rise (Waweru, 2007).

### 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY: SAMPLE AND RESEARCH PROCESS

The research adopted a mixed method research approach to investigate the topic under study. The main reason for adopting this approach was to ensure proper triangulation of data to minimise limitations in analysis. The study targeted companies that operate in Nairobi and Mombasa in Kenya, by purposively sampling a total of 500 employees. The respondents were issued with a closed ended questionnaire to complete. A total of 483 questionnaires were satisfactorily completed and returned, which represented a 97% response rate. Of the 483 respondents, 37 were returned via Survey Monkey, while 446 were collected manually. Furthermore, 10 key employment relations stakeholders were interviewed. Prior to data collection, the researcher considered the content validity of the questionnaire by conducting a pilot study. The test of content validity was established through inter judge consultants. The reliability of the instrument was also evaluated by using the Cronbach alpha co-efficient for all the items in the questionnaire as means to measure the level of internal consistency among the variables under study.

**Table 1: Improvements in Working Conditions in Terms of Health**

Globalisation has improved working conditions in terms of health				
		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	23	4.8	4.8
	Disagree	69	14.3	19.0
	Neutral	171	35.4	54.5
	Agree	191	39.5	94.0
	Strongly Agree	29	6.0	100.0
	Total	483	100.0	

(N=483).

## 4. DATA ANALYSIS

In order to establish the respondents' perceptions regarding the impact of globalisation on employment regulations in Kenya, the researcher posed questions and made statements, which respondents had to answer.

### 4.1. Globalisation and Working Conditions in Terms of Health

This section sought to establish the impact of globalisation on Kenyan employees' working conditions in terms of health.

Table 1 above shows that 39.5% of the respondents agreed that globalisation has improved employees' working conditions in terms of health, while 6.0% strongly agreed and 35.4% of the respondents remained neutral in this regard. However, 14.3% disagreed, while 4.8% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement. In total, 45.5% (39.5%+6.0%) of the respondents agreed that globalisation has improved employees' working conditions in terms of health, while a total of 19.1% (14.3%+4.8%) disagreed with the statement. Therefore, the high response rate of those who agreed with the statement indicates that the conditions of workers in terms of health have improved in Kenya since globalisation.

### 4.2. Globalisation and Working Conditions in Terms of Safety

The researcher was interested in finding out if work environments, in terms of safety, have improved for Kenyan workers since globalisation.

Table 2 below indicates that a majority of the respondents, namely 45.8%, agreed that globalisation has indeed improved working conditions in terms of

safety; 6.2% strongly agreed; 33.7% remained neutral; 11.4% disagreed; and 2.9% strongly disagreed with the statement. In total, 52% (45.8%+6.2%) of the respondents agreed that globalisation has improved employees' working conditions in terms of safety, while 14.3% (11.4%+2.9%) disagreed with the statement. The high response rate of those who agreed with the statement shows that working conditions in terms of safety have indeed improved since globalisation.

### 4.3. Globalisation and Working Hours

The rationale for this section was to establish whether or not the working hours of Kenyan workers have improved as a result of globalisation in recent times compared to the past. Perceptions around this may show whether or not employees work less hours and earn the same amount as they used to earn in the past.

Figure 1 below shows varied views, as 33.7% of the respondents agreed that globalisation has improved employees' working conditions in terms of working hours, while 2.7% strongly agreed, and 28.6% remained neutral. A total of 27.5% of the respondents disagreed, while another 7.5% strongly disagreed that globalisation has improved working conditions in terms of working hours. In total, 36.4% (33.7%+2.7%) agreed that globalisation has improved working conditions in terms of working hours, while a total of 35% (27.5%+7.5%) disagreed with the statement. The slim margin between the number of respondents who agreed with the statement and those who disagreed reflects a polarised view of respondents regarding this particular subject.

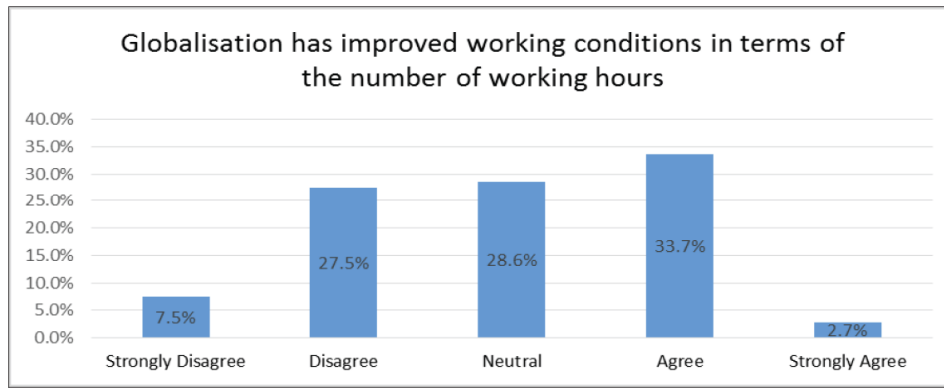
### 4.4. Use of Child Labour as an Unskilled Workforce

The aim of this section was to find out if Kenyan employers employ children and exploit them by paying them low wages compared to available skilled labour.

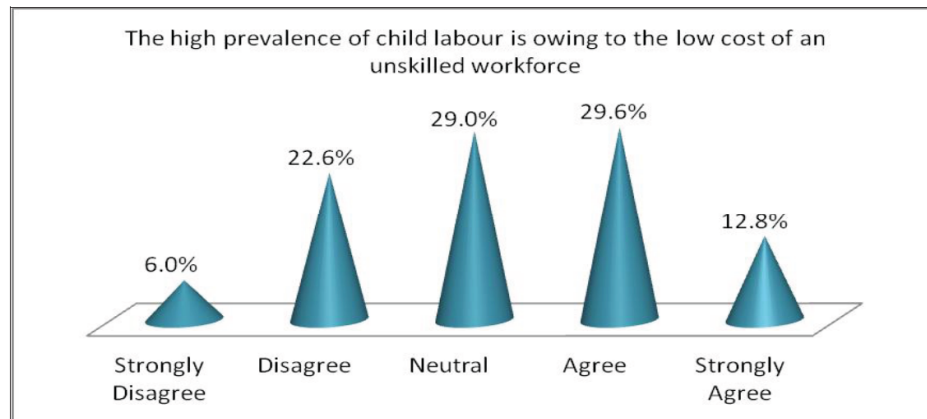
**Table 2: Improvements in Working Conditions in Terms of Safety**

Globalisation has improved working conditions in terms of safety				
		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	14	2.9	2.9
	Disagree	55	11.4	14.3
	Neutral	163	33.7	48.0
	Agree	221	45.8	93.8
	Strongly Agree	30	6.2	100.0
	Total	483	100.0	

(N=483).



**Figure 1:** Improvements in working conditions in terms of working hours.



**Figure 2:** High prevalence of child labour owing to low wages they charge.

Figure 2 above shows that 29.6% of the respondents agreed and 12.8% strongly agreed that the high prevalence of child labour is owing to the low wages that they charge, while 22.6% disagreed and 6% strongly disagreed with the statement. However, 29% of the respondents remained neutral regarding the statement. In total, 42.4% (29.6%+12.8%) of the respondents agreed that the use of child labour has increased owing to the low wage costs involved, while a total of 28.6% (22.6%+6.0%) disagreed with the statement. The high number of those who agreed shows that organisations in Kenya are exploiting children by paying them low wages as part of their unskilled workforce.

**4.5. Globalisation and the Use of Child Labour**

This section sought to establish whether globalisation has encouraged the increased use of child labour in Kenyan organisations in recent times compared to the past.

Figure 3 below shows that a majority of the respondents, namely 40.2%, were non-committal as to whether the use of child labour has increased in recent

times, while 30.8% agreed and 10.6% strongly agreed with the statement. Conversely, 14.9% of the respondents disagreed and 3.5% strongly disagreed that the use of child labour has increased in recent times. In total, 41.4% (30.8%+10.6%) of the respondents agreed that the use of child labour has increased in recent times, while a total of 18.4% (14.9%+3.5%) disagreed with the statement. The high number of respondents who remained neutral may point to the fact that child labour exists, but most respondents lack information as to whether or not the phenomenon has increased in their respective organisations. Despite the high number of those who remained neutral, a great number of those who agreed indicated that there has been a rising trend regarding the use of child labour in recent times amongst Kenyan organisations, particularly in the manufacturing sectors.

**4.6. Globalisation and Increasing Use of Cheap Labour**

This section sought to establish if there has been an increase in the use of cheap labour in the era of globalisation in Kenya.

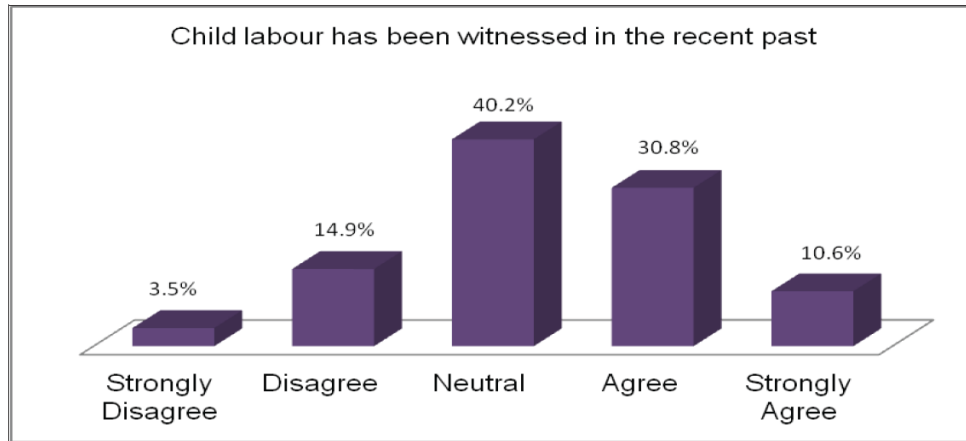


Figure 3: Increase in the use of child labour in recent times.

Table 3: Increasing Use of Cheap Labour Since Globalisation

There has been an increase in the use of cheap labour				
		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	17	3.5	3.5
	Disagree	40	8.3	11.8
	Neutral	116	24.0	35.8
	Agree	223	46.2	82.0
	Strongly Agree	87	18.0	100.0
	Total	483	100.0	

(N=483).

Table 3 above shows that 46.2% of the respondents agreed that there has been an increase in the use of cheap labour, while 18% strongly agreed, and 24% remained neutral regarding the statement. However, 8.3% disagreed and 3.5% strongly disagreed that there has been a rise in the use of cheap labour. In sum, 64.2% (46.2%+18%) of the respondents agreed that there has been an increase in the use of cheap labour, while a sum of 11.8% (8.3%+3.5%) disagreed with the statement. The high response rate of those who agreed

with the statement indicates that there has indeed been an increase in the use of cheap labour amongst Kenyan organisations in recent times.

4.7. Payment to Foreign Expatriates

This section sought to find out if foreign expatriates are paid more than local workers who do the same job in Kenya in the era of globalisation.

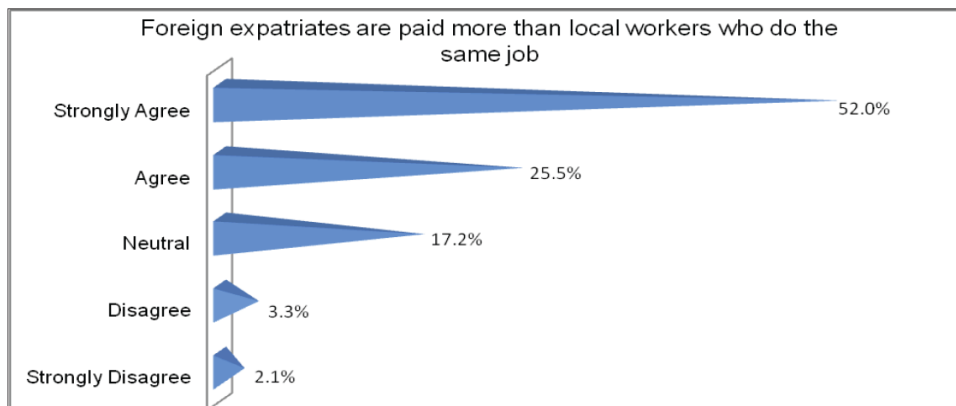


Figure 4: More payment to foreign expatriates than local workers.

**Table 4: Influence of Unions on Wage Negotiations**

Unions exert a great influence on wage negotiations between management and employees				
		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	17	3.5	3.5
	Disagree	60	12.4	15.9
	Neutral	159	32.9	48.9
	Agree	191	39.5	88.4
	Strongly Agree	56	11.6	100.0
	Total	483	100.0	

(N=483).

Figure 4 above shows that 52% of the respondents strongly agreed that foreign expatriates are paid more than local workers who do the same job, while 25.5% agreed with the statement, and 17.2% of the respondents remained neutral. However, 3.3% of the respondents disagreed and 2.1% strongly disagreed with the statement. Cumulatively, 77.5% (52.0%+25.5%) of the respondents agreed that foreign expatriates are paid more than local workers who do the same job, while 5.4% (3.3%+2.1%) disagreed with the said statement. The high response rate of those who agreed with the statement shows that Kenyan companies seem to favour foreign employees in this regard, since they pay them more than they do local employees.

#### 4.8. Unions and Wage Negotiations

The rationale for this section was to establish whether unions exert a great influence on wage discussions, which involve employers and employees, specifically if the push by unions leads to improvements in wages, which management pays employees.

Table 4 above shows that 39.5% of the respondents agreed that unions exert a great influence on wage negotiations between management and employees, while 11.6% strongly agreed, and 32.9% of the employees remained neutral. This may point to the fact that most of the respondents were not union members. However, 12.4% of the respondents disagreed and 3.5% strongly disagreed with the statement. In total, 51.1% (39.5%+11.6%) of the respondents agreed that unions exert a great influence on wage negotiations between management and employees, while a total of 15.9% (12.4%+3.5%) disagreed. The high response rate of those who agreed with the statement indicates that unions do indeed exert an influence on wage negotiations between management and employees.

#### 4.9. Qualitative Data Analysis on the Impact of Globalisation on Employment Regulations in Kenya

In terms of the interviews that were conducted, a majority of the workers would appreciate it if management would support them to improve their current skills so that they can remain relevant in their workplaces. Another respondent stated that employers should address their low salaries, discrimination and harassment by management in terms of accelerated workloads. From this perspective, COTU 1 said that: *“I think that the Kenyan employees face bullying, harassment and/or discrimination. Further, employees are not compensated as they should today as compared to before. The management get very huge salaries at the expense of those that do the actual work of production in most organisations”*.

COTU 2 added: *“... for a long time, I feel that the workers development and skills in an organisation need to ultimately improve in order to boost their outputs. But in most cases, you will discover that the management is the ones who attend workshops or training seminars today compared to the past, yet it is the workers... who really need that skill”*. The interviews showed a lack of social facilities for workers and, therefore, a need for employers to provide social welfare and facilities, which can be used to motivate workers. The interviews revealed that companies do not adhere to the set out procedure for rewards and promotions for workers. The interviews also exposed incidences of rampant nepotism, favouritism and bribery, both in government and the corporate sector in the recent past. Gender equality is not properly observed, and when it comes to promotions, there is a perception that male employees are not considered as much as their female counterparts. This seems to harmonise with the Kenyan Constitution of 2010 that requires all employers to ensure that one third of positions should be occupied by women.

## 5. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The law in Kenya prohibits the employment of children, while any person under the age of eighteen is perceived to be a minor and, if engaged in employment, this would be considered unlawful. However, the findings have revealed that child labour has increased in recent times. This is supported by 30.8% of the respondents who agreed, as opposed to 14.9% who disagreed that there has been an increase in the use of child labour in Kenyan workplaces recently.

It is evident that the Kenyan government has initiated mechanisms to ensure that there is a reduction in the use of child labour through legislation. This is shown by 35.4% of the respondents who disagreed, as opposed to 26.5% who agreed that the legislation to curb child labour is weaker today than before. The findings indicate that in the era of globalisation, Kenya has strived to enact legislation to curb child labour. This seems to be a positive development for employment relations, as it would enhance ethical conduct by Kenyan employers, which has positive effects on employment relations.

With regard to cheap labour, the findings show that 46.2% of the respondents agreed that there has been an increase in the patronage of cheap labour, as opposed to 8.3% who disagreed. The findings are supported by Fashoyin (2010), who argues that vulnerable children, as a result of HIV/AIDS, are an easy target for cheap labour. However, organisations in Kenya seem to have taken advantage of the plight of these putative cheap labourers. Most organisations seem to have also taken advantage of the high rate of unemployment to engage underage workers at a lower rate than the market rate. While others who have been without employment for a lengthy period resort to accepting jobs that pay lower rates owing to a lack of bargaining power. This in turn has negative effects on employment relations in Kenya.

There has been improvement in terms of working hours for employees since globalisation. For instance, 33.7% of the respondents agreed that since the advent of globalisation, working conditions seem to have improved in terms of working hours. When employees are given time to rest by working within the labour laws' stipulated time frames, their morale certainly improves, which goes a long way towards enhancing a cordial relationship between the two parties in the labour relationship. However, the current finding is contrary to

the ITUC (2012) and Waweru (2007), who state that the average working week has increased to 64 hours, as opposed to 44 hours per week, as provided by the labour laws.

COTU 1 remarked that: "the labour laws of Kenya provides for eight hours working time with one hour lunch break in between, but many organisations as observed, mistreat their employees by subjecting them to long hours without compensating them for the extra hours". This tendency has increased since globalisation, as companies have become more profit-oriented at the expense of employees' welfare, which negatively affects employment relations.

Employees are the greatest asset of every organisation and their safety should be a priority concern for companies. Failure to guarantee employees' safety impacts negatively on their productivity and in turn affects the organisation's profitability. Working conditions in terms of safety seem to have improved in Kenya, as indicated in the findings, where 45.8% of the respondents agreed that globalisation has indeed brought about improvements in working conditions in terms of safety. The findings show that employees' safety has improved since the dawn of globalisation, thus employees in Kenya have become more comfortable in their workplaces in recent times than previously, which has strengthened employment relations.

Furthermore, much like safety, employees' health is of great importance for organisations as it impacts directly on their productivity. The study shows that Kenyan organisations have endeavoured to improve health-related issues for their employees since globalisation, as 39.5% of the respondents agreed that globalisation has led to improved working conditions in terms of health, as opposed to 14.3% who disagreed. FKE 1 indicated that: "*taking care of the workers' health for example through provision of medical insurance cover is one way those workers have been motivated in Kenya*". The research findings point to the fact that Kenyan organisations have endeavoured to take care of employees' health concerns, and to generally ensure that employees are well attended to whenever they become ill at work. This in turn has positively affected employment relations in Kenya.

Globalisation has brought international companies to Kenya, either in the form of main office location or foreign branching. This has led to the recruitment of migrants from the companies' headquarters in their



home countries to work in Kenya. The current study found that payment discrepancies exist between local and migrant staff, as indicated by 52% of the respondents who agreed that migrants are paid more than local workers even though they do the same job. COTU 2 indicated that: *"discrimination in terms of pay between local and foreign workers for the same work, affects the morale of the local staff who feel being treated inferior and thus negatively affecting their performance and employment relationship"*. Globalisation has indeed brought about liberalisation and thus foreign companies that are allowed to invest in Kenya, as well as bring in foreign staff, are treated differently to local staff. This seems to have negatively affected how local staff perceive their foreign counterparts. A number of organisations in Kenya have resorted to employing the services of expatriates, especially in technical-related jobs, since these skills are scarce in Kenya. Others have established businesses that need experts from foreign countries. These companies normally pay expatriates higher salaries and better benefits than local staff who have comparable skills. To compound the situation, the expatriates are given preferential treatment above local staff. This state of affairs has an adverse impact on employment relations in Kenya.

In Kenya employees are normally paid according to the type of work that they are engaged in, as well as their qualifications and, in some cases, as a result of how they were able to negotiate their salaries when they were recruited. Unions also help to negotiate better pay for their members through negotiations with respective employers. The findings show that 44.5% of the respondents agreed as opposed to 18.4% who disagreed that employees are paid according to their employment contract. Furthermore, the findings indicate that 39.5% of the respondents agreed as opposed to 12.4% who disagreed that unions exert a great influence on collective bargaining between management and employees. This is in accordance with Fashoyin's (2010) study, which found that trade unions capitalise on collective agreements and strike action as means to improve the working conditions of members. It is indeed a fact that employees in Kenya have recently resorted to collective bargaining as a means of obtaining favourable working conditions and pay from their organisations. Trade unions have become the perfect means to drive this cause, which has in turn improved the living standards of employees owing to improvements in their pay.

## 6. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The study's findings are based on participants' perceptions, which may not necessarily reflect the views of participants in other sectors or regions. Moreover, the mental functioning of respondents could have an impact on the answers that they provided in the questionnaire. This could lead to outright misrepresentation of the effect of globalisation on working conditions and employment relations in Kenya. The information was collected in Nairobi and Mombasa only. This could limit the reliance of the data in terms of generalisation. The data was captured from workers and their organisations, while other members of the broader public were not given an opportunity to express their views, which may not fully cover the perceptions of all working class individuals that are affected by globalisation, and how it impacts their respective employment regulations.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Child labour has been a major concern globally as earlier findings indicate an increase in the use of child labour in Kenya. Most organisations engage the services of children because of the low wages that they pay to children. Children are paid lower wages compared to adults, in addition to the fact that they are not engaged in a formal manner. This is partly because most children do not know their rights, and because they are engaged illegally, it prevents them from complaining to authorities. There is a need for the government to establish mechanisms to minimise and, if possible, put an end to the use of child labour. One way to achieve this is to impose heavy fines on companies that engage children for work. Parliament should also pass legislation that will establish punitive measures for those who use child labour in the workplace. Children should be encouraged and supported to seek formal education instead of being employed as child labourers.

As ways to motivate them, low paid employees should be afforded training and skills development opportunities, in addition to inclusion in profit sharing, whilst also engaging them on a permanent basis whenever opportunities arise. Some employers use the 'just-in-time schedule' to lower labour costs, which places work activities at the mercy of consumer demands for a particular product and often results in employees being given little advance notice of their work schedule. A fair, flexible and reliable schedule is one way to ensure that workers are treated with dignity and respect. Employers should view employees as

human beings with competing life demands rather than as mere numbers on a spreadsheet.

In Kenya there is huge disparity in salary payments between foreign and local staff, as most multinationals engage the services of foreign staff that are treated well with better pay. This really has a demotivating effect on local workers who are confronted with a sense of disparate treatment owing to the huge disparity in pay in spite of the fact that they perform the same work or even work harder than the foreign workers. Hence, it is high time that the gap pay between the foreign staff and local staff is minimised through some form of government policy and legislations. This will greatly improve employment relations and will help to boost productivity, as all employees will experience a sense of equality and fair play in the workplace. This will also guarantee mutual respect between and amongst employees, which will help to bolster harmonious employment relations in Kenya.

In conclusion, globalisation has indeed brought some noticeable changes to employees' working conditions. One notable area that has improved in the workplace since globalisation is employees' health related issues, and this has potential to improve employment relations in Kenyan workplaces because, naturally, employees whose health concerns have been well taken care of will become more committed to their organisations. However, the menace of child labour continues to be a major concern globally, as well as in Kenya, as more organisations prefer to engage the services of children because of the low wages payable to them, and because they are always employed on a temporary basis, which warrants no costs in terms of benefits. Hence, the government and organizations should make a concerted effort to curb these vices within the workplace. More than that, there should be proper regulation of minimum wages and working conditions, which will go a long way to checkmate the issue of child labour. This will help to ensure industrial amity.

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