

**MAKERERE**



**UNIVERSITY**

**COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING, DESIGN, ART AND TECHNOLOGY**

**SCHOOL OF BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

**DEPARTMENT OF CONSTRUCTION ECONOMICS AND MANAGEMENT**

**CHALLENGES OF LABOUR UNIONS IN THE BUILDING CONSTRUCTION  
INDUSTRY.**

**CASE STUDY KAMPALA UGANDA**

**BY**

**AHIMBISIBWE ANTHONY**

Registration No: **19/U/19408/PS**

Student No: **1900719408**

A research proposal submitted to the Department of Construction Economics and  
Management for the Award of a Degree of Bachelor of science in Construction  
Management of Makerere University

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this report entitled “challenges of labour unions in the building construction industry” is my own work except as cited in the references and has not been submitted to any institution.

SIGNATURE ..... *Anthony*

DATE ..... *27-09-2022*

APPROVAL

This Research project titled “Challenges of labour unions in the building construction industry” has been submitted with my approval as university Supervisor

SIGNATURE .....



DATE .....



**MS. MARGARET NAKIWALA**

**Acknowledgement;**

Firstly, I thank the Almighty GOD for making it possible to the submission of this report, firstly;

To my supervisor Ms MARGARET NAKIWALA, special thanks for your support and encouragement.

Secondly, I wish to thank all the lecturers in their respective offices and profession for building up this course to its recognition, and empowerment in the construction industry.

Thirdly, to all you friends in your respective careers, thank you for your inspirations and boosts, and may GOD Almighty bless you

**THANK YOU.**

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**ABSTRACT**

In the building construction industry, labor Unions have numerous challenges over establishing their set goals. This research therefore sought to investigate the challenges of labor unions in the region of Kampala and in addition assess their effectiveness, in particular, to the building construction industry. The labor Union, here in question, is the Uganda Building Construction, Civil Engineering, Cement and Workers' Allied Union (UBCCECAWU), the researcher opts to correspond to this Union as it the Union directly in link with Workers in the building construction industry.

The research was an explanatory research that clarified the challenges of Labor Unions and how they could influence their strategies in the Building Construction Industry. It was qualitative in nature which aimed at discovering and comparing the challenges of the labor Union in Question with the general Unions.

The findings achieved were a representative of respondents' views from the building construction industry. It sought to preview the challenges of the labor Union in question and suggested solutions on how they could be effective in the industry. The very challenges that the Union face include, the poor sanitation of Unions affairs, poor management, inadequate communication, limited government supports, internal leadership conflicts, the unfamiliarity of the Union, and ease to which they are bribed.

Conclusions were obtained corresponding to the feedbacks from chosen respondents; in essence, the Union, UBCCECAWU, was weak in achieving its sole purposes as a union on behalf of the workers in the industry. In other words, to increase their influence in the industry, it is recommended they needed to improve on the general conditions of work at workplaces, initiate proper training scheme or skills, and establish a technical scheme to handle salary/wages, and/or perhaps engage in strikes and picketing

## **1.0 CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background**

In spite of the fact that political regimes in Uganda have been a major influence in the government historical regimes. Labour Unions have grown up slowly. According to the NOTU (National



Organization of Trade Unions Uganda) report, 2005, "The viscous circle of poverty, is not believed to be broken up by the modernization and liberalization strategies of Uganda's economy but due to the existence of trade unions (labour unions) as sustainable systems of resource distribution of incomes between the foreign exchangers (or the employers) and the indigenous profit makers (the employees)...Incidences on grounds of some companies which were their employees, at one occasion, were dismissed on ground of their involvement in labour union activities, included; southern Range ,Roko construction, Hotel Equatorial and a case of Trio-Star Apparel Factory in Bugolobi."

According (Stavis & Felli, 2015) labour unions are arguably the largest organizations in the world fighting for basic rights and more just social relations and tries to advance the potential contribution of labour unions in this arena by asking what is the full scope of, just transition, today and how have labour unions developed and refined it over the years to render the move towards a green economy both environmentally and socially?. The concept of just transition is hotly debated within labour unions and has different interpretations and hence different strategies; the last section assesses these interpretation by means of a normative frame work which seeks to political economy and political ecology." And according to the (Labour union Act, 2006), it states that "employees shall have the right to organize in any labour Union and may; assist in the running of the labour Union; bargain collectively through a representative of their own choosing, engage in other lawful activities for the purposes of collective bargaining or any other mutual aid practice, withdraw their labour and take industrial actions."

With regards to the statement above, labour unions have been facing one main key challenge of being recognized by their employers, even though by statutory law they were freely by the approval of the Ministry aided to establish unions on behalf of her members, in any company (that is, apart from building construction industry). In summary the researcher in particular looked at the challenges that the Uganda Building Construction, Civil engineering, Cement and Allied Workers' Union (UBCCECAWU) faced, in particular, as a key labour Union in the building construction industry and whether if they were effective.

## **1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT.**

Labour unions face a problem of workers not registering with them. While labour unions have to fight their workers' rights, they can only do so by workers registering with the unions.

Labour unions in the building construction industry were established to help workers with the work-related difficulties. These difficulties involve work strikes and labour disputes. Unfortunately Strikes which have continued to a rise on sites.

Hence, with the reference to building construction industry; the poor performance of labour union affairs comprising of poor management, inadequate communication, limited government supports, internal leadership conflicts, the unfamiliarity of the union, and ease to which they are bribed are the challenges to be investigated. This justifies the degree of the ineffectiveness of the unions performance in situations concerned with the labour force hence a significant degree of not being familiar.

## **1.3 OBJECTIVES:**

### **1.3.1 Main objective**

To investigate the challenges of the labour Unions in the building construction industry of Uganda.

### **1.3.2 Specific objectives**

- To assess the strengths of the labour union in the building construction industry.
- To determine the challenges the labour unions face in relationship to the construction industry.
- To determine strategies for increasing their influence in the building construction.

### **1.3.3 Research questions**

What are the strengths of the labour Union in the building construction industry?

What are the challenges that the Labour Union face in the building construction industry?

How can the Labour Union strategize for the increase of their in the building construction industry?

## **1.4 JUSTIFICATIONS**

By identifying the challenges of the Labour union, the study findings will help to provide exhaustive information on the effectiveness and the degree of influence of the Labour Union in the Building Construction industry. Such information will be useful to building construction organizations and individuals involved in the work of counseling the workers in particular.

The study findings will also explain the level of relationship of the bargaining power between the employers and the Unions on behalf of the workers. Such information will be useful to experts in dispute resolutions and any person or organization involved in improving and ensuring proper work performance in building construction industry at all levels.

This study will form a basis for further research since main areas requiring research will be identified. It is important to note that researcher conducted research on these main areas.

Finally, the study will enable the researcher obtain a bachelor's degree of science in construction management.

## **1.5 SCOPE**

### **1.5.1 The content scope:**

The content scope restricted the challenges of the labour unions including their effectiveness in the building construction industry.

### **1.5.2 Geographical scope.**

The scope undertook a study regarding to the challenges of the labour union localized in the regions of Kampala.

## **2.0 CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Introduction**

Labour law or Employment law is a body of laws, which consists of administrative ruling, and restrictions on, working people and their organizations. It mediates in many aspects of the relationship between labour unions, employers and employee. There are two kinds, collective labour law and individual labour law.

In Uganda Building Construction, Civil Engineering, Cement and Allied Workers Union(UBCCECAWU), is a labour Union registered with the ministry of Gender, labour and social Development. It organizes employees in road construction, Civil engineering, cement building, sawmills, wood/factory, bridges, dams construction quarries metal fabrications, joinery workshops and all factories manufacturing building materials and allied trades. The union is affiliated to the National Organization of Trade Unions (NOTU).

According to the National Organization of Trade Unions (NOTU) report, 2005, which is the national center for all trade unions (labour unions), "workers are organized in 21 different unions, and are all affiliated to the national center, NOTU; it continues to say that...generally Trade unions in Uganda are basically organized at the level of industry. Fifty-three percent (53%) of the trade unions on industrial basis while thirty-seven percent (37%) fall under general workers' unions." This, in essence, means that workers are many employed in the industry, implying a high level of labour intensity in the country than the capital base intensity.

The researcher opted to avail resourceful literature on the key objectives of the hypothesis, thus encompassing the strengths and challenge of labour unions and how they would influence their strategies in the building industry.

## **2.2 STRENGTHS OF THE LABOUR UNION**

### **2.2.1 The government involvement in establishing the law and policies**

According to the international labour organization, governments and international financing agencies should encourage socially responsible business practices that promote and protect worker's rights in accordance with the ILO Declaration on fundamental principles and rights at work. The ILO can help to bring this about by providing a platform for social dialogue and for discussions with financial institutions such as the World Bank. In this connection, consideration should be given to the labour clauses (public contracts) Convention, 1949(No.94)."

In response to the statement above, the Fact that in the absence of a statutory minimum wages, the employers take advantage of exploiting their workers and resort to employ new casual labourers. They frequently at their own will continually replace their old/permanent employees to ease their flexibility at work employment plan schedules; such offers at cheap labour cost provisions. The government has established by an Act of parliament a labour union Act in June, 2006. But the Act needs to be monitored effectively.

### **2.2.2 Unforeseen beneficiaries**

According to the (Lipsey, 1995) case for free trade is that world output of all production can be higher under free trade than when protectionism restricts regional specialization...

As suggested by (Lipsey, 1995) upon free trading against protectionism, it is important to understand the correlation between absence and the presence of labour unions in the building construction industry; in the presence of labour unions, the general out puts in the employer's firm is likely to remarkably increase, rather than if forceful conditions of works where emphasized basing on the economic gear of the employer's behaviors towards their employees.

Other beneficiaries may include;

Representation on NSSF board; the union in anyway acts as an eye of the Ministry to see to it that companies by law paid workers increments of pensions into the NSSF organization without exploitation.

Representation on the immigration board; as the union establishes itself in the monitoring their activities nationwide, it records statistically the number of their members in a particular area/region from particular firms.

Advocating for minimum wage legislation; since in Uganda, it is still a big task to convince the government to establish a minimum wage for citizens, unions are the right organizations to support for the legislation of minimum wages.

Advocating for employment regulations; employee's job security is usually uncertain in Uganda, unions are the right organizations to help ensure worker's legal termination of a contract, in particular, to its affiliated members.

## **2.3 CHALLENGES OF LABOUR UNIONS**

### **2.3.1 Poor negotiations and collective bargaining power.**

It is unmistakable that, employees wish to institute common rules collectively at some stage in union actions and workplaces, which is so to share or face globally challenges, this in close collaboration with other unions, and this need to be done internally or by means of negotiation and bargaining.

Fitsum, 1991-2006 explored the nature and extent of industrial relations practice. They examined the extent of the free union activity, the role of collective agreements, the relationship between industrial relations to civil society and citizenship behavior...stating, "It is conducted that workplace conflicts tend to be resolved by dispute settlement mechanisms, internal to the firm. On the one hand, industrial relations practice is based on Western practices centering on trade unions and collective bargaining..."

### **2.3.2 Weak contractual relationships**

In Uganda, the labour law suggests that the contractual relationship between the employees and their employers is deemed to be indefinite.

Whereas according to section 25 of the employment Act 2006, "A contract of service other than a contract required to be in writing may be made orally and except as provided otherwise by the Act, shall apply to orally and written contracts."

It is unfortunate, in reality, that the statement as to contractual relationship has not been efficiently applied in the industry to its beneficiaries. Since, human desires and behaviors among other factors are known to be dynamic and unpredictable, this is most evidently seen with employment of the helpers/ potters.

It is required at common law, as stated in section 65 of the Employment Act 2006, that either party could lawfully terminate the contract of employment provided that reasonable notices were preceded and given in time, thus abiding the building construction industries.

### **2.3.3 Other challenges**

According to (Bongomin & John, 2008), the challenge includes political interference; poor financial backgrounds; lack of relevant information; the weak level of management; the little supports from the government; and poor negotiation and collective bargaining skills. Looking at these challenges the comparisons between the building construction industry and to that of the general unions is finite but similar. The added challenges being that there is little time to interact with workers; other than the laws enacted by the government, the policies to which the employment laws are implemented are not effective; there is no industrial courts; and there are no minimum wages.

## **2.4 Strategies for influencing the labour union**

### **2.4.1 Strikes, pickets, boycotts and unofficial industrial actions**

Construction managers in the building construction industry tend to avoid unusual collective groups for fear of anticipated strikes, pickets, or unofficial industrial actions against the employer's objectives, which slowdown yielding in the works manpower projections to the side of the employers. For example, " it could be a gung of manual workers having their own special names, they discuss their matters in corridors, in the hidden corners, in their relaxed times, or even if they are away from the compounds of the site."

According to section 31 of the labour Disputes (Arbitration and settlement) Act, 2006, "For the purposes of peacefully persuading any person to work or to abstain from working or for the purpose of peacefully obtaining or communicating information, it shall be lawful, in contemplation or furtherance of a labour disputes for:

An employee to attend at or near his or her workplace or at or near the business premises of his or her employer from which his or her work is administered; or an official of a labour union representing that employer to attend at or near their workplaces or at or near the business premises of their employer or associated employers from which such employee's work is administered.

This explains the purposeful picketing defined by a tactic which is often used by workers during strikes, outside the business, which they are striking, this is in order to make their presence felt, increase workers' participation and prevent strike breakers from entering the place of work.

According to section 28 (labor dispute Act, 2006), suggests that unlawful industrial actions as, "...where it appears that, there is a labour dispute (where the dispute is reported to him or her "(labour officer)" or not) which is likely to lead to an unlawful strike, lock out or other industrial action; the matter to which the labour disputes relates is settled by a collective agreement; a substantial proportion of the employers and employees in the trade or section of industry covered by the collective agreement, are directly or through their organization's parties to that collective agreement; and the collective agreement has not expired.

#### **2.4.2 Collective bargaining power**

According to Fabian Tract 373, Fabian society, 11 Dartmouth Street, 1967, "The main functions of unions are to defend and protect its members...", it continues to say that "If once a union is established in a workplace, discussions begin between the union and the employer regarding on setting rules and use of arbitration or introduce a new labour contract which would precisely govern the working relations between the employer and all the workers in the bargaining unit."

Under a collective bargaining criterion, the union is the exclusive employee representative. Individual workers are prevented from negotiating in accordance to their own work arrangements with the employer. The union representative instead does the negotiations with the employer, and each worker is required to abide by the terms of the approved contract. To note, workers are given the privilege to either join or choose not to join being as he/she would want but entirely be at the mercy of his/her employer respectively.



### **3.0 CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The methodology used in collecting and analyzing data was aligned to in the challenges of labour unions in the building construction industry in Kampala, in particular the study centrally looked at the Uganda Building Construction, Civil Engineering, Cement and Allied Workers Union, UBCCECAWU. The methodology included the research design, study population and study area, sample size, sample selection, methods of data collection and method of analysis.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

The study was an explanatory research. It investigated "the challenges of labour unions in the building construction industry in Kampala". It adopted qualitative techniques because the researcher wanted to establish the investigate the challenges and effects of labour unions to generate more qualitative data.

#### **3.3 Study Area**

The research was based in Kampala the capital city of Uganda. It is the largest and most populated district in Uganda. Most building construction firms have based their main offices or branches in the city, perhaps, which firms, their employees are subject to affiliate in the labour union, that is, UBCCECAWU.

#### **3.4 Study Population**

The study looked at the building contractors in the building construction industry. A contractor was implied as an employer, in particular was managed by the director/owners, and whereas the rest were the employees, such as, a projects coordinator, foreman /site overseer, the Masons, and the helpers/potters. The three divisions of Kampala were each represented by the three in number the firm/companies.

#### **3.5 Sample Size and selection**

The study covered at least five (5) companies with in Kampala and four (4) respondents from each company were interviewed.

The study used purposeful sampling technique. Therefore, the sample of five (5) constituted a homogeneous rule. At least one of employees represented as the employees in that geographical area. And one (1) of the employers was obtained with at least a labour union representative.

### **3.6 Methods of collection of Data**

Data was collected using both questionnaires and interviews.

#### **3.6.1 Questionnaires**

The structured questionnaires were to administer 20 primary respondents from the four selected building construction companies. They selected purposely irrespective of any limiting factors, such as, sex, class, age, amongst others. The researcher collected data was from respondents with different social-demographic characteristics which added to the quality of the research. The questionnaires were administered by the researcher who waited for the respondents to answer before the collection of the ten questionnaires. The researcher introduced himself and explained the purpose of the study to the respondents individually before administering to them about the questionnaires.

#### **3.6.2 Interview**

An in-depth interview was used to collect data from key informant (labour officer) of labour unions. Face to face interviews was conducted after securing interviews with the key informant by creating good relationship. Interview method helped to determine the strengths of labour unions and the challenges facing the labour unions.

**What goals does the labour unions play to firms or workers?**

**At what stage do labour unions responsible for their workers.**

**What measures are put in place by labour unions to protect the unionized workers?**

**What policy laws put in place to protect the strength of labour unions?**

**What challenges do labour union face during the implementation of their labour union laws?**

### **3.7 Data management and analysis**

The data was processed and analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative methods.

### **3.7.1 Qualitative data**

The response from the interviews with the key informants was recorded into a note book. The information was organized and edited under different themes like level of strengths of the labour unions, weaknesses of the labour influence.

### **3.7.2 Quantitative data.**

The technique handled statistical data. Under this technique, statistical data was computed in to simple mathematical variables like percentages which were used to generate diagrammatic illustration that further emphasized or gave meaning to the whole analysis from point of view

### **3.8 Ethical considerations**

The researcher upheld the professional responsibility, and conducted research within the provided guidelines. He presented a valid university identity card and sought permission from the right authorities.

Respondents were asked after a brief introduction by the researcher, if they were willing to be interviewed (they had the right to or not to participate). Most respondents were registered by their names except for questionnaire where numbers will be written to ensure that their anonymity and confidentiality will be guarantee

## **4.0 CHAPTER FOUR: DATA FINDINGS, ANALYSIS, AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **4.1 introduction**

The major key labour Union that drew the attention of the researcher was that the Uganda Building Construction, Civil Engineering, Cement and Allied Workers' Union, UBCCECAWU. The union was used in order to generalize and draw conclusions on the due activities done by the labour unions in the building construction industries in Kampala.

The challenges to the labour unions, generally, were not certain in the building construction industry. The researcher wanted to understand the correlation between why the challenges that the union did face in common or to what degree were they active or effective to the environments of employees in the building construction industry in Kampala and how could they would increase their influence in the industry

In analyzing the nature of an organization, it is important to look at the environmental considerations of the organization to the shifts in “a management thinking” of that organization. Looking at the labour union, UBCCECAWU, one of the organizational analyses was based on the internal and external environmental factors. The internal factors were subjects to the strengths or weaknesses of the organization whereas external factors were subjects to the opportunities and threats of the organization.

#### **4.1.1 The population size**

The population size was labour unions with employees in construction industry in Uganda and they were seven (7) in number that is Uganda Building Construction, Civil Engineering, Cement and Allied Workers Union (UBCCECAWU), Uganda Public Service Union, Petroleum and Chemical Workers Union, Amalgamated Transport and General Workers Union, Central Organization of Free Trade Unions, Uganda Building Workers Union and Kilembe mines Workers Union.

#### **Sample space**

Using random sampling, 3 labour unions were selected and data was collected from these unions and they were Uganda Building Construction, Civil Engineering, Cement and Allied Workers Union (UBCCECAWU), Uganda Public Service Union and Petroleum and Chemical Workers Union.

#### **4.1.2 Data findings and analysis on the population study**

A few non biased respondents were picked with purposeful stratified random sampling; this was with prominence to represent respondents' career responsibilities centering the administration of labour unions.

The following tables were the respondents' population number chosen and drawn from the three (3) labour unions in Kampala Uganda.

Divisions and population	Uganda Public Service Union	Petroleum and Chemical Workers Union	Uganda Building Construction, Civil Engineering, Cement and Allied Workers Union	Total
Degree	4	4	4	12
Diploma	2	0	2	4
Certificate	2	0	0	2
Others	0	2	0	2
Total	8	6	6	20

*Table 1: shows chosen respondents' careers and qualifications*

Divisions and occupations of respondents	Uganda Public Service Union	Petroleum and Chemical Workers Union	Uganda Building Construction, Engineering, Cement and Allied Workers Union	Total
Labour officer	2	0	0	2
Engineer	2	4	4	10
Site agent	2	2	2	6
Helpers	2	0	0	2
Total	8	6	6	20

Table 2: shows chosen respondents occupation and responsibilities

The tables above represent the total number of respondents chosen within the three labour unions within Kampala Uganda, the population distribution was chosen by stratified random sampling.

The researcher concentrated more on key personnel determinates such as the labour officer, the employer and employee representatives, this was for the reason that, a fewer people/respondents were anticipated for not having the knowledge about the labour unions, this is a suggested by Senyonjo, 2001.

The respondents above were the irrespective of the respondents' age and sex but rather on their occupations, locations, and their experiences in the field.

## 4.2 The strengths of labour unions

### 4.2.1 Data findings and analysis on the strengths of labour unions.

The strengths of labour unions, at this juncture, implied the administrative internal strengths of the unions, to such major primary determinants like productivity, management, security, marketing, financial and human resource functions. The researcher wanted to understand the degree to which these strengths were reflected to the outsiders, such as the employers, who were the competitors, on behalf of the employees.

In brief, the strengths of the labour union were achieved from the roles that labour unions effectively played. The findings were based on the respondents' views on their welfare as workers and to their beliefs on the roles played.

According to some of the respondents, the reasons for the formation of labour union “in question” were, as presented in the figure 1 shown below

### 4.2.2 Summary presentation

The following were the respondents' feedbacks; as shown in the figure 1 below;

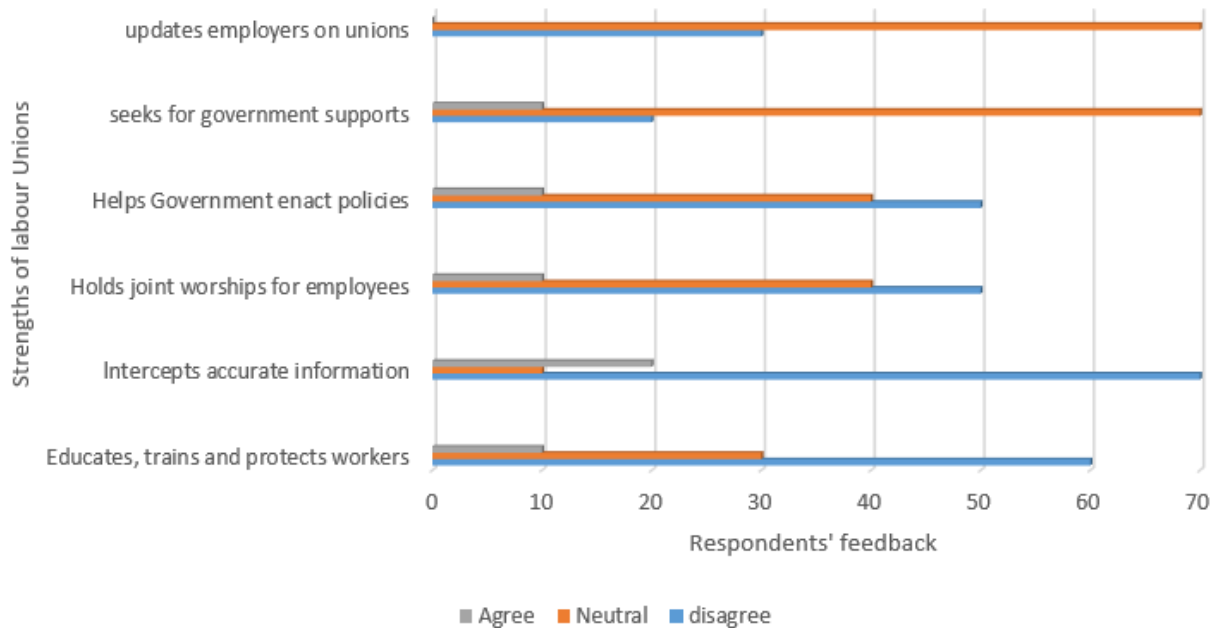


Figure 1: shows the feedback of respondents on the roles played by labour unions.

With regards to the unions' strengths above, the union is required to educate, train and protect workers, to note, the union has the obligation to acknowledge the illiterate, and the unskilled on moral duties at work places for their welfare at work.

They intercept accurate information, since the unions are the closest to workers, they intercept the rightful information because they cooperate directly with the workers.

They hold joint workshops for the workers, unions in training their workers, they initiate programs with innovative technics that sustain their relationships with the workers.

The union updates employers, this is in case of new tasks to be enforced, and the union communicates relevant information to the competitors such as the employers.

The chart in figure 1 above, achieved to explain which respondents were sure (agreed) or not sure (neutral) or disagreed to the strengthening distinctiveness of the labour union, UBCCECAWU, on behalf of the employees. The feedback drawn was on emphasis to determine the degree to which labour unions were devoted to their roles in the building construction industry in Kampala.

However, the general feedback was illustrated below; this portrays, in particular, the strengths of the labour union as per with regards to the respondents' responses.

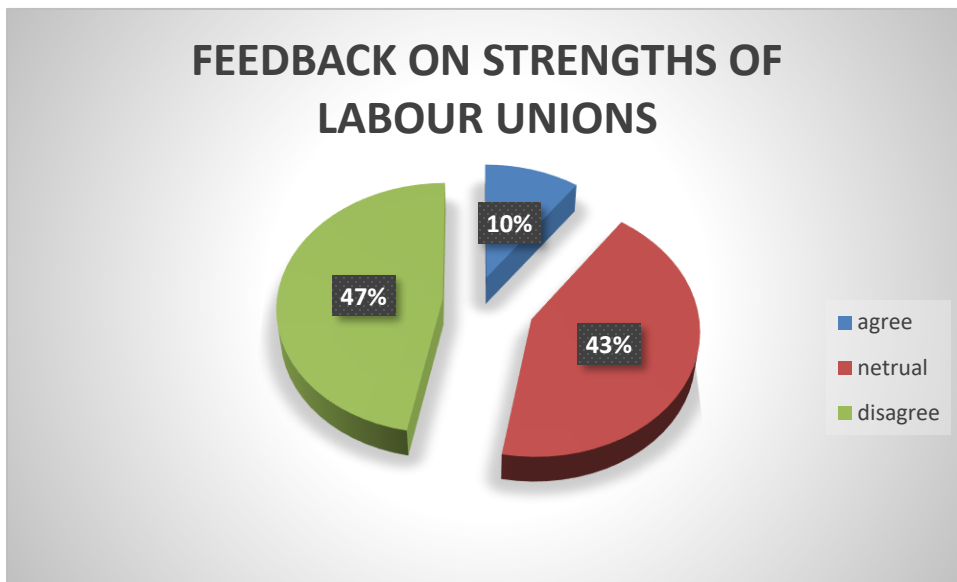


Figure 2: shows the feedback of respondents to the strengths of labour unions



The chart in figure 2 above, achieved to explain which respondents were sure (Agreed) or not sure (Neutral) or disagreed to the strengthening distinctiveness of the labour union, UBCCECAWU, on behalf of the employees. The feedback drawn was on emphasis to determine the degree to which labour unions were devoted to their roles in the building construction industry in Kampala.

From the respondents' chosen, having given feedback on the strengths of the labour union, a few agreed to the strengths of the union, whereas the majority disagreed to the strengths of the labour union.

In conclusion, the union's roles played were not effective; therefore, as an organization, it needs to measure its approach on finding its strengths. Chiefly on critical factors such as; to educate, train and protect workers, intercept information accurately, help government enact favorable policies, and hold jointly workshops with employees.

### **4.3 The challenges of labour unions**

#### **4.3.1 The internal weaknesses of the labour unions**

##### **4.3.1.1 Data findings and analysis on the weaknesses of the labour unions**

The weaknesses of the labour union here, in particular, implied the environmental internal weaknesses as internal challenges of the labour union, that is, UBCCECAWU, in the building construction industry in Kampala. It sought to determine the possible internal weaknesses of the labour union in comparison with its competitors in the surroundings.

With reference to the major key success functional determinants of an internal organization, of the labour union, UBCCECAWU, the weaknesses of the union were subject to the findings of whether if the union did achieve anything

##### **4.3.1.2 Summary presentation**

A comparison was drawn on the general unions to that of UBCCECAWU in the building construction industry, and some of the reasons why the union didn't achieve their target goals were as cited by Odora, 2008; the researcher wanted to affirm and idealize the similarities with the industry, and the following represent respondents' feedback as judgments to why the internal weaknesses of labour unions, this is shown in the following figures below.

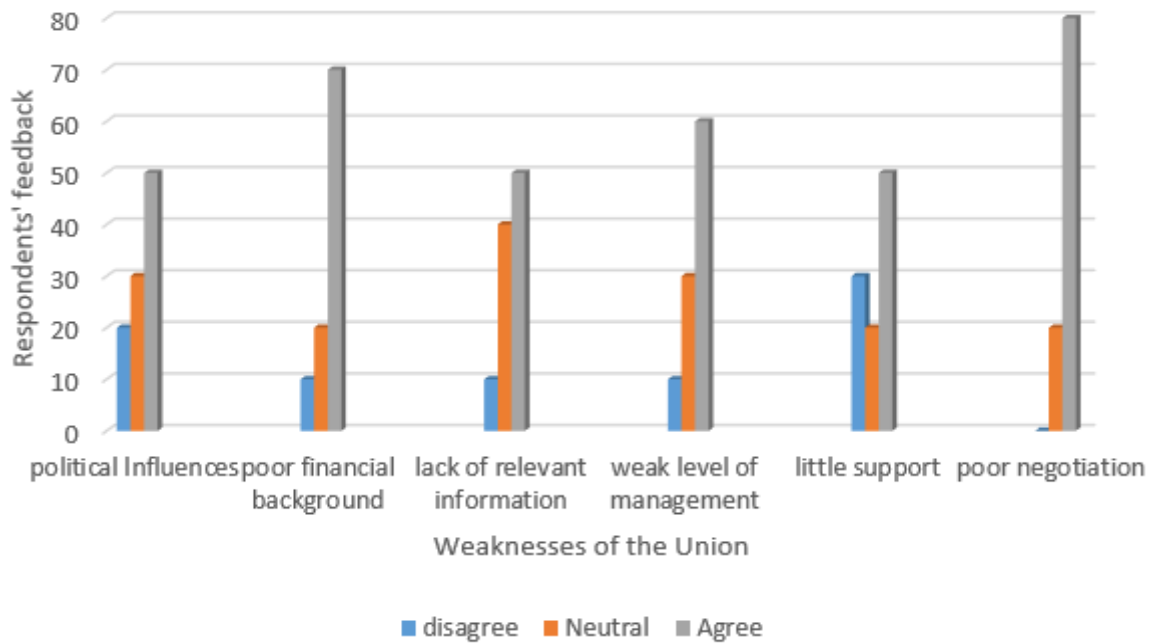


Figure 3: shows chosen respondents feedback on the internal weakness as challenges

With regards to the above internal weaknesses of the union, the union faces the challenge of political interferences; according to the respondents, this is the tendency to which the political climates in the country have had direct diplomacy over the unions.

Poor financial background, the union is faced with insufficient funds obtained from the subscription of members, or grants from the government supports to sustain the union in the daily running of its operations.

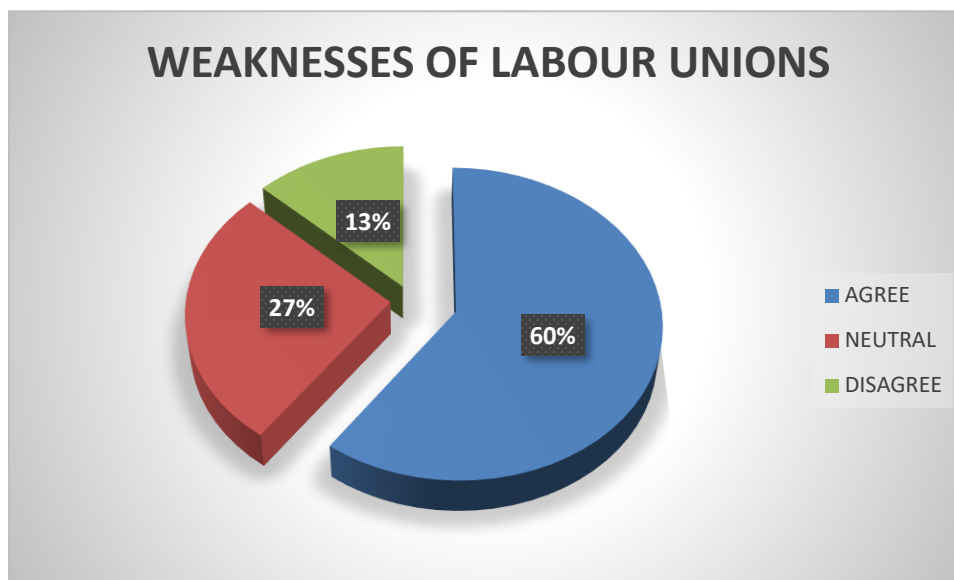
Inadequate relevant information, sometimes the union is faced with the challenge of perceiving relevant information from the workers or employers for fear of revealing private issues.

Weak level of management; it could be that the union has corrupted, incompetent and unskilled leaders that were directors in the running of the unions' operations.

Little supports from the government; the Ugandan government welcomes foreign investors in influencing the markets of the industry but forgets to support the union in implementing policies to support the enacted laws.

Finally, poor negotiation and bargaining powers; it could be that the union leaders are reluctant, or incapable in handling disputes arising amongst its members or may be due to incompetent professional personal quality skills of the leaders.

**The following figure 4 below, however, achieves to explain the general feedback from the respondents**



*Figure 4: shows the feedbacks of respondents on the internal weakness as challenges of labour unions*

**Figure 4: Shows the feedbacks of the respondents on the internal weaknesses as challenges of the labour union**

The chart in figure 4 above, achieves to explain which respondents were sure (agreed) or not sure (neutral) or disagreed to the weaknesses of the labour union, UBCCECAWU, on behalf of the employees. The feedback drawn was on emphasis to determine the degree to which the labour unions' activities were weak in the building construction industry.

As presented on the chart in figure 4 above, the majority of the respondents agreed duly to the weaknesses of the labour whereas a few disagreed to the subject that the unions were weak, internally.

In conclusion, the union is weak. This amounts to the familiarity of it being unknown. The most critical factors it should correct or monitor, being; poor negotiation and collective bargaining power, weak level of management, and poor financial background.

### **4.3.2 The external threats to the labour union**

#### 4.3.2.1 The data findings and analysis on the challenges of the labour unions

In investigating the threats as challenges of the labour union, the researcher identified some challenges that the union met in administering the union activities in the building construction industry, referencing to UBCCECAWU. The challenges were prone to be the problems that the union encountered, externally, to test the purpose of its mere existence, on the behalf of the workers

### 4.3.2.2 Summary presentations

The following figures are the respondents' feedback on the external threats as challenges of the labour

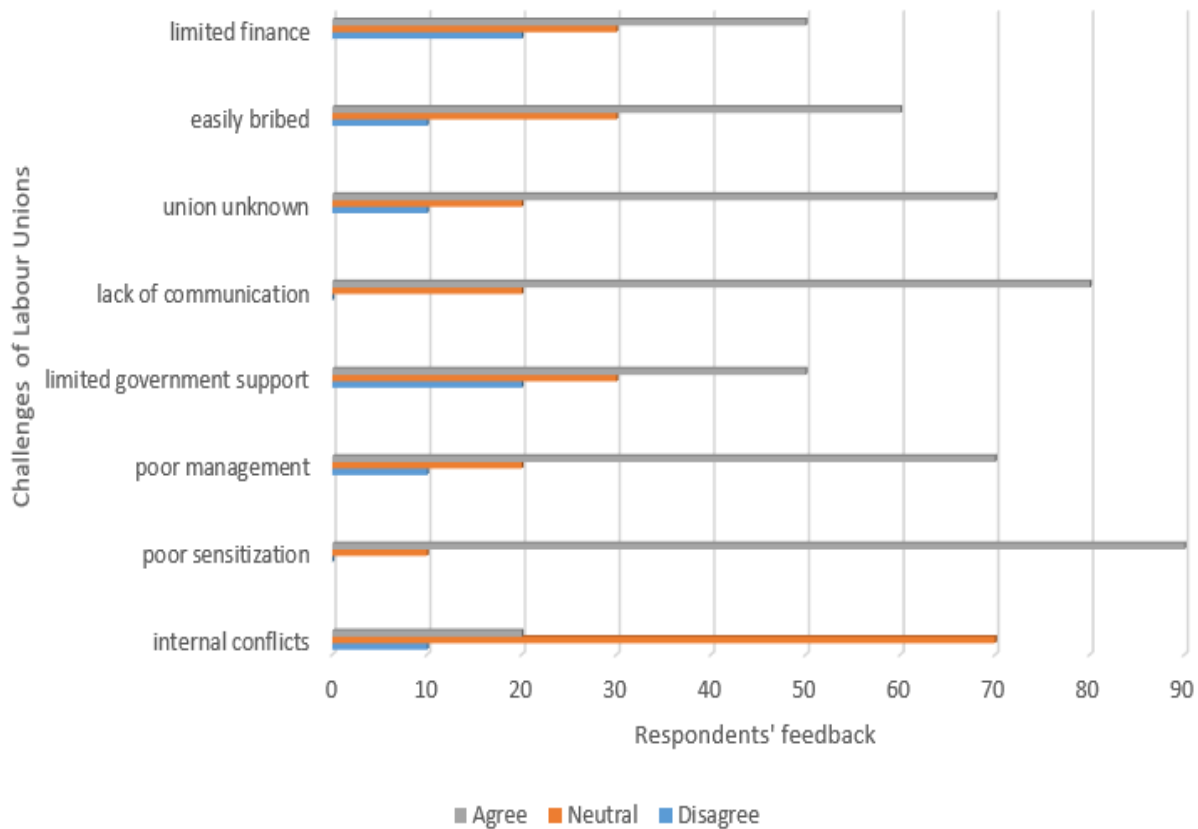


Figure 5: shows the external threats of challenges of lab our unions

Following these challenges, the union in sensitizing the workers and implementing their roles in the industry, they were ineffective to a degree that their purposes as a union on behalf of the workers were so insignificant.

Poor management, the union in managing of its affairs, they were not efficient since they were not adequately planning, organizing, motivating and controlling their activities in the industry, this is irrespective of the managements' skills and the duty of care to the workers.

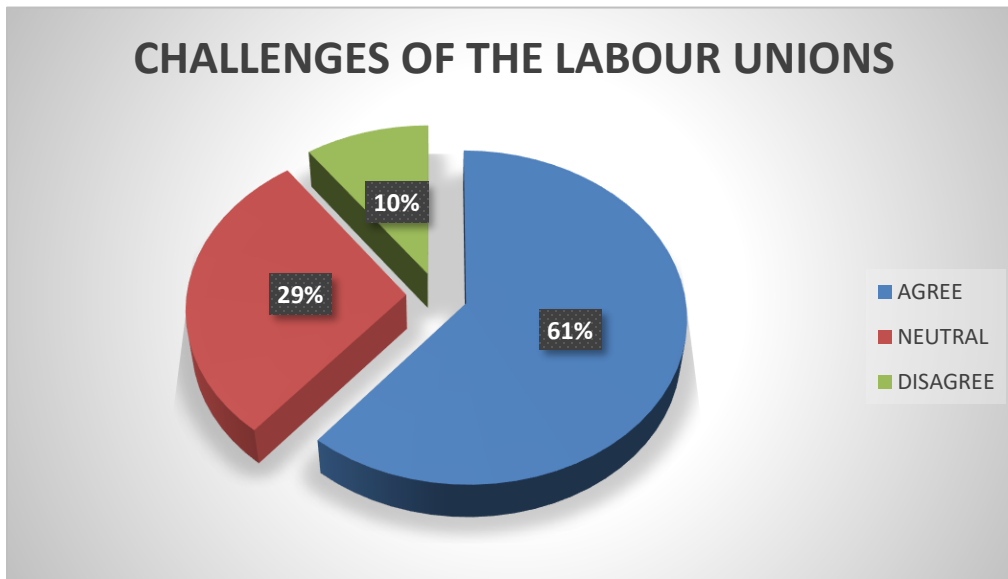
Inadequate communication, the union in being key informants to the participants in the building construction industry, they have been incompetent to a reputable degree of them being unfamiliar in the industry.

Limited government supports, the union face the challenge of inadequate supports from the government this is due to the political influences in the industry, in particularly, the failure to policy establishment to support the enacted laws.

Internal leadership conflicts, there could be internal conflicts of interest of leadership amongst the union leaders, perhaps it could be because of clashing programs, or due to language barriers and cultures, or due to tribalism.

The case to which the union is bribed: it is likely that the labour officers can easily be bribed by their competitors such as the employers in the industry; this is in case of defaults made by these competitors.

**The following are the general responses as feedback to the challenges of the union.**



*Figure 6: shows feedback of respondents on the external threats as challenges of lab our union*

The chart in the figure 6 above, archives to explain which respondents were sure (Agreed or accepted) or were not sure (Neutral) and / or disagreed to these challenges of the labour union.

UBCCECAWU, on behalf of their employees. The feedback drawn was on emphasis to determine the degree to which the labour unions activities were a challenge in the building construction industry.

Referring to the chart in figure 6 above, a greater percent agreed to the challenges presented, and a little disagreed to the subject that these were its external threats as challenges.

In conclusion, the fact that the challenges mentioned by the researcher above were the challenges that the union encountered, the most critical factors were poor sensitization, internal leadership conflicts, the poor management, the unfamiliarity of the union, and lack of communication.

The union is required to take notice of these challenges and take considerable measures towards this.

#### **4.4 The strategies for increasing the influence of the labour unions**

##### **4.4.1 Data findings and analyses on the strategies for increasing the influence of the labour union**

The strategies here for increasing the influence of the labour union implied the process required to achieve the target objectives of a plan for decision makings by the labour union officials. The solutions that the respondents presented here were a step to strategizing a process required for the labour unions to follow so as to achieve their objectives.

Before strategizing the plan, it was important to understand what would be the initial interest or feedback of the respondents to the subject matter. The feedback alone impressed their desired goals or in depth needs. The researcher here conducted a careful research through the means of an interview, and questionnaires.

##### **4.4.2 Summary presentation.**

The following figures were the respondents' feedback on the solutions suggested for the increase of the labour union.

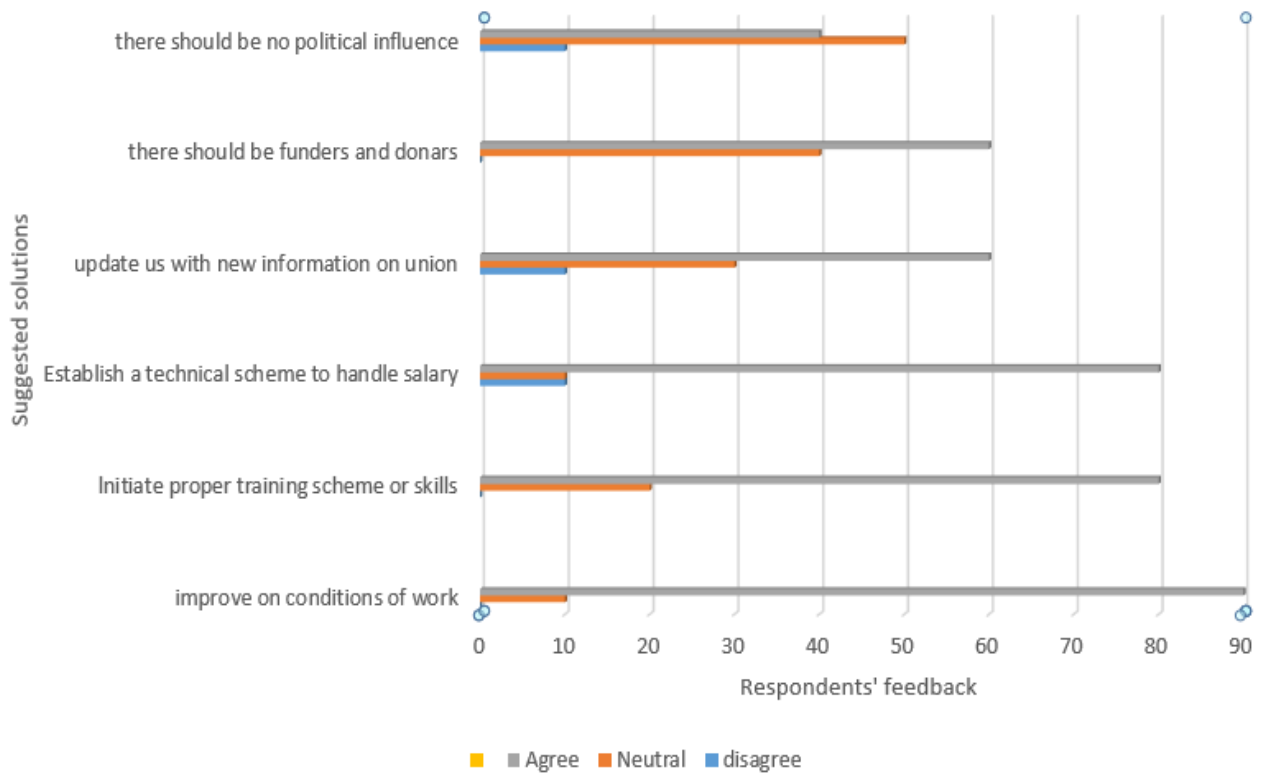


Figure 7: shows feedbacks of respondents on the challenges of unions

Referring to the chart in figure 7 above, a greater percentage advocated for the suggested solutions addressed to handle the unions' challenges compared to a few that disagreed to the fact that these were the solutions to address the challenges of the union.

In conclusion, the solutions suggested above are the respondents' acceptance to get rid of the challenges of labour union. The most critical success factors being; to improve on conditions of work, initiate proper training scheme or skills, and establish a technical scheme to handle salaries/ wages.



## **5.0 CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

The essence of the study as subject to the title suggested for investigating the challenges of the labour unions in Kampala determines to explain the degree of their effectiveness in the building construction industry. The researcher came to this far to acknowledge the challenges, and the following were the conclusions made.

### **5.2 Conclusions**

From the research drawn, the labour union, UBCCECAWU, has been weak, since their roles played were ineffective in the building construction industry.

Comparing with the respondents' feedbacks in the building construction industry; the poor performance of unions affairs, poor management, inadequate communication, limited government supports, internal leadership conflicts, the unfamiliarity of the union, and ease to which they are bribed are such challenges investigated, which justifies to what degree of the effectiveness the union amounts to a reputable degree of not being familiar.

Therefore, to increase the influence of the union in the industry, the union needs to strategize its roles in improving the general conditions of work at workplaces, initiate proper Training scheme or skills, and establish a technical scheme to handle salaries/ wages. Other than the suggested solutions, an added strategy could be to influence their activities by engaging in strikes and picketing.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

I recommend therefore, that the union need to revolutionize its approach on;

Improving the sensitization and education of its members; the union in acknowledging their members/workers, should carry out moral teachings on work performance to avoid unnecessary termination of contracts at workplace.

Initiate proper training scheme or workshops with the inclusion of all the different respective careers in the building construction industry. This will increase the solidarity and innovations to out-way such things as technology aligned with capital intense (machine) replacements.

Improve on conditions of work; the union in having limited funds in supporting its members, it should seek for vulnerable ways to ensure for such things as safety precautions, welfare, and health of its members be insurable.

Establish a technical scheme to handle salary/wages; the union should come up with a tireless program that would per sue the government to enact suitable minimum wages for the building construction industry such for different carriers and experiences in the field.

Appoint and updates employee member representatives in each firm with new information regarding to any Global Union Action Participants.

Avoid poor negotiation and collective bargaining power, the sole purpose of the Union should be to perform its duties on behalf of its members. It should consist of tight controls, and monitoring of its affairs with competitors, such as the employers.

The Union should deal with the weak level of management; it could be as a result of poor planning, organization, monitoring, motivations and poor controls of managing the operations of the Union's activities. Competent and skillful workers must be appointed to mobilize, commence and establish the target goals.

Solicit for funds to overcome the poor financial background; the Unions should not only ensure that union members dully paid for their membership subscriptions, but seek for donors and investors such as international collaboration with the African Union, ILO, European Unions, among others for social and financial supports.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Proposed Budget

No	ITEM	QUANTITY	RATE	AMOUNT(UGX)
1	Stationery	1	80000	80000
2	Transport	Lumpsum		200000
3	Meals	15	5000	75000
4	Safety boots	1	70000	70000
5	Reflector Jacket	1	20000	20000
6	Airtime	Lumpsum		50000
6	Sanitizer	1	35000	35000
7	Contingencies	Lumpsum		50000
	<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>580000</b>

Appendix

2:Activity

Schedule

ACTIVITY	YEAR	2022																											
	MONTH	MARCH				APRIL				MAY				JUNE				JULY				AUG				SEPT			
	WEEK	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Proposal writing		■	■	■	■																								
Literature review						■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■								
Proposal presentation										■	■																		
Data collection												■	■	■	■														
Data analysis														■	■	■	■												
Report writing																		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Final presentation																													■

## INTERVIEW

Dear Respondent

I am AHIMBISIBWE ANTHONY, a student at Makerere University, from the college of Engineering Design Art and Technology (CEDAT), studying Bachelors of Science in Construction Management. I am grateful for your reply as a respondent. And, I am carrying out an academic research on the topic; “CHALLENGES OF LABOUR UNIONS IN THE BUILDING CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY in Kampala.” Please, feel at ease. The information collected will be treated with ultimate confidentiality and will be used solely for academic purposes. Your cooperation will be of at most importance. Please fill in the following.

1. Respondent No..... (optional)

2. Name of the company/firm.....

3. Gender

a) Male

b) Female

4. Age

a) 16 – 25

b) 26 – 35

c) 36 – 45

d) 46 and above

5. Marital Status

a) Married

b) Single

c) Divorced

d) Engaged

6. Educational Status

a) Certificate

b) Diploma

c) Degree

d) Others

7. Please specify; which position/occupation that you do hold in your firm

a) helper/labourers  b) Mason/Brick layer

c) Foreman/Site overseer  d) Supervisor/Engineer

8. How long have you been working in this company?

a) 2 years below  b) 4 – 6 years

c) 2 – 4 years  d) 6 and above

9. Does your company contain any labour union?

a) Yes

b) No

10. Do you participate with any labour union for labourers in any building company?

a) Yes

b) No

11. If yes, please choose, whether if they are,

a) Active

b) Moderate

c) Inactive

12. What goals/objective does the labour union play?

a) To the firm

.....

b) To the Workers

.....

13. Which of the problems are likely affecting the Labour Union, as at the firm/company?

.....

.....

14. Which solutions do you wish to suggest in case you want to answer the problems above?

.....

.....

15. What makes you feel like, you will NEVER wish to leave this company?

.....  
.....

16. Which threats do you, as a Worker, experience in this company?

.....  
.....

17. Please state on; what would be the weakness and strengths of the Labour Union

Weakness;

.....  
.....

Strengths;

.....  
.....

THANK YOU



**QUESTIONNAIRE TO BE USED TO COLLECT DATA**



**MAKERERE**

**UNIVERSITY**

**COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING, DESIGN, ART AND TECHNOLOGY**

**SCHOOL OF BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

**DEPARTMENT OF CONSTRUCTION ECONOMICS AND MANAGEMENT**

**BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT**

**TOPIC: CHALLENGES OF LABOUR UNIONS IN THE BUILDING CONSTRUCTION  
INDUSTRY.**

This questionnaire is designed to collect data about my research on the challenges of labour unions in the construction industry for an award of Bachelor of Science in Construction Management. The questionnaire is required to be filled with exact information as much as possible. All the information filled onto the questionnaire by the all the respondents will be totally and highly confidential and used for academic purposes only.

1. Number.....

2. Name of the company/firm.....

3. Education status

a) Certificate

c). Diploma

b) Degree

d). Others specify

4. Please specify which of the position/occupation below you hold in your firm (building construction).

a). Helpers/laborers

b). Foreman /site overseer

c). supervisor/Engineer

d). labour officer

5. How long have you been working in this company/ labour union?

a). 2 years below

b). 4-6 years

c). 2-4 years

d). 6 and above

6. Does your company encourage or allow employees to engage in labour unions?

a). Agree       b). Neutral       c). Disagree

7. Do you participate with a labour union or any related as laborers/employees?

a). Agree       b). Neutral       c). Disagree

8. If yes, please choose whether if it were;

a). Active       b). Moderate       c). Inactive

9. Do you know of the Ugandan building construction, civil engineering and allied workers union, here in Uganda?

a). Agree       b). Neutral       c). Disagree

10) What are the things your labour union, in respective to your needs and welfare at work?

Agree    Neutral    Disagree

a) To the firm (In case you are an Employer/Labour officer)

i) Send complaints in time

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

ii) Helps us find their motivation areas

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

iii) Helps us find barriers in construction

iv) Elaborates more of employees' general behavior

v) Helps us participate in workshops and union meeting

Agree Neutral Disagree

b) To the workers ( In case you are an Employee/worker)

i) Reports our issues to the industrial relations/government

ii) Improve on our relationship with employer

iii) Bargain for better working conditions and increase of salary

iv) Encourage members participate in Active decision we make

v) Educates, Trains, provide skills and knowledge

11. What problems do you think is affecting the labourer's union, as in cooperating with your employer?

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
i) Political interference	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
ii) Poor financial background	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
iii) Lack of relevant information	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
iv) Weak level of management	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

12. What solutions do you suggest in case you wanted to answer the problems above?

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
i) There be no political interferences by employers	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
ii) There should be funders and donors for extra times	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
iii) Updates us with new information about the Union	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

iv) Establish a technical scheme on handling salary

v) Proper training schemes or skills should be initiated

vi) Improve on conditions and terms of work

--	--	--

--	--	--

13. What makes you feel like, you will NEVER wish to leave this company, as far as your employer is concerned (which benefits do you receive in your company)

Agree      Neutral      Disagree

i) We are well paid and payments are made on time

--	--	--

ii) There are payments of extra money for extra time

--	--	--

iii) Free transportation to and from our homes

--	--	--

iv) Well assured of the job security

--	--	--

v) Free garments and wears for work, such as overall

--	--	--

Dresses

vi) Good Engineers' management skills and motivations

--	--	--

14. Please state, what would be the weaknesses of these labour union

i) The Union has limited financial supports

ii) The leaders are bribed

iii) The Union is not well known by the workers

iv) The Union lacks effective communication criteria measures

v) Limited support by the government

vi) Poor management and irresponsibility by the leaders

14. Please state, what would be the weaknesses of these labour union

i) The Union has limited financial supports

ii) The leaders has limited bribed

iii) The Union is not well known by the workers

iv) The Union lacks effective communication criteria measures

v) Limited support by the government

vi) Poor management and irresponsibility by the leaders

15. Please state, what are the good things of this labour union

i) Updates respective employees over the employees' needs

ii) Seek for government

iii) Encourage the government to enact mean wages and policies

iv) Joint partnership of employees and workshop involvement

v) Effectively manages the Employees

vi) Accurate response and information are intercepted



vii) Educates, trains, sponsors and protects workers interests



THANK YOU