

Strike Action and the Academic Performance of Students of Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education Owerri

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Abstract

This study examined the strike action on the academic performance of students in tertiary institutions with particular reference to Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri, Imo State. The population of the study was 635 academic staff in five schools of the college. A sample of 128 representing 20% of the population was taken. The study adopted a descriptive survey design while the instrument for data collection was structured questionnaire. The Likert four-point, scale rating was adopted whereas the data collected were analyzed using mean. The result of the data analyzed showed that strike action highly influences the academic performance of students in tertiary institutions. Poor remuneration, negligence by government, conducive academic environment among others were identified as major causes of strike action. The researchers recommend that autonomy of tertiary institutions, adequate funding, and the re-orientation of staff to find alternative ways of expressing their grievances as measures to curb incessant strike actions in our tertiary institutions.

Keywords: learning environment, questionnaire, strike action, students' academic performance

1. Introduction

The origin of labor unionism dates back to the Eighteenth Century and the industrial revolution in Europe. During this time there was a huge surge of new workers into the workplace that needed representation. Labor unionism is a global phenomenon. In Nigeria, Labor unionism has been part of the industry since 1912, when government employees formed a Civil Service Union. According to Wikipedia (2015) this organization became the Nigeria union of Civil Servants after the merger of the protectorate of Northern and Southern Nigeria. In 1931, two other major unions were founded: the Nigeria Railway workers union and Nigeria Union of Teachers. As workers continued to increase and the need for representation rises, the need for a mother union was inevitable hence, the merger into one big or mother union which will oversee all the activities of all workers under one umbrella body known as the Nigeria Labor Congress (N.L.C). As a mother body, the (N.L.C) was formally constituted as the only national federation of trade unions in Nigeria 1978. According to Silverman (2004) since its formation, the N.L.C has been a major voice for the Nigeria workers under it, and has given birth to many other Industrial Unions both in the field of health, agriculture, finance and education. Its major aim is to protect, defend and promote the rights, wellbeing, interest of all workers, trade unions and pensioners in the Country and this, it has continued to achieve through its various aims and branches.

A union therefore According to Oxford advanced dictionary is an organization established by and for workers to pursue collective workplace goals; wage, benefits, work rules, power etc. Hence, the formation of Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) as a branch of industrial (Labor) union has brought about some pronounced changes in the academic system of tertiary institutions in the Country. Seen by many as a blessing, others see it as a clog in the wheel of the Nigerian academic system and medium to discourage students. As long as the Academic Staff Union and Employer (Government) represented by politicians are at variance in belief and philosophy there is bound to be industrial disputes between the two. The action and reaction of the academic staff union (ASUU, ASUP and COEASU) in recent years to attitude of the government towards the past agreements, conditions of service, remuneration, emoluments and entitlements as prescribed by UNESCO such as university autonomy and integration of polytechnic academic staff had led to frequent clashes and subsequent industrial actions by ASUU, ASUP and specifically COEASU. These unions have often resolved to strike actions as the last resort to balance the power between their staff and the government when bargaining and confrontations fail to yield desired result. Implying that the only language the government at all level understands is strike.

According to Wikipedia (2015) the Union has been active in struggle against the military regime during the 1980s, when it frequently embarked on national strike to obtain fair wages and University autonomy and after several struggles and opposition by the government and agreement was reached on 3rd September 1992 that met several of the unions demand including right of workers to collective bargaining. The union organized further strikes in 1994 and 1990 against the dismissal of staff by the Abacha Military regime.

Disruption in academic program becomes a natural consequence of each industrial action or strike. Hence, normal teaching and learning are stalled and therefore, most students are prone to diverse activities such as sexual immorality, cyber scan, pool betting, watching of movies, and engaging in unnecessary gossip etc., rather than reading their books and soon they forget about academic and lose interest and focus of educational demands which in long run affects their learning capability. Learning as adduced by Wikipedia (2015) is the act of acquiring new or modifying and reinforcing existing knowledge, behavior, skills, values, or preference and may involve synthesizing different types of information and according to Tanner (1980) it is done under the auspices of the school.

Odubela (2012) concludes that effective learning or an enhanced performance is achieved by successful coverage of the course outline timely and before the examination. This is rarely achieved when there is strike action. Based on this, the researchers are of the opinion that disruption in academic program as caused by strike action exposes students to depression, frustration and emotional and psychological trauma, lack of preparedness on the side of the learner or student and loss of motivation which leads to societal vices and unproductiveness and non-conducive learning environment in the tertiary institution in Country. Just recently, staff of A.I.F.C.E under the umbrella of COEASU embarked on a seven-months strike over non-payment of migration and other demands there by crippling academic activities and forcing the students into compulsory holidays where most of these ills were inevitable. This study therefore intends to examine the influence of strike action on the academic performance of students.

1.1 Objective of the Study

Generally, the objective of the study is to find out how strike action influences the academic performance of students in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Specifically, it seeks to:

1. Ascertain the extent to which strike action influences the academic performance of student in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.
2. Identify the causes of strike action by the various unions in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.
3. Suggest possible solution to the incessant strike action in our tertiary institutions

1.2 Research Questions

1. To what extent does strike action influence the academic performance of students?
2. What are the causes of strike action in tertiary institutions in Nigeria?
3. What are the possible solutions to strike actions?

2. Conceptual Framework

2.1 Concept of Strike

According to oxford advanced learners Dictionary strike action refers to a period of time when an organized group of employees of a company stops working because of a disagreement over pay or conditions. Strike, also called industrial action or simply strike, is a work stoppage caused by the mass refusal of employees to work. A strike usually takes place in response to an employee's grievances. Etymologically, the word strike was first used in 1768, when sailors in support of a demonstration in London, removed the top gallant sails of merchant ship at port, thus crippling the ships. Officially the word is used as "work stoppage or Industrial dispute." The first historically confirmed account of strike action was towards the end of the 20th dynasty, under pharaoh Ramses III in ancient Egypt on 14 November 1152 BC. The artisans of the Royal Necropolis at Dire Elmedina walked off their jobs because they had not been paid (Wikipedia 2015).

Ozurumba (1997) defines strike actions as a state of inactivity in an organization. Asolu (2010) opined that strike action is an action taken to disrupt all the working conditions in order to achieve a purpose influenced by demand for improvement in the conditions of service or to assuage a problem, which arose in the society. According to Russell (2003) a strike action is the organization of citizens with special interest into a group sufficiently powerful to be able to resist the organized forces of government successfully when their causes are ignored such that workers need attention of the public for their just cause.

The implication of the above assertion is that the role of such organization as Nigerian Union of Teachers (NUT), Nigerian Labor Congress (NLC), Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) and Colleges of Education Academic Staff Union (COEASU) and other union bodies comes together to make a strong force with one voice, by engaging on strike to protect their various interest and be able to withstand the force of the government. In line with this assertion, Asobie (2006) states that strike action is an instrument for drawing attention of the employers and the public that is immediately concerned about a dispute. It is used where workers want a new or better condition of work, that is, righter than they were already given by law. For

instance, increase in wage and more leave per year. Ivancevich (2007) posits that strike is an effort by employees to withhold work so that the employer will make greater concessions at the bargaining table. He argues that it is the major bargaining weapon used by the labor union. It varies from economic strike where the employees stop work until demand for better conditions of employment is met, to sit-down strike where they go to work but sit and not do any work.

In the same light, Michael (2013) believes that strikes are most times politically charged. Of all the features of industrial relations, strikes are most often weapons of first rather than last resort. However, labor unions recognize strike as a legitimate last resort when all else fails. Legal dictionary defines strike as work stoppage; the concerted refusal of employees to perform work that their employers have assigned to them in order to force the employers to grant certain demand concessions, such as increased wages or improved employment conditions. It further posits that “a work stoppage is generally the last step in a labor-management dispute over wages and working conditions”. Because employees are not paid when they go on strike and employers lose production, both sides usually seek to avoid it. However, a strike may be the only bargaining tool left for employees.

According to Onyemanan (2016) strike is seen as a collective organized cessation or slowdown of work by employees to force acceptance of their demand by the employers. The legality of the strike action requires approval by the majority of employees by ballot, independent verification to ascertain that the majority support the vote; the notice of the impending strike must be giving to employers in advance; the employer must be provided with the result of the ballot; final notice to embark on the strike must be issued to the employers before the action takes place. This implies that no strike action can occur without the government (employers of labor) knowing or being warned of it. It is therefore the failure of the employer to yield to the demand of the employees that results in industrial dispute.

An international labor organization (2011) maintains that strike is the most visible and controversial form of collective action in the event of a labor dispute and is often seen as the last resort of workers organization in pursuit of their demands. Legal dictionary (2016) went further to say that employees can strike for economic reasons, for improvement of their working conditions or for the mutual aid and protection of employees in another union. In addition, even if they do not have a union, employees can purposely agree to stop working as a group. In that case they are entitled to all the protections that organized strikers are afforded.

No matter its form and nature, it is a disastrous factor in our functional education system; since effective academic activities of the students heavily depend on the proper use of the opportunities and learning experiences in their environment. Hence, the issues of strike action have generated a lot of argument in various parts of our educational sector, this is because as legal dictionary concludes that labor unions do not have the right to use strike to interfere with management prerogatives or with policies that the employers is entitled to make that do not directly concern the employment relationship. A strike must be conducted in an orderly manner and cannot be used as a shield for violence or crime. Intimidation and coercion during the course of a strike are unlawful.

2.2 The Concept of Labor Union

Labor unions or trade unions according to Benson (2015) are organizations formed by workers from related fields that work for the common interest of its members. They help workers with issues like fairness of pay, good working environment, hours of work and benefits. They represent a Cluster of workers and provide a link between the management and workers.

For Photius (2005) labor unions have been part of Nigerian industry since 1912, when government employees formed a civil service union. In 1944, this organization became the Nigerian union of civil servants after the merger of the protectorates of northern and southern Nigeria. Wikipedia (2015) defined labor or trade union as an organization of workers who have come together to achieve common goals such as protecting the integrity of its members, improving safety standards, achieving higher pay and benefits such as health care and retirement, increasing the number of employees and employer assigned to complete the work and better working conditions. The trade union, through its leadership, bargains with the employers on behalf of union members. This is to say that trade, industrial, labor unions are groups of workers who organize themselves in one body with a leader in order to strengthen and protect the welfare and interest of one another, hence they stand together as one and speak in unity with one voice.

The purpose of these unions is to look into the grievances of workers and present a collective voice in front of the management. Hence, it acts as the medium of communication between the workers and management. Ivancevich (2007) defined a labor union as an organization of employees that uses collective action to advance its members interest in regard to wages and working conditions. They form or join because of the belief that there is strength in unity. Trade union decree of 1973 as cited by shokan (1997) viewed labor unions as any combination of temporary and permanent workers or employees, the purpose of which is to regulate the terms and conditions of employment of workers.

Rosemary (1993) opined that trade unions are seen as the legitimate representative of labors and conflict arising from the clash of interest are resolved, if possible, by bargaining and compromise and if not, by overt power. Amstrong (2004) in his opinion asserts that the fundamental purpose of trade unions is to promote and protect the interest of their members; they are to redress the balance of power between employers and employees.

The implication of the above statement is that regulation of relation, settlement of grievances raising new demands on behalf of workers, collective bargaining and negotiation are the other principal functions that these trade unions perform.

2.3 Reason for Industrials (Labor) Union Strike

The general reasons why the academic staff union of universities (ASUU) and Colleges of Education Academic Staff Union (COEASU) have been going on strike has been identified by Nwokeneme (2005) and Bangbose (2006) as shown below: Poor salaries and wages, non-provision of basic amenities and instructional materials, Government insecurity over promises or agreements, Secret cult activities, Independence/ autonomy.

Nwokeneme (2008) further says that various reasons ranging from neglect of the universities, non-maintenance of the university's infrastructure, breaching of agreement between the

government and lectures. Also, the autonomy of Nigerian tertiary institutions and its poor inadequate funding, poor condition of work, separate pay package or work condition between the academic staff and non-academic staff are some of the issues that cause strike action in tertiary institutions.

Specifically, Nasir F. Isa the president of ASUU in an interview with channels Television News on 1st July 2013 outlined the Key areas of agreement with the Federal government that is yet to be implemented that prompted the six months long strike that was embarked on by the union. These include: Funding requirements of the Nigerian universities, Federal government assistance to state universities, Establishment of Nigerian University Pension Management Committee (NUPEMCO), Progressive increase in Annual Budgetary Allocation to education to 26% between 2009 and 2020, Earned allowances, Amendment of the pension/retirement age of academics on the professional cadre from 65-70 years, Reinstatement of prematurely dissolved Governing Councils, Transfer of federal government landed properties to universities, Setting up of research development council and provision of research equipment to laboratories and classroom in our universities. Part of his broadcast reads:

From all indications, it appears the government is not yet prepared to address the challenges facing the Nigerian university system with the urgency that is required. This trend is dangerous, as it constitutes a threat to the relative peace in Nigerian universities. There can be no justification for the government's position given what all Nigerian know about the management of the nation's resources. It is evident that the government is highly deceptive and is not interested in sustaining relative stability in our universities. If the government can betray our union on the 2009 agreement, where is the basis of trust for the impending review that was due for 2012?

It is in the light of the above, especially having exhausted all other options that ASUU-NEC at its meeting in Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye between 29th and 30th June 2013 resolved to call out all its members on a nation-wide strike action beginning from Wednesday, 3rd July 2013. The strike action is comprehensive and total. Our members shall withdraw their services until the Government fully implements and commence the process of review of the same Agreement. In his concluding remarks he said: Gentlemen of the press, the time has come to rise in defense of the liberation of our country. We believe this liberation must begin with education, which is a veritable weapon for socioeconomic transformation. The IMF/World Bank and their local collaborators would make Nigerians believe that "Basic" or little education is good enough for the children of the poor. It is a ruse.

Our union counts on the renewed support of the media in challenging agents of underdevelopment who deny less privileged Nigeria's quality higher education, health, employment and other life transforming elements of development (channels Television incorporated limited).

He also invites labor activists, students, traders, professional groups, civil society organizations and other progressive segments of the public to join our determined efforts to save Nigerians from their captors. Still on the causes of strike, the vice president of COEASU in an exclusive interview with vanguard Newspaper on June 15, 2014 gave some of the reason for the prolonged strike embarked upon by the union as follows;

1. Government refusal to implement an agreement signed with the union in 2010 which was due for a renegotiation in 2012. This agreement includes, addressing the infrastructural deficits in college of education and peculiar academic allowance to the tune of N5 billion which the government has refused to pay the lecturers.
2. Funds for the accreditation of courses
3. Government owes some members monetization arrears to the tune of N1 billion since 2010 and also the issue of underfunding relating to teaching practice.
4. Infrastructural deficit and dilapidation across the campuses
5. Another issue the colleges of education have hammered on for years is the harmonization of the conditions of services in tertiary institutions. The union believes that this will to a large extent, help stop the brain drain from the colleges of education.
6. In full proposed information payroll personal payment system.

These and more are the reasons why COEASU, went on eight- or seven-months strike which involved A.I.F.C.E Owerri students and lecturers, till today, two years down the line, the staff and students of A.I.F.C.E Owerri are still feeling the aftermath of the strike, which affected the academic calendar, led to late graduation absence or no break at all for student and staff academic activities, brain drain and lower grade are all the effect of strike actions.

2.4 Concept of Academic Performance

Academic performance or achievement represents outcomes that indicate the extent to which a person has accomplished specific goals that were the focus of activities in an instructional environment; specifically in schools, colleges and universities. Wikipedia 2016 opines that academic performance is commonly measured by evaluation (examination) and continuous assessment but there is no general agreement on how it can best be captured. It identified among others factors that the learning environment or condition has great influence on academic performance of the student. In the related study, Mellisa J.B (2012) has emphasized how well a student meets standards set out by the institution. A student's success is measured by academic performance. Scottk (2012) refers academic performance to how well a student is accomplishing his or her tasks and studies. The study indicates that grades are the most well-known indicator of academic performance.

This is to say that one of the ways of knowing how good or bad a student performs in a semester or session is through the student's grade at the end of examination; if the students have high grades like (A or B), it implies that the student did well and the performance is good. If on the other hand, the student's grade is below (A or B) then the performance is poor. In the light of this assertion, Arul Lawrence (2013) sees academic performance as the extent to which a learner is profiting from instruction in a given area of learning, achievement is reflected by the extent to which skill and knowledge has been imparted to him.

Steinmayr et al. (2014) identified that academic performance are outcomes that indicate the extent to which a person has accomplished specific goals that were the focus of activities in an instructional environment, specifically in schools, colleges and universities. This implies that

academic performance is a multifaceted construct that comprises various domains of learning, because of wide-ranging academic achievement and the fact that it covers a broad variety of educational outcomes hence, its definition or meaning depends on the indicators used to measure it. Against this background, the (researchers) concluded that since the strike has come and gone and those who witnessed and experienced it are still telling their stories of its aftermath, the use of questionnaires and interviews will therefore aid in gathering information as to how students were affected by the strike.

2.5 Effect of Strike on Students

The persistence closure of the Nigerian tertiary institutions heightened in the 1990s. The tertiary institution lecturers had called for improved conditions of service, which in their assertion is worst if compared with their counterparts anywhere in the world. On their part, the students in Nigerian tertiary institutions have lamented over their own plight and described it as the worst any student in a tertiary institution can experience anywhere in the world. Nwosu as quoted in Njoku (2002, p. 12) stated that there are many traces of symptoms of moral decadence in our tertiary institutions, some of which are caused by strike actions. Stressing on this he said

“Undoubtedly, most of our students are in perpetual cycle of distrust and want, and therefore, trapped in the labyrinth of greed and moral chaos. Our ancient academic norms have been corrupted. He however listed the following as the effects of industrial strike action

- Examination malpractice
- Cultism
- Violence
- Sexual promiscuity/harassment
- Delayed graduation
- Academic dishonesty
- Loss of interest in education and
- Stealing
- Impersonation
- Drug abuse
- Abortion
- Betrayal
- Nudity, and above all
- Poor academic performance or outcome.

Elyoh (2000, p. 7) stated that the closure of tertiary institutions negates the fact that each academic program has to be covered in a specified number of years by intending students. Such students may be self-sponsored or financed by other individuals or organizations or government, which has a budget for its cost and duration. The plans of the student and such sponsors are shattered by incessant strike action by union/lecturers in tertiary institutions; enough time is not given for students to study. Whenever they are called back the next schedule will be examination. Olabisi (200, p. 15) expressed that our school calendar has become so unreliable and unpredictable because of the constant strike actions.

Finally, the Nation Newspaper Friday July (2009:17) has it that “the academic calendar in many of the nation’s tertiary institutions has suffered constant disruption due to work stoppage instituted by the union (ASUU) (COEASU) etc., and regardless of their noble intentions the suffering endured by students and other members of the university community is better imagined than experienced.

2.6 Measures to be Taken to Reduce Strike

Speaking on the possible ways to reduce incessant strike action in the country Benson et al. (2015) listed the following as the possible ways to avoid strike in Nigeria:

1. Attractive Remuneration
2. Adequate financing
3. Adherence to collective bargaining
4. Provision of adequate educational facilities and infrastructure
5. The use of dialogue in resolving conflict.

In possible ways to reduce strike, Onyemenam (2016) has identified two alternative ways union can press home their demand without engaging in strike action. This includes (1) Joint consultation: This is a machinery set in motion to handle workers problems as a group. He sees it as a method by which employees come together to attempt to reach agreement in matters under discussion through the process of negotiation on how to increase salaries and wages. (2) Collective bargaining: This is based on the simple fact that people who pursue an issue of common interest have the right to discuss and arrive at a decision on how to relate to each other; he believes that it is based on this principle that workers have a right to contract with their employers to wages and conditions of work and that the employers should recognize that.

3. Theoretical Framework

Theoretical framework in this section seeks to hinge the work to an existing theory. There are different theories that have been developed by scholars in the field of psychology and sociology to explain a conflict situation and also many educational theories to back up academic activities and performance. The researchers will hinge this work on the “frustration-aggression theory, social conflict theory, and the Tyler rational planning approach or objective approach.

Frustration-aggression-theory is a theory of aggression proposed by John Dollard, Neal E. Miller et al. in 1939. The theory says that aggression is the result of blocking or frustration. A person’s effort to attain a goal, it further states that frustration causes aggression. They opined “that the occurrence of aggressive behavior always presupposes the existence of frustration and, contrariwise, that the existence of frustration always leads to some form of aggression”. Frustration, in this context, was specified as the thwarting of a goal response.

Consequently, being frustrated means both that one’s access to reinforcements is being thwarted by another party (or possibly by a particular circumstance) and the one’s reaction to this thwarting is annoyance. Hinging this theory to this work, we note that the frequent conflict between the Academic unions and the government in recent times that has always led to strike

action by the academic staff is as a result of frustration from the government's inability to adhere to the cry and plea of the various academic unions and the end result is aggression by the union which in turn causes them to embark on strike action.

The social conflict theory according to Karl Marx, Max Weber in Oparah, Gbenga and Ngozi (2014, p. 64) is the struggle for agency or power in society. Social conflict or group conflict occurs when two or more actors oppose each other in a social interaction, reciprocally exerting social power in an effort to attain scarce or incompatible goals and prevent the opponent from attaining them. It is a social relationship where the action is oriented intentionally for carrying out the actor's own will against the resistance of other parties. For Max and Weber "all history is the history of class conflict" they assert that the capitalist or industrialist (government) which is the employers of labor and the working class (laborers) which make up the lecturers, teachers, students are always in conflict due to exploitation by the government. The above theory is in line with social conflict between the labor union and the government due to government inability to pay workers and meet up with their demand results in strike action among workers, lecturers and staff of universities that eventually give birth to poor academic performance among students. Max believed that the gap between industrialists and the laborers would continue to grow. Industrialists would become wealthier, and the laborers continue to move towards poverty. Conflict theory is seen throughout relationships and interactions between two groups of the people including races, opposite sex and religions. The goal of the academic bodies such as lecturers, teachers, and staff in various higher institutions is to work and be paid after all, if neglected by the government or employers of labor, leads to frustration and aggression, which will in turn lead to poor academic performance of students. This is also in line with Tyler Rationale planning objectives as cited in Igwe (2000). The objective emphasizes product (achievement of the educational objective or achievement performance, or intent) as a prerequisite issue as far as curriculum development is concerned.

Igwe (2000) highlighted the general assumption of Tyler Rationale Planning Approach as follows: school is a formal institution with purpose and education should be an intentional activity which ought not to be disrupted either by internal or external classroom factors. All rational activities are characterized by having both purpose, procedure, aims and goals. Curriculum as rational activity is no exception in this rule. Education is a process which involves charging the behavior of learners. The success of academic activity depends on the learner's attention, intention, commitment to the activities; that the end enumerates and justifies the means. The accomplishment of the academic goals by the students is a priority. Based on the foregoing, staff union industrial action cannot come and go without leaving any aftermath effect on the educational achievement of students.

4. Empirical Framework

Osuorji and David (2014) carried out research on the effect of incessant strike on academic performance of studies in ABU Zaria. The aim was to determine the extent to which the strike action has affected academic performance of business education students in ABU, Zaria and to assess the perception of students about incessant strike on Academic performance of Business Education in Abu; Zaria. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The result shows that incessant strikes by lecturers have a resultant effect on the academic performance of

the students of the Business Education program in Abu Zaria. In the same vein, Ige Akindele (2014) researched on “towards the stemming of the tide of strikes in tertiary institutions in Nigeria: stakeholder’s roles and responsibilities. The study used slight descriptive statistics and expository style in its analysis. The study finally recommended that to stem the tide of strike and move tertiary institutions forward, an effective administration of tertiary institutions, adequate funding of education/tertiary education by government, orientation of staff of tertiary institutions are necessary.

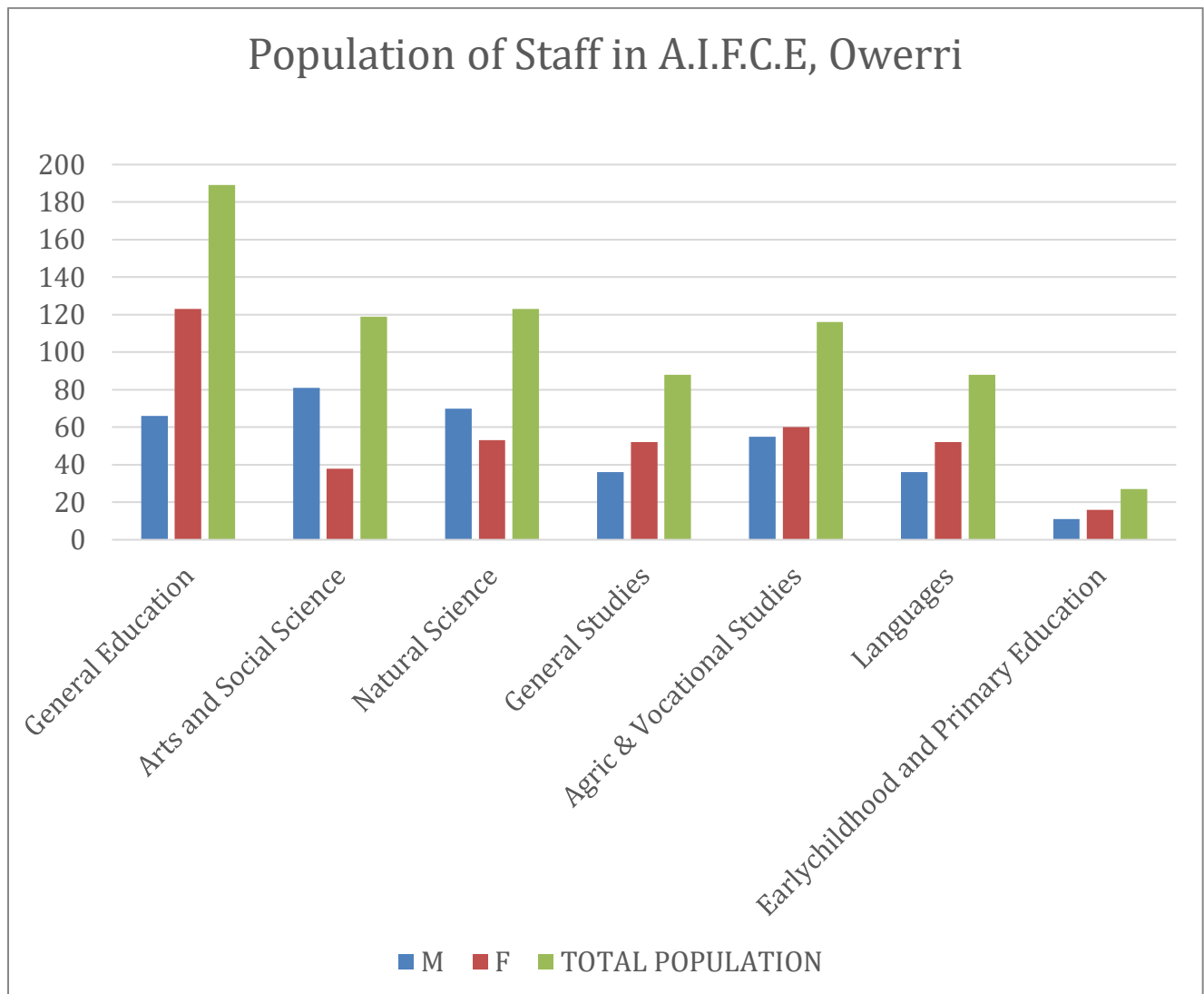
Also, Ednyang et. al. (2013) carried out research on the effect of strike action on human development among secondary school students of Uyo local government Area of Akwa Ibom state, Nigeria. The researchers adopted a descriptive survey method, and the population was 6,500 while the sample size was 650, the instrument used for data collection was questionnaire and the sampling techniques was multi-stage sampling techniques. The study found out inter-alia that disruption in academic programs resulting from strike leads to closure of schools for a period of time. This period may be specific or indefinite thereby affecting students’ learning of the curriculum hence their development. They therefore perform poorly during examination and also engage in examination malpractices.

Again, Duruji Glory et al (2012) carried out a research work on the impact of strike action on academic performance of some selected secondary schools in Owerri municipal council. The research design was a descriptive survey and the population was 728 school teachers and the sample was 440, questionnaire was used to gather data, 88% agreed that strike action negatively influenced student’s academic performance.

5. Research Methodology

The research adopted the descriptive survey design in determining the “influence of strike action on the academic performance of students in A.I.F.C.E Owerri. The design was considered appropriate because it will avail the researcher the opportunity to meet the respondents one on one (close contract) the study involved collecting data from a sample of the population of staff in various schools in the college. Hence, the finding of this study will depend solely on the opinion of the respondents. The area of this study is Alvan Ikoku Federal College of education Owerri, in Imo state. Alvan Ikoku Federal College of education is located in Owerri the capital of Imo State Nigeria. The population of this study comprises all the academic staff in the seven schools in Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri which are 750, distributed as on the following page.

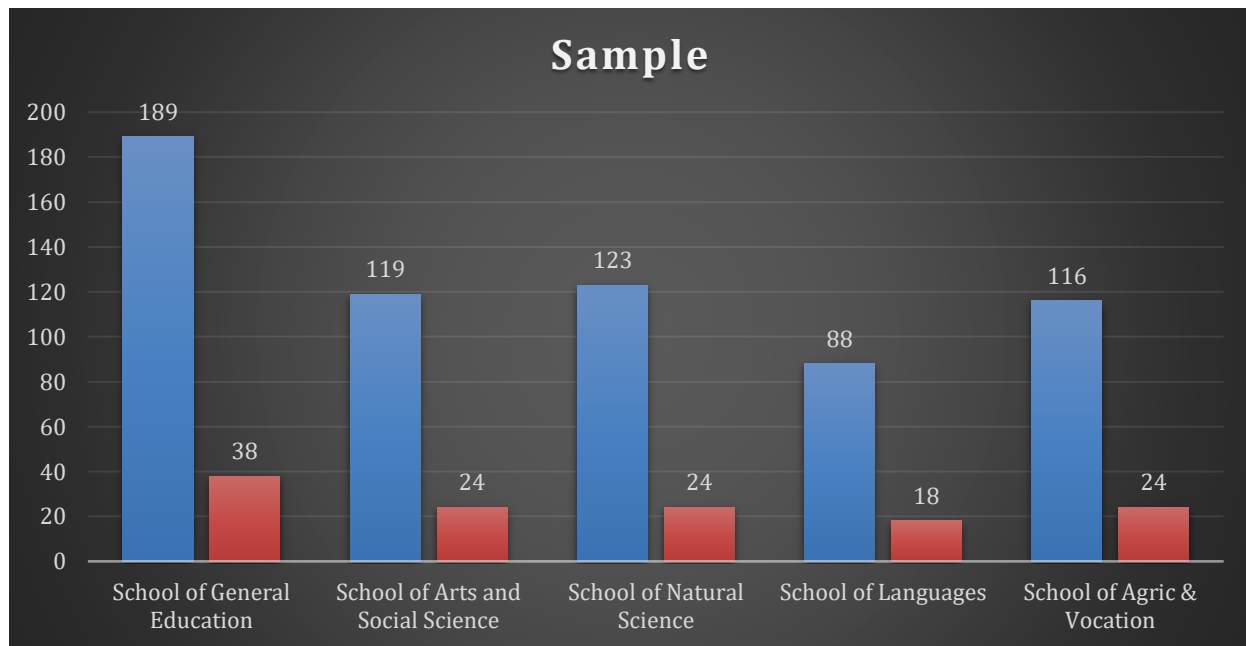
Table 1: Population of staff



Source: Senior Staff Personnel (2021)

A sample of the study will be made up of twenty percent of staff in five out of the eight schools. The school of General Studies will not be included because most of their lecturers are drawn from other schools in the college. The technique will be stratified by random sampling in order to represent the whole departments.

Table 2: Sample of staff



5.1 Instrument for Data Collection

A structured questionnaire which is designed by the researchers using the Likert type scale rating, will be used as the instrument for data collection. The face and content validity of the instrument was determined by three experts in measurement and evaluation and two lectures in Imo State University. The instrument was given to the respondents and collected on the spot to avoid the loss cases. The data generated from the instrument was analyzed using mean.

6. Data Analysis

The data collected will be analyzed using mean. The Likert four (4) points rating scale will be used and weighted as follows: strongly agreed 4 points, agreed 3 points, disagreed 2 points and strongly disagreed 1 point. The acceptance benchmark for the mean is 2.5. Any score below 2.5 will be rejected. While any score above 2.5 is accepted.

6.1 Result

Research Question 1: How does strike action influence the academic performance of students?

Table3: Responses to the effect of strike action on students

S/N	Questionnaire Items	Options				Total	Σ Tot Score	X Score	Remark
	Items	SA	A	D	SD				
1	Strike action highly influence academic performance of students	50 200	40 120	20 40	18 18	128	378	2.95	Accepted
2	Strike actions has no effects on the academic performance of students	10 40	8 24	60 120	50 50	128	234	1.82	Rejected
3	Strike action adversely affects the academic performance of students' goals.	50 200	58 174	12 24	8 8	128	406	3.17	Accepted
4	Strike actions enable students to achieve their academic goals.	00 00	0 0	50 100	78 78	128	178	1.39	Rejected
5	Period of strike produces opportunity for student's carry out serious assignment and studies.	12 48	8 24	70 140	38 38	128	250	1.95	Rejected
	Total =	122	114	212	192				
	Grand Mean= $378+234+406+178+250=1446$ $122+114+212+192=640=2.25$								

The data analyzed in Table 3 shows a mean of 2.25 which is below the stated benchmark of acceptance and as such, shows that strike actions highly influence the academic performance of students in tertiary institutions negatively.

Research Question 2: What are the causes of strike actions in tertiary institutions in Nigeria?

Table 4: Responses to causes of strike action

S/N	Questionnaire Items	Options				Tot Res.	Σ Total	X Mean	Remark
	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD				
1	Poor remuneration is the main cause of strike in Nigeria	20 80	68 204	30 60	10 10	128	354	2.7	Accepted
2	Negligence on the part of the govt is the main cause of strike in Nigeria	40	68	14	6	128	398	3.1	Accepted
3	Unconducive academic environment is a major contributor to incessant strike action actions in tertiary institutions.	28 112	60 180	20 40	20 20	128	352	2.7	Accepted
4.	Selfishness, greed and unprofessionalism among staff contribute a lot to incessant strike actions.	18 72	20 60	70 140	20 20	128	292	2.2	Rejected
5.	Government undue interference in the appointment of head and promotion of staff often causes strike.	12 48	74 222	22 44	20 20	128	334	2.6	Accepted
	Total =	118	290	156	76				
	Grand Mean= $354 + 398 + 352 + 292 + 334 = 1730$ $118+290+156+76 = 640$ $=2.7$								

Table 4 presents an acceptance mean of 2.7 which agrees with the fact that the main causes of strike include negligence on the part of the government, uncondusive learning environment, Government undue interference and remuneration of workers.

Research Question 3: What are the possible solutions to strike actions in Nigeria tertiary institutions?

Table 5: Solutions to the problem of strike

S/N	QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS	OPTIONS				TOT RES	Σ TOT SCORE	X SCORE	REMARK
	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD				
1	Autonomy of tertiary institution is a solution to strike action	20 80	75 225	21 42	12 12	128	359	2.8	Accepted
2	Adequate founding is a major solution to strike in Nigerian tertiary institutions	30 120	70 210	20 40	8 8	128	378	2.9	Accepted
3	To Curb strike action in tertiary institution, government should abrogate the unions in tertiary institution	10 40	20 60	60 120	38 38	128	258	2.0	Rejected
4.	There is need for orientation and re-orientation of staff of tertiary institutions on the need for alternative ways of expressing their grievances	60 240	30 90	20 40	18 18	128	388	3.0	Accepted

5.	Appointment and recruitments should be based on professionalism and competence devoid of political and ethnic consideration	70 280	40 120	12 24	6 6	128	430	3.3	Accepted
	Total =	190	235	133	82				
	Grand Mean= $\frac{359 + 378 + 358 + 388 + 430}{190+235+133+82} = \frac{1813}{640} = 2.8$								

Table 5 presents a mean point of 2.8 which is acceptable, confirming that adequate funding, autonomy of tertiary institutions orientation of staff of tertiary institutions among others are some of the possible solutions to strike actions in our nation's tertiary institutions

7. Discussion of Findings

Table 3, sought to find out how strike action influences the academic performance of students in tertiary institutions. The findings reveal that strike action has an adverse effect on the academic performance of students. This finding agrees with the opinions of Nwosu in Njoku (2002), Elyoh (2002), Olabisi (2009) and the Nations Newspaper of Friday July 18 (2009), which emphasized that many of the moral decadence in our tertiary institutions like exam-malpractice cultism, violence, loss of interest in education among others are caused by strike actions they further state that closure of tertiary institutions negate the fact that each academic program has to be covered in a specified number of years. And regardless of what the noble intentions of the union are, the sufferings endured by students and other members of the university Community are better imagined than experienced.

Table 4 considered the causes of strike revealed that strike is caused by poor remuneration, negligence on the part of the government, unconducive academic environment and government undue interference in the tertiary institution administration among others. These findings are in line with the opinion of Nwokeneme (2005) and channels television interview of the chairman of ASSU (2013) and vanguard Newspaper of June 15 (2014) that gave some reasons why the union embarks on strike as a result of poor remuneration, infrastructural deficit, harmonization of condition of service among others as some causes of strike in the Nigerian tertiary institution.

Table 5, the last item on the research question sought to find out the possible solution to strike action in tertiary institutions, the result revealed that attractive remuneration, adequate funding Adherence to collective bargaining, provision of adequate educational facilities among others can help reduce or stop incessant strike action in the country. These ideas agree with the opinion of Benson (2015) and Onyemanan (2016) who state that where these measures are put in place, strike action will be curbed.

8. Conclusion

This research indicates that the disruption of academic programs by staff unions through industrial actions have significant undesirable negative influence on academic success of the students. It bestows on the student's psyche, causing disheartenment and inability to speedily regenerate themselves towards academic exercise at the resumption. Consequently, poor academic performance in the post-strike semester is inevitable. This has been one of the prominent causes of the half-baked and unemployable graduates that Nigeria's education system has been turning out lately. The study therefore concludes that strike is inimical to academic success and as such should be avoided. Based on the result of the findings the study implies that strike action is a major clog in the wheel of academic progress and the cause of lack of functional education. It also implies that Government, Union (Lecturers) and students all contribute to some factors that result in strike action because if Government would be faithful to her agreement with staff of tertiary institutions in the area of funding, remuneration etc and also Union members would be considerate in their demands; and students also continue studying on their own during strike, strike will be less attractive and students' performance will not be poor.

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- (1) Government should provide adequate funding to the various tertiary institutions in the country.
- (2) Autonomy should be granted to the various tertiary institutions in the country.
- (3) Appointment and recruitment of university heads and staff should be based on professionalism and competence devoid of political and ethnic consideration.
- (4) There is need for orientation and re-orientation of staff of tertiary institutions on the need for alternative ways of expressing their grievances.
- (5) Joint consultation committee that would comprise government representative and other relevant stakeholders in the educational sector should be set up and meet on periodic intervals to discuss impending matter that could generate dispute proactively.

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