

ASUU Strikes and Academic Performance of Students in Ekiti State University Ado-Ekiti

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ABSTRACT:

The research is set to examine Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) strikes and academic performance of students in Ekiti State University (EKSU) Ado-Ekiti. The research employed multistage sampling technique to select the faculties and the departments from where six hundred and four (604) respondents were selected, questionnaires and interviews were employed to draw information from respondents. The findings showed that the incessant strikes action by ASUU in Nigeria have disrupted the academic calendar of Universities and this has affected students' academic pursuit and performance, 71.2% of the respondents have experienced ASUU strikes and 51.6% admitted that ASUU strikes have had negative influence on their academics. Almost sixty percent [59.5%] believed that government can find a lasting solution to the problems of ASUU strikes through prompt and rewarding dialogue that grants the request of ASUU timely. The study suggests and recommends that university students should engage themselves in tutorial classes or self-study during the strike action to keep them abreast with academics at resumption, their parents or guardians should ensure that they encourage students engagement in academic activities rather than domestic chores while the strike last, the members and the executives of ASUU should employ other industrial dispute strategies to express their grievances rather than embark on indefinite strike action which obviously paralyzes student's academics. The Nigerian Government should also employ the method of prompt dialogue and grant the requests of ASUU in time to prevent erosion and total breakdown of the educational sector.

Keywords: *ASUU strike, Academic performance, Students, University, Dialogue*

INTRODUCTION

University worldwide is regarded as the citadel of learning, the fountain of intellectual development and a ground for the production of leaders of tomorrow. According to Ike (1999) a university fulfills, one major function, it is a knowledge and value provider, in other words, a university progresses when it is able to provide knowledge and value and when it is not properly managed by the administrators and staff, it then fails in its function of providing knowledge and value. This according to Nwankwo (2000) explains why merit has been the watchword in

the university system – an institution in which a student must first be certified worthy in character and learning before being admitted into the Honors Degree.

The role of universities in human capital development, research and technological innovation cannot be under evaluated. All over the world investment in University education is a critical component of national development effort. Nations today depend increasingly on knowledge, ideas and skills which are produced through researches in the universities. Nations

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invest in university education because society expects it to contribute to national development in three principal ways. First, society expects its university to produce the highly skilled personnel in technology, engineering, management and other professions; secondly, universities have the responsibility of producing their own corps of academic personnel that is, the intellectual resource pool that will, through scientific research generate new knowledge and innovation to solve developmental problems. Thirdly, universities produce teachers, administrators and managers for other levels of human resources development institutions.

The Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) was formed in 1978, a successor to the Nigerian Association of University Teachers formed in 1965 and covering academic staff in the University of Ibadan, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, University of Ife and University of Lagos. In the 80's, the union was active in its struggles against the military regime. In 1988 the union organized a National Strike to obtain fair wages and university autonomy. As a result, the ASUU was proscribed on August 7, 1988 and all its property seized. It was allowed to resume in 1990, but after another strike, it was again banned on August 23, 1992. However, an agreement was reached on September 3, 1992 that met several of the union's demands including the right of workers to collective bargaining. The ASUU organized further strikes in 1994 and 1996, protesting against the dismissal of staff by the Sani Abacha military regime. After the return to democracy in 1999 with the Nigerian Fourth Republic, the union continued to be militant in demanding the rights of university workers against opposition by the government of President Olusegun Obasanjo. In July 2002, the national president of ASUU, petitioned Justice Mustapha Akanbi of the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission to investigate the authorities of the University of Ilorin for financial mismanagement and corruption.

In 2007, ASUU went on strike for three months. In May 2008, it held two one-week 'warning strikes' to press a range of demands, including an improved salary scheme and reinstatement of forty-nine lecturers who were dismissed from University of Ilorin in 1998. In June 2009 ASUU ordered its members in federal

and state universities nationwide to proceed on an indefinite strike over disagreements with the Federal Government's on an agreement it reached with the union about two and a half years ago. After three months of strikes, in October 2009, ASUU and other staff unions signed a memorandum of understanding with the government and called off the industrial action.

Prior to the last ASUU strike, the National Executive Council (NEC), of the Union met from Tuesday 29th November to Thursday 1st December 2011 at the University of Port-Harcourt to review, among other things: the level of implementation of the 2009 ASUU/Government Agreement; the extent of compliance with the 2011 ASUU/FGN Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the implementation of the Agreement; Government's unilateral dissolution of Universities' Governing Councils; the on-going institutional accreditation and the state of the Nation, including the issue of alleged removal of fuel subsidy, but the lack of understanding between the two parties led to an indefinite strike embarked upon by the Union for fifty-nine days. It was later called off on the 1st of February, 2012. ASUU again went on a warning strike on 30th August, 2012. All these have left an unfavorable mark on the academic activities of the University students and it has also affected the academic calendar and the performance of the students.

Statement of the Problem

The demand of ASUU is that government should fulfill an agreement it reached with it in 2009 on how to save the nation's universities from collapse. On the other hand, government is proposing a piecemeal selective approach. There is no doubt that education is too vital to the survival of any nation that it should be treated as a subject beyond politics or evasive polemics. It is not deniable that Nigeria is presently not doing enough, by world standards, in the funding of her children's education. As far as the government is concerned, there are other competing items for the limited funds available. This has caused serious altercations between government and ASSU resulting into persistent industrial strike actions.

The incessant strikes action by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) has inadvertently affected the academics of

university students; it usually poses a lot of challenges to their study duration, performance in examinations and their final grading. The students are kept away from school for a long time; most of them are completely cut off from academics as conditions at home may not favor productive and rigorous academic exercise. The students and their parents become frustrated because of long expectation of school resumption that is far from sight. Some of the students while at home doing nothing get engaged in other things other than academics. In some cases they are easy recruits for criminal activities, such as armed robbery, kidnapping, and rape. This has made them a problem to the society peace and order in Nigeria. However the extent to which ASUU strikes affects students academic performance require a close examination and this research is geared towards examining the extent to which it has affected the performance of students particularly in Ekiti State University.

Significance of Study

This research will add to the body of knowledge by enlightening the students on how they can cope with the unfavorable ASUU strikes, so as to enable them perform as expected in their studies. Furthermore, this study would also help to further research and add to knowledge build-up in the university. Again from this study, students would be able to devise exemplary means of ensuring excellent performance even with the occurrence of a strike action by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU). Policy makers may also find the outcome of the study useful for future planning.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to examine ASUU strike effects on the academic performance of students in EKSU this is captured by some specific ones thus:

1. To examine the perception of an average university student on strike action by Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU).
2. To determine the extent to which the strike action by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) has affected students' academic performance.

3. To determine the possible ways of minimizing the negative effect of ASUU strike on students' academic performance.

4. To examine what government can do to reduce the incessant strike action to the barest minimum?

Research Questions

1. What is the perception of an average university student about ASUU strike action?

2. How does the strike action by ASUU affect students' academic performance?

3. What are the possible ways of minimizing the effects of ASUU strike on student's academic performance?

4. What can be done by government to reduce the incessant strike action to the barest minimum?

Literature Review

Problems of ASUU Strikes

Over the years, normal academic calendar of Nigerian universities had hardly ever been devoid of hitches. This is occasioned by what is perceived by the lecturers as the insensitivity, irresponsibility and the negligence of the Government. The unrelenting Union had in the past embarked on numerous strike actions in order to press in their demands of funding the educational sectors adequately and other pressing issues. The Government on its part has remained indifferent to their plights during those periods. Perhaps the Government sees the academic sector as having little or no direct significance to the economic development of the nation. The students are left to suffer during this impasse. As a matter of fact, the unwholesome brunt students are made to bear cannot indeed be quantified in terms of their academics. Prominent among these is the disruption of the academic calendar. As a result, students that are meant to spend four to five years to finish their first degree rather spend six to seven years. Invariably, the academic calendar of Universities all over the country cannot be controlled centrally by the federal ministry of education while each University becomes autonomous in the running of its own calendar (Ogbuka, 2000).

Leaders of ASUU under the aegis of the National Executive Council (NEC) of the union at a meeting in Port Harcourt had directed

members across the country to begin an indefinite strike over an alleged failure of government to address their grievances even after ASUU had granted it a two months grace. ASUU is asking government to improve university's funding, review the process of appointing Vice-Chancellors, review the retirement of lecturers to 70 years among others.

In directing members to commence the strike, ASUU President, Prof Ukachukwu Awuzie, said "NEC, having noted that the Federal Government neglected, ignored, failed and refused to implement the 2009 FGN/ASUU agreement after more than two years of its signing, having squandered two months it requested without achieving any progress in the implementation of the agreement, having sacked the Implementation Monitoring Committee that served as the forum for dialogue with ASUU on this dispute, is convinced beyond reasonable doubt that the government is terribly insincere and is manifestly unwilling to genuinely implement the agreement it freely entered into with ASSU. The government has abandoned the main tenet of industrial democracy- that all agreements freely entered into must be honored."

Therefore, ASUU resolved and painfully directed all members of ASUU in all branches nationwide to proceed on a total, comprehensive and indefinite strike, beginning from the midnight of Sunday, 4th December, 2011. For the avoidance of doubt, a total, comprehensive and indefinite strike means: no teaching, no examination, no grading of scripts, no project supervisions, no inaugural lectures, no appointment and promotion meeting, no statutory meetings (Council, Senate, Board etc) or other meetings directed by government or their agents (Olugbenga, 2011).

It is quite a pity that in spite of 14 years of civilian governments, no succeeding government has been able to find a lasting solution to the recurrence of strikes by university teachers in Nigeria. There is no doubting the fact that one of the major causes of educational problems in the country is incessant strikes by university lecturers, which are always precipitated by disagreements between government and teachers.

Going down memory lane, it is important to make mention of some protracted strikes during

the military and present civilian regimes. The universities' academic calendar was greatly disrupted during the days of the military dictator, General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida (rtd). The situation degenerated from bad to worse during the regime of another despot, the late General Sani Abacha. ASUU strike was experienced in Nigeria when the then President of Nigeria, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo failed to implement the agreement reached with university teachers. In a similar vein, the late President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua clashed with ASUU and another strike ensued. It is so unfortunate that the history of ASUU's industrial action repeated itself in the present dispensation under President Dr. Goodluck Jonathan, who himself was a former University lecturer.

Speaking with Vanguard, Professor Peter Okebukola, former NUC Executive Secretary once said; it is important not to narrow down strikes in Nigerian universities to only one group such as the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU). There are four staff unions (ASUU, SSANU, NASU and NATT) any of which is capable of inflicting damage on the system when it calls its members out on strike. There is also the Students' Union. The five unions have their different effects on the Nigerian university system any time they embark on industrial action. Apparently, it is the strike by ASUU that is mostly worrisome and that have the greatest deleterious effects on the educational sector and the society at large.

Effects of Strike Actions

By allowing the university teachers to embark on an indefinite strike before opening any serious dialogue with their union, an erroneous impression is created that the government is impervious to dialogue and negotiations and that the only language it understands is strong-arm tactics – militancy in the Niger Delta or paralysing strike by ASUU and other organised labour. Therefore a major lesson from the strike is the yawning absence of any institutionalised mechanism for industrial arbitration in the country. The government appeared even confused over which of its ministries – the Ministry of Education or the Ministry of Labour – should negotiate with ASUU. Not only is it embarrassing that a

government cannot be trusted to keep its words, the lack of institutionalised mechanism for dealing with the incessant labour disputes in Nigeria is worrisome.

While there are sympathies for ASUU over the government's shabby handling of the situation, the lecturers, by their incessant strikes that frequently disrupt the academic calendar, are now seen as part of the problems of higher education in the country. Since its formation in 1978, ASUU has had running battles with every government of the day, mostly over bread-and-butter issues that are conveniently camouflaged under the veneer of fighting for better funding for education (Adibe, 2009).

During the period of strike, students, as a result of their idleness and frustration, engage in deviant behavior like robbery, arson, rape, touting and constitute nuisance to the society. When they are apprehended, their academics are abruptly truncated. In the years past, the country had been made to suffer immense loss of brains to other countries. It is still happening, as a result of their search for greener pastures. With this marginal loss, few remaining ones are inadequate to build up the academic performance of the students (Obasanjo, 2000).

Learning in Universities has been made irregular as students may have forgotten what they have learnt before the disruption of an academic session upon their resumption to school. Memory is lost if what is being learnt is not reactivated over time. Statistical reports have shown that majority of failures in University are recorded in examinations taken immediately after students return from a long break. The situation witnessed in the University academics has resulted in the turning out of half-baked graduates into the labor market. These half-baked produced cannot live up to expectation in their various chosen professions. This is as a result of poor learning necessitated by poor services from aggrieved lecturers. Students have developed lack of interest in academics because of the usual long stay away from school; instead they indulge in frivolous activities (Adeniran, 2000). Contributory to this is the fact that the condition in which many of these students learn in some of the university is deplorable.

Strikes are not homogenous industrial events to the extent that they involve cessation of work,

a breakdown in the flow of consent and open expression of aggression and remain a social phenomenon or enormous complexity, which, in its totality is never susceptible to complete description, let alone complete explanation (Gouldner, 1954; Poole, 1976). The strike is therefore of many varieties, which may involve all the workers or only key men. The following are one of the commonest forms: Wildcat strikes, Sit down, sympathy, constitutional and unconstitutional strikes, official and unofficial strikes.

The wildcat strike is so called because no reason or notice is given to the employer before embarking on it. Thus, it is in violation of the contract and not authorized by the union. Sit down strikes differ from the sit-ins, because sit downs do not necessarily involve the takeover of the company's assets and its management by the workers. Other than this, and like sit-ins, sit down strike involve workers in being present at work but not necessarily working. Workers organization (trade union) and industrial conflict are related, Union members are more likely to strike than organized workers (Comte, 1997).

The economic model view strikes as bargaining outcomes. Workers' collective actions to them depend on mobilization of labor organization of some population as resources on behalf of the group's common objectives. They both believed that the mobilization or organizational capacity for collective action of workers (measured by union's membership) would be the most powerful prediction of strike. Other factors that may cause strike includes dissatisfaction with wages, bad social condition, fatigue and frustration at work, and the discontent and aggressiveness that can come from a general feeling of inferiority (Olaiya, 2000).

Procedural Conflicts

This conjecture directs attention to the fact that some strikes are the expression of protests against model rules and practices, anomalies in the rule regulating jobs and the demands to correct them. Example includes strike action directed towards improvement in the environment of work rather than increase in wages (Omolayo, 2000).

Hitler (1969) has noted in moving towards a strike action, inhibitions must be relaxed this is

accomplished by accepting or creating interpretation of the situation which encourage action: supplying justification for striking and minimizing the hazard of the undertaking. The extent to which strikes do actually occur will be most immediately determined by processes of negotiation among stakeholders such as the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) and the Government. The sources of strike action can either be internal or external. The internal source of strike action includes the unfavorable physical environment of a workplace, style of management, promotion system, and grievances among the employees. The external sources includes: Government organizational policies, economic policies, nature of national economic mismanagement, and general distribution of wealth.

Most strikes action is therefore deliberate and consciously organized just like those of the University workers and trade unions against the Federal Government breach of agreement. Industrial or organizational conflicts are inevitable, for employers to perform their crucial roles effectively and efficiently, there must be an existing strong cordial relationship between the employees and employers.

Conflict in Nigeria especially through strike actions has become perennial and disturbing so much that it affects the performance of students, in many organizations today, interpersonal and intergroup conflicts are consuming so much organizational time and attention that organizations are starting to look as though conflict is their primary business (Ojielo, 2002). Official strikes are usually authored by the leadership of the union while unofficial strikes are without the authority of the leadership. Usually such strike occurs because the membership have lost confidence in the leaders and are therefore willing to exert direct pressure on the employer without authorization of the leaders (Fajana, 2000). Stone and Alvarez (2003) suggest that individuals from diverse backgrounds will always work together in organizations whereby an increase in diversity is often associated with an increase in conflict.

The strike actions by ASUU is one of the negative manifestations of industrial relations, and this industrial relations deal with the problems of employment, conditions of work, pay, security of employment and other issues

such as labor grievances, trade dispute and their resolution within the framework of rules and regulations, mutually by employer and employees (Marshall, 2006). Industrial relation is the process and institution through which employment is managed, such as trade union dispute (Kuper and Kuper, 2006). Cordova (1980) defines industrial relations as “the process of interest accommodation by which conditions of work are fixed; relations are regulated and power is shared in the field of labor”. Yesufu (1984) on his part sees industrial relation as “the whole web of human interactions at work which is predicated upon and arises out of the employment contract

All these explanations recognized that industrial relations are concerned with the systems, rules, and procedures used by trade union (ASUU) and the employers (Federal Government) to determine the reward for effort and other conditions for employment, although to protect the interest of the employed and their employers and to regulate the ways in which the Government treat the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU). The influence of teachers’ teaching effectiveness on the learning outcome of students as measured by students’ academic performance has been the subject of several studies (Lockhead and Komenan 1988; Starr 2002; Schacter and Thum 2004; Adediwura and Tayo 2007; Adu and Olatundun 2007).

The strike action serves as a means of expressing the grievance of Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), although this is done to the detriment of University students who make up the major part of the primary objective of the university, the performance of university student is at risk when there is the occurrence of incessant strike action, it affects the smooth running of the school and as a result, affects the students performance in examination (Adetiba, 2012).

Negative and Positive Effect of ASUU Strikes

There are seven identifiable negative and two positive effects of such strikes. On the negative side is the depressing effect on the quality of graduates from Nigerian universities since time that should have been used for teaching the curriculum is lost to the strike. The typical scenario is to condense content that should have been taught for the period of the strike to about a

fifth of the expected and rush students to examinations thereafter. This scenario leads to half-baked products from the universities witnessed in the labor market in contemporary time. The second effect is the poor public image of Nigerian universities. Locally, the public is unimpressed with the universities on account of the frequency of strikes.

Globally, there is the usual sneer when Nigerian universities are mentioned and a quick link is made with unstable university calendar due to frequent strikes. This image robs graduates of Nigerian universities of international esteem even when their worth has not been proven through employment. Additionally, top-rated universities that are desirous of staff and student exchange will prefer to partner with universities that maintain stable academic calendar in other parts of Africa. The third effect is loss of revenue. Many potential students prefer universities in neighboring African countries including Ghana, Benin and Togo not because of superiority of academic programs offered but because of instability of academic calendar owing to strikes. These countries earn huge revenue from Nigerian students attending their universities at the utter expense of Nigerian Universities.

Fourth is financial loss to the universities. When the universities are shut down due to strikes, staffs are paid, even if it is several months after, but they end up being paid. The university runs and pays for services such as power and water as well as running and maintenance of vehicles. An estimate of the internal and external losses to the Nigerian public university system for one month of total strike involving all the unions is in the neighborhood of some billions of Naira.

The fifth effect is psychological on the part of students who have to stay idle at home, lamenting their woes and causing irritation to parents. The sixth effect closely connected to the fifth is engagement of the idle students in social vices including joining bad gangs and engagement in internet fraud. Not a few cases of pregnancy of young undergraduates during the period of strike have been reported. The seventh is what can be broadly grouped as security effect. Some undergraduates die in road accidents during the period of the strike in an

attempt to visit friends to vitiate boredom and idleness.

There are two seemingly positive effects. Strikes when moderately implemented are indicative of the positive human rights posture of government and that as a democracy; we give allowance for the labor law which empowers workers to express their grievances through strike. It would appear that the major gains of the Nigerian university system in terms of improved conditions of service for staff and improvement in the physical conditions for teaching, learning and research have been attained as dividends of strikes. There is no university system in the world that has no strike history. However, in Nigeria it is at the extreme, with strikes lingering for months. In North America, Europe and Asia where the top-ranking universities are found, strikes last for a few hours or maximum of one day.

Theoretical Framework

Authority and Conflict – Ralf Dahrendorf

Ralf Darhendorf's conflict theory arose out of a critical evaluation of the work of Karl Marx (Darhendorf, 1959). He accepted that Marx's description of capitalism was generally accurate in the 19th century when Marx was writing, but he argued that in the 20th century, it has become outdated as the basis for explaining conflict. Darhendorf argued that important changes have taken place in countries such as Britain and the U.S.A. they are now 'post-capitalist' societies.

Darhendorf claimed that, far from the two main classes becoming polarized, as Marx had predicted, the opposite has happened. The proportion of skilled and semi-skilled workers has grown, has had the size of the 'new middle class' of white collar workers such as clerk, nurses and teachers. Inequalities in income and wealth have been reduced, partly because of measures taken by the state. Social mobility has become more common, and, crucially, the link between ownership and control in industry had been broken. Manager, rather than owners, exercise day to day control over the means of production. In these circumstances, Marxists claim that conflict was based upon the ownership or non-ownership of wealth was no longer valid. This was because there was no longer a close association between wealth and

power. Shareholders, for example, might own the wealth of a company, but in practice they do not exercise close control over the management. In view of these changes, Dahrendorf argued that conflict were no longer based upon the existence of the two classes identified by Marx, nor were they based upon economic division. Instead, Dahrendorf saw conflict as being concerned with authority. (Dahrendorf, 1959).

To Dahrendorf, authority is the legitimate power attached to the occupation of a particular social role within an organization. Thus, for example, the Government has the right to take certain decisions, regardless of the wishes of the workforce (which includes the Academic Staff Union of Universities-ASUU). All organizations -or associations, as Dahrendorf calls them have positions of domination and subjection. Some are able to take decisions legitimately and issue commands, and others are not. It is this situation which Dahrendorf saw as the basis for conflict in the societies of nowadays. He believed that the existence of dominant and subordinate positions produces a situation in which individual have different interests. Those occupying dominant positions (Federal Government of Nigeria) have an interest in maintaining the social structure that gives them more authority than others, while those in subordinate positions (ASUU) on the other hand have an interest in changing it. This conflict of interests is present in a much wider range of social relationships than the economic conflict of interests between the ruling class and the subject class that Marx identified as the basis for conflict in the society (Dahrendorf, 1959).

Therefore, from the theory of conflict by Ralf Dahrendorf, it can be reasonably assumed that the authority wielded by the Federal Government gives them the right to take decisions and whenever these decisions contradicts the interest of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), there is bound to be conflict which may manifest through the grievances of the ASUU and resulting into strike action

RESEARCH METHOD

The Study Area

Ado-Ekiti is the capital of Ekiti state with the population of about three hundred and eight thousand, six hundred and twenty one (308, 621) according to reports of the population census

2006. Geographically, Ado-Ekiti is located on latitude $7^{\circ} 35'$ and $74^{\circ} 47'$ North of the Equator and longitude $5^{\circ} 11'$ and $5^{\circ} 16'$ East of the Greenwich Meridian. It is bounded on the North and West by Ifelodun / Irepodun Local Government and East and South by Gbonyin, Ikere and Ekiti South-West local Government. Its longest North-South extent is 16km and the longest East-West stretch is about 20km. Ado-Ekiti is under the Ekiti central senatorial district, it is an ancient town whose people migrated from Ile-Ife, and they engage in lots of festivals annually, the people are mostly Christians and Muslim but a negligible few still practice traditional religion

Ado-Ekiti is a one town Local Government that doubles as L.G. and State Headquarter which is about 200m above sea level in the South Eastern part of Ureje stream and 500m above sea level in the North-East limit. The landscape is dotted with rounded inselbergs and steep sided hills of volcanic origin such as Ayoba hill central to the region are gentle undulating slopes which form the source of stream like Amu, Awedele, Ajilosun, Adere. Ado Ekiti is a municipal Local Government that shares similar cultural identities; also, Ado Ekiti is blessed with man-made tourists' areas. The place of prime importance is the ancient Ewi's palace which serves as the traditional administrative centre for Ado and its environs. A place which will certainly be of interest to tourists is the Fajuyi Memorial Park; this is the point where the annual Remembrance Day Ceremony for the past heroes is performed.

Ado Ekiti has recreational centers such as 1st Creation Hotel, Kajola Street, Ado Ekiti, Atlas Motels and Resorts, Ikere Road, Ado Ekiti, Best Model Hotels, off Ilawe Road, Ado Ekiti, Crown Biz Hotels, Ado Ekiti, Fabian, off Ilawe Road, Ado Ekiti, Fountain Hotels, Iyin Road, Ado Ekiti, Pathfinder Hotels, Iworoko Road, Ado Ekiti and so on. (www.ado-ekiti.com). The Local Government is blessed with high population of skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled manpower and middle and high level manpower of Ekiti State University and the Federal Polytechnic, Ado Ekiti. There are 69 public primary schools, 97 private nursery and primary schools, 14 public junior and senior secondary schools, 27 private secondary schools in the Local Government. There are six (6) post

secondary institutions in Ado Ekiti which are Ekiti State University, federal Polytechnic, Ado Ekiti, Government Technical College, School of Nursing, Ado Ekiti, Crown Polytechnic, Ado Ekiti and Afe Babalola University, Ado Ekiti.

The Study Site

The study was conducted in Ekiti State University (EKSU) formerly known as University of Ado Ekiti (UNAD). The institution was established in March 30, 1982 by the administration of late Chief Micheal Adekunle Ajasin, the first civilian governor of Ondo State. It is located about twelve minutes drive from the centre of the city of Ado Ekiti in Ekiti State. Ekiti State university as it is known today, was at inception in 1982 known as Obafemi Awolowo University (O.A.U) and it prides itself as the only university in Nigeria that has within a quarter of a century had its name changed four times. The name was changed to Ondo State University in 1985 and to University of Ado Ekiti (UNAD) in November 1999 and to its present name Ekiti State University (EKSU) in September 2011. Since Ekiti State University also joins other universities in the Strike action by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), it is then eligible to be made the study location, particularly as a case study; therefore, the students of the university are the subject matter of this study.

Population of Study

The population of this study includes the students of Ekiti State University (EKSU), comprising the 300 level and 400 level students, they are chosen because of their experience of

ASUU strike during the course of their studies, and their perspective was therefore exploited in the course of this research.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

The multistage sampling method was adopted in this study. Ekiti State University (EKSU) has nine (9) faculties from where two (2) faculties were selected by systematic random sampling. In selecting the faculties systematically, a sampling interval of four (4) was used, therefore, a total number of two (2) faculties were selected. The sampling interval is denoted by $K = \frac{N}{n}$ where $N = 9$, and $n = 2$, $K = \frac{9}{2} = 4.5$

From table 1, Social Sciences and Management Science Faculties were chosen at a sampling interval of four (4). There are five (5) Departments in the Faculty of the Social Sciences and three (3) Departments in the Faculty of Management Science, in order to arrive at a satisfactory sample from the two (2) Faculties, the simple random sampling method was adopted in selecting four (4) Departments from the eight (8) Departments of the two (2) Faculties as shown in table 2. The selected Departments are Sociology, Accounting, Business Administration and Economics.

Systematic sampling was employed in the selection of respondents from the chosen departments at a regular and stated interval of two (2) as shown in table 3.

Table 3, shows that six hundred and four (604) respondents comprising both male and female regular students were chosen from the departments to represents the entire student population of Ekiti State University (EKSU).

Table 1: List of faculties in EKSU

| S/N | Faculties |
|-----|----------------------|
| 1 | Law |
| 2 | Arts |
| 3 | Education |
| 4 | Social sciences |
| 5 | Agricultural science |
| 6 | Engineering |
| 7 | Science |
| 8 | Managemrnt science |
| 9 | College of medecine |

Table 2: Faculties in EKSU

| S/N | Faculties | Departments |
|-----|--------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Social sciences | Economics Psychology Political science Sociology Geography and planning science |
| 2 | Management science | Business administration Banking and finance Accounting |

Source: Field Survey, 2013

Table 3: Respondents from the four departments

| Depts | Total respondent | | | Chosen respondents | | |
|--------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------|--------------------|--------------------|-------|
| | 300 level students | 400 level students | Total | 300 level students | 400 level students | Total |
| Eco | 190 | 102 | 292 | 95 | 51 | 146 |
| Soc | 68 | 62 | 130 | 34 | 31 | 65 |
| Bus admin | 152 | 170 | 322 | 76 | 85 | 161 |
| Acct | 262 | 202 | 464 | 131 | 101 | 232 |
| Total | 672 | 536 | 1208 | 336 | 268 | 604 |

Source: Field Survey, 2013

Research Instrument

The research instruments were questionnaires and interview. A comprehensive questionnaire was designed and administered to the respondents, the questionnaire contained closed and open ended questions, each of the respondents were asked to check for an option that best suits the question(s) and fill in their responses as appropriate on the questionnaire spaces provided.

The questions were divided into three sections A, B and C, the first section contained socio-economic characteristics, while the second section examined students' perception and the possible ways of minimizing the effects of ASUU strike on the academic performance of students, and the third section comprises of open ended questions which explored the effect of ASUU strike on students' academic performance.

The interview guide used comprises four (4)

Sections to get in-depth information from the respondents on effect of ASUU strike on academic performance of students in Ekiti State University EKSU). The interview was conducted in a structured and unstructured format to enable respondents express their opinion appropriately.

Method of Data Collection

Qualitative and quantitative methodologies were adopted for data generation. Hence questionnaires and interviews were employed to obtain data from the respondents. The questionnaires were administered to the respondents (students) in the selected departments of the chosen faculties. Six hundred and four (604) questionnaires were administered and in-depth interviews were conducted with

some randomly selected students from the research sample.

Method of Data Analysis

The data gathered were analyzed through the statistical package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Hypotheses were tested using the Chi-square to interpret the quantitative data collected with the questionnaire, and content analysis was adopted in interpreting the qualitative data.

Table 4, shows the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents in terms of sex, age, religion, and marital status and other variables. The tables in the chapter show the perceptions and responses of respondents to the research questions, the results gathered from the field work through the research questions were analyzed so as to have a systematic explanation of the main focus of the research.

Table 4, shows that 453(78.1%) of the

respondents are between the age of 21-25 years while 127(21.9%) are between the age of 26-30 years. The table indicates that 431(74.3) of the respondents are Christians while 142(24.5%) are Muslims and 7(1.2%) are traditional worshippers, it can be observed that Christians have a higher population among the total respondents when compared with the Muslims and the traditional worshippers. It was also revealed that 412(71%) of the respondents were Yoruba, 112(19.3%) Igbo and 56(9.7%) Hausa ethnic group representing the three major ethnic groups in Nigeria; it can be observed that there were more Yoruba among the respondents than those who belong to the Igbo and Hausa. Five hundred and twelve (512(88.3%)) of the respondents were single and 68(11.7%) were married. Most of the respondents 156(26.9%) were from the Accounting department and 224(38.6%) department of Business Administration.

Table 4: Socio-Demographic characteristics of respondents

| S/N | Demographic variable | Grouping | Frequency(N=580) | Percentage (%) |
|-----|----------------------|-------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Sex | Male | 331 | 57.1 |
| | | Female | 249 | 42.9 |
| | | TOTAL | 580 | 100.0 |
| 2 | Age | 21-25yrs | 453 | 78.1 |
| | | 26-30yrs | 127 | 21.9 |
| | | TOTAL | 580 | 100.0 |
| 3 | Religion | Christianity | 431 | 74.3 |
| | | Islamic | 142 | 24.5 |
| | | Traditional | 7 | 1.2 |
| | | TOTAL | 580 | 100.0 |
| 4 | Ethnicity | Yoruba | 412 | 71 |
| | | Igbo | 112 | 19.3 |
| | | Hausa | 56 | 9.7 |
| | | TOTAL | 580 | 100.0 |
| 5 | Marital status | Single | 512 | 88.3 |
| | | Married | 68 | 11.7 |
| | | TOTAL | 580 | 100.0 |
| 6 | Departments | Sociology | 59 | 10.2 |
| | | Economics | 141 | 24.3 |
| | | Accounting | 156 | 26.9 |
| | | Business Administration | 224 | 38.6 |
| | | TOTAL | 580 | 100.0 |

Source: Field Survey, 2013.

Table 5, revealed that 413(71.2%) of the respondents strongly agreed that they had experienced ASUU strike during their study duration in Ekiti State University (EKSU) while 167(28.8%) also agreed on a lighter range. The table revealed that 305(52.6%) of the respondents strongly agreed that delayed negotiation/ bargaining between ASUU and Government triggers strike action.

As shown in table 6, a little above half of the respondents 299(51.6%) admitted that ASUU strikes affect their academic performance negatively, 290(50%) said their reading habit reduced during ASUU strike, while 254(43.8%) said their reading habit increases. More than half of the respondents 307(52.9%) admitted that examination questions become tough for them when conducted immediately after ASUU strike, also 312(53.8%) of the total respondents confessed that their CGPA reduces when examinations are conducted immediately after

ASUU strike, the table revealed that 183 (31.6%) of the respondents agreed that ASUU strikes make them lose confidence in academics significance respondents 343(59.1%) admitted that they forget about academic activities when they are sent home due to ASUU strike.

From table 7, 403(69.9%) of the total respondents strongly agreed that students' engagement in tutorials during strike enhances their performance when they resume, 156(26.9) agreed, while 21(3.6%) could not decide. It was revealed that 348(60%) of the total respondents strongly agreed that self-study during strike will minimize the negative effect of ASUU strike on student' academic performance because it would make up for all the wasted time during the strike action and it would also enhance their performance when they resume, 208(35.9%) of the respondents agreed, 19(3.3%) of the respondents could not decide, while 5(8.6%) of the respondents disagreed.

Table 5: Perception of students bout ASUU strike

| S/N | Question | SA | | A | | U | | D | | SD | |
|-----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|
| | | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| 1 | ASUU strike has occurred during your study duration in the university. | 413 | 71.2 | 167 | 28.8 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2 | ASUU strike is beneficial to students' academic endeavors. | 33 | 5.7 | 30 | 5.2 | 132 | 22.8 | 165 | 28.4 | 220 | 37.9 |
| 3 | Government is to be Blamed for the incessant strike action. | 219 | 37.8 | 166 | 28.6 | 131 | 22.6 | 41 | 7.1 | 23 | 4 |
| 4 | ASUU members are to be blamed for the incessant strike action. | 225 | 38.8 | 158 | 27.2 | 133 | 22.9 | 39 | 6.7 | 25 | 4.3 |
| 5 | Delayed negotiation/ bargaining between ASUU and the government trigger the strike action. | 305 | 52.6 | 101 | 17.4 | 90 | 15.5 | 34 | 5.9 | 50 | 8.6 |

Source: Field Survey, 2013.

Table 6: Effect of ASUU strike on students' academic performance

| Questions | Frequency (N=580) | Percentage (%) |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| In what way has ASUU strike contributed to your academic performance? | | |
| Positive | 281 | 48.4 |
| Negative | 299 | 51.6 |
| TOTAL | 580 | 100.0 |
| What happens to your reading habit during ASUU strike? | | |
| Reduces | 290 | 50 |
| Increases | 254 | 43.8 |
| No response | 36 | 6.2 |
| TOTAL | 580 | 100.0 |
| How do you feel about examinations conducted immediately after ASUU strike? | | |
| It is tough | 307 | 52.9 |
| It is easy to answer | 246 | 42.4 |
| No response | 27 | 4.7 |
| TOTAL | 580 | 100.0 |
| What happens to your CGPA when examinations are conducted immediately after ASUU strike? | | |
| It Reduces | 312 | 53.8 |
| It Increases | 255 | 44 |
| No response | 13 | 2.2 |
| TOTAL | 580 | 100.0 |
| Does ASUU strike make you lose confidence in academics as being significant to your career? | | |
| Yes | 183 | 31.6 |
| No | 255 | 19.5 |
| No response | 13 | 49 |
| TOTAL | 580 | 100.0 |
| Do you forget about academic activities when you are sent due to ASUU strike? | | |
| Yes | 347 | 59.1 |
| No | 237 | 40.9 |
| TOTAL | 580 | 100.0 |

Source: Field Survey, 2013.

Table 7: Minimizing effects of ASUU strike on students' academic performance

| S/N | QUESTION | SA | | A | | U | | D | | SD | |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|------|-----|------|----|-----|---|-----|----|---|
| | | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| 1 | Students' engagement in tutorials during strike enhances their performance when they resume. | 403 | 69.9 | 156 | 26.9 | 21 | 3.6 | - | - | - | - |
| 2 | Self-study during strike will minimize the effect of ASUU strike on students' academic performance. | 348 | 60 | 208 | 35.9 | 19 | 3.3 | 5 | 8.6 | - | - |

Source: Field Survey, 2013.

Table 8: Government solution to incessant strike action

| S/N | Question | SA | | A | | U | | D | | SD | |
|-----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|------|-----|------|---|-----|---|-----|----|-----|
| | | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| 1 | Government's provision of the request of ASUU will reduce their incessant strike action. | 415 | 71.6 | 162 | 27.9 | 3 | 0.5 | - | - | - | - |
| 2 | Government's prompt dialogue with ASUU will minimize strike action. | 421 | 72.6 | 144 | 24.8 | 5 | 0.9 | 3 | 0.5 | 7 | 1.2 |

Source: Field Survey, 2013.

Table 8, shows that 415(71.6%) of the total respondents strongly agreed that Government's provision of the request of ASUU will reduce the incessant strikes action, 162(27.9%) of the respondents agreed while 3(0.5%) could not decide. The table also revealed that 421(72.6%) of the respondents strongly agreed that Government's prompt dialogue with ASUU will minimize the strike action, 144(24.8%) of the respondents agreed, 5(0.9%) could not decide, 3(0.5%) of the respondents disagreed while 7(1.2%) of the respondents strongly disagreed. It can also be observed in the table that 235(40.5%) of the total respondents agreed that Government can find a lasting solution to the problems of ASUU strike in Nigerian Universities, 345(59.5%) disagreed with the statement that Government can find a lasting solution to the problems of ASUU strike in Nigerian universities.

Hypothesis Testing

Ho: There is no significant relationship between ASUU strike and the academic performance of students.

Hi: There is a significant relationship between ASUU strike and the academic performance of students.

To test the hypothesis, the respondent's sex and department were cross tabulated with the influence of ASUU strike on their academic performance. The chi-square was employed in testing the hypothesis at 5% level of significance. Table 9 shows that the sex of the respondents has a significant relationship with the influence of ASUU strike on academic performance at a degree of freedom of 1. And the total respondents in the four (4) departments taken as the sample which includes; Sociology, Economics, Accounting and Business Administration has a significant relationship

Table 9: Cross tabulation of socioeconomic characteristics and the effect of ASUU strike on the academic performance of students

| Categories | Effects of ASUU strike on academic performance of students | | chi-square | df | p-value |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|------------|------------|----|---------|
| | Positively | Negatively | | | |
| SEX | | | | | |
| Male | 138(23.8%) | 193(33.3%) | 26.221 | 1 | 0.000 |
| Female | 105(18.1%) | 144(24.8%) | | | |
| DEPARTMENT | | | | | |
| Sociology | 26(4.5%) | 33(5.7%) | | | |
| Economics | 66(11.4%) | 75(12.9%) | 31.309 | 3 | 0.000 |
| Accounting | 68(11.7%) | 88(15.2%) | | | |
| Business Administration | 111(19.1%) | 113(19.5%) | | | |

Source: Field Survey, 2013.

with the influence of ASUU strike on the academic performance at a degree of freedom of 3. Therefore, the Null Hypothesis (Ho) was rejected and the Alternative Hypothesis (Hi) was accepted. That is, there is a significant relationship between ASUU strike and the academic performance of students in Ekiti State University (EKSU). This equally varies according to sex and the departments the students belong to.

CONCLUSION

This research work studied the effect of ASUU strikes on the academic performance of students in Ekiti State University (EKSU) Ado-Ekiti. As it has been observed, the desire of every university student is to complete his or her study without any hitch, but as it turns out in contemporary Nigeria, ASUU strikes have placed limitations on this aspiration, apart from the fact that the strikes elongate the study duration of university students, the performance of students in academic activities are hampered, so much so that good and brilliant students end up graduating with poor grades.

Government education polices and the associated inactions and the strike embarked upon by members of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) have contributed to the

poor academic performance of the university students in Nigeria. The avoidable conflict between the government and ASUU must not be allowed to jeopardize the academics and future of Nigerian students. Education in Nigeria must be given its pride of place; the government must strive hard to meet the United Nation's minimum standard. Nigerian Universities cannot be locked up permanently and think ASUU and government will move about comfortably.

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