

Impacts of Recurring Strike on Undergraduate students of Islamic Studies in Kwara State

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Abstract

This study investigated the impacts of recurring strike on Islamic Studies students in Kwara State. The study adopted descriptive survey design. The population of this study was all undergraduate students in Kwara State. The sample of the study comprised randomly selected two hundred undergraduate Islamic studies students in Kwara State. The instrument used in the study was an adapted questionnaire titled impact of long-term strike on academic performance of undergraduate Islamic Studies students; it contained fifteen items. The content and construct validity of the instrument were carried out and test re-test form of reliability was conducted with 0.76 reliability index. Two research questions were raised in the study and answered using percentage. The findings of this study revealed that distortion in academic calendar, promotion of immoralities among the undergraduate students, reduction in students' productivity and creativity, and unnecessary delay in the year of students' graduation are the major impacts of long-term strike on Islamic studies students. It was recommended that both Federal Government and Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) should reach a compromise on conditions that will improve effectiveness in the system and prevent subsequent strike action in Nigerian universities.

Keywords: strike, performance, undergraduate, Islamic, ASUU

Introduction

The employees' refusal to work has inevitable impacts on the business, employees themselves and employers. According to Eric and Urho (2015), strike is an act of leaving work by mass employees due to maltreatment from the employers. They further explained that this act may be as a result of inadequate human and material resources available in the system or reaction against employers' policies or any other reasons that may in one

way or the other affect the effectiveness of the work. However, perpetual strike system practiced in Nigerian universities is, among other reasons, to call the attention of Federal Government to the irregularities in university education policies and to give adequate concern to teaching and non-teaching staff welfare in the universities. Enomah (2010) defined strike as unresolved conflicts between the employer and the employee. It also means an act of abandoning work by a group of employees as a result of disagreement with the management over their work-related issues (Anonaba, 2015).

Recurring strike action in Nigerian universities is caused by numerous reasons. According to Adavbiele (2015), recurring strike action in Nigeria is the result of unfair treatment, violation of contractual agreement, negligence, reaction to the requests of the school management and a host of others. Clark (2012) explained that maltreatment of universities' staff by the Federal Government in terms of incentive, prompt action to the request of the employees are among the notable causes of strike action. Similarly, Adavbiele (2015) noted that non implementation of new national minimum wages and poor application of collective bargaining between Federal Government and Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) compounded the conflict.

Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) is a union working under the umbrella of Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC). The union's claim of having the right to challenge the government over refusal to respond positively to their requests had made this issue complicated. According to Nkechi et al. (2022), the conflict between ASUU and Federal Government over their requests from the government has drastically affected undergraduate students because it has created chances for them to engage in different acts of immoralities such as illegal sexual intercourse, cybercrimes, pool betting, watching of movies, unnecessary gossip and a host of others which can destroy their future career. Nevertheless, there are some who engage themselves in technical arts such as tailoring, web designing, tiling, snail-rearing, catering, and so on in order to utilize their period for activities that can enhance their productivity.

Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU) strike in Nigeria can cause numerous eventualities to not only the academic progress of students but also the staff as well. Mutual reconciliation between the government and ASUU is the only way out in order to sustain effectiveness in teaching and learning in the university environment. Odubela (2012) noted that effective learning is only achieved when there is no break in teaching-learning calendar periods. Adavbiele (2015) submitted that strike action has serious negative impact on undergraduate students' performance and concluded that the impact of strike action is not limited to human resources alone but also extended to material resources used in teaching-learning in the universities. Egwu (2018) added that recurring strike action in Nigerian tertiary institutions reduces students' productivity and decreases discovery through researches.

Similarly, Edinyang and Ubi (2013) observed that incessant closure of universities in Nigeria has caused setback to university system of education and also put students in pitiable conditions, disrupting academic calendar and undeserved extension in academic programmes. This, according to them, will lead to poor students' academic performance

and unfair lecturer-students relationship. Kazeem and Ige (2010) claimed that strike had been having serious effect on government, teaching and non-teaching staff, parents and students. Olakunle (2011) added that when there is strike, the school calendar will be adjusted which in turn has adverse effect on the academic performance of the students. Offem and Solomon (2019) observed that strikes make both academic and administrative works difficult. They further added that academic and non-academic staff will face difficulties in re-planning, re-structuring and re-dressing school activities after strike action is called off.

Responsibility of tertiary institutions is to produce talented, skilled and knowledgeable graduates who will be socially, physically and psychologically fit to tackle the present and future challenges in any environment they find themselves. Strike action in tertiary institutions in Nigeria has been addressed by many researchers; and among the causes is the slogan of “No Work, No Pay” which cannot in anyway assist the situation on ground in Nigeria. Academic performance of undergraduate students will suffer and eventually be affected. This problem has attracted the attention of researchers whose diverse studies have concentrated on the consequences of recurring strike on undergraduate students. For instance, Adavbiele (2015) investigated the implications of incessant strike action on the implementation of Technical Education Programme in Nigeria; Eric and Urho (2015) examined effects of strike action on educational management planning of universities in Rivers State; Nkechi et al. (2022) concentrated on strike action and the academic performance of students of Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education Owerri, while Offem and Solomon (2019) studied the effect of strikes on management and planning of educational activities in Nigerian universities. Of all the empirical studies available at the disposal of the researchers, none of the studies has been carried out in Kwara State, let alone examine the impacts of reoccurring strike on undergraduate students of Islamic Studies in Kwara State. Based on this established gap in research, the researchers decided to investigate the impacts of recurring strike on undergraduate students of Islamic Studies in Kwara State.

Research purposes

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of long-term strike on undergraduate students in Nigerian universities; specifically, the study examined:

1. The impacts of recurring strike on undergraduate Islamic Studies students in Nigerian universities.
2. The measures to be taken in curbing subsequent strike action in Nigerian universities.

Research questions

The following questions were answered in the course of this study:

1. What are the impacts of recurring strike on undergraduate Islamic Studies students in Nigerian universities?
2. What type of measures should be taken in curbing subsequent strike action in Nigerian universities?

Methodology

This study adopted descriptive survey research design. The population for this study comprised all undergraduate students of Islamic Studies in Kwara State, Nigeria. Simple random sampling technique was used to select two hundred (200) undergraduate students of Islamic Studies in Kwara State. An adapted questionnaire from Eric and Urho was used and it was titled Impact of Long-term Strike on Academic Performance of Undergraduate Islamic Studies Students’ Questionnaire (ILSAPUISS). The questionnaire contained fifteen (15) items and four likert-scale was used in the study. Frequency count and percentage were used to analyse the demographic data of the respondents and answer the research questions.

Presentation of results

Research question 1: What is the impact of long-term strike on undergraduate Islamic Studies students in Kwara State?

Table 1: The impact of long-term strike on undergraduate Islamic Studies students

S/N	ITEMS	SA	%	A	%	D	%	SD	%
1	Long-term strike makes me lose confidence in Nigerian system of education	55	27.5	46	23	63	31.5	36	18
2	Long-term strike creates room for credibility reduction in Nigerian university system of education	47	23.5	56	28	75	37.5	22	11
3	Long-term strike distorts the school calendar	108	54	92	46	0	0	0	0
4	Long-term strike affects negatively the achievement of university education objectives	77	38.5	87	43.5	23	11.5	13	6.5
5	Long-term strike erodes the dignity and respect for higher education in Nigeria	33	16.5	56	28	87	43.5	24	12
6	Long-term strike extends students’ academic years	123	61.5	77	38.5	0	0	0	0

7	Long-term strike promotes immoralities among undergraduate students	56	28	74	37	59	29.5	11	5.5
8	Long-term strike reduces students' attention and concentration	43	21.5	56	28	59	29.5	42	21
9	Long-term strike weakens lecturer-students relationship	17	8.5	27	13.5	89	44.5	67	33.5
10	Long-term strike reduces undergraduate students' productivity and creativity	98	49	78	39	19	9.5	05	2.5

Table 1 shows that distortion of school calendar, unnecessary overstay of undergraduate students in the programmes, promotion of immorality among undergraduate students, reduction of students' productivity and creativity and unfavourable achievement of university education objectives are the major impacts of strike on undergraduate students of Islamic studies.

Research question 2: What type of measures should be taken in curbing subsequent strike action in Nigerian universities?

Table 2: Measures to be taken in curbing subsequent strike action in Nigerian universities

S/N	ITEMS	SA	%	A	%	D	%	SD	%
1	Federal government should regulate ASUU system	23	11.5	52	26	88	44	37	18.5
2	Federal government should provide necessary amenities needed in the universities	98	49	102	51	0	0	0	0
3	Federal government should reach a compromise with ASUU and allow peace to reign	76	38	92	46	32	16	0	0
4	Federal government should change university policy system	163	81.5	37	18.5	0	0	0	0

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5	Federal government should withdraw the control of the system from the principal officers in the universities	11	5.5	43	21.5	98	49	48	24
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Table 2 displays that the measures that can yield positive changes and prevent subsequent strike action in Nigerian universities are provision of necessary amenities and amendment of university policy system.

Discussion of the findings

The findings of the study indicated that long-term strike in Nigerian universities has impact on undergraduate students of Islamic studies because it will delay their graduation year and distort school calendar. This finding is in line with the findings of Eric and Urho (2015), Egwu (2018), Nkechi et al. (2022). The finding of this study is in line with the Eric and Urho’s finding that strike will reduce credibility of the institutions and students’ productivity. Similarly the finding of this study goes in line with the finding of Nkechi et al. that strike action has an adverse effect on students’ academic performance. Also the finding of this study is similar to the finding of Egwu that recurring strike action in Nigerian tertiary institutions affects research, innovation, discovery and students’ performance.

The finding of this study also indicated that long-term strike in Nigerian universities can be controlled through measures such as provision of necessary amenities, peaceful reconciliation between the two parties and amendment of university education policy.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded that ongoing trend of strike in Nigerian university has numerous impacts on Islamic Studies students but with patience and mutual understanding, things can flow smoothly.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made, based on the findings of this study:

1. Associations of Undergraduate Student Union should organize peaceful reconciliation meeting between Federal Government representative and Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU).
2. Federal Government should be ready to provide the necessary amenities in the universities as requested by Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU).
3. Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) should reach a compromise amicably with the Federal Government.

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