



Labour Management Relations And ASUU Strike In Nigerian Universities, 2009-2018

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ABSTRACT

The incessant ASUU strikes in Nigerian Universities had generated serious concern to both educated and uneducated Nigerians. This study, labour management relations and Asuu strikes in Nigerian universities from 2009 to 2018 examines the undemocratic manner on the side of the government in handling issues related to strikes in Nigerian universities. The study aims at identifying, the extent at which the implementation of labour management agreement affected ASUU strike action in Nigerian universities from 2009-2018, To examine whether there is any relationship between labour management and frequent ASUU strikes actions in Nigerian Universities from 2009-2018, Ascertain how labour disputes that existed between ASUU and the government of Nigeria resulted to protracted ASUU strike action in Nigeria. The theory adopted by the study is Institutional theory while the sources of data collection included the primary and secondary sources of data collection. The study also arrived at the findings; that government pays less attention in addressing the demands of Asuu. Strikes has negative impact on students' learning and performance while funding is a major factor for public universities in Nigeria and it also a huge factor in managing Asuu strikes with negative impact on the society. The study adopted descriptive statistics research within the period of this study while convenience sampling technique was used to select the sample size. The study also identified the worse cause of strike to be the over politicization of Asuu demands Nigerian universities the recommendations suggested full autonomy for Nigerian universities. Lecturers should have a well-structured salary system which will sustain them even in retirement because their entire life has been dedicated for academics and implementation of policies and development of societal agenda which will keep the younger generation close to traditional and universal values.

Keywords: Labour Management Relation, Asuu, Strike, Disputes, Nigerian, Universities.

INTRODUCTION

In Nigeria, Labour relations emerged with the coming of the colonial Government, at the time people were mostly self-employed farmers and independent craftsmen who carried out their business on a family basis. The arrival of the colonialists brought wage employment for the first time into the country. In Nigeria the genesis of labour relation is in the public sector of the economy. The history of trade unions in Nigeria indicates that the first union, now known as the Nigeria Civil Services Union (NCSU), founded in 1912, emerged from the growing wage employment in government

establishments (Akah, 2018). The NCSU was, however, not the typical union, in that it was not formed with all the ideals of trade unions as organizations that felt the need to fight for members' rights, nor was the union formed out of frustration or disaffection with their employment conditions. Indeed, as Yesufu remarked in Tayo, (1992:32) it is important to note that the union was thus not formed by a group of disaffected workers who wanted a platform from which to fight for their grievances, or for the improvement of specific conditions of employment. The trade union NCSU, the railway and the NUT dominated the industrial relations scene of the 1930s. First unlike the NCSU, both the NUT and the railway union best represented the ideals of trade unions as organizations whose purpose was the advancement of the employment interest of members.

Labour-management relations refer to the formal relationships that exist in the institution between the workers and the management team who represents the owners (employers) of the organization or institution and the government. Major Problems in the management of labour relations in Nigerian universities is the problem of dynamism, implying internal and external change. Internal changes would refer to the changes in managerial initiatives due to external environmental pressures. External changes refer to both domestic country-wide regulatory and environmental changes and changes due to globalization. Another problem is the proliferation of labour unions as a result of ineffective management of labour relations and employment insecurity. In Nigeria the issue of labour disputes has always been there and has persistently interrupted the flow of academic programs in the universities. These disputes as can be seen in the figure below indicates that from 1960-till 1977, history had been made regarding strikes and record of settlements.

Figure 1.1.1 Labour Disputes and their Settlement Recorded Strikes 1960-77

Year	No of Strikes	Workers Involved	Man-days lost
1960-1	65	36667	157373
1961-2	58	18673	57303
1962-3	45	n.a	53039
1963-4	62	45409	96621
1964-5	195	73447	253460
1965-6	126	n.a	238679
1966-7	89	41344	100000
1967-8	63	11767	70955
1968-9	29	11551	35028
1969-70	46	18357	71895
1970-1	124	78474	224470
1971-2	85	31915	63254
1972-3	71	43676	105415
1973-4	105	41527	148130
1974-5	354	126818	357028
1975-6	264	122546	439296
1976-7	130	83126	225710

Source: Federal Ministry of Labour, Annual Reports. See also T. Fashoyin, 'The Impact of the Trade Disputes Decrees of 1968 and 1969 on strike Activity'.

Finally, the problem of regular strike action emanate from the differential nature of employee remunerations and benefits. According to Akpala (1982) labour-management relations is concerned with the internal arrangement between employers and trade union in a bipartite relationship within an industry or across industries or within an enterprise to regulate relations affecting employment and its compensation. Okenwa (2000) defined management-labour relation as a relationship between workers not as individual but in their collective entity with the employer. Labour management relations is part of industrial relations, but industrial relations is broader, Ukoha (1989) said that industrial relations is

the relationship that exists between workers, employers and the government for the purpose of determining the conditions under which work is done. Therefore we can state that industrial relations is the regulation of the employers relationship with the workers or labour union, the employers or management and the government or its agencies, the propose of which is the establishment of job rules which specify the rights, duties and responsibilities of each other. Strike is an inevitable labour/management procedure in decision making, though management has never valued strike as progressive but destructive. While workers on the other hand, viewed strike as a positive management tool. Strike has therefore produced both positive and negative effects. To the students, strike has always produced negative effect as they are at the receiving end. . During this period (2009-2018) academic activities suffered drastic set back. Between June, 2009 to February, 2010 academic staff union of universities was on strike and all federal and states owned universities were all affected. Also, all Eastern states owned universities after the general strike commenced their own strike again between, June, 2010 to December, 2010 over governments insensitiveness to their welfare and the breach of the agreement reached and lack of equipment (Anikpo, 2011).

According to Kazeem & Ige (2010), disruption in academic programme resulting from strike leads to closure of schools for a period of time. This period may be defined to be specified or indefinite and at such periods, no academic activity takes place in schools and upon resumption students are denied opportunity to make up for lost academic periods. Olukunle (2011) opined that disruption in academic programmeas caused by strike gives students underserved study years extension. Isangedighi (2007) & Iheanacho (2002) supported the above assertion by stressing that effective learning is achieved when students are emotionally and psychologically stable. But on the contrary, when disruption in academic programme occurs from strike action, students become emotionally and psychologically unstable especially on the perception that it will cause them to stay at school longer than expected.

Having recourse to the contributions made by Isangedighi & Iheanacho, Oyesode (2002) is of the view that ASUU strike do not benefit student and the parents during the period of strike action because during strike action, students are at home engaging in one crime or the other thereby causing problems for their parents, in addition, a four year academic program extends to more than seven or more years. Lecturers will be as well compelled to rush their course outline so as to meet up with academic calendar of the year but the question remains that during this process of rush, do the student get the required academic proficiencies and skill based knowledge to face the challenges that await them after school?

This situation mentioned above have brought in many factors which have been attributed to the failure of public organizations in Nigeria; it is our contention here that one of the fundamental reasons for the incessant ASUU strikes is poor industrial relations, in the universities. Some of the causes of this unfortunate situation relate to such factors as lack of regular consultation between management and labour, non-recognition of contributions of individual workers, and inadequate remunerations and other employment related matters. These problems usually breed industrial tension and strife, and cause workers to be ill disposed towards the growth and realization of the goal and objective of the institution.

In the issue of labour management in Nigerian Universities, the truth about the incessant Strike actions that does not yield much positive results stems from government's insensitivity to the inadequacies bedeviling Nigerian Universities. In addition to the lack of commitment on the part of Nigerian political leaders in encouraging research and development and in-fact advancing education development in Nigeria, the government had always paid deaf ear to the cries for rescue by ASUU in order to put the Nigerian standard of education at its proper state compared to what obtains in other parts of the world. The issue of university autonomy, the provision of needed equipment and human/material resources has been the cog in the wheel of progress and the reason why ASUU embark on strikes action in order to press home their demands. This situation has led the political leaders to secure admissions abroad for their wards as the best place for the first class citizens thereby neglecting the poor academic standard in our universities that has for a long time in Nigeria affected labour management relations and ASUU strikes in Nigerian universities from 2009 to 2020 characterized by regular suspension of strike actions, yet the contending issues not completely attended to in order to solve educational problems in Nigerian universities.

The Problem

The interest of Nigeria political leaders is not in raising and maintaining the standard of education by encouraging research and development through the provision of necessary infrastructure and funding in our universities but rather to patronize well-funded universities abroad since their children rarely study in Nigerian universities. The politics involved has always refused to border positively on the issues always raised through these strike actions but rather views it as means of enriching the lecturers in Nigerian universities. However, it is right to conclude that our political leadership has been recolonized to the extent that all agreements reached with the ASUU and Federal government of Nigeria has either been haphazardly attended to or by persuading ASUU to suspend its strike actions with false claims purposefully created to undermine the rightful position of ASUU for salvaging our educational system in Nigeria.

Labour management relations has become one of the most delicate and complex problem of modern industrial society. Industrial progress is impossible without cooperation of labour and harmonious relationship with management. Therefore it is in the interest of all to create and maintain good relations between employees and management. In the absence of good relationship between labour and management, productivity will always be negatively affected

. However, it was against this background that the study attempt to assess labour management relation and ASSU Strike in Nigeria between 2009-2018. The following research question are formulated to guide the study:

1. To what extent has labour and management relations affected ASUU strikes in Nigerian universities from 2009-2018?
2. What is the level of relationship between labour management and frequent ASUU strike in Nigerian Universities from 2009-2018?
3. How has labour and management engaged the government in order to end the protracted ASUU strike action in Nigeria?

Objective of the Study

The general objective of the study is to examine the role labour management relations has played in handling the incessant labour disputes between the Federal government and ASUU

Clarification of Concept

Labour Management Relations: A Conceptual Discourse.

Labour- management relations is a concept which describes the nature of work relations that prevails at any given point in time. The relation is a dynamic one. It could be co-operative or conflictual as suggested by Banjoko (2002), in his assertion that;

Labour management relations is focused on ways and procedures for maintaining a satisfactory, healthy and cooperative relationship between the employees or workers and their representatives, on the one hand, and the management, on the other, so that the pursuit of the individual and corporate interests of the organization become the concern of both parties. More elaborately, labour relations cover all that happens to an employee from the time he is employed until he leaves the job. This involves how a staff, for instance, is recruited into the university system, his orientation and deployment to the appropriate job, his further training and career advancement or promotional prospect, handling of grievances arising there from, and to the termination of appointment and or retirement. In line with the above conception illustration which talked more on procedure for maintaining a satisfactory, healthy and cooperative relationship between employees and the management but Wordofa (2008) centered his assertion on major interest of labour which he said that One of the major area of interest in labour is the effectiveness of these organizations to remain financially stable and the ability to work within established political, economic and social systems despite the supportive or disruptive features of the social environment such as mass media, legislation and the ability of labour leaders to satisfy member's goal and interest. He went further to say that a major driving force that has enabled organized labour to succeed in its efforts to assist members. One way organized labour has done this, is to contribute in whatever way they can to national development. he continued to point out that the main goal of establishing trade unions is that the interest of members comes first, according to Sydney and Beatrice Webb as in UNDP (2000) that stressed that the main goal of establishing trade unions is that workers initially joins unions to pursue

immediate economic goals, but eventually pursue political, economic and social reforms such as the nationalization of industries and the protection given to infant industries. In line with the above illustration, they observed that despite the efforts in contributing to national development, the political class has continued to accused organized labour of interfering in political process. But Onuegbu (2010) sees labour management relations as relationship between employers and unions within an industry or organizations in the production process which he went further to illustrate that the main aim of management (representatives of the owners) is to increase returns on investment (profit) through the maximization of productivity and the minimization of costs. However the aim of workers is the maximization of welfare and wages (costs) to enable them take care of their personal needs and where possible wants.

He continued that is not difficult to see the conflicting interest of management and labour. While the interest of labour is usually income and welfare maximization for the workers, that of management is profit maximization (Revenue maximization and Cost minimization). This position cannot but generate conflict which may be in the form of strikes, lock-in, go slow and so on embarked on by the workers ; and salary stoppage, lock-out, retrenchment etc as punitive measures by management. He went further to narrate that one thing that is clear in this relationship (and often overlooked when relationship get soured) is that both labour and management get their returns from the organization and so should protect the organization. This is because without the organization, there would be no management, no workers and therefore no labour (Union). Another is that if both parties i.e. labour and management focus on increasing the cake(value added) to be shared rather than concentrating only on how to get more from the existing cake, then each party will have more to take home.

ASUU- Management Relations in Nigeria

By ASUU- management relations, we mean the relationship between ASUU (the umbrella body of all academic staff of Nigerian Universities) and the federal government in one hand; and ASUU and the universities administration in the other hand. If there is no constant or coherence relationship between ASUU and federal government as well as the administration of the university, it will certainly affect the educational system negatively. The importance of this relationship is shown in the principal objective of setting up the university system where ASUU and federal government as well as university administration interact. The aim of setting up university system will not be achieved and the education system will not function effectively if such relationship does not exist. However the co-existence and co-operation of these bodies will certainly lead to harmony, coherence between the external bodies and the internal bodies. It will as well lead to smooth educational system operating uninterruptedly. It will ensure that educational policies will be institutionalized. It is on this relationship that ASUU-management relations anchored.

The relationship between Academic Staff Union Universities and FGN has been fraught with conflict and a history of contending issues since 1978 when it was founded. Active in struggles against unfair treatment of it members, ASUU fought the military regime in the 1980s. The union organized a national strike in 1988 to obtain fair wages and university autonomy. For this reason, the union was banned on 7 August 1988 and all its property seized. In 1990, the ban was lifted and again banned in 1992 after another strike. However, in September 1992, most of its demands were met including the right of workers for collective bargaining. In 1994 and 1996 other strikes were organized against unlawful dismissal of lecturers by Abacha Regime. In 2002, Justice Mustapha Akanbi was petitioned to investigate the authorities of University of Ilorin (Unilorin) for corruption and misappropriation of funds. In 2008, ASUU went on strike twice for improvement in salary and reinstatement of lecturers dismissed in University of Ilorin and University of Nigeria Nsukka.

In 2009, memoranda of understanding were signed and the industrial action called off. From these activities of ASUU, the main issue has always been the lackadaisical attitude the federal government of Nigeria (FGN) has shown toward the union's demands. The FGN has severally reneged on previous agreements and memoranda of understanding it had with the union coupled with negligence of the educational sector while spending billions of naira on unproductive ventures and supporting widespread corruption. This situation has led to a trail of ASUU strikes over the years. Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) can therefore be seen to be a trade union whose activities being

lawful and not inconsistent with the spirit and practice of trade unionism are covered by the laws of the land. ASUU may approach issues from different perspectives; indeed ASUU's liberal, sometimes radical and militant stance more often than not, bring them into conflict with the government. Another aspect of the relationship of ASUU and federal government is seen in the area of university autonomy, poor conditions of service, poor funding and non-conducive environment for academic pursuit had been simmering for years and had been the theme for fruitless negotiations and dialogue with successive Federal Ministries of Education (Iyayi, 2002; Pemedede, 2007).

The concern for university autonomy has become part of Nigeria's national agenda aimed towards reforms in university systems (Ololube, Amaele, Kpolovie, Onyekwere, & Elechi, 2012), and the making of successful universities requires a supportive governance structure in which universities have autonomy to achieve objectives, whether in research or teaching (Raza, 2009). Some other scholar supported the view by saying that there is no country of the world that can move significantly forward without guaranteeing autonomy and academic freedom to its tertiary institution (Owhondah, 2008). In the absence of the above mentioned facts, the overriding challenge of the university, particularly Nigeria universities is how to have full autonomy and academic freedom. It is difficult to harness and consolidate Nigerian universities capacity to employ their own staff, admit their students, determine the balance between teaching and research, establish and maintain its own standards without the fear of unjustifiable external influence (Goma, 1989, Anyamele, 2004)

In other factors which relates to autonomy of universities, when considered University education in Nigeria, it is indeed a neglected venture. Commissioned reports, research publications and academic debates, they all clamor for educational reform, autonomy and freedom beginning in the early 1990s and extending into late 2014, yet have not yielded any significant results because of the disjointed and a little at a time action by the government (Ololube et al., 2012). In line with the above assertions, ASUU (2002), said that university autonomy and academic freedom should be more than a statement of policy. It must be the very essence and legalizes spirit of the academic institution itself. To this end, no nation can un mindfully move forward without university autonomy and academic freedom. As a corollary, Owhonda (2008) states that university existence is hope to fasten the economy of the nation, political awareness and prepare the ground for technological advancement. In fact it is seen as the pivot of social development. Academic freedom guarantees the right of lecturers to teach without fear of reprisals to advance the frontiers of knowledge as widely as possible. The result of non-academic freedom negates the existence of true academic culture in the tertiary institutions (Fashina, 2001). For example, to protect and sustain university autonomy and academic freedom, appointments and promotion of lecturers has to be regularized such that it gives recognition to lecturers on the basis of their intellectual contributions, expertise and professionalism. This can be achieved when the university is free from political insulation and is given the mandate to choose their own vice chancellor and other principal officers (Jegede, 2010).

The above discussion have ushered in grounds which can raise questions like could university autonomy and academic freedom in Nigeria has, thus, become an issue of concern: if so, these issues tend to generate conflicts, which have led to industrial action in 2012 and 2013 academic session. The universities lost several semesters and indeed years to such industrial actions because of government failure to fund the universities, pay earned allowances to lecturers and improve infrastructure. Okai (2013) supported the above statement by saying that the objectives of highest education can hardly be achieved when resources are in short supply

Another aspect of relationship is the policy made by government to checkmate admission procedure and plan for the smooth programmes in every universities system in Nigeria. According to Ikelegbe (2005) in Ikeanyibe refers policy as a simply actions taken or to be taken and actions not taken or not to be taken by government or private organization. It is a statement of what an organization wants to do, what it is doing, what it is not doing and what it would not want to be done, so on this grounds, the government came up with a policy provides an official backing for every universities. In a review by Okoromo (2006) he claimed that, "policy is an overall guide that gives the general limits and direction in which administration actions will be taken. Okoroma (2006) is of the view that for a policy to qualify as an educational policy, it must be different from other policies. Okoroma recognized the multilayer's of university education; though Kerr did not study educational policy from a critical

realist perception, he acknowledged that government determines the direction of an educational system through its educational policies initiative.

On this ground, the relationship between the universities administration and Academic Staff Union Universities will be discuss with more emphasis on federal and state universities. The management of universities and government respond by antagonizing and victimizing lecturers. Governments alone are not guilty of the harassment, victimization and termination of lecturers" appointment. But some scholars have made alarming assertion on the harsh treatment melted on lecturers by Vice chancellors in some universities, Anele (2011) sited in Tantua, (2015)by pointing out that some Vice Chancellors stop salaries, deny them promotion and sack lecturers in connivance with the Governing Councils. Anele (2011) in Tantua, (2015) went on to stress that apart from Government, "Vice Chancellors also victimize and antagonize their staff. They hurriedly implement government anti-ASUU policies and decisions such as immediate stoppage of salaries, non-payment of salaries, signing of attendance registers to consolidate their positions, termination of appointment of Union Exco members, refusal to award them degrees (where some academics are involved in higher degree programmes in universities) and manipulation of promotions of ASUU activists among others.

Experience has shown that the Vice Chancellor has more powers and influences the Governing Councils greatly. The Vice Chancellor as the Chief Executive Officer of the university controls the funds of the university which includes internal generated revenue, subventions and grants from Governments and other institutions. We find Governing Council members begging for contracts and executing same, and as a result some of them become "toothless bulldogs". Vice Chancellors employ the children and relations of members of his „kitchen cabinet“ as well as the children of Governing Council members and as a result they watch helplessly as the Vice Chancellors victimize and antagonize staff since they have compromised themselves. The Vice Chancellors victimize, antagonize and sack staff at will under the watchful eyes of the Governing Council and the Academic staff union which appears helpless (Tantua, 2015).

Another scholar supported Tantua 2015 by making a striking assertion, Anikpo (2011) pointed out that there are some Vice Chancellors who cook up charges to manipulate the promotion of staff and terminate the appointments of lecturers and staff who criticize their policies. Vice Chancellors hand pick members of their investigation and disciplinary committees and use the committee to subject their perceived enemies and the perceived enemies of their "kitchen cabinet" to more than three trials for the same offence just to set a guilty verdict. Some Head of Departments and senior teaching staff do not feel comfortable employing and retaining lecturers with a first class degree or retaining staff that have more degrees than themselves and would do everything possible to get that staff's appointment terminated because they feel threatened. I support the above assertion by saying that Heads of Departments are not elected but appointed by the Vice Chancellors. Lecturers do all they can to be in the good books of the Vice Chancellor and therefore some Head of departments serve as stooges to the Vice Chancellors. Head of Departments in agreement with Vice Chancellors hand pick external examiners to remark scripts. Some Vice Chancellors in connivance with some Head of Departments lobby the external examiners who might want adjunct ship to get negative reports about their perceived enemies to victimize him/her. Promotion for the perceived enemies of the Vice Chancellor/Management and the perceived enemies of his kitchen cabinet are been stifled. Their papers for assessment sometimes get missing in transit or are deliberately delayed. In some cases too, assessment papers are kept on the shelves for months unknown to the lecturer without sending them out for assessment just to victimize the lecturer.

The National Scholar of April (2005) pointed out that „By 1978, every radical lecturer had been penciled down for hoarding, serious harassment, imprisonment, exile or assassination...“ Dr. Patrick Wilmot and Dr. Bela Usman of Ahmadu Bello University had their appointments terminated in 1986 and 1989 respectively for engaging actively in ASUU activities and for criticizing the policies of the Government. Also in 1987, Dr. Festus Iyayi, the then president of ASUU and Dr. Peter Agbonifoh, both of the university of Benin, and who were executive members of ASUU had their appointments terminated because they opposed the imposition of Prof Grace Alele Williams as the Vice Chancellor and also criticized her policies. A follow up was the making of check-off dues voluntary by the Babangida Administration to make the union weaker. Also in 1996, the then ASUU president, Dr. Assisi Asobie was also dismissed from service as a result of actions by ASUU (Ezike, 2012) sited in

Tantua (2015), in line the above statement, Tantua (2015) gave another instance of Asuu-management relation which he drew his emphasis on Rivers State University of Science and Technology where pointed out that the researcher is a lecturer of interest. The governor of the state, who is the visitor of the university brought and imposed a Vice Chancellor on the university which was challenged by the Rivers State University of Science and Technology ASUU. A total strike was declared and the RSUST branch of ASUU broke into two factions. Reengagement registers were opened for all lecturers to sign if you are still interested in your job and to work with the imposed Vice Chancellor. All those who signed the reengagement register were paid their withheld salaries and re-absorbed, while those who did not sign had their appointments terminated by the Governing Council. The sacked ASUU activists and other lecturers proceeded to the National Industrial Court, but all they had were adjournments upon adjournments. They had to seek a political solution to the problem since it was obvious they might not get justice from the courts

ASUU-Strike in Nigerian Universities

By Asuu- Strike in Nigerian universities, I mean the total stoppage of work for all academic staff union of universities (ASUU). A brief history of ASUU and the factors responsible for rising strike actions in Nigerian universities in line with federal government responses towards commitment/implementations of all agreement reached with ASUU. The history of Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU)'s strike can be traced back to 1978, Since the inception of the union, Academic Staff Union of the university (ASUU) in 1978, the union has undergone series of industrial action that amounts to 25 strike action apart from the internal strike by the various chapter of the union, statistics from the national universities commission (2014). The first industrial strike of the Academic Staff Union of the university (ASUU) as reported by Olusegun (2014) commence in 1988 during the military regime of General Ibrahim, Babangida which lasted for months. The strike led to the prescription of ASUU on 7th of August 1988 and this also resulted into the seizure of ASUU properties and the union was as well banned by the federal government. However, the ASUU responded by forming another association named university lecturer association (ULA) but could not withstand the test of time. ASUU demand for strike actions was anchored on

- ❖ Fair wages of the union member
- ❖ Setting up of a join negotiation committee between the federal government and the university staff union
 - ❖ University autonomy and academic freedom
 - ❖ Poor remunerative structure and conditions of service
 - ❖ Under-funding of universities
 - ❖ Poor physical conditions of work in the universities
 - ❖ The delay in the payment of the elongated salary structure

Since 2003-2013, the above reasons have almost remained central in ASUU demand and the factors of rising ASUU strikes in Nigerian universities. The problem is: why has this demand remained consistent and unresolved over the years? Regarding the causes, Adavbiele (2015), x-ray the causes of strike actions as; unfair treatment to the employees/victimization, violation of legislation and poor application of the provision of collective bargaining.

Going by the above explanation, ASUU strikes in Nigerian universities are now reoccurring issues and so problematic that parents, students are divided in their opinion on who is responsible for these lingering strikes. Some viewed government nonchalant attitude and lack of commitment to the welfare of the education sector as the cause, others blame ASUU on their radicalism, confrontational approach and insatiable quest but 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, review the process of appointing Vice-Chancellors, review the retirement of lecturers to 70 years while government is proposing a piecemeal selective approach. Again, Prof. Biodun Ogunyemi, the president of ASUU, speaking on some of the agreement held with the government, noted that government had reneged on a 2013 agreement to revitalize universities with 1.3trillion over a period of six years. The first year, the government was to release N200billion, which it did, but it took a long time for us to access it. But since that release in 2013, no single has been released thereafter. For 2014, N220billion was not released. Again 2015 and 2016, nothing was released up to the third quarter of 2017. In all, we can

estimate the outstanding amount to be about N825billion for revitalization of our universities and in the last two years, what has been allocated to education in the between six and seven percent. Even in countries where they had wars like Rwanda and Sudan, they are still allocating well above 20percent to education. Our citizens are rushing to Ghana, most universities there are public universities (Ameh Comrade Godwin, 2017).The ASUU strike in Nigerian Universities will not be properly discussed without an empirical illustration which shows period of those strike actions. The table will be a guide to know exactly when ASUU strike commenced. The table above shows the period of ASUU strike from the inception (1978 till date), however the present study focuses on Labour management relations and ASUU Strike in Nigerian Universities from 2007 to 2018 and the table in the sub-theme of ASUU management relations and strike action in Nigerian universities will discuss exhaustively on the period of the present study

ASUU-Management Relations and Strike in Nigerian Universities

ASUU – Management relations simply explains the relationships that exist between ASUU which is the umbrella body of all academics staff of Nigerian universities and federal government as a regulatory body in one hand, ASUU and the universities administration in the other hand and the cordial relationships of these bodies is what made up the ASUU- management relations. Ebele (2013) explained his views on ASUU- management relations, he stressed that both the federal government and ASUU have a joint role to play .He said that the federal government has to learn to keep to bargains and as well meet up with their obligations, regardless of not waiting for ASUU to always remind them (federal government) to implement all agreement reached with ASUU. Ebele further explained that instead of federal government to continue to engage in opening more universities, they should invest more in the already existing universities and ensure they have enabling environment for academic pursuit.

Ebele (2013) asserted that ASUU / administration should ensure that lecturers should have peer reviews mechanism in which the university system itself is able to assess lecturers, find out how many of these lecturers are really lecturing and what their workload is because some lecturers are overworked while some are just there doing nothing, on this grounds some other scholar supported the view by adding that it is very important that necessary actions should be taken by government to put universities back in good shape. This will enable universities to constantly conduct sound academic research, teaching in a more comfortable environment, enjoy freedom of teaching and academic self-governance (Boulton & Lucas, 2008). Another author added to the assertions of Boulton & Lucas by saying that those universities require some reasonable level of funding which will push the universities to a greater height. He further illustrate that Nigerian universities in particular lack modern teaching gadgets, no internet facilities, overcrowded lecture halls, poor libraries, ill-equipped laboratories, very poor staff-students ratio, ranging from 1:363, 1:122, abandoned developmental project, poor sources of water and toilet system in hostels and lecture venue, low staff strength with alarming number of junior lecturers as against experience senior lecturers as a result of serious lack of funding (Ajayi & Ekwudayo, 2008).

According to Boniface (2013) the former Vice-chancellor of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka said that The Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) has been going on strike for a number of years over the same issue-government not honoring agreements reached with the union; yet, nothing seems to have changed, In his furtherance, he believe that tertiary education should not be free. Tuition is free in federal universities in Nigeria and that is a problem because there is no free lunch in education regarding that students are the future hope of their families and the nation, so they should be the centre of gravity of the university system and should not be made to suffer. According to Dr. Omadeli Boyo, Medical Director, Pinecrest Specialist Hospitals, Lagos in Ebele, (2013) said the Federal Government and ASUU have a part to play. He outlined a multi-prolonged approach to the issue,

According to Omadeli Boyo in Ebele (2013) he said the Problem is that ASUU is complaining that they are supposed to be paid allowances for marking, teaching and supervising more than acceptable number of courses and projects. They have been drawing government's attention to outstanding allowances while he is thinking that sometimes government signs agreements to get ASUU back to work; they are signed with the intention to break them as they are reached under duress .Omadeli

Boyo further explained Government's Part in Ebele (2013) that Government has to learn to keep to bargains and meet up with their obligations; they should not wait to be Reminded. ASUU has been drawing their attention to outstanding in terms of allowances. Again, instead of opening more universities, government should invest more in already existing universities and ensure they have enabling environment for academic pursuit. This includes ensuring that there are enough lectures for students. Government is just interested in admitting students into the university and not asking themselves how many students a lecturer should handle. They should invest more in polytechnics and other specialized institutions; many more students deserve to go to vocational training institutes so that less pressure is placed on the university system. Subsequent contributions were still made by Omadeli Boyo in Ebele (2013) regarding the **Checks and balances**. The Federal Government must ensure that is a signage on how lecturers discharges their duties in line with the overworked load which they constantly demand for allowance while taking into consideration on the side of government, Boyo said, "Price of oil is dropping and the agreement cannot be met, according to government. If the government says it is broke, people outside government cannot see signs of being broke because the convoys, jeeps, live in affluent life style, collecting large seating allowances and high level of consumption pattern, so people cannot come to terms with the fact that the government is broke. They believe there is money.

During Obasanjo's military regime, ,government cut down on ostentatious lifestyle and if people see such a thing happening now, the way government is being pruned, they will understand, In line with **ASUU's Part**, The lecturers should have a peer review mechanism in which the university system itself is able to assess lecturers and at the end of every semester, find out how many of these lecturers are really lecturing and what their workload is because some lecturers are overworked while some are just there doing nothing.

Omadeli Boyo in Ebele (2013) advised that Instead of always going on strike; "ASUU should use internal mechanisms to ensure that government is reminded of these agreements and when the agreement is flouted, they should take pages in the newspapers and draw the attention of the media and the general public to how government is flouting the agreements. They could then appeal to the National Assembly's Education committees, appeal to the president and after that, they could give an ultimatum and do warning strikes like two days without lectures. It could also include refusing to hold convocation; Uzuegbunam in Ebele (2013) supported the above assertion by saying that strike is normal part of human existence. It is also a normal part of any healthy relationship; for when strike arise, parties are given opportunity to discover faults and shortcomings from the other and when strikes are resolved, it makes for a better working relationship between both parties. However, it is our opinion that there could be more workable means of resolving this disagreement between the government and the Association of Staff Union of Universities.

Uzuegbunam further stressed that some experts have continued to suggest that the best way to resolve conflicts in employee-management relations is through collective bargaining and joint consultation between the management and representatives of labour and he said Strike action, as the last resort when negotiations fail simply derives from anger, resentment, rebellion, and if you like, selfishness. Though strike actions have always gotten the attention of government in the past and possibly made them rethink on their stand, yet considering the popular saying that "when two elephants fight, it is the grasses that suffer", trade unions and professional associations should rescind their constant decision to resort to strike action. For one, it makes them appear weak and vulnerable and leaves at rail of bad news behind.

Collective bargaining presupposes that both parties in a conflict are seen as mature, responsible and selfless in trying to resolve any clashes of interest. Everyone wants to be understood, nurtured and supported and this understanding, nurture and support can only come through adequate communication between the parties Therefore, communication is central to the resolving of strikes. This can only be motivated through collective bargaining. Rather than the high-horse kind of negotiation between the Federal government and ASUU, both parties should begin to listen to each other than in dishing out their own points of view. Both should in the interest of the nation, the educational institution, the wasting Nigerian students and the image of the nation, begin to listen to themselves, look beyond themselves and find common grounds of agreement rather than insisting on each other's ways. This can only continue to elongate the matter and not lead us anywhere. One sure

question for both the Federal government and ASUU is: how can we hope to compete in the global marketplace if Nigerian students cannot boast of consistent, quality education? The education of our youth should be a priority not an option; and strike action can never be the last resort when such priority is sought-after (Ebele, 2013).

Theoretical Framework

In-view of the organizational functionality of the issues under this study and investigation, this paper adopts Institutional Approach in analyzing the relation between the government and ASUU in these years of struggles. This is to theoretically explain the occurrences of any phenomena. This sociological theory operates on the assumption that for functions or activities to be performed, there must also exist formal structures and vice-versa. This brings into therefore the need for a formal organization with defined rules and purpose with a predetermined goals and objectives and recognizing organizational right (Kelinger, 1975). Hence, the establishment of labour union (ASUU) with formal rules and institutional framework in line with the demands of both the people and qualified members of the labour union.

The utmost concern for the organization is to protect its interest and to provide services to the people related to it. This disposition to ensure quality of university education and on the other hand the government seeks to defend its interest yet not disputing the position of ASUU. In operation, these institutions have a broader mandate and goals to achieve

METHODOLOGY

Data gathering instruments used in this study will include primary and secondary sources.

1. **Primary Data Collection:** The oral interview method of collecting data will be used essentially adopted through a face-to-face interviewing technique which will be conducted in the two universities using oral interview guide in order to generate sufficient data for the study. In each of these Universities interviews will be granted to ASUU executives which include the Chairman, Secretary, Public Relations Officer, Treasurer, etc and other registered ASUU members.

2 **Secondary Sources of Data Collection:** This approach of collecting data takes into consideration of the fact that the research is within a time frame of 2009 to 2018. Such background information is needed in order to explain issues surrounding the ASUU strike in Nigerian Universities. The sources included published and unpublished materials such as materials in Journals, Magazines, Textbooks and industrial and labour reports

Negative Consequences of Incessant and Protracted ASUU strikes

ASUU strike had had negative consequences on academic Performance and its incessant nature have also delt badly on the quality of education generally in the Nigeria. ASUU strikes as a way of reminding government to do what is right for the education sector and the students. Strike action have been perceived as resultant effect from the impasse between employers of labour and employees and this has obvious implications on the implementation of education programme in Nigeria. The socio-economic costs of these strike actions in the system are not quantifiable and there are very many negative influences on these strike actions on the student's performance, Educational Sector and the Nation at large. There is the depressing influence and effect on the quality of graduates from Nigerian universities since less time will now be required for students to graduate. As time is a resource that cannot be recouped when lost. Final year students who should have graduated this year may not be able to meet up. Law students and medical students who are supposed to go to law school or go for horsemanship will not be able to meet up, the ripple effect is that there is a "standstill" for the children of this nation. 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).

The negative influence of ASUU strike in all universities is a thing to reflect on mostly in the aspect of truncating academic scheduled and its evidence can be seen 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). 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. Another negative aspect of it is the effect of 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. The 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 effect is psychological on the part of students who have to stay idle at home, lamenting their woes and causing irritation to parents and the effect closely connected to the engagement of the idle students in social vices including joining bad gangs and engagement in internet fraud. Evidently, another effect 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. Today ASUU is still battling with wage increase, full autonomy, equipment, etc. the government had not adequately provided all these and that is why ASUU resort to strike action. The evidence of subsequent strike actions can be seen below in the table

ASUU Strikes in Nigerian Universities from the inceptions of the union in 1978

YEARS	DURATION
1988/89/90	2 Months Strike
1992	3 Months Strike
1993	4Months Strike
1996	6Months Strike
2001	5Months Strike
2002	2Months Strike
2003/2004	6Months Strike
2005	3Days Strike
2006	3Days Strike
2007	3Months Strike
2008	1Week Strike
2009	4Months Strike
2010	5Months 14Days Strike
2011/2012	3Months Strike
2013	5Months 9Days Strike
2017	3Weeks Strike
2018/2019	2Months 3Days Strike
2020	9months 4days strike

Source: Extracted from Akah (2018), NUC statistic (2014) and Authors compilation/modification

As we can derive from the table above, between 1988/89 and 1990, ASUU stayed home for about 2 months without giving gap another strike lasted for 3 months in 1992. At the same time in 1993, 4 months strike was observed while in 1996, 6 months strike lasted leaving the students out of academic activities. The same situation strike action lasted from 2001, 2002 2002, 2004, 2005, 2006, and 2007, with 3 months strikes. This situation was not corrected such that in 2008 ASUU still embarked on 1 week strike but extended it to 4 months in 2009. Then in 2010 more than 5 months was involved and in the year 2011/ 2012 ASUU went on strike for about 3 months. In 2013 5 months was off from academic calendar while in the year 2017 3 week strike came as a result of government usual attitude towards striking workers. In 2018 and 2019 2 month and 3 weeks strike were observed. Which system of education can be managed this way and yet maintain its place in the standard of its education when compared to other countries. The condition worsens as the years go by, in the year 2020 ASUU strike lasted for 9 months and 4 days which seems to be one of the longest ever in history (Kelechi & Chidera, 2020).

CONCLUSION

Having gone through the inevitable but necessary conditions that could necessitate ASUU strike, although its impacts have recorded negative outcomes among the students of the universities in Nigeria, It should be known that on ASUU side, these agitations are very necessary in their living up to expectations. On the entrenched tradition of labour management, the negotiation arrangement is very poor respecting the leadership and neglecting core values, rights and privileges. Yet the denial does not stop labour movements since it borders on a permanent struggle that must see a party agree and shift grounds for other parties to achieve reasonable outcomes. The issue of strike action involving ASUU cannot be allowed as everyone understand that the government has a role by attending to these demands in order to reposition Nigerian university education. Another reason why the leadership must be guide to ensure cordial relationship between ASUU and government, Understanding the interest of each party will help us know who should be first shift ground before the other. Yes the government must acknowledge the grounds of ASUU so that other issues of defense can become secondary

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. In order to cushion the effect of ASUU strike full university autonomy should be granted to universities so as to pave way for them to function effectively in all ramification and to keep ASUU separate from other labour management traditions which is not common with ASUU government relation
2. The lack of commitment on the part of government characterized by underfunding of universities should be a history not a reality in order to end ASUU incessant industrial actions.
3. Lecturers should have a well-structured salary system which will sustain them even in retirement because their entire life has been dedicated for academics and implementation of policies and development of societal agenda which will keep the younger generation close to traditional and universal values.
4. The government should make education sector the number one priority and avoid misdirected political dealings because empty promises made to ASUU members and the general university education system have had negative effects on the student's performance thereby making the Nigerian students unemployable in the labour market.
5. As a matter of policy, the executives and legislators of both federal and states should have their children in public universities in Nigeria.
6. That the federal and state governments should always respect the agreed negotiated agreement between them and the academic staff union of universities to avoid incessant strike actions

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