

LECTURER' AND STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF IMPACTS OF INCESSANT STRIKE ACTION ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF SOCIAL STUDIES STUDENTS IN COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN SOUTH WEST NIGERIA

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Abstract

This paper examined the perceptions of lecturers and students on impacts of incessant strikes on academic performance of students of social studies in Colleges of Education in South West Nigeria. 420 respondents were randomly sampled from 4 Colleges of Education that were also randomly sampled from the South West zone of Nigeria. A self- designed 20 item questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection while the t-test statistical too was used to test the three hypotheses generated for the study. The study revealed that there is a consensus on the fact that incessant strikes impact negatively on students' academic performance. There were no significant differences in the perception of lecturers and students, Male and Female students as well as students from federal and state College of Education. Recommendations were made on how incessant strike can be brought under control to mitigate their effects.

Keywords: *Impacts of Incessant Strike, Perception of Lecturers and Students, Academic Performance, Social Studies.*

Introduction

Students across various institutions of higher learning in Nigeria are constantly faced with industrial action, either by the academic or non-academic staff union of the various institutions. This is usually caused by disagreements or lack of understanding between the government and members of the academic community and often results in a deadlock that usually paralyses academic activities and disrupts the academic calendar. The fundamental reason that unions embark on strike action is to show their displeasure about a particular circumstance or situation that they are experiencing. This may be an agitation for a pay rise, provision of more favourable working conditions or improved welfare packages. The ultimate aim is to get a better condition of service for the workforce. The end result, as observed by Nwaze (2019) “is usually to effect a change and turn around in that situation.”

It has been established that conflict is inevitable in all human organizations. There is always a clash of interests especially in a Government / Labour relationship where the government, like all employers, would always want to maximize profit paying lip service to the welfare of the employees. Money issue is almost always the major problem. There are cases of delay or non-payment of salaries and allowances, non-payment of leave bonuses, lack of promotion of workers and non-provision of suitable working environments. All these lacks become unbearable to the workers when they compare their situations to the extravagant living of the political class who contribute next to nothing to the baking of the national cake but always angling to take the lion’s share.

Strike actions that are embarked upon by staff of higher institutions of learning have almost become an annual routine. Between 1999 and 2016, 2015 was the only year when there was no disruption of academic activities in Nigerian universities. In fact in 2003 and 2014, universities were under lock and keys for 6months. In 2010 they were locked up for 5months and 1 week. For other years the duration ranges between 3days and 5months (Yusuff, 2017).

Statement of the problem

Eckson (2017) opined that incessant strikes hinder the academic performance of the students. As learning is suspended for a long period, the students’ reading abilities fall. Some learnt concepts are forgotten. He opined further that most protracted strikes distort the school calendar. In a similar vein, Odubela (2012) observed that disruption in academic programmes occasioned by strike action breeds disappointment, frustration, emotional and psychological trauma and a situation that dampen human development.

Corroborating the above, Arukaimo (2013) asserted that idling youths at home could cause security problems. This is in tandem with Eckson’s (2017) thoughts that “strike periods have the tendency of leading undergraduates into some social vices like prostitution, oil bunkering etc., as an idle man is the devil’s workshop.”

Purpose of the study

Yusuf (2019) reported that statistics from National Universities Commission (2002) revealed that from 1992 to 2002 ASUU embarked on strikes 23 times to drive home demands. The last one in 2003 lasted for more than 6 months. As it is with universities, so do we have in other tertiary institutions. It is like all institutions are in a race to outdoor one another in the strike action thing.

A lot of man hour is lost to these strike actions and students often have to stay beyond the normal years in school to be able to complete their academic programmes. Even at that, when strikes are suspended and normal lessons begin, the desire to make up for the lost time often predisposes the institutions to rush the remaining academic programmes putting the students and the staff under severe academic pressure.

It is in view of the above that this study sets out to examine the impacts of incessant strike action on the academic performance of Social Studies students in Colleges of Education in southwestern Nigeria. It is also the focus of this study to examine the perceptions of lecturers and students on impacts of incessant strike on the academic performance of students.

Hypotheses to be tested

To achieve the purpose for which the study was designed, the following hypotheses were generated:

Ho1: There is no significant difference between the perceptions of lecturers and students on impacts of incessant strike on academic performance of Social Studies students in Colleges of Education in South West Nigeria.

Ho2: There is no significant difference in the perceptions of Male and Female students on impacts of incessant strike on academic performance of Social Studies students in Colleges of Education in South West Nigeria.

Ho3: There is no significant difference in the perceptions of students from federal Colleges of Education and those from state Colleges of Education on impacts of incessant strike on academic performance of Social Studies students in Colleges of Education in South West Nigeria.

Methodology

This is a descriptive survey design. Random sampling technique was used to select the four Colleges of Education and the 420 respondents that served as the sample for this study. From the sampled Colleges a total of 20 lecturers and 400 students were randomly drawn; 5 lecturers and 100 students were drawn per college.

The instrument used for collecting data was a 20 item questionnaire designed by the researcher to elicit responses on the subject matter under survey. A four point Likert's rating scale was used to measure the respondents' reactions to the 20 items of the questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of two sections.

Section A sought general information on the respondents. This includes their sex, college, school and whether the respondent is a lecturer or a student and the ownership of the institution the respondent belongs to.

Section B is made up of the 20 statements on impacts of incessant strikes on academic performance of Social Studies students in Colleges of Education in south west Nigeria.

Validity of Instrument: The instrument was face validated by senior colleagues in the research area and was pilot tested at The College of Education, Lanlate. The reliability coefficient was calculated to be 0.82 using Kuder Richardson's Kr20. The questionnaires were personally administered by the researcher to lecturers and students of the sampled colleges and their responses were collected and scored as follow:

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
4	3	2	1
For positive statements			

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
4	3	2	1
For negative statements			

Data generated were analyzed with the aid of the student t-test statistical tool.

Findings / Results

Hypothesis 1: This hypothesis states that there is no significant difference in the perception of lecturers and students on impacts of incessant strikes on academic performance of Social Studies students in Colleges of Education in South West Nigeria.

Table 1: Test of differences in perception of lecturers and students on impact of incessant strike on academic performance of Social Studies students in Colleges of Education.

Group	\bar{X}	Diff In \bar{X}	SD	df	T-obs.	T-cal.	P	Decision
Lecturer	34.4	-2.8	17.16	418	-0.15	2.02	0.05	NS
Students	41.6		20.51					

NS: Not Significant.

To test the null hypothesis above, the scores were analyzed. The mean of lecturers' views was 34.4 while that of students was 41.6. These means were further subjected to a t-test analysis. The result indicates that there is no significant difference between the perceptions of lectures and students since the t-value calculated -0.15 is less than the critical t-value of 2.02 at 418 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis is therefore retained.

Hypothesis 2: This hypothesis states that there is no significant difference in the perceptions of Male and Female students on impacts of incessant strike on academic performance of Social Studies students in Colleges of Education in South West Nigeria.

Table 2: Test of differences in perception of male and female students on impacts of incessant strike on academic performance of Social Studies students in Colleges of Education.

Group	\bar{X}	Diff In \bar{X}	SD	df	T-obs.	T-cal.	P	Decision
Male students	12.51	-1.47	5.27	398	-2.58	1.96	0.05	NS
Students	13.98		5.90					

NS: Not Significant.

The data presented in table 2 above indicate that the mean for male students' views was 12.51 and that of female was 13.98. The means were subjected to a t-test analysis. The result show there is no significant difference between the perceptions of both Male and Female students since the calculated value -2.58 is less than the table value which is 1.96. The null hypothesis is therefore retained.

Hypothesis 3: This hypothesis states that there is no significant difference in the perceptions of students from federal Colleges of Education and those from state Colleges of Education on impacts of incessant strike on academic performance of social studies students in Colleges of Education in Southwestern Nigeria.

Table 3: Test of difference in the perceptions of students from federal Colleges of Education and state Colleges of Education on impacts of incessant strike on academic performance.

Group	\bar{X}	Diff In \bar{X}	SD	df	T-obs.	T-cal.	P	Decision
Students of Federal Colleges	13.06	0.31	5.82	398	0.54	1.96	0.05	NS
Students of State Colleges	12.75		5.50					

NS: Not Significant.

The data presented in table 3 above indicate that the mean for students from federal Colleges of Education was 13.06 with a standard deviation of 5.82 while that of students from state Colleges of Education was 12.75 with a standard deviation of 5.50. The means were subjected to t-test analysis and it was found that there was no statistical significant difference in the perceptions of the groups of students since the calculated t-value 0.54 is less than 1.96 which is the table value. Hence the null hypothesis is retained.

Discussion

The result of the tests shows that both lecturers and students in college of education agree that incessant strike impacts on the academic performance of students of social studies in Colleges of Education in Southwestern Nigeria. This is a worrisome trend. This is more so because, as opined by Olusegun (2014), instability in school calendar through incessant strike elongates study periods and hampers academic activities. The study also revealed that there is no significant difference in the perception of Male and Female students on impacts of incessant strike on academic performance. This is in tandem with Kazeem and Ige's (2010) findings. Yusuf (2017) has a similar observation on his study of Nigerian undergraduates' views of impacts of strike actions. As asserted by Odebela (2012), an effective learning or an enhanced academic performance is achieved by the successful covering of the course outline before examinations. This is not likely to be achieved in a situation where incessant strike is the order of the day.

Strike actions make students idle. This is worrisome too because an idle hand, they say, is the devil's workshop. Students are predisposed to social vices and criminal tendencies when they have too long free periods arising from incessant strikes. Yusuf (2017) observed that during strike actions students may engage in unproductive activities such as sexual immorality, cyber crimes, pools betting, playing video games, gossips, watching films and reading comic materials for entertainment instead of reading for academic purposes. All these negatively impact on their academic performances.

98.6% of the respondents agreed that incessant strike actions are often caused by government's lack of responsiveness to staff demands. 97.01% agreed that strike actions paralyze all academic activities and lead to disruption of the academic calendars. 96.87% of the respondents agreed that if incessant strike actions are suspended and normal school programmes resume, students are hardly given enough time to make up for the lost time. As such, quality of graduates produced becomes questionable. This agrees with Adesulu's (2014) submission that strike action affected the quality of graduate from Nigerian universities as the time lost for lecture delivery due to strikes was not gained after the strike.

Recommendations

In view of the findings of this study the following are hereby recommended:

1. That since a conducive learning atmosphere is a sine-qua-non for quality education, education should be properly and adequately funded to encourage effective teaching and research and prevent incessant strike actions.
2. That governments / managements should always honour agreements entered into with labour union to engender industrial harmony.
3. That various unions in our institutions of higher learning should device other means of resolving industrial conflict than incessant strikes that have been found to be counterproductive. Use of token strike is recommended.
4. That governments / managements should always demonstrate good leadership skills and motivation by carrying employees along, setting moderate achievable goals and adopting incentive pay methods.
5. That both sides should be ready to shift grounds as this is a basic ingredient of collective bargaining. No one side should stick to his gun. Everyone must be ready to give some concessions.

Conclusion

This paper examined the perceptions of lecturers and students on impacts of incessant strikes on academic performance of students of social studies in Colleges of Education in South West Nigeria. The study revealed that there is a consensus on the fact that incessant strikes impact negatively on students' academic performance. There were no significant differences in the perception of lecturers and students, Male and Female students as well as students from federal and state College of Education. Recommendations were made on how incessant strike can be brought under control to mitigate their effects.

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