
ACADEMIC STAFF UNION OF UNIVERSITIES (ASUU) STRIKE AND STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN SELECTED PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES FROM NORTH CENTRAL, NORTH WEST, SOUTH WEST AND SOUTH- SOUTH GEO-POLITICAL ZONES IN NIGERIA (2010 – 2022)

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) strike and how it affects students' academic performance, a study of selected universities from the Four Geo-Political zones in Nigeria. The Geo-Political Zones are South-South, South-West, North-Central, and North-West while the universities are the University of Uyo, Uyo, Akwa-Ibom State, Niger Delta University Amassoma, Bayelsa State, Ekiti State University Ado-Ekiti, University of Lagos, Lagos State, University of Abuja, Federal Capital Territory, Federal University of Agriculture Makurdi, Benue State, Bayero University Dutsin-ma, Kano State and Federal University Dutsinma-Dutsinma, Katsina State. ASUU's strike dates back four decades. The issues behind ASUU's strike include inadequate funding of public universities, poor remuneration for lecturers, and the imposition of the integrated personnel and payroll information system (IPPIS), etc. ASUU's strike actions have had an overwhelming effect on university education in Nigeria. ASUU strike forces students to stay at home for months without engaging in any academic activity. The long period students spend at home without studying their books will negatively impact their academic performance when the strike is eventually called off. It is against this backdrop that this examined how ASUU's strike affects the academic performance of students in Nigeria's public universities. The study adopted the survey research design method. Thus questionnaires and oral interviews were used to obtain the primary data from the respondents in the above universities. A total of 6000 questionnaires were administered to respondents and 4,148 questionnaires were retrieved. The arithmetic mean was used to analyze the data collected. The findings revealed that poor funding of public universities in the country and the imposition of the Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS) were the major causes of ASUU's strike. The findings also revealed that students lose interest in their studies due to the prolonged period they spend at home. The study recommended amongst others that the government should set up a special grant to be released annually to public universities. The university Senates should ensure that whenever ASUU calls off its strike lecturers should cover the course contents before examinations are set for students.

Key words: ASUU, Industrial Dispute, Strike, Academic Performance.

INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the most essential needs in our life. Education is one of the keys that helps to unlock and drive any society towards socio-economic development. It is on this premise that countries all over the world give serious attention to providing quality education for their citizens. Adamu and Nwogo in Monogbe and Monogbe (2019) maintained that education plays a leading role in the transformation of countries from developing to developed nations.

Nigeria's education system comprises primary, secondary, and tertiary. While primary and secondary education is the foundation level for preparing pupils into higher educational institutions, tertiary education is an advanced education system in which students are trained, and developed to become professionals in their respective disciplines and for career advancement. In Nigeria, tertiary education is provided by Monotechnics, Colleges of Education, Polytechnics, and Universities. Of all the institutions mentioned above, it is the university that provides the highest level of education leading to the award of Bachelor's, Master's, and Ph.D. Degrees. University is the fortress of knowledge for building future leaders.

It is sad to say that public universities in Nigeria are facing a lot of challenges. One such challenge is the incessant strike embarked upon by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU). The root causes of the ASUU strike include inadequate funding of public universities, imposition of the Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS) in federal universities, non release of earned academic allowance to lecturers, poor remuneration, the proliferation of universities particularly by state government without adequate funding of existing ones and the failure of the federal government to implement agreement entered to ASUU.

The failure of the government to address the above-mentioned issues has prompted ASUU to embark on a series of industrial actions in the past two decades. From 2010 to 2022, ASUU embarked on eight (8) industrial actions. ASUU spent over 1,068 days in these strike actions which is more than two academic sessions. During these strikes, all academic activities such as lectures, conferences, seminars, etc. are suspended forcing students to stay at their homes for months. There is no doubt the ASUU strike actions will affect the standards of university education and by extension the academic performance of students in public universities.

It is against this backdrop that this study examined how ASUU strike actions impact students' academic performance in public universities in Nigeria.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

For more than two decades, ASUU and the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) have been at loggerheads over several issues relating to university education in the country which has ended up in industrial actions. These issues include poor remuneration and conditions of service of academic staff in government-owned universities, poor funding, and infrastructural decay in public universities, the proliferation of public universities without adequate funding, lack of autonomy for universities which limits academic staff from carrying out research, scholarship, and innovation, as well as the introduction of Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS) in Federal Government, owned universities (Bello & Isah, 2016)

These issues have escalated and have resulted in resentment between ASUU and the Federal Government. The issues mentioned above have resulted in an industrial dispute between ASUU and the Federal Government prompting ASUU to embark on a series of strike actions. These strike actions often lead to the shutting down of public universities across the country.

ASUU strike forced students to stay at home for months without doing anything. Even the knowledge acquired before the strike commenced is forgotten because the zeal to study is no longer there.

Furthermore, the shutting down of public universities by the ASUU strike also disrupts the university academic calendar. When the ASUU is strike is called off or suspended, students are rushed into writing their examination without adequate time for preparation. The result of this rush-rush approach to learning is that most students perform poorly in their examinations.

Premised on the above problem, the study examined how ASUU's strike affects the academic performance of students in Nigeria's public universities.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS.

The study will be guided by the following research questions:

- (i) what are the causes of the ASUU strike?
- (ii) how did the ASUU strike affect students' academic performance in public universities?
- (iii) How does the ASUU strike affect lecturers' commitment to students' academic performance?

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study aimed to achieve the following objectives.

- (i) identify the causes of the ASUU strike in Nigerian public universities.
- (ii) examine how ASUU strike affect students' academic performance in public universities.
- (iii) assess how ASUU strike affect lecturers' commitment to students' academic performance?

CONCEPTUAL REVIEW/THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

INDUSTRIAL DISPUTE

Dispute also known as conflict is inevitable in any work environment or organization. This is because the goal of the employer and the employees are always opposed to each other. While the employer seeks to maximize profit and elongate the working hour, the employee, on the other hand, tend to shorten the hours of work for the day, and demand better wage, better welfare, a decent work environment, and good condition of service. These demands from employees oftentimes result to dispute between employers and their employees.

The Trade Dispute Act which was Amended in 2004, sees trade dispute as an alleged dispute; a dispute between unions, a grievance, a dispute of interest, or any dispute over the application or the interpretation of any law relating to employment, the term and conditions of employment of any employee or any class of employees, or the physical conditions under which employee or class of employees may be required to work, the entitlement of any person or group of person to any benefit under an existing collective agreement, the existence or non-existence of any collective agreement, the dismissal, employment, suspension from employment, retrenchment, reemployment or reinstatement of any person or group of person, the recognition or non-recognition of an organization seeking to represent employees in the determination of their terms and condition or employment; or whether or not a dispute does exist. The above definition shows that industrial dispute goes beyond employers and employees. It can be among individuals, groups of individuals, or different unions operating in the same organization.

NATURE/TYPES OF INDUSTRIAL DISPUTE

Industrial dispute can be divided into two categories which are discussed below:

(i) **Individual Dispute:** The foundation of industrial dispute is when an individual is denied what rightly is due to him/her in the organization. Most workers due to one reason or the other are intentionally denied their rights by the management of the organization. For example, promotion and annual salary increment is the right of every worker who meets the laid down conditions and criteria for promotion in the organization. When a worker who is due for promotion is intentionally denied the promotion even when the worker in question meets all the conditions and criteria required for the promotion, it becomes a dispute between the worker and the organization. Individual dispute have been a major source of industrial conflict in Nigeria particularly in public organizations. Individual disputes sometimes leads to full blown industrial crisis as a result of solidarity other workers shared with the individual in the organization or sister union in similar organization or institution. This position is supported by Akinbode (2019) who stated that individual dispute may turn into collective dispute whether there is union or not. It is commonly said in the labour movement that “an injury to one, is an injury to all”. This labour slogan has motivated many workers and labour leaders to embark on industrial actions even when the issue in questions does not directly touch or concern them. It is worthy to point out the sack of forty nine (49) lecturers by the university of Ilorin management that became a collective dispute for Academic Staff Union of Universities prompted the union to embark on one-week warning strike in May 2008 to press for a range of demands including the re-instatement of the forty nine lecturers who were dismissed from university of Ilorin in 1996 (Bello and Isa, 2016). It is important to point out that individual dispute which sometime is taken less serious may turn into a very serious industrial dispute that may adversely affect the organization in the long run.

(ii) **Collective Dispute:** Collective dispute is the dispute involving a group or the entire workforce in the organization. Collective dispute between employers and employee has to do with issues like conditions of work or service, wages and social benefits as well as freedom of employees to form and join any trade union of their choice. Akinbode (2019) averred that collective dispute involves denial of rights that is perceived to affect a group of workers in an organization. He stated that issues in collective disputes often centers on wages and salary, allowances, non-remittance of pension deduction and other working conditions. Collective dispute is the most portent of all industrial disputes since it involves the whole workforce in the organization. Most often, collective dispute lead to full blow industrial action which sometimes last for weeks or even months. The dispute between the Federal Government and the Academic Staff Union of Universities is a good example of collective dispute as it affects lecturers’ in public Universities across Nigeria.

Collective disputes can be divided into two sub-categories: rights disputes and interests’ disputes. A rights dispute arises where there is disagreement over the implementation or interpretation of statutory rights, or the rights set out in an existing collective agreement. For example disagreement on salary increase and annual salary increment in the public service can be seen as right dispute. In contrast, an interest dispute concerns cases where there is disagreement over the determination of rights and obligations, or the modification of those already in existence. Interest disputes typically arise in the context of collective bargaining where a collective agreement does not exist or is being renegotiated (International Labour Office, 2007).

STRIKE

The right to strike is recognized as one of the fundamental rights of workers in any work environment. It is against this backdrop that the International Labour Organization’s

Committee on Freedom of Association argued that the right to strike is one of the potent means open to workers' unions for the promotion, protection, and preservation of their economic and social interests within and outside the workplace (Gamie *et al.*, 2020). The philosophy behind strike is firmly rooted in human dignity granted to each individual worker and not waivable under any circumstance.

The first strike in Nigeria occurred in 1945, after failure of protracted presentations to the government for salary increase to meet the very high increase in cost of living. About one hundred and fifty thousand (150,000) Clerical and Non-Clerical workers in the Nigerian civil service came together in a general strike that affected all government departments (Gamie, et al., 2020). Since then, strike has become an instrument for workers in Nigeria both in the public and private sector to express their grievance towards their employers on issues that bothers on their economic and social interest.

Ohadinma and Iwuoha (2010) averred that strike is the temporary stoppage of work by a group of employees in order to express a grievance or enforce demands. Flippo in Ohadinma and Iwuoha (2010) sees strike as a concerted and temporary withholding of employee services from the employer for the purpose of extracting greater concessions in the employment relationship than the employer is willing to grant at the bargaining table.

Kempner in Onah (2015) averred that strike is the continuous cessation of work on the part of employees in an organized sector. He added that strike is an extreme form of industrial dispute and is also regarded as the ultimate sanction which gives reality to collective bargaining.

In the opinion of Onah (2015), strike is the strongest weapon by which workers attempt to compel their employers to meet their demand by force. He went further to add that strike is one of four ways commonly used in settling industrial dispute. The other ways are meditation or conciliation, arbitration and compulsory investigation.

The principal law governing trade dispute in Nigeria, that is, the Trade Dispute Act of 1976 defines strike as:

the cessation of work by a body of persons employed acting in combination, or a concerted refusal or a refusal under a common understanding of any number of persons employed to continue to work for an employer in consequence of a dispute, done as a means of compelling their employer or any person or body of persons employed, or to aid other workers in compelling their employer or any persons or body of persons employed, to accept or not to accept terms of employment and physical conditions of work; and in this definition- (a) "cessation of work" includes deliberately working at less than usual speed or with less than usual efficiency; and (b) "refusal to continue to work" includes a refusal to work at usual speed or with usual efficiency" (section 48).

From the foregoing, strike or industrial action is the partial or total withdrawal of labour supply by workers as a result of a dispute between employer and employees. Such dispute may arise due to poor condition of service, poor working environment, refusal to implement agreement reached with workers etc.

It is worthy to point out from the above discussion that the instrument of strike should not be abused by workers. In other words, workers should not embark on strike at the slightest provocation from their employers. Workers should know when to embark on industrial action in order for their demands to be met.

TYPES OF STRIKES

Industrial actions or strikes can be classified in different ways. The classification is based on the reasons behind the strike and what the workers intend to achieved from embarking on the strike.

(i) **Economic Strike:** This type of strike has to do with economic matters workers especially labour demand for better wages, salary increase etc. In other words, workers embark on economic strike for improve emolument. In Nigeria, economic strike has dominated most of the strikes embarked upon by labour unions.

(ii) **Sympathy Strike:** Sympathy strike is a strike embarked by a labour union to show solidarity to another union by joining them in a strike that does not directly affect them. For instance, ASUU and SSANU can show solidarity to one another through sympathy strike.

(iii) **Picketing:** This type of strike occurs when union members station their self at the entrance of company to prevent customers and other people from patronizing the company's products or services. Section 43 of Trade Union Act of 1973, protects workers right to picket an organization. Picketing can turn violent especially when the management of company or organization wants to force themselves into their office and the workers refuse to allow them into the organization (Ohadinma & Iwuoha, 2010).

(iv) **Warning Strike:** This is a type industrial action undertaken by labour union to serve as a warning signal to the concerned management or employer informing them to meet certain demands of the worker of which failure to do so will lead to full blown strikes. Warning strike can last up to one month depending on the decision of the union members.

(v) **Work-to-Rule:** Work to rule is a type of strike action whereby workers keep strictly to their schedule of duties. In other words, the workers resume work at the official time in the morning and leave their offices exactly at official closing time even though there are customers or other official issues to attend to. It is a deliberate refusal by workers to continue beyond the official working hour even when there is a convincing reason to do so.

(vi) **Secondary Boycotts:** Secondary boycott is a type of strike when for instance a union demanding for wage increase from its organization or management lobbies company B or C not to deal or transact business with the organization until the union's demands are met. It is important point out that for this type of strike to be effective, the third party companies (company B or C) must be related to the organization which the union is demanding the wage increase from. Example, the third party companies may be company A's suppliers, agents or distributors.

THE HISTORY OF ACADEMIC STAFF UNION OF UNIVERSITIES (ASUU)

The Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) is a labour union that emerged from government workers' interactions to improve Nigeria's educational system. The body came into existence in 1978 to succeed the Nigerian Association of University Teachers (NAUT). Membership of NAUT as at 1965 was drawn from the University of Ibadan, University of Nigeria (Nsukka), Ahmadu Bello University (Zaria) and Obafemi Awolowo University (Ile-Ife) and University of Lagos. The University of Benin, Edo State later joined (Osagiobare *et al.*, 2019).

According to Falola (20121), the formation of ASUU is traceable to the examination of the country's academic condition, which was then heading towards a crisis. As a labour union of intellectuals, ASUU seeks not only the socio-political and economic/welfare interest of its members within the framework of promoting the cause of university education in Nigeria, but the entire good of Nigerians and Nigeria (ASUU, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, n.d). The objectives of ASUU as contained in Rule 2 of the union's constitution are as follows:

- (i) to organize all academic staff who engaged by universities and who are qualified for membership
- (ii) to regulate the relation between academic staff and employers and between members.
- (iii) to establish and maintain a high standard of academic performance and professional practice
- (iv) to establish and maintain a just and proper conditions of service for its members.
- (v) to advance the education and training of its members.
- (vi) to provide benefits and other assistance to its members.
- (vii) to encourage the participation of its members in the affairs of the University system of a nation.
- (viii) to protect and advance the socio-economic and cultural interest of the nation and
- (ix) to pursue such other objectives that are lawful and are not inconsistent with the spirit and practice of trade unionism (ASUU constitution, 1978, as amended in 2006).

Ogbette *et al.*, (2017) averred that beside the professional goals of ASUU as a labour union, there are some elements of economic and political goals pursued by ASUU. They stated that the economic goals emanates from the political consideration because those who control the political sphere also determined who get what how when and under what conditions.

ASUU STRIKES FROM 2010 – 2022 IN NIGERIA

Historical struggle of lecturers in Nigeria's public universities dates back to over four (4) decades. Thus, the first strike by university lecturers' occurred in 1973, under the defunct Nigerian Association of University Teachers (NAUT). The strike was called to negotiate wage increase for lecturers in public Universities. At the time, NAUT was not really a strong trade union and it took a mere threat from the military government of General Gowon to halt the strike (Bello & Isa, 2016). Since the first strike in 1973, ASUU has embarked on series of strike actions on issues relating to public universities in the country.

For instance, in 2010, ASUU went on indefinite strike that paralyzed academic activities in public universities across the country. The strike which started July 22, 2010 to January 2011 lasted over five months. The strike was called due to the Federal Government failure to implement the Memorandum of Action that was agreed with ASUU in 2009 (Tolu-Kolawole, 2022).

In 2011, the National Executive Council (NEC) of ASUU met from Tuesday 29th November to Thursday 1st December 2011, at the University of Port-Harcourt, Rivers State to review among other things the level of implementation of the 2009 ASUU/FGN agreement, the extent of compliance with the 2011 ASUU/FGN Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the agreement which include: Government unilateral dissolution of University's Governing Council; the on-going institutional accreditation and the state of the Nation including the issue of alleged removal of fuel subsidy. The lack of understanding between ASUU and Federal Government on the above mentioned issues led to an indefinite strike by ASUU which lasted for fifty nine (59) days (Tolu-Kolawole, 2022).

Again in 2013, the failure on the part of the Federal Government to review the retirement age of professors from 65 to 70, increased budgetary allocation to the education sector among

other demands led to another industrial action by ASUU. The strike which lasted for five months and fifteen days started on 1st of July 2013 and the strike was called off on 17th of December 2013 (Bello & Isah, 2016; Lawal, et al., 2021).

There was no disruption of academic activities between 2014 and 2015 by ASUU. However, in 2016, ASUU downed tooled for seven (7) days over unresolved issues in previous strikes which the Federal Government agreed to address. In 2017, ASUU, declared indefinite strike over unresolved and contentious issues with the Federal Government. The union declared the indefinite strike at a briefing at Labour House, Abuja. ASUU President, Professor Biodun Ogunyemi while briefing journalist said “lecturers’ across the country were getting increasingly frustrated, distracted and disenchanted”. The indefinite strike action which commenced on 13th August 2017 nationwide was total and comprehensive. The strike was later called off on 17th September 2017 with the Federal Government agreeing to implement ASUU demands (Ewuzie & Chukwuma, 2020; Agbakwuru, 2017).

In 2018, Nigerian University students experienced another disruption of their academic calendar and activities as ASUU embarked on another industrial action. The strike which started on 4th November 2018 was triggered by government failure to implement the agreement reached with ASUU on November 2016. The strike was suspended after three months precisely on the 8th of February 2019. The Minister of Labour and Employment Dr. Chris Ngige announced that government had resolved the eight contentious issues that led to the strike. He added that ASUU agreed with the government that 25 billion naira will be released for the revitalization of public Universities in Nigeria (Tolu-Kolawole, 2022).

In March 23, 2020, academic activities in public Universities across the country was once again paralyzed as ASUU declared an indefinite strike. The strike was declared the same week President Buhari imposed a lockdown in the country to curb the spread of Coronavirus. Issues that led to the strike action include unpaid salaries and allowances of ASUU members and the imposition of Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS) in Federal Universities among others. The strike which is one of the longest strike lasted for 9 months and was eventually called off on December 23, 2020 (Adedigba, 2019).

In February 14, 2022, ASUU embarked on another strike action that lasted for 8 months. The issues that lead to the 2022 ASUU strike include release of the revitalization funds for schools, the payment of earned academic allowances to lecturers, and the release of whitepapers from the reports of the presidential visitation panels. Other demand put forward by ASUU is usage of the University Transparency and Accountability Solution (UTAS) as a payment platform for university workers as against the Integrated Personnel Payroll Information System (IPPIS). The strike was later called off in 14th October 2022 after the intervention of the Speaker of the House Representative Rt. Hon. Femi Gbajabiamila, and other well-meaning Nigerians (Simon, 2022).

The table below shows a summary of ASUU industrial actions from 2010 to 2022

S/N	Year	Regime	Number Days/Weeks/Months
1	2010	Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan	5 months, 1 week
2	2011	Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan	3 months
3	2013	Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan	5 months, 13 days
4	2016	Major-General Muhammadu Buhari (Rtd)	1 week warning strike
5	2017	Major-General Muhammadu Buhari (Rtd)	1 month, 6 days
6	2018	Major-General Muhammadu Buhari (Rtd)	over 3 months
7	2020	Major-General Muhammadu Buhari (Rtd)	9 months
8	2022	Major-General Muhammadu Buhari (Rtd)	8 months

Source: (Bello & Isa, 2016; (Tolu-Kolawole, 2022; Lawal, et al., 2021; Ewuzie & Chukwuma, 2020; Agbakwuru, 2017; Adedigba, 2019).

SOME CAUSES OF ASUU STRIKE

(i) **Poor Remuneration for Lecturers:** Every worker needs a better wage in order to meet their basic needs and that of their extended family members. The demand for better wage for public university lecturers in Nigeria is one of ASUU that has prompted embarking on strike actions in recent times.

Comparing the remunerations in the Nigerian public service with the university system, Onyeonoru in Bello and Isa (2016) averred that at independence in October 1960, the salary of the Prime Minister of Nigerian was only eight hundred pounds (£800) more than that of the Principal, that is, the future Vice-Chancellor of the University College Ibadan while the later earned more than a Nigerian Army Commander and General. The Prime Minister personal emolument was four thousand five hundred pounds (£4,500) while the Principal of the University College Ibadan earned three thousand, seven hundred and fifty pounds (£3,750) and that of the Army Major General and Commissioner was three thousand five hundred and eighty pounds (£3,580).

Today, public university lecturers in Nigeria are grossly underpaid when compared to their counterpart in other countries and even in neighbouring country like Ghana.

Commenting on the poor state of salaries of university lecturers' in the country, the ASUU national President, Prof. Emmanuel Osodeke, averred that while a Professor in Nigerian university earn \$700 per month, in Ghana, a Professor is paid \$3,000 as monthly salary and in the United Kingdom, a Professor earn around £8,000 to £10,000 as monthly salary. The ASUU President added that lecturers' are still currently earning the same salary they use to earn since 2009 (Akasike, 2022).

The failure of the government to increase the salaries of lecturers in public universities in spite of the high rate of inflation which has eaten deep into the already meager salaries of lecturers is one of the reasons why ASUU has embarked on series of strike actions in the country.

(ii) Inadequate Funding of Public Universities: This is another major issue behind ASUU’s persistent industrial action in Nigeria. The agitation for funding of public universities by ASUU is premised on the deplorable state of government owned universities across the country. Federal and State Governments in Nigeria have not given university education the needed attention in terms of funding and upgrading of infrastructural facilities across university campuses in the country.

From 2010 to 2022, the budgetary allocation to the entire education sector fall short of UNESCO recommendation of 26 percent of the annual budget allocation to public education in developing country. Furthermore, at the World Education Forum final report, a UNESCO document titled Education for All, (EFA), 2000 – 2015” 15 percent to 20 per cent was recommended as international benchmark for all nations to achieve the honourable goal of ensuring education for all (Bakare, 2021).

The table below shows the Federal Government budgetary allocation to public education from 2010 to 2022.

S/N	Year	Allocation to Education (₦)	Percentage (%) of The Total Budget.
1	2010	249.09 billion	4.83
2	2011	93.8 billion	9.3
3	2012	468.3 billion	10.1
4	2013	499.7 billion	8.54
5	2014	494.7 billion	10.5
6	2015	484.2billion	10.79
7	2016	369.6 billion	7.9
8	2017	550.5 billion	7.34
9	2018	605.8 billion	7.04
10	2019	620.5 billion	7.05
11	2020	671.07 billion	6.7
12	2021	742.5 billion	5.68
13	2022	923.7 billion	5.39

Source: (Olufemi, 2020; Wahab, 2021; Eromosele, 2022; Odigwe&Owan, 2019; Edujihe, 2018).

The above table clearly shows that the budgetary allocation to public education in Nigeria falls short of UNESCO’s recommendation of 26 percent. The highest allocation to the education sector from 2010 to 2022 is 10.7% in 2015. From 2016, there has been a steady decline in the budgetary allocation to public education in the country. The 2022 federal government budgetary allocation to education sector is the lowest allocation to public education by the Federal Government in the past ten years. The N923.7 billion which represents 5.39 percent is a 50 percent reduction from the 10.79 percent allocation to the education sector in 2015.

The continuous decline in the budgetary allocation to public education is worrisome for a country yearning for socio-economic development.

Added to the problem of poor funding of public universities, is the proliferation of universities particularly by State Governors despite the poor funding and deplorable state of existing universities. Every Governor in Nigeria wants university established in their village thereby turning the establishment of universities into constituency projects.

The need for better funding of public universities is one of the many issues causing the seemingly endless industrial actions by ASUU.

(iii) Earned Academic Allowance: Earned academic allowance is another issue that has generated dispute between the Federal Government and ASUU in recent times. According to Dakuku (2020), the earned academic allowance is an overtime allowance paid to lecturers when the class size they are teaching exceeds the maximum allowed. It also allows allowances paid to lecturers for carrying out responsibilities outside their normal official duties or engagement. These allowances were captured in the 2009 FGN/ASUU agreement. They include: postgraduate supervision allowance, teaching practice/industrial supervision/field trip allowances, honoraria for external/internal examiner (postgraduate thesis), honoraria for external moderation of undergraduate and postgraduate examinations, postgraduate study grant, external assessment of readers or professors, call duty/clinical duty/clinic hazard, responsibility allowance, excess workload allowance (FGN/ASUU Agreement, 2009).

The earned academic allowance has generated a lot of controversies between the Federal Government and ASUU since the signing of the FGN/ASUU agreement in 2009. The controversy over the earned academic allowance is as a result of from government failure to clear backlog of earned academic allowance arrears owed lecturers in federal universities.

(iv) Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS): The Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System IPPIS was one of the reform programmes that was conceptualized by the Federal Government on October 2006 to improve the effectiveness and efficiency in the storage of personnel records and administration of monthly payroll in order to enhance confidence in staff emolument, costs and budgeting (Abdulsalam, et al., 2020).

According to Effiong, et al., in Folorunso and Simeon (2021), the IPPIS was conceived to reduce or eliminate corruption and data storage in the payroll system. They stated that, in order to reduce corruption, the Nigerian government in October 2006, conceived the Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System (IPPIS) to provide a reliable and efficient database for the public service to eliminate record and payroll frauds, facilitate easy storage, facilitate manpower planning, update and retrieve personnel records for administrative and pension processes and facilitate convenient staff remuneration payment with minimal wastes and leakages.

The objectives of IPPS include the following:

- (i) to automate human resource functions and processes for improved efficiency and effectiveness in public service delivery.
- (ii) to provide for a one stop centre for reliable, consistent and accurate human resource information for decision making.
- (iii) to foster information sharing through integration with other Government ICT systems in order to eradicate duplication of data and improve accuracy.
- (iv) to enhance capacity of Government to forecast human resource requirements for the Public Service in terms of numbers and skills requirements.
- (v) to enhance efficiency and effectiveness in the management of establishment and monitoring of wage performance.
- (vi) to facilitate timely and accurate salary and pension processing for promotion of accountability and transparency of Government payroll (Abdulsalam, et al., 2020).

The Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System is currently used for payment of salaries of all Federal Government employees directly into their various bank accounts as

against the former practice where some Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) handle payment of salaries of their employees. A total of seven hundred and eleven (711) MDAs have so far enrolled in the Integrated Personnel Payroll and Information System. According to the Federal Government, IPPIS enhances transparency and checks corruption in the public service (Uzoh, 2020; Dipo, 2021).

The implementation of IPPIS in federal universities across the country is one of the if not the most contentious issues generating industrial dispute between ASUU and the Federal Government in recent times. ASUU has consistently argued that it members cannot enroll in the IPPIS because it violates the Federal University Act of 2003 which bestow on the Governing Council of each Federal Government owned University the power over administrative, financial and their personnel matters (Uzoh, 2020).

In place of IPPIS, ASUU recommended the University Transparency and Accountability Solution (UTAS) which it developed as an alternative to IPPIS to the Federal Government. The University Transparency and Accountability Solution (UTAS) that was developed by ASUU and its researchers is to handle the financial administration of staff of federal Universities monthly payroll and accounting processes.

The Federal Government has refused to accept ASUU's UTAS on the ground that it failed integrity test conducted by the National Information and Technology Development Agency, NITDA. The Federal Government through the Minister of Labour and Employment Dr. Chris Ngige stated that UTAS didn't pass 300 out of the 500 integrity text conducted on it (Agbakwuru, 2022).

The refusal of the Federal Government to accept UTAS as payment platform for lecturers in federal universities and the rejection of IPPIS by ASUU has remained a major issue leading to ASUU strike.

SOME NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF ASUU STRIKE ON STUDENTS.

(i) **Loss of Interest to Continue with the Programme:** Due to the incessant ASUU industrial action, most students have deem it fit to venture into the street in search for greener pasture in which they earn a stipend. Some students may not even go back to school upon the calling off the strike action due to the huge amount of money they are making and the doubt of getting such job that will fetch them that amount of money after graduation (Monogbe & Monogbe, 2019).

(ii) **Poor Students Academic Performance:** Studies have shown that student academic performance in examination drops upon resumption from ASUU industrial action. This is due to the fact that students are far from the school environment as such, less importance is given to reading and other form of academic activities (Monogbe & Monogbe, 2019). On the part of the lecturers', prolonged industrial strike makes them to rush academic work in order to meet up the semester and in the process some aspect of the course outline is left untouched. The net effect of this fire brigade approach to learning adversely affect students' academic performance as they perform badly in examination which in turn affect the quality of University education.

(iii) **Inconsistent Academic Calendar System:** ASUU industrial actions have led to inconsistent academic calendar in public Universities which eventually delay the graduation year of students'. Incessant ASUU strikes naturally extends the years students' spend in school with the attendant cost implication. Some undergraduates are known to spend up to seven years for a four-year course due to ASUU strikes. This has a ripple effect on some

forms of employment, like in the banking industry and military where age is an essential consideration for employment into any position.

(iv) **Financial Burden on Students and Parents:** Added to the problem of extension of students' graduation year, ASUU industrial actions has created more financial burden on students'. Many University students who stay in rented apartments, are in a spin over the lingering strike embarked upon by ASUU. As the hope of resuming school gets dimmer, students are getting calls and text messages from their landlords or agents to either renew their rent or move their belongings from the rented apartments. A house agent in Lagos, Prince Williams stated that it is in the law for house owners to demand a renewal of rent from their tenants once the rent expires, whether or not there is an ASUU strike. According to him, ASUU strike does not stop landlords from demanding a renewal of rent. "Whether you are physically present in the house or not as long as you keep your property inside that room, you are meant to pay and if you can't, you should move out of the house. It is an investment and it is meant to yield dividends for the owners," he said (Sahara Reporters, 2020).

(v) **Increase in Crime Rate:** It is rightly said that an idle mind is the devil's workshop. Most students' as a result of idleness caused by ASUU's strike venture into all kinds of criminal activities like armed robbery, kidnapping, cybercrime etc. Others engaged in gambling, political thugs' amongst others. It is important to mention that some of the hoodlums who took part in looting and destruction of public properties during the EndSARS protest were University students' who out of idleness and frustration caused by ASUU prolonged strike joined the protest to express their anger towards the government (Olufemi, 2020).

(vi) **Increase in the Rate of Examination Malpractice:** Studies have shown that the rate of examination malpractice increases whenever ASUU embarks on strike action. This may not be unconnected to the number of weeks and sometimes months that students spend at home without engaging in meaningful academic activities. Also, the rush-rush approach adopted by most universities to meet the university academic calendar whenever ASUU calls off its strike without adequate time for students to study and prepare for their examinations makes most students indulge in examination malpractice.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Academic performance like any other concept in social sciences does not have a precise meaning or definition. Hijjazi and Nagvi in Ampofo and Osei-Owusu (2015) averred that academic performance is a multidimensional construct composed of the skills, attitudes, and behaviors of a learner that contribute to academic success in the classroom. Student academic performance according Ampolo and Osei-Owusu (2015) is the degree to which a student is able to accomplish a given class work in the school setting.

Yusuf *et al.*, (2015) sees academic Performance is the outcome of students' evaluation in the educational process indicating to what level the students have achieved the educational goals as specified in the curriculum which is greatly influenced by internal and external classroom factors. Lukman (2021) opined that academic performance is a measure of a person's indicative and responsive abilities, which indicate, in an approximated fashion, what he or she has learnt as a result of an educational or training process. Fhrizz and Merlina (2021) pointed out that academic performance is the degree of knowledge demonstrated in a certain field or topic in comparison to the norm, and it is often assessed using the grade point average.

From the above definitions, academic performance is the outcome of students' evaluation in the educational activities indicating to what extent a student has achieved the educational goals his or her chosen discipline.

ASSU STRIKE AND STUDENT'S ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

Students' academic performance in Nigerian universities is grateful influenced by so many factors. Amongst such factors that can affect students' academic performance are the industrial actions embarked upon by staff of public universities.

Commenting on the negative impact of strikes on students, Okpala in Egwu (2018) opined that incessant strike actions in tertiary institutions dwindle the academic performance of students. He stated that as learning is suspended for a long period, students' abilities fall and even the knowledge acquired during the learning period is forgotten by some students. Similarly, Monogbe and Monogbe (2019) averred that students' performance in examinations drops upon resumption from strike action. This according to them is due to the fact students are far from the academic environment during the period of strike and less seriousness is given to reading and other academic activities.

In the same vein, Bakare (2021) opined that industrial actions have made most universities revise their academic calendar an act necessitated by the need to adjust and re-adjust dates due to incessant strikes. He stated further that academic sessions are canceled to accommodate new arrangements to make academic sessions conform to years of graduation. During these adjustments according to Bakare (2021), standard requirements are flouted, the stipulated number of weeks for lectures is reduced drastically while due process is abbreviated to force quantity into a constricted format. He added that the practice of consideration of results which normally passes through the committee of Deans en route Senate is short-circuited to meet mobilization for the National Youths Service. The result of this rush-rush approach is that standards are reduced and due process bypassed which eventually leads to poor students' academic performance and graduation of students that cannot stand the test of time.

Supporting Bakare's position, Kazeem and Ige in Monogbe and Monogbe (2019) averred that the disruption of academic activities resulting from industrial action embarked by ASUU has crippled the Nigerian educational system as the product of Nigerian universities is half-baked due to the disruption of the university academic calendar.

ASUU's industrial actions have no doubt had a devastating effect on the Nigerian university system and by extension the academic performance of students in public universities across the country. ASUU's strike has also watered down the quality of education produced by public universities.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study is anchored on Ralf Dahrendorf conflict theory. Ralf Dahrendorf's conflict theory was propounded in 1959. The theory arose out of the evaluation of Karl Marx's conflict theory. He accepted that Marx's position of capitalism as the cause of conflict in the 19th century was accurate; but argued that in the 20th century, it has become inappropriate as the basis for explaining the cause of conflict in modern society. Dahrendorf argued that significant changes have taken place in modern societies like Great Britain and the United States of America which are now 'post-capitalist' societies (Ajayi, 2014).

Dahrendorf averred that, far from the two main classes becoming separated, as Marx had predicted, the opposite has occurred. The percentage of skilled and semi-skilled workers has increased, likewise the size of the 'new middle class of white-collar workers such as clerks, nurses, and teachers. Inequality in income and wealth has been reduced, partly because of measures taken by the state. Social mobility has become a common thing, and more notably, the link between ownership and control in industries has been broken. Managers, rather than owners, now exercise day-to-day control of the means of production of goods and services (Ajayi, 2014). Based on these circumstances, Marxists' assertion that conflict was caused by ownership and non-ownership of wealth was no longer accepted.

In light of the above, Dahrendorf argued that conflict is not a result of the existence of the two classes (Bourgeoisie and Proletariats) identified by Marx, nor does conflict result from economic division. Rather, Dahrendorf saw conflict as being centered on authority (Ajayi, 2014). To Dahrendorf, authority is the recognized power attached to the occupation of a particular social role within an organization. All organizations as Dahrendorf averred have positions of domination and subjection. He stated that some can take decisions lawfully and issue commands, while others cannot. For instance, the government can take certain decisions that affect workers in the country, notwithstanding the wishes of the workers based on the authority and the dominant position the government occupies. It is this situation according to Dahrendorf that is the basis of conflict in modern societies. He held that the existence of dominant and subordinate positions in organizations or associations leads to different interests. Those occupying dominant positions like the Federal Government of Nigeria for instance have an interest in maintaining the social structure that gives them more authority than others. On the other hand, those in subordinate positions such as ASUU have an interest in changing it (Ajayi, 2014).

Applied within the context of the study, from Ralf Dahrendorf's theory of conflict, it can be reasonably assumed that the authority wielded by the Federal Government gives them the right to take certain decisions concerning university education in the country without consulting the unions in the university. When these decisions contradict the interest of the unions in public universities such as the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), there is bound to be conflict that may manifest through the grievances of ASUU members thereby resulting in strike action.

METHOD OF THE STUDY

The descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. Thus, questionnaires were used to obtain the primary data from the study population. The population comprises lecturers and students from the University of Uyo, Uyo, Akwa-Ibom State and Niger Delta University Amassoma, Bayelsa State in the South-South, Ekiti State University Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State and the University of Lagos, Lagos State in South West, University of Abuja, Federal Capital Territory and Federal University of Agriculture Makurdi, Benue State in North Central, Bayero University Dutsin-ma, Kano State, and Federal University Dutsinma, Katsina State in North West Geo-Political zone.

The purposive sampling technique was used to select the lecturers and the students in the above-mentioned universities for the study. A total of 6,000 questionnaires were administered to the lecturers and the students to seek their opinions on how ASUU's strike affected students' academic performance in public universities. The questionnaires were duly completed and 4, 148 were retrieved from the respondents.

The oral interview was also conducted to validate the data obtained from the questionnaires. Six persons were interviewed from each university. The arithmetic mean was used to analyze the primary data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Question 1: What are the causes of ASUU strike?

Table 1 Mean rating of the respondents on the causes of ASUU strike.

S/N	Item	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD(1)	Total	\bar{x}	Decision
1	Poor remuneration for lecturers	1972	1671	321	184	4,148		
	Weight of Responses	(7,888)	(5,013)	(642)	(184)	13,727	3.3	Agreed
2.	Non-payment of earned allowance to lecturers.	1864	1721	345	218	4,148		
	Weight of Responses	(7,456)	(5,163)	(690)	(218)	13,527	3.3	Agreed
3.	The imposition of Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS) on federal universities.	1992	1829	183	144	4,148		
	Weight of Responses	(7,968)	(5,487)	(366)	144)	13,965	3.3	Agreed
4.	Poor funding of public universities.	2038	1867	146	97	4,148		
	Weight of Responses	(8,152)	(5,601)	(292)	(97)	14,142	3.4	Agreed
	Arithmetic Weighted Mean						3.3	
	Criterion Mean						2.50	

Source: Field data (2023).

Results of the analysis of data in Table 1 show that items 1, 2, 3, and 4 have mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50. This shows that the respondents agreed that poor remuneration of lecturers, the government's failure to pay earned academic allowance to lecturers, the imposition of the Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS) in Federal Universities, and poor funding of public universities were the causes of ASUU's strike in Nigeria.

The findings in Table One are in tandem with several interviews conducted with lectures on the causes of the ASUU strike in public universities. Most of the lecturers interviewed identified poor funding of public universities, failure of the Federal Government to pay outstanding earned academic allowance to lecturers and the imposition of IPPIS in Federal Government owned universities are the major issues affecting ASUU members. They stated there are inadequate lecture halls/theaters, laboratories, hostels, workshops, and other facilities needed for effective learning in most universities across the country.

The findings from the questionnaires and the oral interviews on poor funding of public universities corroborate the University NEEDS Assessment Committee report headed by former Executive Secretary of the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND), Professor Mahmood Yakubu. The report discovered odious rot in Nigeria's university system. According to the report, many lecturers, including professors, shared offices that were

dilapidated and poorly furnished. Lecture theatres were overcrowded and classrooms, laboratories, and workshops were shared by many programmes across different faculties. The report singled out the deplorable state of most classrooms where students receive lectures in public universities across the country (Tunde, F. 2013). Similarly, Dakuku in Moses and Ogbomah (2023) identified poor funding of public universities in the country as one of the causes of the ASUU strike actions.

It is obvious from the findings that poor funding of public universities is the major cause of ASUU's strike actions. This can be seen from the interviews conducted with lecturers that revealed the dearth of infrastructural facilities needed for effective learning in most public universities in the country.

Question 2: How did the ASUU strike affect students' academic performance in public universities?

Table 2 Mean rating of the respondents on the effect of ASUU strike on students' academic performance?

S/N	Item	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD(1)	Total	\bar{x}	Decision
5	Students' loss interest in their study.	1967	1789	267	125	4,148		
	Weight of Responses	(7,868)	(5,367)	(534)	(125)	13,360	3.2	Agreed
6	It affects students' mental ability to concentrate in their study when strike is called off.	1895	1897	201	155	4,148		
	Weight of Responses	(7,580)	(5,691)	(402)	(155)	13,828	3.3	Agreed
7	Examinations are set when course content is not covered.	2091	1756	187	114	4,148		
	Weight of Responses	(8,364)	(5,568)	(374)	(114)	14420	3.4	Agreed
8	Adequate time is not given to students' to prepare for exam when ASUU strike is called off.	1986	1727	253	182	4,148		
	Weight of Responses	(7,944)	(5,181)	(506)	(182)	13,813	3.3	Agreed
	Arithmetic Weighted Mean					3.3		
	Criterion Mean					2.50		

Source: Field data (2023).

Results of the analysis of data in Table 2 show that items 5, 6, 7, and 8 have mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50. This indicates that the respondents agree that students lose interest in their studies during ASUU strike, ASUU strike also affects students' mental ability to concentrate on their studies when the strike is suspended or called off. The respondents also agreed that examinations are set when the course content is not covered whenever ASUU suspends its strike and finally, most students perform poorly in the examination due to the

prolonged ASUU strike. The result in Table 2 thus shows that ASUU's strike negatively affects students' academic performance in public universities.

The findings in Table 2 agree with several interviews conducted with students and lectures on the effect of ASUU's strike on students' academic performance in Nigeria's public universities. For example, Miss Ebriere and Emmanuel both 300-level students of Niger Delta University (NDU) in an interview averred that whenever ASUU embark on strike, they find it difficult to study their books and engaged in other academic activities. Other students interviewed at NDU stated that students are not given adequate time to prepare for examinations whenever ASUU's strike is called off. They averred that this action by the university affects their academic performance when the semester results are published.

Miss, Bose, Miss Yemi, and other students interviewed at Ekiti State University Ado-Ekiti, shared similar light concerning ASUU's strike on the academic performance of students. They stated ASUU strike always demoralizes student from studying their books. They added that students are the ones who bear the brunt of ASUU's strike because whenever ASUU calls off its strike students are asked to write their examination without adequate time preparation. Further interviews conducted with other students and lecturers show that the ASUU strike negatively affects students' performance.

The above findings from the questionnaire and the oral interviews are the tandem with Okpala in Egwu (2018) who stated that the incessant strike actions in tertiary institutions dwindle the academic performance of students. He stated that as learning is suspended for a long period, students' abilities fall and even the knowledge acquired during the learning period is forgotten by some students. Similarly, Monogbe & Monogbe (2019) averred that students' performance in examinations drops upon resumption from the strike. They added that this is due to the fact students are far from the academic environment during the period of strike and as such less seriousness is given to reading and other forms of academic activities.

The above findings clearly show that ASUU's strike actions negatively affect students' academic performance in public universities. This may not be unconnected with the short contact period students usually have with their lecturers whenever ASUU calls off or suspends its strike action. The short contact period for lectures and other academic activities will no doubt negatively impact the academic performance of students in public universities.

Question 3: How does the ASUU strike affect lecturers' commitment to students' academic performance?

Table 3. Mean rating of the respondents on the effects of ASUU’s strike on lecturer’s commitment to student academic performance.

S/N	Item	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD(1)	Total	\bar{x}	Decision
9	ASUU strike causes lecturers not to be serious with their teaching job.	1844	1741	343	220	4,148		
	Weight of Responses	(7,376)	(5,223)	(686)	(220)	13,505	3.2	Agreed
10	ASUU strike causes lecturers’ not to be committed to student academic growth.	1860	1725	337	226	4,148		
	Weight of Responses	(7,440)	(5,173)	(674)	(226)	13,513	3.2	Agreed
11	Students’ continuous assessment is not taken seriously when strike is called off.	1864	1721	345	218	4,148		
	Weight of Responses	(7,456)	(5,163)	(690)	(218)	13,527	3.3	Agreed
12	Students don’t get proper attention from lecturers when strike is called off.	1937	1819	262	130	4,148		
	Weight of Responses	(7,748)	(5,457)	(524)	(130)	13,859	3.3	Agreed
Arithmetic Weighted Mean						3.2		
Criterion Mean						2.50		

Source: Field data, 2023.

Results of the analysis of data in Table 3 show that items 9, 10, 11, and 12 have mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50. This means that the respondents agree that the ASUU strike causes lecturers not to be committed to their teaching job, the ASUU strike impacts lecturers' commitment to student academic growth, students’ continuous assessment is not taken seriously when ASUU's strike is called off and students don’t get proper attention from lecturers when the strike is called off. The result in Table 3 therefore shows that ASUU's strike affects lecturers’ commitment to students’ academic performance.

The findings in Table 3 are in tandem with interviews conducted with students and lectures on the effect of ASUU’s strike on lecturer’s commitment to students’ academic performance. Most of the lecturers interviewed averred that ASUU strikes demoralize them particularly when the government fails to meet their demands. They added that this makes lecturers not put in their best towards the students when the strike is called off.

Most of the students interviewed share similar views with their lecturers. They stated that lecturers don’t teach well anytime ASUU calls off its strike. They added that hardly you will see lecturers spend 1 hour 30 minutes in the class in a 2-hour course. Most of the lecturers just come and give areas of concentration without spending adequate time in class.

The above findings from the questionnaire and the oral interviews show that the ASUU strike affects lecturers’ commitment to students’ academic performance. It is important to note that when ASUU's demands are not met after calling off or suspending the strike action, the

commitment from lecturers towards their jobs and the students, in particular, will not be there. This will no doubt affect the academic performance of students.

CONCLUSION

The study focused on the Academic Staff Union of Universities strike action and how it affects student academic performance in public universities. ASUU strike action in Nigeria dates back four decades. Issues behind ASUU's strike can be summarized as the government's failure to implement agreements entered with lecturers in public universities. These agreements include adequate funding of public universities, better remuneration for lectures in public universities, and the removal of the Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIIS) in Federal Universities amongst others.

The ASUU strike has had a devastating effect on Nigeria's educational system and by extension the academic performance of students in public universities across the country. Each time ASUU embarks on strike action, it leads to the closure of public universities in the country. This affects lectures, conferences, workshops, etc. which sometimes prolong for several months before the strike is eventually called off.

Prolonged ASUU strike makes students lose interest in their studies and also affects their mental ability to concentrate on their studies when the strike is called. This negatively affects the academic performance of students in public universities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made based on the findings

(i) **Better Remuneration for Public Universities Lecturers:** One of the findings from the study relates to poor remuneration of lecturers as one of the causes of ASUU's strike actions in Nigeria. A university Professor in Nigeria earning below 1,000 U.S. dollars is very poor compared to their counterpart in other climes. The Federal Government should increase the wages and other emoluments of lecturers in public universities in the country in line with their counterparts in other climes.

(ii) The findings from the study revealed that from 2010 to 2022, ASUU embarked on eight (8) strike actions. These industrial actions will no doubt affect the academic performance of students and by extension the quality of graduates produced by public universities in the country. ASUU should therefore explore other means such as peaceful protests within their respective university campuses to press home their demands rather than embark on strike actions every time.

(iii) **Adequate Funding for Public Universities:** Another finding of the study is poor funding of public universities. The government should set up special grants which should be released annually to fund public universities in the country. The government should also collaborate with the Academic Staff Union Universities to ensure that such grants are properly utilized and not embezzled by university management. Also, the governing councils and management of public universities should explore other sources of funding public universities rather than rely on the government alone.

(iv) The findings in this study also revealed that whenever ASUU called off its strike action, universities rushed students to write their examinations even when the course content has not been covered by lecturers. Hence the Senate of public universities should ensure that lecturers cover the course content and adequate time should be given to students to prepare before asking them to write their semester examination.

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