
INDUSTRIAL ACTIONS AND HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA: A STUDY OF ACADEMIC STAFF UNION OF UNIVERSITIES (ASUU) IN UNIVERSITY OF PORT HARCOURT AND NIGER DELTA UNIVERSITY, AMASSOMA.

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Abstract

This study examined industrial action and how it affects human capital development in Nigeria: a study of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) at the University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State, and Niger Delta University, Amassoma, Bayelsa State. ASUU strike is predicated on a lot of issues which include poor remuneration of lecturers, poor funding of public universities, non-payment of earned academic allowance, and the imposition of the Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS) in Federal Universities. This has prompted ASUU to embark on several industrial actions to draw government attention to the above issues. Between 2011 and 2021, ASUU embarked on six industrial actions. ASUU's industrial actions which often disrupt academic activities in public universities across the country will no doubt affect human capital development in Nigeria. This is because prolonged ASUU strike causes students to lose interest in their studies, affects research and students' academic development which negatively impacts the quality of graduates produced by public universities in the country. The study adopted the survey research design. Thus questionnaires and oral interviews were used to obtain the primary data from lecturers and students from the two universities. A total of 3000 questionnaires were administered to respondents in the two universities and 2,195 questionnaires were retrieved. The data retrieved were analyzed using the arithmetic mean. The findings revealed that lack of proper funding of public universities in Nigeria, and the imposition of IPPIS in Federal Universities were the major causes of ASUU industrial actions. The findings also revealed that ASUU strike affects research and students' academic development. The study recommends alternative sources of funding for public universities. The Senate of public universities should ensure that adequate time is given to lecturers and students to prepare whenever ASUU calls off its strike before asking students to write their semester examinations.

Keywords: ASUU, Industrial Actions, Human Capital, Human Capital Development.

Introduction

The development of any country depends on its human capital. Human capital is the driving force towards the socio-economic development of any country. It is one of the most important necessities of any nation. It is on this premise that Edwin Markham posited that “in vain we build the city if we do not first build the man.” In light of Edwin Markham’s assertion, countries all over the world have paid serious attention to providing quality education for their citizens to enhance human capital development.

Education is the driving force toward human capital development therefore, investment in quality and sustainable education is crucial to human capital development. No nation can achieve sustainable economic growth and development without substantial investment in human capital (Iyoboyi & Muftau, 2014; Idongesit *et al.*, 2021). The role of education in human capital development no doubt may have influenced the colonial government in Nigeria to establish the first tertiary institution, the Yaba Higher College in 1932 to produce quality human capital that will assist the colonial government in the development of the country.

Today, tertiary education in Nigeria is provided by Colleges of Education, Polytechnics, and Universities. Of the three tertiary institutions mentioned above, it is the university that provides the highest level of human capital development through training, leading to the award of various certificates and degrees such as Diplomas, Bachelor's degrees, Master's, and Ph.D. degrees. Aside from the award of degrees, the university is the brain box for research, vocational education, academic conferences, workshops, etc.

As Monogbe and Monogbe (2019) rightly stated, the university is the fortress of knowledge for learning and quality research where future giants are built. It is disheartening to say that this fortress of knowledge in Nigeria is now known for frequent industrial action embarked upon by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU). Aliktor (2021) averred that “the crux of the ASUU and Federal Government dispute can be summarized in a simple clause “the need for increased government funding of Nigerian universities to enable them to compete globally in research and learning”.

The Academic Staff Union Universities embarked on six (6) industrial actions between 2011 and 2021, spending over 590 days on these strike actions. ASUU demands are germane owing to the deplorable state of public universities in the country but the damage done by ASUU's industrial actions to the education sector is severe. Every ASUU industrial action lead to the total shutdown of public universities which affects all academic activities including local and international conferences and workshops organized by public universities.

The objective of university education includes the development of the intellectual capacity to understand and appreciate the environment and the acquisition of appropriate physical and intellectual skills necessary for the development of both the individual and society (Davies & Amesi, 2017). With the frequency at which ASUU embarks on industrial action, one wonders how this noble objective can be achieved in the area of human capital development in Nigeria. It is on this premise that this study seeks to investigate how ASUU industrial actions impact human capital development in Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

The Academic Staff Union of Universities and the Federal Government of Nigeria have had a series of industrial disputes relating to public university education in the country which has ended up in industrial action. These issues according to Bello & Isa (2016); Atueyi, (2020) include poor remuneration and conditions of service for academic staff in government-owned

universities across the country, poor funding and infrastructural decay in public universities, the proliferation of public universities without adequate funding, and the lack of autonomy for public 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.

The inability of the Federal Government to resolve the issues mentioned above has prompted ASUU to embark on several industrial actions to press home their demands. The industrial action embarked upon by ASUU has led to the closure of public universities across the country for months in some cases. No labour union or trade union in Nigeria has embarked on industrial action as ASUU has done in the past two decades. No wonder a Google search on ASUU, the acronym of the Academic Staff Union of Nigerian Universities repeatedly comes up with suggestions like ‘ASUU strike’, ‘ASUU strike update’, and ‘ASUU strike update for today’ (Dakuku, 2020).

The above is not surprising because of the frequency at which ASUU embarks on industrial action and most Nigerians have come to associate ASUU with strikes. The industrial actions embarked on by the Academic Staff Union of Universities often disrupt the learning process which further damages university education in the country. The adage in Nigeria “when two Elephants fight, it is the grass that suffers” becomes practical in this case of the industrial dispute between ASUU and the Federal Government as students become the grass that is trampled upon each time a strike occurs in public universities.

The Academic Staff Union of Universities strike has had a devastating effect on human capital development in Nigeria. ASUU strike also affects the quality of graduates produced by public universities in the country. This is due to short contact hours between lecturers and students when the industrial action is suspended or called off. Prolonged strikes also make lecturers rush academic activities without in-depth covering of the course content. This fire brigade approach to learning leads to poor human capital development which demeans the overall standard of university education in Nigeria.

It is against this backdrop that this study is carried out to examine how ASUU industrial actions affect human capital development in Nigeria.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions.

- (i) What are the causes of the ASUU industrial action?
- (ii) How did the ASUU industrial actions affect human capital development in Nigeria?

Objectives of the Study

The study tends to achieve the following objectives.

- (i) identify the causes of the ASUU industrial actions.
- (ii) examine how the ASUU industrial actions affect human capital development in Nigeria.

CONCEPTUAL REVIEW/THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Industrial Dispute

The term dispute refers to any form of misunderstanding between two or more individuals, among a group of individuals or social groups in any social setting. Dispute also known as conflict is unavoidable in any work environment or organization for the reason that the goals of the employer and the employees are at all times opposed to each other. While the employer will always seek to maximize the best from the employees in terms of profit making, the

employee tends to ensure that their welfare is protected in terms of better wages, decent work environment, good condition of service, etc. These demands from both employers and employees often time result in disputes.

Kempner in Onah (2015) averred that industrial dispute is the dispute between one or more employers or organizations of employers and one or more workers or organizations of workers, where the dispute relates wholly or mainly to terms and conditions of employment or the physical conditions in which they are required to work; engagement or non-engagement of one or more workers, termination or suspension of employment of one or more workers; allocation of work as between workers or group of one or more workers; a procedure agreement or any other matter to which a procedure agreement can relate.

Yesufu (1984) opined that industrial dispute is the disagreement between a trade union and the employer or group of employers resulting from the failure of one side to meet the demand of the other for the amelioration or removal of a grievance or grievances. Yesufu's definition of industrial dispute can be likened to the failure of the Federal Government to honour the 2009 FGN/ASUU agreement and the 2020 Memorandum of Action (MOA) entered with the Academic Staff Union of Universities.

The Trade Dispute Act of 1976 in section 48 sees trade dispute as "any dispute between employers and workers or between workers and workers, which is connected with the employment or non-employment, or the terms of employment and physical conditions of work of any person". The above definition shows that industrial dispute goes beyond employers and employees. It can be among individuals, groups of persons, or different unions operating in the same organization.

Chandi in Moses and Ogbomah (2023) maintain that industrial dispute is all employment disputes relating to employer and employee relationships either in their relationship as individual employees or in their collective employment relations.

The rise in industrial dispute in Nigeria is the reason behind the incessant strikes embarked on by various labour unions across the country which result in impediments to economic activities, a halt of progress in affected sectors, and an increase in the unemployment rate. Olatunji et al., (2015) averred that despite the negative consequences of dispute in the organization, scholars like Marx, Engels and Hyman are of the view that industrial dispute is necessary to foster the welfare development of the employees and that industrial dispute is necessary to attain equilibrium level in industrial relationship.

Arising from the above definitions, industrial dispute is a dispute between workers or groups of workers or between employers and employees in an organization be it public or private. It should be noted that industrial dispute mostly occurs between employers and their various worker's unions which relates to issues that affect workers in the organization. Such issues include condition of service, workers welfare, and wages amongst others.

Nature of Industrial Dispute

Industrial disputes can be divided into two categories:

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

(i) **Individual Dispute:** Industrial dispute occurs when an employee is denied his/her benefits. Most workers due to one reason or the other are denied their rights by the management of the organization. For instance, promotion and annual step increments are the rights of every worker who meets the conditions and criteria in the public service. When a worker who meets the criteria set for promotion is denied the promotion, it may give rise to a

dispute between the worker and the management or organization. The inability of the organization to address the issue in question leads to individual disputes in the organization. According to Moses and Ogbomah (2023), individual disputes have been a major source of industrial conflict in Nigeria particularly in public organizations. Individual disputes can escalate to collective disputes if they are not addressed immediately by the organization.

(ii) **Collective Dispute:** As the name implies, a collective dispute is a dispute involving a group of employees in the organization. Moses and Ogbomah (2023) averred that collective dispute involves issues like conditions of work or service, wages, and social benefits as well as the freedom of employees to form and join any trade union of their choice. It is collective because it affects all the workers in the organization. Akinbode (2019) opined that collective dispute involves the denial of rights that is perceived to affect a group of workers in an organization. He added most collective disputes usually centers on wages and salary, allowances, non-remittance of pension deduction, and other working conditions.

Industrial Action/Strike

In current literature in management and administration, another term for industrial action is strike. Therefore in this study, the term industrial action and strike will be used interchangeably. In other words, whichever term that is used whether industrial action or strike all are referring to and explaining one thing.

The philosophy behind strike is firmly rooted in human dignity granted to each worker and not waivable under any circumstance. No wonder the first strike which occurred in 1152 BC in Egypt during the reign of Ramses III was staged by craftsmen to demand an increase in their wages and an improvement in working conditions while building the tombs of the Pharaohs in the town of Deir el-Medina. The strike lasted for eighteen days and the impact was so great that the authorities had to accede to some of the demands of the workers especially a rise in their wages (The Economic Times, 2014; Gamie, et al., 2020).

Moses and Ogbomah (2023) see industrial action as the partial or total withdrawal of labour supply by workers over the refusal of management or the organization to meet certain demands from workers.

The Trade Dispute Act of 1976 sees 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).

For Flippo in Ohadinma and Iwuoha (2010), strike is a concerted and temporary withholding of employee services from the employer to extract greater concessions in the employment relationship than the employer is willing to grant at the bargaining table. The essence of a strike from Flippo's point of view is to put pressure on the organization to meet the demands of workers. Such pressure arises when workers withdraw their service from the organization. Justifying why workers embark on strike, Engels (1980) posit that:

"they must protest against every reduction, because they feel bound to proclaim that they, as human beings, shall not be made to bow to social circumstances but that social conditions ought to yield to them, as human beings (and that)... silence on their part would be a recognition of these social conditions, and admission of the right of the bourgeoisie to exploit the workers in good times and let them starve in bad times" (p. 225).

Against this backdrop, Engels insisted that the working men must rebel so long as they have not lost all human feelings. He went further to assert that active resistance of the working men has its effect in holding the money greed of the bourgeoisie within certain limits and keeping alive the opposition of the work to the social and political omnipotence of the bourgeoisie. The reason behind most strikes from Engels's position, is to put an end to the exploitative tendencies of the bourgeoisies who have little or no regard and feelings towards the plight of workers.

Strike or industrial action from the above definitions can be seen as the partial or total withdrawal of labour supply by workers over the refusal of the organization or employer to meet certain demands such as salary increase, condition of service, and welfare issues to mention but a few. Strike is seen as the last resort by the workers to press home their demands when all forms of negotiation have failed and it has become glaring that the organization or employer is unwilling to grant workers their demands.

Some Causes of ASUU Industrial Actions

There are several reasons why ASUU has embarked on several industrial actions in Nigeria. Some of the issues behind the ASUU strike are:

(i) **Poor Remuneration:** The demand for better remuneration for lectures in public universities is one reason why ASUU has been embarking on industrial actions. ASUU has demanded better pay for lecturers in public universities to enable lecturers to have a decent

living and meet their basic needs. The monthly emoluments of Nigeria's university lecturers are very poor when to their counterparts in other countries. According to the ASUU national President, Prof. Emmanuel Osodeke, a Professor at a Nigerian public university earns \$700 per month while his/her counterpart in Ghana earns \$3,000 monthly, and in the United Kingdom, a Professor goes home with £8,000 and £10,000. He added that Nigerian university lecturers' are still currently earning the same salary they used to earn since 2009. He added that like medical personnel in the country, the lecturers' are also leaving for other countries due to poor remuneration (Akasike, 2022).

The demand for better remuneration is one of the issues that have prompted public university lecturers in Nigeria to embark on several industrial actions to prevent brain drain in the university system.

(ii) Poor Funding of Public Universities: The poor funding of public universities across the country is one other major reason behind ASUU's persistent industrial action in Nigeria. The agitation for better funding of public universities by ASUU is premised on the deplorable state of government-owned universities across the country. Over the years, the Federal and State Governments in Nigeria have not given the education sector the needed attention in terms of funding and upgrading of infrastructural facilities across university campuses in the country.

For example, from 2011 to 2021, the budgetary allocation to the entire education sector fell short of the 15 percent to 20 percent recommended by the World Education Forum final report, a UNESCO document titled Education for All, (EFA), 2000 – 2015. The document recommended 15 to 20 percent as an international benchmark for all nations to achieve the honourable goal of ensuring education for all from 2000 to 2015 (Bakare, 2021).

The poor funding of public universities can be noticed in almost all public universities with the dearth of learning facilities such as lecture halls and theaters, laboratories, workshops, and hostels amongst others. The near absence of these facilities over the years prompted ASUU to embark on industrial actions for proper funding of public universities in the country.

(iii) Earned Academic Allowance: Earned allowances are typically a kind of overtime allowance whereby lecturers make extra allowances when the class size they are teaching exceeds the maximum allowed (Dakuku, 2020).

In the 2009 ASUU/FGN agreement, it was agreed that entitled academic staff shall be paid the following earned allowances at the rates indicated for undertaking the following assignments. These allowances 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 (Moses & Ogbomah, 2023).

The failure of the Federal Government to consistently pay the earned academic allowance and clear outstanding arrears of the earned academic allowance is one of the reasons behind ASUU's industrial actions.

(iv) Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS): Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS) was initiated by the Federal Government to turn around the deteriorating performance in the public service. IPPIS was one of the reform programmes that were conceptualized by the Federal Government in 2006 to improve

the effectiveness and efficiency in the storage of personnel records and administration of monthly payroll to enhance confidence in staff emolument, costs, and budgeting (Abdulsalam, et al., 2020).

The IPPIS was financed through a World Bank facility of about USD 4.9 million. It was transferred to the Office of the Accountant General of the Federation (OAGF) in 2008 (Folorunso & Simeon, 2021).

The Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System is currently used for the payment of salaries of 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.

The industrial dispute between ASUU and the Federal Government on IPPIS is the imposition of IPPIS on Federal Universities in Nigeria. ASUU's position is that forcing Federal Universities to enroll in IPPIS is a violation of sections 2AA and 2AAA of the amended Federal University Act of 2003. In place of IPPIS, ASUU recommended the University Transparency and Accountability Solution (UTAS) which it developed as an alternative to the Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System. 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 refusal of the Federal Government to accept ASUU's proposed UTAS and ASUU's refusal of its members to enroll in IPPIS has generated a lot of controversy between ASUU and the Federal Government. This has prompted ASUU to embark on industrial actions in recent times.

Human Capital Development

Human capital development is a concept derived from human capital. Human capital is often used in management and social sciences. Onah, (2014) averred that human capital development refers to a process that relates to training, education, and other professional initiatives to increase the level of knowledge, skills, abilities, values, and social assets of an employee which will lead to an employee's satisfaction and performance, and eventually on the organization performance. Obisi and Anyim in Idongesit, *et al.*, (2021) posit that human capital development is talents, skills competencies, and other advantages that people possess, and can be put to better use to give organizations and nations more benefits.

In the opinion of Chikwe, *et al.*, (2015), human capital development involves providing opportunities for all citizens to develop to their fullest potential through education, training, and motivation as well as creating the enabling environment for everyone to participate fully in National development. They added that any effort to increase human knowledge, enhance skills and productivity, and stimulate resourcefulness of citizens is an effort in human capital development, investment to entrench good governance, provide supporting infrastructure, and develop the education, health, and social systems are investments in human capital development.

Harbison (1973), sees human capital development as the deliberate and continuous process of acquiring requisite knowledge, skills, and experiences that are applied to produce economic value for driving sustainable national development. What Harbison is saying is that the essence of human capital development is to achieve sustainable national development.

Arising from the above definition, human capital development is the building of the human capital of a nation through education, training, conferences, and seminars. The essence of human capital development is to equip the individual with the right knowledge and skills for them to be productive. It is worth pointing out that in Nigeria, the university is the only tertiary institution that provides the highest level of human capital development leading to the award of degrees and certificates. It also organizes conferences, seminars, workshops, etc. to impart knowledge and skills.

Measurement of Human Capital Development

The indices for measuring human capital development according to Han and Lin (2008) include the level and quality of education, work-related knowledge, and competence.

(i) **The Level and Quality of Education:** The level of education is the progression from elementary to higher education offered by tertiary institutions. The higher the level of education an individual attains, the higher the knowledge and skills the individual must have acquired. The quality of education, on the other hand, means an education that is deliberately designed to provide the recipient with all-around development of knowledge, skills, and the potential to attain success in their future endeavours in society.

(ii) **Work-Related Knowledge:** Work-related knowledge means the knowledge an individual possesses concerning the job he/she is employed to do. Work-related knowledge is acquired through formal and informal education. This knowledge can be practical and theoretical knowledge needed for the effective performance of the job. Work-related knowledge is an important index for measuring human capital development because the knowledge related to the job will determine whether a person is employable. For example, the Employability and Skill Survey by Philips Consulting in Lagos State showed that most companies and employers of labor in Nigeria prefer to employ graduates produced by foreign universities, particularly in the oil and gas sector because they believe that they have better employable skills and work-related knowledge than graduates produced by tertiary institutions in Nigeria (Business Day, 2022).

(iii) **Competence:** Competence is a vital index for measuring human capital development. Competence is related to knowledge, skills, attitudes, and abilities acquired over time through education and training. It is the ability to perform a task or job with little or no supervision. The level of competence an individual has in performing his/her job is attributed to the quality of education and training acquired over the years.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Garry Becker and Theodore Schultz's Human Capital Theory. They view human capital as how education increases the productivity and efficiency of workers by increasing the level of their cognitive skills. In other words, human capital from their perspective is the stock of economically productive human capabilities, which can be formed by combining innate abilities with investment in human beings (Adedeju & Campbell, 2013).

According to the theorist, education is crucial in human capital development hence investment in education is seen as a worthwhile investment that will enhance the productive capabilities of workers. The belief in education as a capital good is rooted in the concept of human capital, which attached a high premium to human skills as a factor of production in the development process. Education according to the human capital theory is an investment decision in which individuals forgo time and resources for higher wages in the future (Adedeju & Campbell, 2013).

Applied within the context of the study, universities provide the highest level of human capital development in any country. The objective of university education includes the development of the intellectual capacity to understand and appreciate the environment and the acquisition of appropriate physical and intellectual skills necessary for the development of both the individual and society (Davies & Amesi, 2017). Thus, any disruption of the university education will adversely affect human capital development. The industrial action embarked upon by the Academic Staff Union of Universities leading to the suspension of all academic activities such as lectures, conferences, workshops, etc. will no doubt impact human capital development.

The theory helps us to understand that education is a prerequisite for human capital development; therefore any disruption of the educational system like the ASUU strike which affects public universities in Nigeria will negatively impact human capital development in the country.

Method of the Study

The study adopted the survey research design method. Thus, questionnaires were used to obtain the primary data from the population. The population of the study comprises lecturers and students of the University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State and Niger Delta University, Amassoma, Bayelsa State. A total of 3,000 questionnaires were distributed to lecturers and students in the above-mentioned universities and 2,195 questionnaires were retrieved.

The oral interview was also conducted alongside the questionnaire to obtain direct information from the target population. The information from the interviews was used to authenticate the data obtained from the questionnaires. Eight persons were interviewed from each university. The data collected from the questionnaire was analyzed with arithmetic mean.

Findings and Discussions

Table 1: The causes of ASUU industrial actions.

S/N	Item statements	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD(1)	Total	\bar{x}	Decision
1	Poor remuneration for lecturers contributes to ASUU strike.	1,071	997	71	56	2,195		
	Weight of Responses	(4,284)	(2,991)	(142)	(56)	7,473	3.4	Agreed
2.	The inability of the government to pay outstanding earned allowance.	1,048	989	82	76	2,195		
	Weight of Responses	(4,192)	(2,967)	(164)	(76)	7,399	3.3	Agreed
3.	The imposition of Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS) on Federal Universities.	993	978	163	61	2,195		
	Weight of Responses	(3,972)	(2,934)	(326)	(61)	7,293	3.3	Agreed
4.	Poor funding of public universities contributes.	1,127	988	52	28	2,195		
	Weight of Responses	(4,508)	(2,964)	(104)	(28)	7,604	3.4	Agreed
	Arithmetic Weighted Mean					3.3		
	Criterion Mean					2.50		

Source: Authors field data, 2023.

The data presented in Table 1 shows that the arithmetic weighted mean of (3.3) is greater (>) than the criterion mean of (2.50). Thus, the result showed that poor remuneration of lecturers is one cause of ASUU's industrial actions. This was followed by the government's failure to pay earned academic allowance to lecturers in public universities. Also, the imposition of the Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS) on Federal Universities was another major reason behind ASUU's industrial action in Nigeria. Finally, poor funding of public universities in the country contributed to ASUU's industrial actions.

The above findings are in agreement with the interviews conducted on the causes of ASUU industrial actions in Nigeria's public universities. An interview conducted with a lecturer at the Niger Delta University (NDU), who preferred to be anonymous stated that the lecturer's salary in the country is nothing to write home. He stated that in NDU promotions are not implemented due to the Bayelsa State Government subvention policy in tertiary institutions. Similarly, a lecturer at the University of Port-Harcourt who also preferred to be anonymous averred the poor emolument given to university lecturers is one of the reasons behind ASUU's industrial actions. He stated that lecturers in Federal Universities earned less than N500, 000 monthly which is very demeaning compared to political appointees in the country. Another lecturer at the University of Port Harcourt who also did not mention his name and department in the interview identified poor funding of public universities and the imposition of IPPIS on Federal Universities as the major causes of ASUU industrial actions. He stated that IPPIS is a major threat to ASUU members and that is the reason why university lectures are against its implementation in Federal Universities.

The findings from the questionnaire and the oral interview on the causes of ASUU industrial action in public universities are in tandem. The information obtained from the questionnaire and the oral interviews show that the poor remuneration of lecturers in public universities, failure of the Federal Government to pay outstanding monies of earned academic allowance, poor funding of public universities, and the imposition of IPPIS in Federal Universities are the reasons behind ASUU incessant industrial actions.

Table 2: The effects of ASUU’s strike on human capital development.

S/N	Item statements	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD(1)	Total	\bar{x}	Decision
5	Hinders research and academic development.	1,089	1,075	21	10	2,195		
	Weight of Responses	(4,356)	(3,225)	(42)	(10)	7,633	3.4	Agreed
6.	Student loss interest in their studies	1,009	977	109	100	2,195		
	Weight of Responses	(4,036)	(2,931)	(218)	(100)	7,285	3.3	Agreed
7.	Affect human capacity development.	1,021	997	121	56	2,195		
	Weight of Responses	(4,084)	(2,991)	(242)	(56)	7,373	3.3	Agreed
8.	Impacts the quality of university graduates	1,008	989	103	94	2,195		
	Weight of Responses	(4,032)	(2,967)	(206)	(94)	7,269	3.3	Agreed
	Arithmetic Weighted Mean					3.3		
	Criterion Mean					2.50		

Source: Authors field data, 2023.

The data presented in Table 2 shows that the arithmetic weighted mean of (3.3) is greater (>) than the criterion mean of (2.50). Thus, the result showed that ASUU's strike hinders research and students' academic development, makes students lose interest in their studies, affects human capacity development, and impacts negatively on the quality of graduates produced by universities.

The above findings on the effect of ASUU industrial actions on human capital development agree with an interview conducted with a lecturer in the Niger Delta University. He stated that whenever ASUU embarks on strike, all ongoing research at public universities is suspended. He added that this affects the academic development of both lecturers and students. Also, another lecturer at Niger Delta University who preferred to be anonymous in the interview averred that ASUU strike no doubt hinders research and academic development of students. He stated further that ASUU's strike also negatively impacted the quality of graduates produced by public universities due to the short contact period lecturers normally have with students when ASUU's strike is called off.

Similarly, Francis a student of Niger Delta University, Amassoma in an interview stated that ASUU’s strike makes it difficult for students to study their books, and it affects the CGPA of most students in the university. Corroborating Francis's point, Miss Debora a student of the Niger Delta University, Amassoma also in an interview stated that ASUU's strike makes her lose interest in her studies. She stated further the number of months she spends at home each ASUU embarks on strike makes her not to be interested in education.

Several students interviewed at the University of Port Harcourt also stated that the ASUU strike negatively impacted their studies. For example, Miss Blessing and Moses who did not mention their department in the interview averred that each time ASUU calls off their strike, lecturers rush students to meet the date set for examination. They stated that adequate time is not given to students to prepare for their examinations. This according to them affects their academic development and their CGPA.

The findings from the questionnaire and the oral interview on the effect of ASUU industrial actions on human capital development are in tandem. The information obtained from the oral interviews shows that ASUU industrial actions negatively impact on research and academic development of both students and lecturers in public universities. It was also discovered from the oral interview that most students lose interest in their studies due to the prolonged ASUU strike. This loss of interest in study according to them affects their academic development and their CGPA. The ASUU strike also affected the quality of graduates produced by public universities in the country. This may be due to the short contact period student have with their lecturers whenever ASUU's strike is called off or suspended. This rush-rush approach to meet the university academic calendar will affect the quality of graduates produced by public universities in the country.

Conclusion

The study examines industrial actions and human capital development in Nigeria: a study of ASUU at the University of Port Harcourt and Niger Delta University (2011 – 2021). The Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) industrial actions date back to over four decades in Nigeria. ASUU's industrial dispute with the Federal Government is centered on a lot of issues among which are poor funding of public universities, poor wages and remuneration of lecturers, non-payment of earned academic allowance for lecturers, and the imposition of the integrated personnel and payroll information system (IPPIS) in Federal Government owned universities. This has prompted ASUU to embark on several industrial actions.

Between 2011 and 2021, ASUU embarked on six industrial actions. In these industrial actions, the union spends over 590 days. These industrial actions within the period led to the suspension of academic activities such as lectures, conferences, workshops, etc. in public universities across the country. This action of university lectures negatively impacted human capital development in the country.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the findings:

(i) **Upward Review of Universities Lecturer's Remuneration:** Our findings from the study revealed that poor remuneration of public university lecturers is one of the causes of ASUU's industrial actions in Nigeria. The Federal Government should review the wages and other emoluments of university lecturers in the country in line with international best practices. For example, a professor in a Federal University earns below 1,000 U.S. dollars which is very poor compared to their counterpart in other countries. Adequate remuneration for lecturers will help prevent the incessant strikes and brain drain experienced in public universities in the country.

(ii) The findings from the study revealed that from 2011 to 2021, ASUU embarked on six (6) industrial actions. These industrial actions will no doubt affect the quality of graduates produced by public universities in the country and by implication human capital development in Nigeria. ASUU should therefore explore other viable means such as protests to press home their demands rather than embark on strike actions.

(iii) **Alternative Source of Funding for Public Universities:** One other finding of this research relates to poor funding of public universities. It is obvious that with the depleting revenue of the government, the government alone cannot adequately fund public universities. Therefore, public universities in Nigeria should source for alternative means of funding their operations. The Academic Staff Union Universities (ASUU) should drive the process of alternative means of funding for public universities.

(iv) The finding in this study also revealed that whenever ASUU calls off their strike, lecturers don't cover their course before students are asked to write their exam. Hence the Senate of public universities should ensure that adequate time is given to lecturers and students to prepare before asking students to write their semester examination.

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