

Influence Of Prolonged Asuu Strikes On Well-Being Of Lecturers And Students In Nigerian Universities

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Abstract

The paper investigated the influence of prolonged ASUU strike on welfare of lecturers and students in Universities in using University of Benin as a case study. Throughout the world, Industrial action has been a tool workers used to express their grievance when they are not satisfied with the way their employers are treating them. Academic Staff of University Union (ASUU) in Nigeria are not left out in embarking on strike, which could have affected the well-being of both the lecturers and students in the Universities. For the study to be given proper bearing, four (04) research questions were postulated, and two (02) were turned into hypotheses. The design of the study was survey. The study population is all academic staff and students in Faculty of Education, University of Benin, Edo State, Nigeria. The sample size was Ninety one (91) academic staff and four hundred (400) students in Faculty of Education, University of Benin, Edo State, Nigeria This was done by using random sampling techniques to select 50% of department and lecturers, forty (40) students in each department across all levels were also selected. Questionnaires titled “Questionnaire on Influence of Prolonged ASUU Strike on Well-being of Lecturers (QIPASWBL)” and: Questionnaire on Influence of Prolonged ASUU Strike on Well-being of Students (QIPASWBS)” were used to obtain data. Experts in the field ensured that the instruments measured what it was intended to measure. The value of 0.91 and 0.93 were obtained for QIPASWBL and QIPASWBS respectively. The instruments were administered to the lecturers and students. Research questions one and 2 were analysed mean and standard deviation. Hypotheses three and four were tested with t-test of independent sample statistic.. The finding showed that prolonged ASUU strike has negative influence on lecturers and students. It was also revealed that there is no significant difference in influence of prolonged ASUU strike on well-being of lecturers and students based on sex . Based on the findings the researchers recommended that government of Nigeria should always uphold the agreement signed with ASUU in order to avoid strike, Government should also have a meaningful dialogue with ASUU , so that the issue of strike will not always occur in Nigerian Universities. Government should take seriously the well-being of lecturers and students as this will go a long way for effective performance for both teaching and learning.

Keywords: *Prolong Strike, Well-Being, Lecturers, Students*

Introduction

ASUU is a prominent union in Nigeria representing academic staff in public universities. Strikes by ASUU are not uncommon and typically revolve around issues such as providing money for public universities, salary arrears, enhanced working conditions, and educational reforms. The strikes often result in the temporary closure of universities, which can disrupt academic calendars and affect students' education. These strikes are a means for ASUU to negotiate with the Nigerian government and push for improvements in the country higher education system. Industrial action by Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) in Nigeria has become a pandemic, ASUU always embarked on strike to make government responsible for the agreement made to them ASUU has embarked on strike over different issues relating to the welfare of its members, which include improve remuneration, infrastructural facilities and inability for the government to honour agreement made with the union among others. During the strike by ASUU, all public universities are always closed down, all academic activities are put on hold which made students to go back home. Some of students grumbled that while universities are on close, they typically remain jaded and indolent at home, while expecting the strike to be called off. They believe that such dullness and redundancy could lead to intellectual/psychology vigour trials which include despair and worry and in turn could affect student's mental well-being.

Students may also loose interest in schooling because of the delay and this may lead to frustration and in turn resort to them looking for

privileges to earn stipends. Some of the students stay outside the campus because of inadequate facilities to accommodate all the students in the hostels on campus, this resulted into some of them to get accommodation outside campus. When there is strike, these students end up wasting their rental because they cannot be staying in the leased flats when school is closed. When industrial actions are over, the school authorities always put pressure on lecturers to end the semester or session which may not allow students to learn well.

History of Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) and Industrial Action in Nigeria

In early 90s ASUU boarded on strike to compel government to take responsibility for their universities. It is on responsibility for their universities. It is record that ASUU organized strikes for demands, amongst which is the university autonomy. Instead of government to take responsibility they attacked the union through various means, for example proscribing of ASUU, disrupting ASUU meetings/congress using state/paid agents, arrests ad incarceration of union leaders, invading university campuses by security agents, ordering union members to vacate their accommodation on campus, illegal seizure of ASUU's properties, stopping/withholding of salary, verbal and written intimidation, forcing lecturers to sign registers indicating their opting out of strikes, wrongful dismissal to mention a few.

In September 1992. ASUU and Nigeria government reached an agreement that presented most of the demands of the union. Since then and arising from this 1992 ASUU/FGN agreement,

several other suspended strikes were resumed that were aimed at compelling government to honour this and other agreements freely entered into with the union. Instead of honouring agreements towards finding solutions to the identified challenges the public universities, the governments decided, in their wisdom, to adopt authoritarian measures as usual. For instance, between 1992 and 1998, in order to violate the agreement with ASUU and also to centrally control what happens in universities, government appointed sole administrators for some Nigerian universities such as a retired Army General for Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Other public universities that experienced such anomaly in varying proportions were university of Nigeria, Nsukka, University of Maiduguri, Edo State University (Now Ambrose Alli University), Ekpoma, Ladoké Akintola University of Technology, Ogbomoso among others. The said sole administrators were appointed and backed by military decrees that conferred on them almost unlimited powers with some of them combining the roles of Senate and Council with that of Vice-Chancellor. This incongruity became another reason for the disagreements between ASUU and governments.

In the 21st century, these ASUU struggles got to another Crescendo in 2009 and after some months of industrial action, agreement was signed by ASUU and government in October 2009. In the usual way of the government, most of the vital components of this agreement were implemented in the breach, thus leading to resumption of a suspended strike that culminated in a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between ASUU and FGN in December, 2013. This was the year that an (November 12th) that Comrade Festus Iyayi (ASUU EXCO) lost his life in a frightening auto calamity reportedly

triggered by a irresponsible group of the then Kogi State governor. Though on his way (Iyayi) to Kano State to attend the National Executive Council Meeting of ASUU concerning the said 2013 national strike. As usual, most (if not all) items in the 2013 MoU were again unfortunately jettisoned by Nigerian Government and this eventually led to another industrial action which gave rise to a Memorandum of Action (MoA) in September, 2017. It is noteworthy that because of the government's lackadaisical approach towards implementation of these MoUs/MoAs, there was another resumption of a suspended strike in November, 2018 which was conditionally suspended again by ASUU on 7th February 2019 after signing another MoU with FGN. Based on experience over the years and what has been documented concerning industrial disputes, particularly between ASUU and government, in Nigerian universities, there are questions some of people have been pondering on such as: Could it be that it is when government can only attend to the welfare of its workers only when they embarked on strike? Why would government always use the same unsuccessful strategies in dealing with strike issues in Nigeria? Is that there are officials in Nigeria government whose attention is that strikes be stimulated for their self-centered attention? These may be taken as rhetorical question but deep answers to them may help.

Perhaps last strike which began on February 14th, 2022, and was called off on October 14th, 2022, is the one of the lengthiest with devastating effects on the universities. For eight months, the system was in complete paralysis and rigor mortis. With Buhari and his executives tactfully destroying the university systems. Nevertheless, not matter what is seen to be as ASUU's short-coming, there is no need why a government would allowed its

institutions to be shut down for that long period of time, leading to death of some university staff who could not pay for their medications

Table 1: ASUU strike chart (1999–2022)

S/N	Year	Duration
1	1999	5Months
2	2001	3Months
3	2002	2Weeks
4	2003	6Months
5	2005	2Weeks
6	2006	3Days
7	2007	3Months
8	2008	1Week
9	2009	4Months
10	2010	5Months
11	2011	59Days
12	2013	5Months
13	2017	1Month
14	2018	3Months
15	2020	9Months
16	2022	8Months

All the industrial actions were as a result of Nigeria government not fulfilling their part in the agreement made with ASUU

Empirical Studies on ASUU Strike in Nigeria

Numerous research work have been done on Industrial action by ASUU in Nigeria. Adeoye and Adebisi (2016) carried out a research work that revealed that psychological healthiness of student are affected by ASUU industrial action. Students' emotional well-being before, during, and after a strike was evaluated using a multi-pronged

methodology. The results revealed that students felt nervous, miserable, hopeless, and uninterested during the industrial action by ASUU. They grumbled of being isolated, tired, and purposeless, all of which restricted with their capability to pay attention to study.

Okobia and Alason (2018) also carried out a study on the emotive peel that the ASUU strike took on Nigerian college children. The study used a survey methodology to collect data from 186 college and university students before, during, and after a strike. The results revealed that students sensed a variety of undesirable feelings during the strike, as well as worry, anguish, and annoyance. Agada and Oseni's (2019) study considered how Nigerian college undergraduates dealt with the pressure of the ASUU strike. Results from exhaustive discussions with sixteen undergraduates exposed that students used a diversity of managing tools, such as getting out to helpers and family, partaking in interests, and think again undesirable principles. Students' psychological healthiness consequences during the strike were exposed to be exaggerated by the managing tools they applied through the strike, with those using more actual managing approaches undergoing a smaller amount of uneasiness. Asekun-Olarinmoye et al. (2020) carried out research work on how the ASUU strike affected the psychological healthiness of Nigerian medical students. Throughout the industrial action by ASUU, data were gotten from 129 medical students using a cross-sectional design. The results established that the strike had a deeply damaging influence on the psychological healthiness of medical students, with many recording feelings of pressure, exhaustion, and emotive fatigue. According to Liu et al., (2021), the lengthy stay at home can lead to a lack of shared interface, which can affect students'

rational well-being Social interface is essential for students' rational well-being as it offers a sense of feel right and care.

According to Okeke et al (2021) who carried out study on the influence of ASUU Industrial action on psychosocial progress of lecturers in South-East zone of Nigerian Universities. The findings revealed that ASUU strike has grave influence on the psycho-social developments of academic staff in Nigerian universities. Strike disrupts students' bases of earnings, leading to economic pressure, which can contribute to rational well-being matters (Liu et al., 2021).

Statement of the Problem

The incessant strike by ASUU has become pandemic in Nigeria. The influence of the strike on well-beings of students and lecturers cannot be under-estimated. ASUU Strike is used as weapon in Nigeria to make Nigeria authorities respond to the treaty made with ASUU. When government made agreement and refused to honour the agreement, strike is the means that workers used to make the Nigeria authorities accountable for the agreement made. Industrial action by ASUU in Nigeria has led to closing down of universities which could lead to idleness of students which could affect their well-beings. Students could also loose interest in schooling because of the delay and this also may lead ti frustration or depression. The strike could also affect the well-beings of lecturers, in the sense that most of the time they embarked on strike, government seized their salary, the most recent one is the last strike between February 2022 and October 2023 when government withheld their 8Months salary, This posed pressure on the well-beings of lecturers as many were unable to pay their medical bills which in turn caused the death of few

of them. The prolonged stay at home in the name of strike could affect the well-beings of students and lecturers in Nigeria, It is on this evidence that this work aims to explore the influence of Industrial action by ASUU on welfare of students and lecturers in Nigerian Universities .

Research Questions

What is the influence of strike on well-being of lecturers?

What is the influence of strike on well-being of students?

What is the differences in the influence of strike on well-being of lecturers based on sex?

What is the differences in the influence of strike on well-being of students based on sex?

Hypotheses

Research questions 3 and 4 were hypothesized as follows:

There is no significance difference in the influence on strike on well-being of Lecturers based on sex

There is no significance difference in the influence of strike on well-being of students based on sex

Methodology

Design for the study was survey.. The population of the study is all lecturers and students in Faculty of Education, University of Benin, Edo State, Nigeria. The sample size was Ninety one (91) academic staff and four hundred (400) students in Faculty of Education, University of Benin, Edo State, Nigeria

This was done by using random sampling techniques to select 50% of department and lecturers, forty (40) students in each department across all levels were also selected. Questionnaires titled “Questionnaire on Influence of Prolonged ASUU Strike on Well-being of Lecturers (QIPASWBL)” and: Questionnaire on Influence of Prolonged ASUU Strike on Well-being of Students (QIPASWBS)” were used to obtain data. Experts in the field ensured that the instruments measured what it was intended to measure. The value of 0.91 and 0.93 were obtained for QIPASWBL and QIPASWBS respectively. The instruments were administered to the lecturers and students. Research questions one and 2 were analysed mean and standard deviation. Hypotheses three and four were tested with t-test of independent sample statistic.. The finding showed that prolonged ASUU strike has negative influence on lecturers and students. It was also revealed that there is no significant difference in influence of prolonged ASUU strike on well-being of lecturers and students based on sex . Based on the findings the researchers recommended that government of Nigeria should always uphold the agreement signed with ASUU in order to avoid strike, Government should also have a meaningful dialogue with ASUU , so that the issue of strike will not always occur in Nigerian Universities .Government should take seriously the well-being of lecturers and students as this will go a long way for effective performance for both teaching and learning.

Presentation of Results and Discussion of Findings

Research Question one

What is the influence of strike on well-being of lecturers

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of the Influence of Strike on Well-being of Lecturers

S/N	ITEMS	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remarks
	During Prolonged ASUU strikes:			
	I always feel satisfied with my life	2.60	4.50	Agree
	I always feel happy	1.95	.987	Disagree
	I am always down emotionally	2.45	.991	Disagree
	I always feel sick because of idleness	2.36	1.02	Agree
	I always feel relieved because I have time to rest	2.28	3.18	Disagree
	I always find it difficult to pay my bills	3.18	3.32	Agree
	Sometimes I feel embarrassed doing odd jobs to be able to meet financial need	2.71	1.01	Agree
	I always feel like going to work to teach my students	2.96	.936	Agree
	I always have opportunity to do other things	2.74	.837	Agree

	I do not always feel like writing or researching	2.37	1.01	Agree
	I always feel like eating more than 5 times in a day	1.89	.849	Disagree
	I find it difficult to support other people financially	3.23	.919	Agree
	It is always difficult for me to cater for my needs both physically, materially and health wise	3.00	.954	Agree
	I always feel cheerful and in good spirit	2.19	.872	Disagree
	I always feel calm and relaxed	2.28	.922	Disagree
	I always feel active and vigorous	2.27	.919	Disagree
	I always wake up feeling fresh and rested	2.47	.958	Disagree
	I always feel tired and inactive	2.57	.944	Agree
	I am always feeling that I am into other things than lecturing	2.43	.884	Disagree
	I am always feeling disappointed about my profession	2.65	.945	Agree
	Cluster Mean	50.58	26.95	Agree

Table one showed that lecturers disagreed that during prolonged ASUU strike they always happy, down emotionally, feel sick, relieved because they have time to rest, feel like writing or researching, feel happy and in noble spirit, feel peaceful and comfortable, feel lively and energetic, wake up feeling renewed and reinvigorated. The Lecturers also agree that they always find it difficult to support other people financially during prolonged ASUU strike, difficult to cater for their needs physically, materially and health wise, they agree that they feel like they are in another profession than lecturing, they agree that they always feeling disappointed about their profession during prolonged ASUU strike. The table show cluster mean of 50.58 and standard deviation of 26.95. Since the cluster mean is greater than the normative mean of 50.00, this shows that prolonged ASUU strike influence the well-being of lecturers.

Research Question Two

What is the influence of strike on well-being of students?

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of the Influence of Strike on Well-Being of Students

S/N	ITEMS	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remarks
	During Prolonged ASUU strikes:			
1	I am not always feeling good about myself	2.41	1.15	Disagree
2	I am always feeling depressed	2.67	1.08	Agree
3	I am not always relax	2.44	1.01	Disagree
4	I tend to get moody	2.31	1.03	Disagree
5	I am not interested on new things	2.79	1.10	Agree
6	I always feel disappointed being a university student	2.63	1.08	Agree
7	I am always feeling frustrated	2.52	1.05	Agree
8	I always feel I am into other things than schooling	2.37	1.01	Disagree
9	I am always feeling idle	2.41	1.03	Disagree
10	I am always finding it difficult to read	2.05	,997	Disagree
	Cluster Mean	25.00	10.50	Agree

Table showed that the students agreed that during prolonged ASUU they are always feel depressed, not interested in new things, feel frustrated, find it difficult to read. They also disagree that during prolonged ASUU strike they always feel good about themselves, not always relax, tend to get moody, feeling idle, finding it difficult to read. he table show cluster mean of 25.00 and standard deviation of 10.50. Since the cluster mean is equal to the normative mean of 25.00, this shows that prolonged ASUU strike influence the well-being of students.

Hypothesis one

There is no significance difference of influence of Prolonged strike on well-being of lecturers based on sex

Table 3: Independent Sample t-test of Influence of Prolonged Strike on Well-Being of Lecturers Based on Sex

Sex	N	Mean	Std Dev	df	t	Sig(2 tailed)
Male	54	51.44	6.48	89	1.035	.304
Female	37	49.54	11.03			

$$\alpha=0.05$$

Table 3 showed a calculated t-value of 1.035 and a p-value of .304 testing at α level of 0.05. Since the p-value is greater than the alpha level, the hypothesis which stated there is no significant difference of

influence of prolonged ASUU strike on well-being of lecturers based on sex is retained. This means that there is no disparity in influence of prolonged ASUU strike on well-being of lecturers based on sex.

Hypothesis Two

There is no significance difference of influence of strike on well-being of students based on sex

Table 4: Independent Sample t-test of Influence of Prolonged Strike on Well-Being of Students Based on Sex

Sex	N	Mean	Std Dev	Df	t	Sig(2 tailed)
Male	186	25.23	6.30	398	1.689	.092
Female	214	24.13	6.72			

$\alpha=0.05$

Table 4 showed a calculated t-value of 1.689 and a p-value of .092 testing at α level of 0.05. Since the p-value is greater than the alpha level, the hypothesis which stated there is no significant difference of influence of prolonged ASUU strike on well-being of students based on sex is retained. This means that there is no disparity in influence of prolonged ASUU strike on well-being of students based on sex.

Discussion of Findings

The finding of research question one showed that prolonged ASUU strike influence the well-being of lecturers. This could be because when ASUU is on strike their salary are always withheld which always make them find it difficult to cater for their needs in term of physical, material and health wise. When all these are not in place, it could affect the well-being of lecturers. The findings is in agreement with Okeke et al (2021) who carried out study on the influence of ASUU Industrial action on psychosocial progress of lecturers in South-East zone of Nigerian Universities. The findings revealed that ASUU strike has grave influence on the psycho-social developments of academic staff in Nigerian universities.

The finding of research question two revealed that prolonged ASUU strike influence the well-being of students. This finding could be as a result of being frustrated and depressed because of idleness, when students that are suppose to be in school are at home, there is tendency for them exhibit social devices because of idleness which could adversely affect their well-being. The finding is in support of Adeoye and Adebisi (2016) carried out a research work that revealed that psychological healthiness of student are affected by ASUU industrial action. Students' emotional well-being before, during, and after a strike was evaluated using a multi-pronged methodology. The results revealed that students felt nervous, miserable, hopeless, and uninterested during the industrial action by ASUU. They grumbled of being isolated, tired, and purposeless, all of which restricted with their capability to pay attention to study. This finding also agrees with Asekun-Olarinmoye et al. (2020) who carried out research work on how the ASUU strike affected the psychological healthiness of Nigerian medical students. Throughout the industrial action by ASUU,

data were gotten from 129 medical students using a cross-sectional design. The results established that the strike had a deeply damaging influence on the psychological healthiness of medical students, with many recording feelings of pressure, exhaustion, and emotive fatigue.

The findings also revealed that there is no disparity in influence of prolonged ASUU strike on well-being of lecturers and students based on sex. The finding corroborate Liu et al., (2021), who found out that the lengthy stay at home can lead to a lack of shared interface, which can affect students' rational well-being Social interface is essential for students' rational well-being as it offers a sense of feel right and care.

Conclusion

Subject to the findings, the researchers resolved that the prolonged ASUU strike in Nigerian universities had adverse influence on the lecturers and students. The well-being of employee should be paramount to the employers, this is not the case in Nigerian universities. The lecturers of Nigerian universities always find it difficult to cater for their needs physically, materially and health wise while the students always feel depressed, frustrated and disappointed for being Nigerian undergraduate students.

Recommendations

Subject to the findings, it was suggested by the researchers that government of Nigeria should always uphold the agreement signed with ASUU in order to avoid strike, Government should also always have a meaningful dialogue with ASUU, so that the issue of strike will not always take place in Nigerian Universities. Government should take

seriously the well-being of lecturers and students as this will go a long way for effective performance for both teaching and learning.

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