

Strike Actions in Federal Universities and Undergraduate Students' Psycho-emotional Well-being in University of Benin, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study investigated the impact of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) strike on the psycho-emotional well-being of undergraduate students in the University of Benin. The study adopted a survey research design. Multi-stage random sampling technique was employed to obtain the sample of 400 respondents from the students' population of 4000 in the Faculty of Education. The instrument for data collection was titled ASUU strike and student psycho-emotional wellbeing questionnaire. The study revealed that ASUU strike had negative impact on the students' psycho-emotional well-being in general. Consequence on the findings, it was recommended that Government and ASUU should employ amicable means of resolving their differences for the sake of students' psycho-emotional well-being. Besides, counselling centre/units within each University should create awareness and intervention programmes that would assist students to stabilize emotionally after protracted ASUU strike action.

Keywords: Strike, Undergraduates, Psycho-emotional well-being

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Introduction

Historically, the tertiary education system in Nigeria appears to have come into existence and survived thus far through different union efforts. According to Abdulrahman (2015), the missionaries who started the business of education in Nigeria never assumed responsibility for

education beyond the primary and secondary levels as their efforts covered only the two levels of education. This could probably be attributed to the fact that their major intention was evangelism and not originally to make education their priority for Nigerians. In the same vein, the colonial government was perceived by some elite Nigerians at that time as not giving tertiary (university) education a priority to Nigerians. Kosemani and Okorosaye-Orubite (1995) asserted that apart from the secondary schools established by the missionaries, the then colonial government established a few ones like; King's and Queen's Colleges, in 1909 and 1927 respectively in Lagos and some professional education centres to provide sub-professional training for Nigerians. This necessitated agitations from the few educated Nigerians (Nationalists) who were not satisfied with what they considered debasement of Nigerians in the establishment of post-secondary centres like Central for Agricultural Research Stations (CARS) at Moor Plantation in Ibadan, the centre for Veterinary Medicine at Vom in Jos and the centre for engineering training at the Nigerian Railway in Lagos. The agitations compelled the then colonial Government to constitute two commissions in 1943 on the possibility of establishing higher education in the colonies, led by Mr. Justice Sir Cyril Asquith and the other on higher education in West Africa, chaired by Colonel Water Elliot. The report of the commissions eventually led to the establishment of Universities in Nigeria. The first to be established was the University College Ibadan (UCI) in 1948 that was affiliated with the University of London. The other universities were; University of Nigeria, Nsukka in 1960, University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife) in 1962 by the Western Region, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria in 1962 by the Northern Region and the University of Lagos in 1962 by the Federal Government. Babalola et al (2007) posited that the University College Ibadan became a full-fledged University in 1962. In 1970, the University of Benin was established in the then newly created Midwestern Region. Thus, the six universities established during the period 1960-1970 are principally referred to as first generation universities in Nigeria (Otonke, 2012). Ibukun (1997) posited that the UCI considered as the first university was from its inception saddled with a number of problems which vary from poor staffing, constitutional provisions and low enrolment leading to high dropout rate. It can be inferred that the problems associated with the survival of the university education in Nigeria started from its inception which however got worsened over

time by the different bad regimes of both prolonged military and democratically elected governments.

The attitude of the government towards university education led to the different strike actions in the citadel of learning. Union activities in the education sector can be traced to the existence of the Nigerian Association of University Teachers (NAUT) in 1965 whose principal orientation and objective was to front for improved members' condition of service, fair wages, of her members in the then five Universities (University of Ibadan, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, University of Ife and University of Lagos) in Nigeria. NAUT later metamorphosed into the Academic Staff Union of University (ASUU) in 1978. The inaugural strike action in Nigeria universities actually happened ten years after ASUU was established, precisely in 1988. A closer look at the reasons for the different industrial actions of the union from 1988 - 2022 point to the same reasons of its inauguration in 1965 viz; improved members' condition of service, fair wages of her members, poor physical conditions of work, insufficient or poor funding of universities, academic freedom and delay in the payment of elongated salary structure. One would have expected a progressive resolution of issues and consequently new emerging issues rather than the recurrent issues whenever ASUU embark on strike to draw the Government's attention to their statutory educational obligations to the Nigerian citizens. Thus, Adavbiele (2015) attributed the incessant ASUU strike actions to the government unfair treatment to the employees/victimization, violation of legislation and poor application of the provision of collective bargaining. This unfortunate situation of the universities in Nigeria partly accounts for the inconsequential progress and contributions of Nigeria to the technological growth and advancement in Africa and the world at large.

Strike action refers to the interim down tools or workers' temporary cessation or suspension of their services in an establishment in order to coerce their employer(s) to give the required relevant attention to their demands. In order word "it is an organized work stoppage by a body of workers to enforce compliance with demands made on an employer or a group of employers," (Chijioke, 2013). It could either be primary or secondary in nature. The primary strike actions are aimed at the employer(s) with whom the employees have a dissension. While in secondary strike actions, the employees direct their actions to the third party with whom the employer(s) maintain good

business relationship in the establishment. Thus, ASUU as a union has principally been engaged in primary strike actions during which they suspend all official assignments in the university with particular reference to teaching/lecturing, conducting examination, preparing students' result, course advising, theses supervision "et cetera" in order to force the employer (the Government) to address their demands. This invariably leads to distortion and disruption of academic activities which directly have a degree of negative effects on the students.

The impact of ASUU strike actions is multifarious as it negatively affects the students, the union members (employees), the Government (employer), the parents and the society at large. The union members during strike are often subjected to further hardship by their employer (Government) by withholding their wages (as in the case of the 2022 strike action as lecturers' salaries for eight months (March –October) have been withheld by the Federal Government). Thus, Okeke et al (2021) identified starvation, denial of basic rights and entitlements during strikes as part of the negative impact on the academic staff in Nigerian universities which leave them in pain with feelings of demoralization and humiliation. The students appear to be the most affected by any strike action in the citadel of learning. The study of Ajayi (2014) at Ekiti State University on the impact of ASUU strikes on students' academic performance in Nigeria revealed that ASUU strike actions have negative impact on students' academic pursuit and performance with 71.2% of the respondents (from the population of 604) that have experienced ASUU strikes and 51.6% admitted that ASUU strike actions have had negative influence on their academics. Similarly, the study of Ajayi (2014) revealed 299 (51.6%) of the respondents accepted the fact that ASUU strikes impacted their academic performance negatively, 290 (50%) expressed the reduction of their reading habit during the strike actions, while 312 (53.8%) of the respondents admitted that their Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) dropped immediately examinations were conducted soon after ASUU strike. Besides the academic performance, Adamu and Nwogo (2014) revealed that, ASUU strike actions have a negative effect on the quality of university graduates that the country produces.

Apart from the negative impact of strike actions on students' academic performance, it is suspected that strike actions could impact negatively on students' psycho-emotional well-being. It is obvious that most undergraduates are apparently idle when out of school

consequence on the strike action. Such situation basically has its emotional impact as Ajayi (2014) admitted that ASUU strike has psychological effects on the students who have to stay idle at home, lamenting their woes and causing irritation to parents. During strike, students who are idle often experienced frustration, frustration is closely associated to anger which provokes aggression. Thus, Greenglass et al (2002) hypothesized that the more students perceived their goal-directed plans are interrupted by strike actions, the greater their anger and frustration about the strike. Hence they indulge in frivolous activities and deviant behaviours as they develop lack of interest in academics due to the long stay away from school (Ajayi, 2014). The idle students are highly susceptible to negative influence and become quick recruits into social vices including joining bad gangs and involving in internet fraud. The study of Greenglass et al (2002) on university students' psychological reactions to strike at York University in Canada revealed that the labour dispute was a stressful experience as it interfered with students' educational plans and seriously affected their plans including employment and travel. Similarly, an earlier study of York University's students, Grayson (1997) discovered that many students were worried that the strike interfered with their summer school plans as 62% of the sample said that their plans for a summer job was affected. "Thus, for many students, the labour dispute represented a blocking of goal-directed activity since it interfered with plans that students had already made before the strike" P.263 (Greenglass et al, 2002). So, it logically follows that the more students' educational plans are affected by strike action, the greater their anxiety level can be.

The prolonged strike actions in Nigeria public universities appear to have heightened the anxiety level of most undergraduate students in Nigeria. An account of ASUU strike actions in Nigeria universities revealed that ASUU organized strike in 1988, 1992, 1994 and 1996 (Amadi & Precious, 2015). Since 1999 ASUU strike has become almost a recurrent annual routine as the academic calendar has been intermittently disrupted by the union industrial strike actions. Chukwudi and Idowu (2021); Sanchi et al (2022) x-rayed ASUU strike actions thus; 1999 - five months, 2001 - three months, 2002 - two weeks, 2003/2004 - six months, 2005 - three days, 2006 - three days, 2007 - three months, 2008 - one week, 2009 - four months, 2010 - over five months, 2011/2012 - three months, 2013 – over five months, 2017- three weeks, 2018/2019 two months and 2020/2021 - nine months. The last strike

lasted for eight months; precisely from Monday, February 14th to Friday October 14, 2022. An overview of the strike duration in Nigeria universities suggests the closure of the country's citadels of learning since 1999 to 2022 for sixteen times (16 times) and a period of over four years (4 years) precisely; fifty- four months (54 months), two weeks (2 weeks) and six days (6 days). This has enormous consequences on the students' psychological and emotional dispositions as they are the principal recipients of the strike actions' impact. Amos et al (1993) on emotional impact of strike action revealed that strike actions have slightly negative impact, with 23% of the respondents indicating a moderately negative effect and 20% indicating no effect on their emotions. In the correlational study on emotional effects, Amos et al (1993) found pre-strike effects correlated positively with strike period effects, while the pre-strike effects were slightly negatively correlated with post-strike effects as strike period effects were not correlated with post-strike effects. In Nigeria, different variables could contribute to the psycho-emotional problems of students owed to the strike actions. With the disruption of the school calendar, the academic programme would have unduly been prolonged, thus some students would be prevented from the National Youth Service Corps programme (as they would have been above the age for mobilization at the time of graduation), a prerequisite for job appointment in Nigeria Government establishment.

It has also been closely associated with adolescent students' involvement in some nefarious activities like cyber-crime, drug abuse and anti-social behaviour like armed robbery, kidnapping and even increase in number of female students' unprepared/unwanted pregnancy. The incessant strike actions appear to have discouraged a good number of youth from remaining in school as they stay longer than normal. Thus, defeating the purpose of university education as first mentioned by Newman in 1853 that the university is a place of teaching universal knowledge, whose objective is the dissemination of knowledge rather than just its advancement (Newman 1907, first published in 1858).

Much have been said for and against the why of ASUU strike actions in the public tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The union members continued to press hard on the Federal Government, while the Government stylishly sustains her foot-dragging in fulfilling or granting the demands of the union. Yet, the students, the acclaimed future hope of the nation are at the receiving end with little or no consideration from both major contenders. Thus, bringing to bear the popular adage among

Africans that; “when two elephants fight, the grass suffers”. In the face of the lingering and prolonged industrial strike actions in the citadels of learning, there is the need to enquire beyond its impact on the academic performance of students to the psycho-emotional effects on the students. This is considered imperative in the face of increasing youth unrest being experienced in Nigeria than ever. Within the last ten years reported cases of kidnapping, cyber-crime, indiscriminate killing of human beings and other nefarious activities closely associated with young vibrant people have astronomically increased in Nigeria. One cannot but consider the psycho-emotional disposition of these ebullient but made idle undergraduates who have been kept at home, left more frustrated by endless strike actions and with no job even for teaming others roaming aimlessly the streets in Nigeria.

However, there appears to be a paucity of research investigations and findings in this regard, particularly with regards to students’ psycho- emotional disposition by sex (male and female) and by their years of study. Thus, this study sought the following aim and objectives.

Aim and the Objectives of the Study

The principal aim of the study was to investigate the impact of ASUU strike actions on the psycho-emotional well-being of undergraduate students in the University of Benin. The specific objectives were to:-

1. To ascertain the extent to which students’ zeal and plans for their educational career were sustained.
2. To ascertain the extent to which students’ experienced heightened anxiety and mild depression consequence on the ASUU strike action.
3. To investigate whether the effect of the ASUU strike action differs by students’ year of study.
4. To investigate whether the effect of the ASUU strike action differs by study sex.

To aid the investigation, the following research questions were asked

Research Questions

1. To what extent were students psycho-emotionally (anxiety and mild depression levels, zeal and plans for education) disposed during the protracted ASUU strike?

2. To what extent do students differ in their psycho-emotional well-being during the ASUU strike by year of study?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significance difference in the students' psycho-emotional well-being during the ASUU strike by year of study.
2. There is no significance difference in students' psycho-emotional well-being during the ASUU strike by sex.

Methodology

Research Design

The study was a survey, adopted descriptive approach. Here the researcher intended to describe the existing association between the variables (ASUU strike actions impact on undergraduate students' emotional well-being) in the University of Benin without manipulating any of the variables.

Participants

The participants of this study consisted of 400 undergraduate students from a total population of 4000 in the Faculty of Education, University of Benin. Multi-stage random sampling technique was used to select four departments in the Faculty of Education, University of Benin. The first stage was to recognize the nine Faculties in the University. The second stage was to stratify the Faculties into three main blocks of; humanities, natural sciences and life sciences. The third stage was through simple random sampling procedure selected the humanities block made up of Social Sciences, Management Sciences, Arts and Education Faculties. The fourth stage was the purposive selection of the Faculty of Education and the fifth stage was the random sampling of four (4) departments from the eight departments in the Faculty of Education. In each of the four departments one hundred (100) students were randomly sampled across the different class levels, making a total of four (400) hundred undergraduate students that participated in the study. At the end, only 292 questionnaires were validly responded to and could be analysed for the study.

Instrument

The instrument used for the study was titled ASUU strike and students' psycho-emotional well-being questionnaire. It was constructed by the researcher for the purpose of this study. It had 20 items that covered the psycho-emotional (anxiety and depression levels) disposition of students and on four point scale of; very much true of me, VTM (4 points), true of me, TM (3 points), partly true of me, PTM (2 points) and not true of me, NTM (1 point). The content validity of the instrument was established by three experts in the field of educational measurement and counselling psychology. The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach Alpha statistics and coefficient of .867 was obtained.

Procedures

The data were obtained through the instrument that was administered to the 400 students in the Faculty of Education, University of Benin. The permission of the dean of the Faculty was sought along with the heads of the departments of the four departments which were used. On approval of the Dean and the HODs, the researcher met with the students. The intention of the researcher was discussed with the students in their respective class rooms and the researcher sought their cooperations. The questionnaire was randomly administered in each of the class level to those who voluntarily indicated interest to participate in the study. On completion, the copies of the questionnaire were retrieved the same day before the close of the school hours. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data.

Presentation of Results

1. Research question 1: To what extent are students psycho-emotionally (anxiety, depression levels, zeal and plan for education) disposed during the protracted ASUU strike?

Table 1: Item analysis of undergraduate students' psycho-emotional disposition (anxiety, mild depression, zeal and plan to pursue education) during the protracted ASUU strike.

| S/ N | Items | N | Mean | Std | Ranking |
|---------|---|-----|--------|---------|------------------|
| 1 | The prolonged ASUU strike has made schooling uninteresting to me. | 292 | 3.2329 | .97418 | 5 th |
| 2 | I have been worried about my life's ambition since the ASUU strike. | 292 | 3.1267 | .94216 | 6 th |
| 3 | With the constant ASUU strike, I have lost interest in Nigeria Education System | 292 | 3.2740 | .87752 | 4 th |
| 4 | The constant ASUU strike has being frustrating my life as a student | 292 | 3.0719 | 1.02459 | 7 th |
| 5 | I am not happy about the extended Academic Programme due to ASUU strike | 292 | 3.3801 | .84301 | 1 st |
| 6 | I started entertaining some negative thought during the strike | 292 | 2.8356 | 1.13384 | 14 th |
| 7 | During the strike, I became lonely | 292 | 2.1610 | 1.09895 | 20 th |
| 8 | I enjoyed the prolonged ASUU strike | 929 | 2.9726 | 1.09007 | 12 th |
| 9. | I thought less of schooling during the ASUU strike | 292 | 2.2466 | 1.11264 | 19 th |
| 10 | I was gainfully engaged during the strike action in online studies | 292 | 2.7911 | 1.13407 | 15 th |
| 11 | The strike action left me with negative thought about Education in Nigeria | 292 | 3.0582 | 1.01536 | 8 th |
| 12 | I have lost interest in the Education System in Nigeria | 292 | 3.0103 | 1.04367 | 10 th |
| 13 | I have given up trying to improve my educational career | 292 | 2.0582 | 1.11843 | 17 th |
| 14 | I engaged in online trading during the prolonged ASUU strike | 292 | 2.6815 | 1.16268 | 16 th |
| 15 | The ASUU strike relieved me of academic tension | 292 | 2.2055 | 1.11483 | 19 th |
| 16 | I was extremely happy to stay at home during the strike | 292 | 3.0411 | 1.10218 | 9 th |
| 17 | The ASUU strike made me to discover some skills/talents for self help | 292 | 2.8562 | 1.05511 | 13 th |
| 18 | The strike period was very relaxing | 292 | 2.9932 | 1.00512 | 11 th |
| 19 | With the ASUU strike, education will be great in Nigeria | 292 | 3.3390 | .98343 | 2 nd |
| 20 | I am worried about when I will finish my university education with the constant ASUU strike | 292 | 3.3185 | .93680 | 3 rd |

The Table 1 above shows the mean of 3.38 and standard deviation of .84 for item number 5 as the highest ranked item, expressing the sad/unhappy state of the students over the protracted ASUU strike. It

equally shows items 19 and 20 with the mean of 3.34 and 3.32 and standard deviation of .983 and .937 respectively, ranking as the 2nd and 3rd. Thus, expressing the level of students' anxiety as the ASUU strike action was sustained. Items 3 and 1 with the mean of 3.27 and 3.24, and the corresponding standard deviation of .878 and .974 ranked 4th and 5th respectively. Here the students expressed their mild depressive state as they have lost hope in the education system in Nigeria sequel to the constant industrial action of ASUU over unfulfilled government agreement and poor working condition. Items 2 and 4 with the mean of 3, 23 and 3.07, and the corresponding standard deviation of .942 and 1.025 ranked 6th and 7th, expressing the students' inability to plan properly due to ASUU strike action. Even the 19th and the 20th ranked items considered the last two ranked in the questionnaire had the mean of 2.2466, 2.1610 with std of 1.11 and 1.09 respectively, expressed the despondency of students during the strike action.

Research question 2: To what extent does the students' psycho-emotional well-being differ during the ASUU strike by year of study?

Table 2: Descriptive table of students' psycho-emotional disposition by year of study.

| Year of study | N | Mean | std | Ranking |
|----------------------|------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| 100 level | 43 | 57.1163 | 7.20849 | 3rd |
| 200 level | 49 | 54.5714 | 7.46659 | 4th |
| 300 level | 89 | 58.0562 | 6.79632 | 2nd |
| 400 level | 111 | 58.9009 | 6.56984 | 1st |
| Total | 292 | 57.6541 | 7.01889 | |

The table 2 above shows the mean and standard deviation of students' psycho-emotional disposition by their year of study. It has the mean of 58.9009 with standard deviation (std) of 6.56984 of 400 level students ranking higher than others. It shows the mean of 58.0562, 57.1163 with the corresponding std of 6.79632 and 7.2084 of 300 level and 100 level students respectively. Leaving the 200 level students with the least mean of 54.5714 and std of 7.46659. This implies that the 400

level students were more psycho-emotionally disturbed, closely followed by the 300 level and the 100 level students.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the students' psycho-emotional well-being during ASUU strike by year of study.

Table 3: One way Analysis of Variance Table of students' psycho-emotional well-being by year of study.

| | Sum of Square | df | Mean Square | F | Sig |
|---------------|---------------|-----|-------------|-------|------|
| B/w groups | 665.017 | 3 | 221.672 | | |
| Within groups | 13671.048 | 288 | 47.469 | 4.670 | .003 |
| Total | 14336.065 | | | | |

Table 3 above shows the F value of 4.670, df of 3, 288, p. value of .003, tested at alpha level of .05. The p. value is less than .05 ($.003 < .05$). This implies that there is a significant difference in the students' psycho-emotional well-being by year of study. Therefore, the hypothesis that says there is no significant difference in the students' psycho-emotional well-being by year of study is not rejected. Thus, there is significant difference in the students' psycho-emotional well-being by year of study

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the students' psycho-emotional well-being during the ASUU strike by sex

Table 4: Independent t test Table of students' psycho-emotional well-being during ASUU strike by sex.

| Sex | N | Mean | df | F | Sig |
|--------|-----|---------|-----|------|------|
| Male | 81 | 55.3580 | 2 | | |
| Female | 211 | 58.5355 | 290 | .026 | .873 |

The Table 4 shows the df 2,290, F value of .026, p. value of .873 tested at .05 level of significance. The p. value is greater than the alpha level ($.873 > .05$). Therefore, the hypothesis that says there is no significant difference in the students' psycho-emotional well-being during the ASUU strike by sex is retained. However, the table shows the mean of 55.3580 and 58.5355 for male and female students respectively. This suggests that male and female students did not enjoy the same psycho-emotional well-being during the ASUU strike. It suggests that female

students were more psycho-emotionally disturbed than male students although it was not high enough to be significant.

Discussion of Findings

The study revealed that anxiety was the highest psycho-emotional problem the undergraduate students had during the strike action. The students expressed this in items 5, 19, and 20 that ranked 1st, 2nd and 3rd respectively. This finding corroborated the assertion of Ajayi (2014) that ASUU strike has psychological effects on the students. The students' anxiety possibly ensued from the anticipated extension of the academic programme leaving the students to be exceedingly worried about when their university education will come to an end. This finding can be attributed to the age restriction by some government establishment after university education. For instance, in Nigeria, National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) is restricted to a certain age limit (below the age of 30 years). Besides, the few job opportunities made available to the common citizens are equally restricted to a particular age bracket. Yet, most of the undergraduate students are already close to their 30th year. With ASUU strike action, some will likely not be mobilized for NYSC and are not to be considered for some job opportunities due to no fault of theirs (consequence on their age) but for ASUU strike.

The finding equally revealed mild depression as the next highest psycho-emotional problem of the undergraduate students. The students expressed this in items 3 and 1 that ranked 4th and 5th in the instrument. Consequent on ASUU strike, a good number of the respondents expressed their loss of interest in Nigeria education system as schooling become uninteresting to them in Nigeria. This certainly is tending towards dispel and loss of hope in the entire tertiary school system in Nigeria.

The study equally revealed students' inability to plan properly for life ambition due to the constant strike action. This ranked 7th as expressed in items number 4 of the instrument. This finding corroborates the assertion of Greenglass *et al.* (2002) that strike actions interrupt students' goal directed plans. This can be true of the students as the strike action put on hold their academic career. This could account for reasons why a good number of them develop passion for other career like acting (Hollywood) that can give them immediate sense of belonging.

The study revealed a significant difference in students' psycho-emotional disposition by their year of study. This implies that all the students did not feel the impact of the strike action psycho-emotionally on equal or similar basis or gravity. In this regard, the descriptive analysis revealed the extent of the impact on years of study. Thus, the finding revealed that 400 level students were the most affected students by the ASUU strike. As that level ranked 1st with the highest mean of 58.9009. The 400 level was closely followed by the 300 and 100 levels students respectively. This finding can be seen as a true reflection of the students' psycho-emotional disposition consequent on the ASUU strike. The 400 level students could be more anxious as the strike action has unduly extended their study programme in the university. Prior to the strike action, they were anticipating the completion of their study in few months. With the strike action that lasted for eight months, their hope of graduating as they anticipated was shattered, hence their anxiety and mild depression. The 300 level students could not have been different in terms of duration of the academic programme. However, the 100 level students' expression of the psycho-emotional disturbance can be associated with various factors. The fact remains that they had spent barely three months on campus before the strike action started. They were probably still trying to cope with the stress of the new academic environment when the strike action begun. This could exacerbate their anxiety level as they think of what the future holds for them in terms of educational pursuit in Nigeria.

The finding revealed no significant difference in students' psycho-emotional disposition by sex. This implies that students of either male or female felt the same during the protracted ASUU strike action. However, the mean score of male and female students differ slightly. With the female mean of 58.5355 and male mean of 55.3580, it can be said a difference actually existed, but may not be strong enough to be significant. This implies that female students expressed more psycho-emotional issues due the strike action than their male counterpart. This finding can be attributed to pressure on the female folk from both internal (within them) and external pressure (their parents and family members). A good number of female students perceive education as a means towards other height. The extension of the education programme due to the strike would likely affect other aspects of their life. They could be more worried as they would like to graduate from school and settle for marriage. They are likely to be more anxious when they consider

their age as many are in their late 20s or very close to 30 years. This is a major concern for female students in this part of the country who are not in marriage early in life due to educational pursuit. The strike action appears to be frustrating the early achievement of their desire to marry soon after the degree programme. Basically the male students appear not to be under any pressure in this regard as they tend to enjoy a better elasticity in terms of child bearing and choice of marriage suitor or partner.

Implications

The implications of these findings for university undergraduates are enormous. It is evident from the findings that undergraduate students suffered psycho-emotionally during the ASUU strike action. This implies that the strike action heightened the anxiety level of the students. Similarly, a good number of them went into dispel as the hope of graduating as at when due was dashed. Apparently, the psycho-emotional well-being of the students was greatly impacted. Such disposition predisposed the students to be susceptible to other mental health related issues. This implicitly negates and thwarts the goals of education as explained in the National Policy on Education.

Besides, the findings revealed that students could not plan properly during the ASUU strike action. Undeniably, the students were held more or less stagnated as they could not have concrete plan for their educational career. This could exacerbate depression level in those who are already pro to depression. Thus, the ASUU strike had both psychological and emotional impact on the students. By implication, the strike action created an unhealthy emotional atmosphere that did not enhance positively the mental and emotional disposition of the undergraduates.

Conclusion

Sequel to the findings of the study, it was concluded that ASUU strike action has negative psycho-emotional impact on the undergraduate students. It equally impacted on the students' ability to make adequate plan for their academic career.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made.

1. The Federal Government and the Academic Staff Union of Universities members should resolve their differences amicably without resorting to strike actions.
2. If and when strike action is inevitable, it should not last beyond three weeks
3. The counseling units/centre in the University should create awareness and intervention programmes to assist students to mitigate the negative effect of any strike action.

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