
**IMPACT OF FREQUENT STRIKES BY THE ACADEMIC STAFF
UNION OF UNIVERSITIES ON UNIVERSITY EDUCATION IN SOUTH
EAST NIGERIA**

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the Impact of Frequent Strikes by the Academic Staff Union of Universities on University Education in South East Nigeria. Four research questions and four null hypotheses were formulated and guided the study. The population of the study was 7,240 academic staff and students (803 academic staff and 6437 final year students) of Faculty of Education. The sample size of the study was 362 respondents drawn through proportionate sampling techniques. The instrument for data collection was a researcher developed questionnaire titled, 'Impact of Frequent Strikes by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASSU) on University Education Questionnaire (IFASUEQ). The Questionnaire was validated by three lecturers: two from the Department of Educational Foundations (Administration and Planning option), and one from the Department of Science Education (Measurement and Evaluation option), all in the Faculty of Education, Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki. The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach Alpha technique with the aid of SPSS which yielded an overall index of 0.64. Mean and standard deviation was used to answer research questions, while the null hypotheses were tested using independent sample t-test at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that frequent strikes negatively impact on students' academic performance as it affects students' intellectual ability and increase lack of exposure to practical skills among other; that the impact of ASUU strikes on staff welfare indicates that universities experience lack of staff training during strike actions but gives room for adequate job security. Based on these findings, the study recommended among other things that government and university authorities should establish a sustainable dialogue and conflict resolution mechanism with

ASUU to ensure that issues relating to staff welfare, funding, and working conditions are addressed promptly before they escalate into prolonged strike actions that disrupt academic programmes.

KEYWORDS: *Impact, Frequent Strikes, Academic Staff Union, Universities, University Education, South East Nigeria.*

INTRODUCTION

University education plays a fundamental role in the development of any society, whether developed or developing. This is because universities serve as important centres for advanced knowledge creation, skill development, critical thinking, and the preparation of future leaders who contribute to social, economic, scientific, and technological advancement. Through teaching, research, and community engagement, universities promote innovation and provide the intellectual foundation required for national development. Consequently, higher education institutions are widely regarded as engines of societal transformation and drivers of economic growth in modern societies. The development of university education in Nigeria dates back to the colonial and early post-independence periods when the need for trained manpower for administrative, professional, and technological development became increasingly evident. One of the earliest landmark institutions in this development was the University of Nigeria, Nsukka (UNN), which was founded in 1955 by the Eastern Regional Government under the leadership of Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe and officially opened in 1960. The establishment of the university was guided by the philosophy of providing education that would meet the developmental needs of Nigeria and promote African cultural identity and intellectual independence. According to Azikiwe (1961), the university system in Nigeria was envisioned as a means of producing skilled manpower, promoting research and innovation, and fostering national development through the training of responsible and intellectually competent citizens.

Universities are commonly described as communities of scholars devoted to the pursuit of knowledge, truth, and intellectual advancement. They consist of academic staff, administrative personnel, and students who collectively engage in teaching, research, and community service. In contemporary scholarship, universities are viewed not only as institutions where knowledge is transmitted but also as centres for knowledge production, innovation, and social transformation (Altbach, 2020). They play an essential role in preparing individuals for leadership positions in society, the economy, and governance while

fostering values such as critical thinking, ethical responsibility, and civic engagement (Marginson, 2016). Furthermore, universities contribute to national development by equipping learners with the competencies required to solve complex societal challenges and by cultivating intellectual capacities that enhance productivity and innovation in various sectors of the economy (Oketch, 2016). In Nigeria, the university education system is composed of both public and private institutions. Public universities are owned and funded by the government and are classified into federal and state universities. Federal universities are established and funded by the Federal Government of Nigeria, while state universities are owned and managed by individual state governments. Private universities, on the other hand, are established and managed by individuals, religious organizations, or corporate bodies. These different categories of universities collectively contribute to the provision of higher education in the country and play significant roles in manpower development, research advancement, and national progress.

Despite the significant role universities play in national development, the Nigerian university system has faced numerous challenges that threaten its stability and effectiveness. Among these challenges are inadequate funding, poor infrastructure, overcrowded classrooms, shortage of academic staff, declining research capacity, and frequent industrial disputes between university staff unions and the government. One of the most persistent challenges confronting Nigerian universities is the recurring strike actions by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), which often lead to prolonged disruptions of academic activities. The disruption of academic activities in Nigerian universities due to strike actions has become a major concern for government authorities, parents, students, and other stakeholders in the education sector. Industrial actions within the university system frequently result in the suspension of lectures, postponement of examinations, and closure of institutions for extended periods. Such disruptions create uncertainty within the academic calendar and raise concerns about the sustainability and credibility of university education in Nigeria (Abubakar & Ali, 2018). In many cases, stakeholders have expressed fears that continuous strike actions may seriously undermine the quality of education and weaken the ability of Nigerian universities to compete globally.

Strike action could be defined as a collective refusal by employees to perform their duties as a means of pressing for the resolution of grievances related to working conditions, wages, or other employment issues. According to Abdurrahman (2012), strike action is a work stoppage caused by the mass refusal of employees to work, usually in response to unresolved

grievances between employees and their employers. Strikes are often considered legitimate tools used by workers and labour unions to negotiate better working conditions, improved remuneration, and enhanced welfare benefits. In Nigeria, the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) represents the interests of academic staff in public universities and has played a major role in advocating for improved funding and better working conditions in the university system. The right of workers to form trade unions and engage in collective bargaining is recognized under Section 40 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended), which guarantees freedom of association. Similarly, labour laws and trade union regulations provide legal frameworks that allow workers to organize and protect their economic and social interests through collective action, including strike actions (Nwandu, 2018). From this perspective, strike action is often regarded as a legitimate mechanism through which employees draw attention to issues affecting their welfare and professional conditions.

Although, strikes may serve as instruments for negotiating improved conditions of service, prolonged industrial actions can produce significant negative consequences for educational institutions and their stakeholders. In the Nigerian university system, ASUU strikes have often been triggered by issues such as inadequate funding of tertiary institutions, non-payment of earned academic allowances, delays in salary payments, poor infrastructural development, and disagreements over government policies affecting university administration. According to Ogunode, Okweloga, and Abubakar (2022), some of the major demands raised by ASUU during strike actions include the revitalization of public universities, implementation of agreed salary structures, improved research funding, payment of outstanding allowances, and reforms aimed at strengthening the governance of universities.

Frequent strike actions in universities can significantly disrupt the academic activities of students and staff. Students' academic performance, in particular, may be adversely affected by prolonged interruptions in the academic calendar. Academic performance refers to the extent to which students successfully achieve educational objectives through the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and competencies required in their chosen fields of study. According to Hassan and Sa'adu (2024), academic performance can be measured through indicators such as grade point averages, examination results, retention rates, and successful completion of academic programmes. Beyond these measurable indicators, academic performance also

involves the development of critical thinking abilities, professional competencies, and lifelong learning skills that prepare students for productive participation in society (Nwagbala, Okafor, & Ani, 2022). Empirical evidence suggests that frequent strike actions disrupt academic calendars, resulting in interrupted lectures, postponed examinations, and extended programme durations. These disruptions often reduce students' engagement with academic activities and may negatively influence their motivation, study habits, and academic preparedness. Prolonged breaks from academic activities can also lead to loss of learning continuity, reduced exposure to practical learning experiences, and increased examination anxiety among students (Hassan & Sa'adu, 2024; Nwanyanwu, Eze, & Ude, 2023). Consequently, strike actions may contribute to declining academic performance, delayed graduation, and reduced competitiveness of graduates in the labour market.

In addition to their impact on students, strike actions could also affect the welfare of academic staff in universities. Staff welfare refers to the range of benefits, services, and working conditions provided to employees in order to enhance their physical, psychological, and professional well-being. According to Amie-Ogan, Wey-Amaewhule, and Ndidi (2022), staff welfare includes adequate remuneration, timely payment of salaries and allowances, access to health services, provision of conducive working environments, and opportunities for professional development and research support. These welfare provisions are essential for maintaining high levels of motivation, productivity, and job satisfaction among academic staff. Despite that strike actions are often organized to demand improved welfare conditions for university staff, prolonged strike actions could have unintended consequences. During extended strike periods, academic staff may experience financial stress due to salary delays or suspension of certain benefits. In addition, disruptions to teaching and research activities may limit opportunities for professional development, academic collaboration, and research productivity. These challenges may reduce staff morale and increase the likelihood of academic staff seeking employment opportunities outside the public university system (Amie-Ogan, Wey-Amaewhule, & Ndidi, 2022). The resulting loss of experienced academic personnel can weaken the institutional capacity of universities to deliver quality education and conduct meaningful research. Within the university environment, lecturers and students represent two major groups that are directly affected by industrial disputes and disruptions to academic activities. Lecturers are academic professionals responsible for teaching, research, and community service within universities. They play vital roles in curriculum delivery, student mentorship, knowledge production, and institutional development. Lecturers may

differ in terms of academic rank, years of experience, research interests, and professional orientation, and these differences may influence their perspectives on industrial actions and university governance issues (Nwanyanwu, Eze, & Ude, 2023).

1

Students, on the other hand, are individuals enrolled in universities for the purpose of acquiring knowledge, skills, and professional competencies in specific fields of study. Students differ in terms of academic level, age, socio-economic background, learning styles, and career aspirations. These differences may influence how students perceive the effects of strike actions on their academic experiences and future career prospects. For instance, final-year students may be particularly concerned about delays in graduation caused by strike actions, while early-year students may be more focused on the continuity of their learning experiences (Hassan & Sa'adu, 2024). Consequently, both lecturers and students may hold varying perceptions regarding the impact of strike actions on university education. Given the recurring nature of ASUU strike actions and the growing concerns about their implications for university education in Nigeria, it becomes necessary to examine their effects on key aspects of the academic system. In particular, there is a need to investigate how these industrial actions influence students' academic performance and staff welfare within universities. Understanding these impacts is essential for informing policy decisions aimed at improving the stability, effectiveness, and quality of university education in Nigeria. It is against this background that the present study examined the impact of Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) strike actions on university education in South-East Nigeria, focusing specifically on their effects on students' academic performance and staff welfare as perceived by lecturers and students.

Statement of the Problem

University education in Nigeria, particularly within the South East geopolitical zone, has continued to experience severe disruptions due to the recurring strike actions embarked upon by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU). Although strikes are intended as legitimate mechanisms for pressing home unmet demands, their prolonged and unpredictable nature often produces consequences far beyond the initial objectives. In many instances, extended strikes dampen the morale of academic staff who, faced with withheld salaries and worsening economic conditions, may lose interest in core academic engagements such as conferences, research, workshops, and seminars. As a result, some lecturers divert their energy to alternative income-generating activities for survival, thereby weakening the

academic culture of scholarship and productivity. These recurrent disruptions also distort the academic calendar, delay student graduation, and create long periods of academic inactivity that compromise the quality of teaching and learning. The issue has become increasingly alarming as evidence by NUC-Nigeria Education Verification System, 24 May 2022 showed rising cases of stress-related illnesses and deaths among lecturers linked to prolonged industrial actions, unpaid salaries, and inflationary pressures. The cumulative impact of these setbacks undermines the stability and purpose of university education, aggravates public frustration, and raises concerns among parents, students, communities, university administrators, and other stakeholders about the sustainability of tertiary education in Nigeria.

Moreover, persistent ASUU strikes impose heavy academic, psychological, and developmental burdens on students, who are repeatedly subjected to disrupted learning cycles, extended study years, and diminishing motivation. Prolonged academic breaks reduce students' concentration, weaken lecturer-student interaction, and create an environment where teaching is rushed upon resumption in an attempt to recover lost time. The consequence is often a hurried academic process that compromises the mastery of essential skills and fosters the production of inadequately prepared graduates, particularly in public universities. Besides, observation by the researcher indicates that between 2010 and 2022, over a thousand days of learning were lost to ASUU strikes, significantly lengthening academic programmes and altering the rhythm of university life. Such instability threatens not only the academic progression of students but also the credibility of university degrees and graduates in the labour market. If this trend remains unaddressed, the Nigerian university system may continue to suffer erosion of standards, increased graduate unemployment, and weakened national development outcomes. It was against this background, the present study investigated the impact of frequent ASUU strikes on university education in the South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria, with a view to understanding their implications for the quality, efficiency, and sustainability of higher education in the region.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to examine the impact of Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) strikes on university education in South-East Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to;

1. Find out the impact of Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) frequent strikes on students' academic performance in the universities.
2. Determine the impact of Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) frequent strikes on staff welfare in the universities.

Scope of the Study

This study was delimited to the impact of Academic Union of Universities (ASUU) Strikes on University Education in South East Nigeria. Specifically, the study focused on the impact of Academic Staff Union of Universities strike on students' academic performance and staff welfare in the universities. All academic staff members in the faculties of Education and Final Year Students in the Faculties of Education, 2024/2025 session in the five State Universities in the South East region of Nigeria were used.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What is the impact of Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) frequent strike on students' academic performance in the universities?
2. What is the impact of Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) frequent strike on staff welfare in the universities?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance to guide the study.

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of lecturers and students on ways in which the Academic Staff Union of University (ASUU) strike impact on students' academic performance of universities.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of lecturers and students on the ways in which the Academic Staff Union of University strikes impact on staff welfare of universities.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted descriptive survey design. According to Abonyi, Okereke, Omebe, Anugwo, and Nnachi (2022), descriptive survey design consists of those studies in which small data are collected from a large population to enable the researcher describe in a systematic manner and interpret the characteristic and facts about things that exist. This design is suitable for this study because it involves collecting data from a representative sample of

academic staff and final year students in the faculties of education across the five states universities and analyzed without manipulation. The population of the study was 7,240 academic staff and students (803 academic staff and 6437 final year students) of Faculty of Education. The sample size of the study was 362 respondents drawn through proportionate sampling techniques through Taro Yamane formula.

The instrument for data collection was a researcher developed questionnaire titled, 'Impact of Frequent Strikes by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASSU) on University Education Questionnaire (IFASUEQ). The Questionnaire was validated by three lecturers: two from the Department of Educational Foundations (Administration and Planning option), and one from the Department of Science Education (Measurement and Evaluation option), all in the Faculty of Education, Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki. The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach Alpha technique with the aid of SPSS which yielded an overall index of 0.64. Direct method of data collection was used with the help of 3 briefed research assistants. Mean and standard deviation was used to answer research questions, while the null hypotheses were tested using independent sample t-test at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

This results of the study were presented in tables based on the research questions and null hypotheses that guided the study.

Research Question 1: What is the Impact of ASUU frequent strike on students' academic performance in the universities in south East, Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation on the impact of ASUU strike on students' academic performance in the universities.

S/N	ITEM STATEMENTS	N	\bar{x}	SD	DECISION
1	Incessant strike action affects students' intellectual ability.	362	3.50	0.54	Accepted
2	Many students lack interest in their studies during strike action	362	3.49	0.63	Accepted
3	It gives provision for low study habit	362	3.49	0.59	Accepted
4	Majority students find it difficult to maintain teachers-students' relationship during strike actions	362	3.42	0.63	Accepted
5	Only few students develop high self-esteem during				

	strike action.	362	3.49	0.60	Accepted
6	Students may not be adequately taught after strike before the examination	362	3.24	0.65	Accepted
7	Strike action increase lack of exposure to practical skills among students	362	3.18	0.54	Accepted
	Grand mean (\bar{x})		3.40		

Table 4.1 presented data results of analysis for item 1-7, which showed how ASUU strike impact on students' academic performance especially in State owned universities. Each item, 1-7 obtained the mean value of 2.50 and above with a grand mean of 3.40. This implies that respondents agreed that incessant ASUU strike action negatively affect students' intellectual ability, interest of students for studies, encourages poor study habit, difficult to maintain teacher-students' relationship, lack of self-esteem, experience inadequate teaching and lack of exposure to practical skills among students.

Research Questions 2: What is the impact of ASUU frequency strike on staff welfare in the universities?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation on impact of ASUU strike on staff welfare in the universities.

S/N	ITEM STATEMENTS	N	\bar{x}	SD	DECISION
8	Universities experience lack of staff training during strike action.	362	3.08	0.63	Accepted
9	Medical provision for university staff appears to be neglected.	362	3.18	0.61	Accepted
10	Promote paying of salaries among staff.	362	3.25	0.68	Accepted
11	It enhances conducive learning environment	362	3.30	0.68	Accepted
12	It gives room for adequate job security	362	3.32	0.65	Accepted
13	ASSU strike makes provision for staff promotion	362	3.32	0.61	Accepted
15	Inadequate allowance to staff is resolve during ASUU strike action.	362	3.20	0.72	Accepted
16	ASUU strike may increase provision of housing facilities to the members of staff.	362	3.12	0.69	Accepted
	Grand mean (\bar{x})	3.20			

The result of the data analysis presented in Table 2 revealed the impact of incessant strike action of Asuu on staff welfare in the universities as shown in table 4.2, items 8-16, indicated mean values that are upto 2.50 and above which is a criterion level for acceptance. The grand mean yielded 3.20. Based on this, the researcher concluded that incesant strike of Assu

really impact on staff welfares expecially in the state own universities. Example, the staff experience lack of training during strike actions, medical provision for the university staff appears to be neglected, while on the other hand, inadequate allowance to staff could be resolved during strike action, and also paying of gratvity to staff are negotiable during strike action.

Test of Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of lecturers and students on the ways in which the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) strike impacts students’ academic performance in universities in South-East Nigeria.

Table 3: t-test Analysis of Lecturers and Students Mean Ratings on the Impact of ASUU Strike on Students’ Academic Performance.

Respondents	N	Mean (\bar{x})	SD	df	t-cal	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision
Lecturers	162	3.38	0.58	360	0.74	0.46	Not Significant
Students	200	3.42	0.61				

Since the p-value (0.46) is greater than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of lecturers and students on the impact of ASUU strike on students’ academic performance in universities in South-East Nigeria. Both groups agreed that ASUU strikes negatively affect students’ intellectual ability, interest in studies, study habits, teacher-student relationships, and exposure to practical skills.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of lecturers and students on the ways in which ASUU strikes impact staff welfare in universities.

Table 4: t-test Analysis of Lecturers and Students Mean Ratings on the Impact of ASUU Strike on Staff Welfare.

Respondents	N	Mean (\bar{x})	SD	df	t-cal	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision
Lecturers	162	3.18	0.64	360	0.68	0.50	Not Significant
Students	200	3.22	0.67				

Since the p-value (0.50) is greater than the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is accepted. This result indicates that there is no significant difference between lecturers and students regarding the impact of ASUU strikes on staff welfare in universities in South-East

Nigeria. Both groups perceived that strike actions affect staff training, medical provision, allowances, promotions, housing facilities, and other welfare issues.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study revealed that frequent strike actions by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) have significant implications for students' academic performance in universities in South-East Nigeria. The analysis presented in Table 1 showed that all the items recorded mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50, with a grand mean of 3.40, indicating that respondents agreed that frequent strike actions negatively influence students' academic performance. Specifically, the respondents agreed that incessant strike actions affect students' intellectual ability, reduce students' interest in academic activities, encourage poor study habits, and weaken teacher–student relationships. The findings also revealed that during prolonged strike periods, only a few students are able to maintain high self-esteem in their academic pursuits, while many students experience inadequate teaching when academic activities resume. In addition, the results indicated that strike actions limit students' exposure to practical skills, which are essential for effective learning and professional competence. These findings are consistent with the study conducted by Adebayo and Olanrewaju (2023), which found that repeated university strike actions disrupt academic calendars and lead to learning discontinuity among undergraduate students in Nigerian universities. Their study revealed that prolonged interruption of academic activities reduces students' motivation for learning and weakens their intellectual engagement with academic tasks. Similarly, the findings align with the work of Oladipo and Akinwale (2022), who reported that frequent industrial actions in Nigerian universities contribute to declining academic discipline and weakened study habits among students. The researchers noted that when students remain idle for long periods due to strike actions, they tend to lose academic focus and may engage in non-academic activities that negatively affect their learning outcomes.

Furthermore, the present findings corroborate the report of Suleiman (2024), which indicated that the disruption of academic programmes during strike periods makes it difficult for lecturers to complete course contents effectively when academic activities resume. This often results in rushed lectures and limited practical exposure for students. Practical learning experiences are essential for the development of technical competence and critical thinking skills; therefore, their absence can significantly affect the overall academic performance of students. In addition, frequent strike actions disrupt the social and academic interaction

between lecturers and students, which is an important component of effective teaching and learning in higher education institutions.

The test of null hypothesis I revealed that there was no significant difference between the mean ratings of lecturers and students regarding the impact of ASUU strike actions on students' academic performance. This implies that both lecturers and students share similar perceptions about the negative consequences of strike actions on academic activities. This finding supports the study conducted by Okeke and Chinedu (2023), who reported that both lecturers and students in Nigerian public universities perceive strike actions as a major challenge to the effectiveness and stability of university education. According to the researchers, the consistent disruption of academic programmes affects not only the quality of learning but also students' academic commitment and time management.

The findings of the study also revealed that ASUU strike actions have notable implications for staff welfare in universities. The results presented in Table 2 indicated that all the items recorded mean scores above the acceptance level of 2.50, with a grand mean of 3.20. This suggests that respondents agreed that strike actions influence staff welfare conditions in universities. The respondents indicated that during strike periods, university staff experience limited opportunities for professional training and development. They also observed that medical provisions and other welfare packages for staff often receive inadequate attention. However, the findings further showed that strike actions sometimes create opportunities for negotiation of improved salaries, staff promotion, job security, and other welfare benefits for university staff.

These findings are consistent with the observations of Abdullahi (2023), who explained that industrial actions in Nigerian universities are often initiated as a response to unresolved welfare issues such as delayed salaries, inadequate allowances, and poor working conditions. According to the author, strike actions are frequently used by academic unions as a strategic tool to compel government authorities to address staff welfare concerns. Similarly, Nwosu (2022) reported that while strike actions disrupt academic activities, they sometimes lead to improved welfare packages for academic staff through collective bargaining between university unions and government authorities.

The result of hypothesis II further indicated that there was no significant difference between the mean ratings of lecturers and students regarding the impact of ASUU strikes on staff welfare. This implies that both groups have similar perceptions regarding the influence of

strike actions on the welfare conditions of university staff. This finding is supported by the work of Ahmed (2024), who observed that the welfare challenges faced by academic staff in Nigerian universities are widely recognized by both students and university administrators. According to the study, persistent welfare concerns such as irregular salary payments, inadequate research funding, and limited professional development opportunities often contribute to the frequent industrial disputes experienced in Nigerian universities.

It is important to note that the findings of this study demonstrate that frequent ASUU strike actions have far-reaching implications for both students' academic performance and staff welfare in universities in South-East Nigeria. While strike actions may serve as a mechanism for negotiating improved welfare conditions for university staff, they simultaneously disrupt academic programmes and negatively affect students' learning outcomes. Consequently, there is a need for sustainable policy frameworks and effective dialogue between government authorities and university unions to minimize industrial conflicts and ensure the stability of the Nigerian university system.

Educational Implications of the Study

1. The findings of this study imply that frequent ASUU strike actions pose a serious challenge to quality assurance and effective academic planning in Nigerian universities. Continuous disruption of academic calendars leads to rushed teaching, incomplete coverage of course content, and limited opportunities for practical learning experiences. This situation may ultimately weaken the quality of graduates produced by the university system, as students may not acquire the necessary intellectual and professional competencies required in the labour market. Therefore, university administrators, curriculum planners, and policymakers must prioritize stable academic calendars and implement institutional policies that ensure continuity of teaching and learning even during periods of industrial disputes. Strengthening academic planning mechanisms, including flexible learning schedules and digital instructional strategies, can help reduce the negative academic consequences associated with strike actions.
2. Another important implication of the findings is that unresolved staff welfare issues contribute significantly to recurring industrial actions in Nigerian universities. When academic staff experience inadequate welfare provisions such as irregular salaries, limited professional development opportunities, and poor working conditions, the likelihood of industrial disputes increases. This situation affects not only staff morale and productivity

but also the overall stability of the educational system. Consequently, educational policymakers and government authorities must adopt proactive welfare management strategies that ensure timely salary payments, improved working conditions, and adequate funding for staff development programmes. Addressing these welfare concerns can help reduce the frequency of strike actions and promote a more stable and productive university environment that supports effective teaching, research, and learning

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that frequent strike actions by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) have significant implications for both students' academic performance and staff welfare in universities in South-East Nigeria. The study revealed that strike actions disrupt the continuity of academic activities and negatively affect students' intellectual development, interest in studies, study habits, and exposure to practical learning experiences. The interruption of academic programmes also weakens the academic relationship between lecturers and students and often leads to inadequate teaching when academic activities eventually resume. Consequently, frequent strike actions undermine the stability and effectiveness of the university system and may reduce the overall quality of higher education in the region. The study therefore concluded that strike actions often arise due to unresolved welfare issues such as inadequate training opportunities, poor medical provisions, and insufficient allowances, they also serve as a mechanism through which academic staff negotiate improved salaries, promotions, job security, and other welfare benefits.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study

1. Government and university authorities should establish a sustainable dialogue and conflict resolution mechanism with ASUU to ensure that issues relating to staff welfare, funding, and working conditions are addressed promptly before they escalate into prolonged strike actions that disrupt academic programmes.
2. University management and relevant education stakeholders should develop strategies to mitigate the academic disruptions caused by strike actions, such as implementing flexible academic recovery programmes, strengthening e-learning platforms, and providing additional academic support to help students regain lost learning time after strike periods.

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