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ROLE OF POOR GOVERNMENT FUNDING OF UNIVERSITY EDUCATION ON INCESSANT ASUU STRIKES: CONSEQUENCES ON UNDERGRADUATES' LEARNING OUTCOMES IN NNAMDI AZIKIWE UNIVERSITY, AWKA.

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ABSTRACT
The purpose of the study was to investigate the role which poor government funding of Nigerian university education play in causing incessant ASUU industrial (strike) actions and its consequences on Nigerian undergraduates' learning outcomes. The study adopted the descriptive research design and three research questions guided the study. The population consists all the full-time regular undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka during the 2020/2021 academic session. Sample size of the study was 400 Single Regular students selected through multistage sampling procedure. The instrument for data collection was a researcher-developed questionnaire titled Poor Funding on ASUU Incessant Strike Questionnaire (PFAISQ). The PFAISQ was duly validated by two experts from the Department of Educational Foundations and its reliability was tested using the cronbach Alpha technique which yielded an alpha coefficient of 0.78. The research questions were answered using mean. The major findings from the study revealed that poor government funding of university education plays a key role in provoking incessant ASUU strikes through meagre budgetary allocation to universities which cannot adequately cater for the rising education demands, poor remuneration for lecturers, constant reneging from implementing agreements duly reached and signed between ASUU and federal government, among others. The study also found daring consequences of incessant ASUU strikes on learning outcomes of university students. Such consequences include mental illhealth and engagement in social vices as a result of boredom and idleness at home, poor academic performance, late

graduation and in some instances a total dropout from school. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended among others that government should be proactive and prompt in initiating increase in salaries and allowances of lecturers as and when due in honour of agreements reached and signed between ASUU and herself. This will put in check frequent agitations on salary increase and welfare packages by workers. Again, ASUU members should devise a more innovative means of pressing home their demands without having to shut university gates against students, seeing that they (students) suffer many hardships and sometimes lose their lives during prolonged strike periods. They (ASUU) should begin to apply the method of Work-to-Rule until Federal Government does the necessary instead of embarking on industrial (strike) actions. Suggestions for further studies were made.

Keywords: Role; Poverty; Government Funding; University Education; Incessant ASUU Strikes; Consequences; Undergraduates; Learning Outcomes.

Introduction

Notwithstanding the importance of education to every child, studies by the UN found that Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest rates of educational exclusion in the world as quality and accessibility of education in the continent have not been in the best shape as the continent of Africa has continued to experience issues. On that backdrop, UNESCO had warned that without urgent action, the situation will likely get worse (Misra, 2017). Nigerian nation is getting a fair share of the myriads of issues that trouble her educational system particularly her funding system (Ejiogu, 2019).

In an effort to make Education worthwhile, well-meaning organizations (international and local) and individuals had consistently encouraged various governments in Africa to increase budgetary allocation to the education sector. Budgetary allocation is the main source of funding of public schools which government meet through grants and subventions. Some years ago, the United Nations Education Scientific Cultural Organization (UNESCO) was said to have recommended that every nation should allocate a minimum of 26% of its annual budget to education which till date, has not been complied with, hencee the organization calling out the concerned governments to do the

necessary. Among the groups who have made such call to Nigeria government were the Youth Orientation for Development (YOD) which in their 2019 annual celebration tagged "Transforming Education," urged the Federal Government of Nigeria through their chairman - Emmanuel Ejiogu, to implement UNESCO's recommendation of 26 percent budgetary allocation to education sector (Ogune's report in The Guardian on August, 2019). Another prominent voice which had publicly chided the Federal Government over the abysmal allocation of funds to education contrary to the UNESCO standard was that of Barau Jibrin, the Chairman, Senate Committee on Tertiary Institutions and TETFUND (Adedigba, 2017).

It is, however, important to state here that this 26% figure had been an issue of controversy as many, including Adamu, the minister of Education of Nigeria, had argued that UNESCO never gave such recommendation. Conversely, Adamu confessed to the fact that Nigerian education had constantly been uunderfunded, reporting that since 1999 when democratic governance returned, the annual budgetary allocation to education in Nigeria has been between 4 percent and 10 percent. On this, he therefore asked Buhari administration to invest about N1 trillion yearly in education for the nation's interest, noting that even among sub-Saharan Africa countries, Nigeria is trailing far behind smaller and less endowed nations in terms of our investment in education. Interestingly, though sad to note that the Minister of Education himself (Adamu) was quoted by Azeezat Adedigba in Dubawa.org, to confess that none of the E9 Nations (Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria and Pakistan) or D8 countries (Bangladesh, Egypt, Nigeria, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Pakistan, and Turkey) other than Nigeria, allocates less than 20% of its annual budget to education. The recent government retreat on education, which was attended by other Nigerian ministers, ended by asking the president to increase revenue allocation to the education sector to about 15 per cent of the 2018 budget. If the minister in charge could observe that other smaller and less endowed nations are investing not less than 20% to education while Nigeria crawls behind with meagre less than 10%, not even a baby could be deceived that our education system is not comatose and in urgent need of resuscitation.

Following the above, one wonders how Nigerian education sector would not continually find itself in the troubled waters of underachievement of goals. Many researchers such as Wahab (2022); Abiodun-Oyebanji (2017) in their studies observed failure of the Nigerian nation to meet the globally recommended budgetary benchmark which enables nations to adequately cater for the rising education demands. From their findings Nigerian Education system is plagued by poor funding.

For Nigeria to achieve her goals as a nation as well as favourably compete with other nations of the world, her education system especially that of her university system, needs to be adequately funded and very well managed too (Adekola, 2019). Sad enough, this is a far cry given the indices on funding system of her education sector which covers the three levels of primary, secondary and the university. As opined by (Abiodun-Oyebanji, 2017), Nigerian experience projects a disturbing picture of the education system. Nigerian Education finance challenge has been observed to be both about mobilizing resources and also about improving the effectiveness of fund management (Obi, 2021).

Particularizing on funding of the university level of the system, Abiodun-Oyebanji observed that the problem of poor funding of universities is one of the major challenges impeding the potential of the Nigerian university education system from acting as a catalyst to growth and development of her graduates. He stressed that the existing funding mechanism for Nigerian universities is dysfunctional not just because universities always have to wait for the monthly government's subvention as it rarely get to them early, but the paltry income can hardly take care of the recurrent expenditures let alone capital expenditure. Gambo and Fasanmi (2019) also averred that most of the challenges facing Nigerian universities are almost all traceable to inadequate funding. However, some researches revealed that poor funding is just one out of the myriads of problems facing Nigerian university education system. According to them, our education system is plagued with numerous social vices such as weapon use and weapon-related violence (Nwikpo, Ezeonwumelu, Eluemuno & Anierobi, 2020) indecent dressing

(Nwikpo, Anierobi, Eluemuno, Ezennaka & Ezeonwumelu, 2022); examination malpractices (Anierobi, Nwikpo, Okeke & Unachukwu (2020); cultism, hooliganism and corruption (Ajitoni & Olaniyan, 2018), premarital cohabitation (Kalu, Ejiogu, Chukwukadibia & Nleonu, 2021), examination malpractice (Amadi, Chikweru, Opuiyo & Ruth, 2019) etc.

Although some other researchers are in agreement with those who said that poor funding is not the only problem plaguing university education in Nigeria, they held that many inadequacies such as poor educational infrastructures, inadequate classrooms, teaching aids (projectors, computers, laboratories and libraries), paucity of quality teachers and poor / polluted learning environment are the offshoots of poor funding. To those in this school of thought, inadequate funding by the federal, state and local governments remains the first and possibly the greatest challenge facing education in Nigeria (Mba, 2019).

The abysmally poor funding of Nigerian university education system had been noted to have many daring consequences. Some stakeholders and interest groups have barefacedly confronted the government on the issue of poor/under-funding of the nation's education sector especially the university level; pointing out the ugly consequences of government's lack of commitment and sincerity in funding the system. For instance, Action Aid Nigeria (2021), in their report during the gathering of the world (Nigeria inclusive) in Abuja to mark 2021 Global Action Week on Education (GAWE) chided the federal government (FG) over the continued revenue dwindling occasioned by Illicit Financial Flows (IFFs) instead of channeling the-needed revenue to fund the delivery of free, quality, essential public services, like education. They enumerated problems which could be traceable to poor funding of Nigeria education system and prominent among the problems reported are insecurity, thriving of private sector, dropping out of school by the poor and most vulnerable in the society.

The report revealed that, because of the under-funding of the education sector, the private sector is on the increase, entrenching social inequalities, leading to stratification and huge disparities in education opportunities. Confirming this in a paper titled "Nigeria's universities are performing poorly. What can be

done about it" which was published in March 11, 2019, David Mba, Pro Vice-Chancellor and Dean of Computing, Engineering and Media, De Montfort University, averred that Nigeria's universities have been under-funded for decades; liking it to a talented but under-achieving football team, he explained that it fails to achieve goals because the country hasn't invested enough in their structure, their facilities and their people. Observing that with the poor budgetary allocation to education, learning outcomes in Nigeria will continue to be affected, plunging the sector into deeper crisis and putting the country's future at risk, Gina Bella in The Labour (2022) reported that meeting the SDG goal on Education through increased budgetary allocation is critical to attainment of the other SDGs. By the foregoing, it is evident that the money being allocated to education sector in Nigeria on yearly basis is not enough for the smooth running of our educational affairs and there is no doubt that this issue of poor funding of education in Nigeria is one of the reasons Nigerian education sector has witnessed a lot of setbacks and challenges which include incessant strike actions by various academic unions. One of the academic unions whose incessant strike actions is inimical to quality education in Nigeria is the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU).

The Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) has been pressurizing the government to adequately fund public universities, improve infrastructural development of public universities, increase staff welfare packages and better conditions of service, salaries and allowances. These are summed up in the 2009 Agreement and 2013 Memorandum of Understanding between ASUU and the federal government (ASUU, 2013). It seems that the successive governments have paid lip service to ASUU demands. Following this, ASUU has resorted to employment of strike actions as the last resort to balance the power between their staff and the government as the bargaining and consultation failed to yield desirable results. Implying that the only language understood by the government is strike action (Kawugana, 2016).

Confirming the above, Oyebade and Obaka (2022) observed that since 2011, a year hardly passed without the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) being on strike. In their study of socio-economic impact of Academic

Staff Union of Universities' incessant strikes on host communities: Focus on Anyigba Community of Kogi State, Nigeria, they found out that ASUU's strike actions negatively impacted on morality, threatened security and retarded the economy. Hardly will any academic session successfully come to an end without ASUU embarking on strike to the detriment of students, parents, society and even the government and lecturers themselves.

Literature has shown that since the inception of the ASUU in 1978, the union has undergone series of industrial actions more than 25 strike actions with few examples stated thus: in 2013, ASUU embarked on 5 months strike, in 2017 it was 3 weeks, in 2018, the union laid down tools for about 3 months, as of 2019, it was 2 months. Further, in 2020, the mother of all strikes was embarked on by ASUU between March 23 2020 to December 2020 - a 9 months strike which saw the students locked out of school and just recently in 2022, the gates of Nigerian universities again were shut against the students and other educational activities that go on in the universities for 8 months (February to October). The rate at which ASUU strikes occur in Nigeria now seems to have become a norm which has harmful effects on the growth and development of education in Nigeria.

Some scholars have looked at the causes for ASUU incessant strike actions and one key reason many seem to point at is the failure of the federal and state government to honour and implement agreements reached and signed by them with the union. Frank (2022) enumerated other factors such as the absence of better working conditions for lecturers in the public universities in Nigeria, poor funding for Nigerian public universities, 65 years retirement age for lecturers, non-implementation of the FG/ASUU 2009 Memorandum of Action and nonacceptance of UTAS as the payment platform for Nigerian Universities as against IPPIS. Ep EduPadi Blog (2022) listed 3 major causes of ASUU strike as the refusal of the Federal government to meet ASUU demands, the decrease in budgetary allocation to education and the refusal of the Federal government to renovate and improve universities in Nigeria. Alimi (2022) also listed funding for revitalization of the Nigerian Universities – Implementation of needs assessment report, poor funding of State Universities, non-release of operational

license of Nigerian University Pension Management Committee (NUPEMCO), nonpayment of fractions and non-payment of salaries, non-Payment of Earned Allowances, amendment of the Pension, Retirement Age of Academics on the Professorial cadre from 65 to 70 years and non-implementation of the 2014 Pension Reform Act with respect to retired professors and their salaries among others.

Obviously, the industrial actions by ASUU necessitated by government's refusal to end poor funding has devastating consequences on the education system of Nigeria. The implication of this is that one cannot consider ASUU strikes without touching on the issue of poor funding of the university education because when a house (government funding) falls, its rafter (highest body of academics) is not left standing and when that happens, the loads which the designed support system of the roof deck carries (students) join to fall. Alabi (2019) captured the situation in his observation that ASUU industrial actions had high dysfunctional impacts on the university development by disrupting academic calendar thereby extending students stay on campus; and damaging the reputation of the university system.

Little wonder that the nation's education system has fallen below international standard in World Education Index to the point that no public university in Nigeria is ranked among the first two hundred best universities globally (The committee of Vice-chancellors of Nigerian Universities; Info guide nigeria.com). This may also explain the lack of recognition of Nigerian degrees by world's high-ranking universities which consider Nigerian graduates half-baked. This is not a surprise as previous researchers Nwikpo, Okeke and Unachukwu (2016) had noted a downturn in Nigerian education system leading to churning out half-baked and low quality graduates who cannot defend their certificates in their chosen field of work. Strikes have brought immeasurable regression to the education sector and the nation at large (Ukwu, 2013). On their own part, Ogbette, Eke and Ori (2017) averred that ASUU strikes have negative effect on enactment of universities national curriculum. Monogbe and Monogbe (2019) also opined that quality of education and student performance is negatively influenced by incessant

ASUU strikes. Asides many irregularities such as distortion of academic calendar with its attendant students' dropout, involvement in immoral behaviour resulting from idleness and delay in achievement of set goals, the incessant industrial actions in the education sector has greatly caused Nigerian government to lose billions of Naira that should have been used to improve her socio-economic development (Kawugana, 2016).

The unfortunate effects of the strange marriage between government poor funding and ASUU strikes seem not to be over yet even with the on the October14, 2022 suspension of the most recent strike. This is judging from the fact that federal government just paid lecturers under the umbrella of ASUU only for 18 working days in the month of October, 2022 (Ugwu in Daily Post, 2022) instead of full month salary plus arrears of 4 out of the outstanding 8 months which the said lecturers expected. Tolu-Kolawole in The Punch News on the November 3, 2022, reported that the National president of ASUU, Professor Emmanuel Osodeke confirmed the development which he described as shocking. In the same vein, Tolu-Kolawole quoted a senior member of the National Executive Council to have said, "We were only paid for the days after strike after the strike. I received a half salary. Other members are angry right now, they are blaming the NEC for calling off the strike" yet another member accused the government of wanting to kill unionism in the country but reiterated the union's resolve to stand up to the government's intimidation. This is a worrisome development. It is not looking good for the education system in Nigeria. The ugly situation calls for more researches in a bid to curb incessant ASUU strikes and rescue the waning education sector. Against this backdrop, this researcher aimed at investigating the role of poor funding in ASUU incessant strikes and what consequences it has on learning outcomes of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

Statement of the Problem

One major reason for getting enrolled in the university academic programme is to acquire advanced knowledge for better academic outcomes and be equipped to fit into the global trend where education is an essential development index. To achieve this objective, university students are required to engage in rigorous academic tasks and skill

development with a commitment that is void of distractions.

Unfortunately, researches and personal experiences have shown that Nigerian university education is far from being distracted, given the many strike actions incessantly embarked on by lecturers under the umbrella of Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU). Literature has equally revealed a worrisome low learning outcomes by students of Nigerian universities which does not only turn them out as low quality graduates who cannot defend their paper certificates in their chosen field of work but the downward trend renders their degrees unrecognized before the world's high-ranking universities. Many researchers have carried out excellent studies to find out the reasons for this worrisome situation and consequently to solve it. They have considered categories of factors ranging from student-related to family-related, school-related, lecturer-related and the ASUU strike and even poor funding, yet the problem seemed to be persisting as a lot of undergraduates are yet to come up in their learning outcomes even if averagely.

Reviewed literature by the current researcher revealed that the role poor funding of university education plays in incessant ASUU strikes had not received much attention empirically as many had ignorantly believed that many times lecturers embarked on strike was to force the government to upgrade their salaries. Following this, the current researcher became interested in filling that gap by investigating how the government plays a major role in making universities lecturers to go on strike through poor funding, which in turn exerts its consequences on the students. Hence, the fundamental problem of this study was, "What is the role of poor funding of Nigerian university education by the government in ASUU strikes and consequences ASUU industrial actions on learning outcomes of undergraduates of NAU, Awka.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1). What nature of role does poor government funding of the nation's university education play in motivating ASUU industrial actions?

2). What are the ways poor government funding of Nigerian nation's universities cause

ASUU industrial actions?

3) . What are the consequences of the prolonged ASUU industrial actions on Nigerian undergraduates' learning outcomes?

Research Method

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. This design was regarded as appropriate because the variables were not controlled or manipulated. The design implied that a group of people were studied by collecting data and analyzing same from only a few people considered to be representative of the entire group. In this case, a few groups of single regular undergraduates from Nnamdi Azikiwe University which is a public university were sought, identified, observed and measured to obtain a comprehensive understanding of nature of role poor funding play in provoking ASUU strike and the consequences the resultant strikes have on their learning outcomes. The population of the study comprised all the regular single undergraduates. A sample size of 400 was selected for the study, drawn through multi-stage sampling procedure. Stage one was selection of 10 out of the 14 faculties which made up the undergraduate population of NAU. Simple random technique was used for this purpose. Stage two was stratifying the students into groups according to their marital status (single and married). The purpose of this was to be able to use only the unmarried students for the study. This is because, in the opinion of the researchers, the long disengagement from academic activities and idleness that comes from it, would more likely influence negatively on the single students than on the married ones. The married ones have their spouses and probably their children to keep busy with. Stage three was the use of Convenience technique to choose 40 single undergraduates from each of the 10 selected faculties. The researcher did not take the departments into consideration hence the use of Convenience technique. The 40 per each of the 10 faculties brought the number of sample used for the study to 400 single undergraduates. Simple random technique was used for this purpose. The instrument for data collection was a researcher-developed questionnaire titled Poor Funding on ASUU Incessant Strike Questionnaire (PFAISQ) which was duly validated by two experts from Education Faculty. The instrument has two parts, part A and B. Part A contains the bio-data of the respondents, while part B contains

questionnaire items arranged in section A, B and C. The instrument was structured on four points rating scale of: Strongly Agreed (AS), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D), and Strongly Disagreed (SD) weighted as 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively for Section B and C while that of part A was structured on Negative, Positive and Neutral scale. To determine the reliability, the PFAISQ was pilot-tested on 50 undergraduates from Faculty of Education of Chukwuemeka Odumegu Ojukwu University, Igbariam, Anambra State. They did not have problem in responding to the items. The data obtained were analyzed using cronbach Alpha which yielded an alpha coefficient of 0.78. The researchers used direct delivery method to administer the questionnaires to the 400 undergraduates. The questionnaires were administered to the respondents by the researcher with the help of three research assistants. After they had answered the questions, the questionnaire was retrieved immediately to avoid the possibility of getting lost or damaged. Administration of instruments and collection of data spanned 3weeks. Research questions were answered using mean. The decision rule is that a mean value of 2.50 was used as the criterion. The implication of this is that any item that scored a mean of 2.50 and above would be seen as agreed responses, while items that scored less than 2.50 would be regarded as disagreed responses.

Data Presentation and Discussion of findings

Research Question One: What nature of role does poor government funding of the Nigerian university education play in motivating ASUU industrial actions?

Table 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of the responses of undergraduates on the kind of role poor government funding of the Nigerian university education play in motivating ASUU industrial actions.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (100 %)
Negative	315	78.75
Positive	69	17.25
Neutral	16	4
Total	400	100

Data in Table 2 above reveal that 315 respondents representing 78.75% of the sampled population are negative, 69 respondents representing 17.25% of the sampled population chose positive while 16 respondents representing 4% chose neither negative nor positive. Therefore, poor funding of Nigerian universities by the Federal Government plays a causative role on ASUU incessant industrial actions.

Research Question Two: What are the ways poor government funding of Nigerian nation's universities cause ASUU industrial actions?

Table 2: Mean rating of respondents on the ways poor government funding of Nigerian nations universities cause ASUU industrial actions.

S/N	Poor Government Funding of Public Universities causes ASUU strikes in these following ways:	N	MEAN	SD	DECISION
1	Poor remuneration for lecturers	**400**	**3.0**	1.92	**AGREE**
2	Refusal to adopt UTAS as the payment platform	**400**	**2.6**	1.08	**AGREE**
3	Mismanagement of fund by those whose duty it is to discharge it	**400**	**2.7**	1.06	**AGREE**
4	Infrastructural decay in the campuses.	**400**	**2.9**	0.98	**AGREE**
5	Non-Payment of Earned Allowances as at when due	**400**	**2.50**	1.00	**AGREE**
6	Motivation ASUU Members in sponsoring publication of their academic papers.	**400**	**2.2**	1.0	**DISAGREE**
7	Failure to meet UNESCO recommended budgetary allocation to education sector.	**400**	**2.5**	1.02	**AGREE**
8	Revitalization of university education	**400**	**2.1**	0.98	**DISAGREE**
9	Constant reneging from implementing agreements reached and signed between ASUU and federal government.	**400**	**3.6**	0.64	**AGREE**
10	Giving financial aids to lecturers to attend international conferences and seminars	**400**	**2.4**	**1.4**	**DISAGREE**

Data in table 2 show that all the items have mean score of 2.50 and above except items 6, 8 and 10 which are negative items hence their "disagree" is "agree" when structured in the positive. The implication of this is that the

respondents are in agreement to the fact that poor government funding of universities in Nigeria is a key reason why ASUU constantly embarks on industrial actions.

Research Question 3: What are the consequences of the prolonged ASUU industrial actions on Nigerian undergraduates' learning outcomes?

Table 3: Mean rating of respondents on the consequences of the prolonged ASUU industrial actions on Nigerian undergraduates' learning outcomes

S/N	ASUU Incessant Strike affect the learning outcomes of undergraduates in the following ways:	N	MEAN	SD	DECISION
1	Toll on mental health as a result of boredom and idleness at home	**400**	**3.1**	0.92	**AGREE**
2	Overstay in school leading to graduating beyond record time/year	**400**	**2.6**	1.08	**AGREE**
3	Loss of interest in education leading to dropout	**400**	**2.7**	1.06	**AGREE**
4	Leaves the students more mature to handle life's issue as a result of experiences gathered during the period	**400**	**2.82**	1.97	**AGREE**
5	Rushing students to cover backlog of academic workload after strike call-off	**400**	**2.9**	0.98	**AGREE**
6	Engagement of students in social vices such as prostitution, cyber-cimes watching inordinate films rather than reading their books	**400**	**2.5**	1.02	**AGREE**
7	Have no access to lecture halls and library facilities to keep their brains warm pending call-off	**400**	**3.0**	1.05	**AGREE**
8	Turning students into certificate seekers rather than knowledge seekers	**400**	**2.9**	0.96	**AGREE**
9	Graduation with degrees which lack recognition by world's high-ranking universities	**400**	**3.6**	0.64	**AGREE**
10	Low productivity in the field of work after graduation	**400**	**2.61**	**0.86**	**AGREE**

Data in table 3 show that all the items have mean scores of 2.50 and above showing agreement. This shows that all the respondents agreed to the fact that prolonged ASUU industrial action has

negative consequences on Nigerian undergraduates' learning outcomes.

Discussion of Findings

The study revealed that poor government funding has a negative impact on the running of university education in Nigeria. The finding aligns with the report of Bella in The Labour (2022) that poor budgetary allocation to education in Nigeria is affecting learning outcomes, plunging the sector into deeper crisis and putting the country's future at risk. The finding agrees with David Mba, Pro Vice-Chancellor and Dean of Computing, Engineering and Media, De Montfort University, who averred that Nigeria's universities have been under-funded for decades; liking it to a talented but under-achieving football team, he explained that it fails to achieve goals because the country hasn't invested enough in their structure, their facilities and their people. One group of people whose position is critical in university education asides the students is the lecturers. This study found that the incessant strike actions embarked upon by these lecturers under the aegis of ASUU is one of the fallouts of effects poor government funding of the nation's public universities. This was supported by Oyebode and Obaka (2022) who affirmed that since 2011, a year hardly passed without the Academic Staff Union of Universities being on strike; implicating lack of adequate funding and unpaid earned academic allowances as the most common reasons why ASUU members go on strike. It is very difficult to continue working, when a person has not been paid for the previous services provided. The finding of this study also corresponds with the assertion of Ajayi (2013) that the unrelenting Union (ASUU) had in the past embarked on numerous strike actions in order to press in their demands of funding the educational sectors adequately.

This study equally revealed that poor government funding of Nigerian university education is a key reason why ASUU constantly embarks on industrial (Strike) actions. Some ways poor government funding of Nigerian nation's university cause ASUU industrial actions among others poor remuneration of lecturers, constant reneging from implementing agreements reached and signed between ASUU and federal government, refusal by the government to adopt UTAS as the payment platform, Infrastructural decay in the campuses. Frank (2022); Alimi (2022) found similar factors to be responsible for

ASUU strikes. Others finance-related factors found by this study transcend beyond issue mobilization of fund to fund mismanagement and misappropriation by those in charge. This finding corresponds with Obi (2021) who stated that Nigerian Education finance challenge has been observed to be both about mobilizing resources and also about improving the effectiveness of fund management. Although some other researchers could not put their feet down on poor funding as the only problem plaguing university education, they were in agreement that many of the inadequacies such as poor educational infrastructures, inadequate classrooms, teaching aids (projectors, computers, laboratories and libraries), paucity of quality teachers and poor / polluted learning environment are the offshoots of poor funding. To many, failure of the Nigerian nation to meet the globally recommended budgetary benchmark which enables nations to adequately cater for the rising education demands, is an evidence that Nigerian Education system can be said to be plagued by poor funding (Wahab, 2022; Abiodun-Oyebanji, 2017).

Further, the study equally revealed that incessant strike actions by ASUU members have negative consequences on the university students' learning outcomes. Among other consequences, it was found out that the strike actions takes a toll on the mental health of the students as a result of boredom and idleness at home, cause a loss of interest in education leading to dropout, engagement in social vices such as prostitution, cyber-cimes, watching inordinate films rather than reading their books, late graduation, rush of academic activities after call-off of strike, low productivity in field of work after graduation, award of degrees not reputed in the international market and so on. The finding aligned with some previous researchers' findings: Ugwu in Daily Post, 2022Monogbe and Monogbe (2019); Ogbette, Eke and Ori (2017); (Ukwu, 2013). They and many others found negative consequences of ASUU strike actions on Nigerian students' learning outcomes. Monogbe et al (2019) stated that majority of failures in university recorded in examination were taken immediately after students return from long period of strike. This is due to the fact that students were far from the academic environment during the strike as well as involved in one business or the other, while others use the period to learn entrepreneurship skills and some

went on holiday and so on. Summarily, the findings of this research corresponds to the report of Ajayi (2013), stated that the incessant strikes action by ASUU in Nigeria disrupt academic calendar of Universities, delay graduation, affect students' academic pursuit and performance and without doubt, renders certificates and degrees obtained in Nigeria universities, of no much value before the international world.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this research, it was concluded that poor funding of public university system by the federal government is the key cause of incessant ASUU industrial (strike) actions. It was further concluded that ASUU industrial strike has negative consequences on the learning outcomes of undergraduates in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka and the entire Nigerian tertiary institutions. ASUU incessant strikes as a result of poor funding by government, in turn have negative consequences on learning outcomes of undergraduates.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1). The governments should be proactive in initiating increase in salaries and allowances as well as other welfare packages of Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) and other workers in the education sector as and whenever due. This will put in check frequent agitations on salary increase and welfare packages by workers.

2). Furthermore, public universities should look for other external sources of earning revenue rather than rely on the meagre grants and subventions from the Federal Government. This could be through direct investment in Agriculture and Private Partner Participation (PPP).

3). ASUU Leadership should call the students' body (NAN) and their parents to a meeting and use the platform to give them a firsthand information of the points of disagreement between them and the federal government. This will help disabuse their minds from negative information being sold to them against their Lecturers (ASUU members).

4). ASUU members should devise a more innovative means of pressing home their demand without shutting university gates against students including their children and wards seeing from the findings of the study, the many

hardships students suffer during prolonged strike periods. They should begin to apply the method of Work-to-Rule until Fed Government does the necessary instead of embarking on industrial (strike) action

5). Students, parents and society should apply a change of attitude and perception towards Nigeria lecturers and not holding on to the wrong information they were fed that the only reason ASUU members embark on strikes was to pressurize the government to keep increasing their salaries.

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