

STRIKE ACTIONS AND ITS EFFECTS ON EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT IN UNIVERSITIES IN RIVERS STATE

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Abstract

This work is on strike actions and its effects on educational management of Universities in Rivers State. It is a survey design. The study randomly selected seventy five (75) non-academic staff and sixty (60) academic staff from each population of the university which total one hundred and thirty five (135) respondents randomly and independently sampled. The data collected was gathered using structured questionnaire and oral interview and it was synthesized with the sample percentage (%) method. The data collected were analyzed and presented in tabular form. The result obtain showed that poor condition services, poor salaries and different salary structure and poor supply of welfare services for staff and students are the cause of strike action, closure of school frequency, etc, are the effect of strike actions. The measures to eradicate strike action in universities in Rivers State include proscription of trade unionism in tertiary institutions and ensuring managerial efficiency. It was therefore recommended that previous agreement on salaries, fringe benefit and other working conditions between labour and management government should be implemented as at when due.

Introduction:

Over the years universities have played dominant roles in the developed world. Universities are usually in the forefront of any social, economic and political challenges, especially with the power of research being focused on areas that will promote human development and solve existential problems. Research is not just for the promotion of lectures, but research finding are part of a society's knowledge base, which is transmitted to students and industries, so then, a university must be an institution for the people, a centre for knowledge and problem solving for society. It is said that the use of the English word "STRIKE" first appeared in 1768 when sailors in support of demonstrations in wooden "struck" or removed the topgallant sails of merchant ships at port, thus crippling the ships.

Strike actions have turned our education system into a blamed and not tied to the need of society. Education must be woven into life with a common thread running through life and society; this is how universities can be relevant in the development of our nation state. Such things like safe

drinking water, electricity, security, technology and waste disposal are still huge challenges for them, universities engage contractors for buildings and road construction and are largely part of the contract driven economy, if the universities are not indeed centres of excellence, how can they impart excellence on society. So the civil engineering and ancillary departments must be involved with research on constructing roads and building at a fraction of today's cost.

The **objective** of the work is to examine the many strike actions associated to our tertiary education systems and to specifically identify the causes of incessant strike actions on our universities.

Research Question:

The research question below will be answered in the work: What are the causes of incessant strike action in our nation's universities?

Table showing causes of strike actions in Universities

| S/No | Question Item | Responses | | | |
|------|---|-----------|------|-----|------|
| | | Yes | % | No | % |
| 1. | Poor salary and different salary structure | 80 | 59.2 | 55 | 40.7 |
| 2. | Poor condition of service | 125 | 92.5 | 10 | 7.4 |
| 3. | Understanding | 102 | 75.5 | 33 | 24.4 |
| 4. | Lack of autonomy in universities and other tertiary institution | 40 | 29.6 | 95 | 70.3 |
| 5. | Increase in the cost of living standard | 18 | 13.3 | 102 | 75.5 |
| 6. | Incessant student's violence and cultism in campuses | 59 | 43.7 | 76 | 56.2 |
| 7. | Poor supply of welfare services for staff and students | 95 | 70.3 | 40 | 29.6 |
| 8. | Constant negotiation and dialogue | - | - | - | - |
| 9. | Under funding and inadequate teaching facilities | - | - | - | - |
| 10. | Proscription of student unionism in tertiary institution | 45 | 33.3 | 90 | 66.6 |

Table above shows that while 80 respondents representing 59.2% of the sample agreed to the issue of poor salary and different salary structure, 55 respondents representing 40.7% disagreed almost 100% of those interviewed agreed.

When the respondents were examined on poor condition of service, their response in the table indicated that 125 respondents which 92.5% respond positively, that poor condition of service while 10 respondents which is 7.4% respond negatively that is not the cause of strike action in university.

Furthermore, the table reveals that 92.54% of the respondents totally agreed that poor condition of service, and poor supply of welfare services for staff and student are the cause of strike action in tertiary institution.

From the above the following percentages of 50 and above have been accepted as cause of strike action in universities in Rivers State.

- 1) Poor salary and different salary structure 59.2%
- 2) Poor condition service 92.2%
- 3) Understanding 75.5%

Poor supply of welfare services for staff and students 70.3%

Discussion:

From the analyses of data for the work as presented above, the following were found:

- a) Poor salary and different salary structure
- b) Poor condition of service
- c) Understanding
- d) Poor supply of welfare services for staff and student.

Summary:

First and foremost, the factor that contribute to strike actions in tertiary institutions in Rivers State was presented in the table. The result showed that poor salary and different salary structure is a serious factor. This finding is indicative of the fact that poor salary and different salary structure affect the staff. A salary is a form of prosodic payment from an employer to an employee which may be specified in an employment contract. It is contrasted with paid wages, where each job, hour or other unit is paid separately, rather than on a periodic basis.

Judge & Timothy (2004) stated that, employee as individual has personal needs, interests and aspirations and usually, these needs should be satisfied or actual goal of the institutions. Consequently conflict between the two (employee and salary) becomes an ongoing phenomena in institutions of higher learning. Besides, the two entities cannot part ways since they are instrumental to the existence of the institutions. In a society as dynamic as ours with much emphasis on material acquisition, the employees in tertiary institutions have joint the band wagons in pursuit of the comforts of life which money can afford. In support to this, Allen (2005) stated that conflict arise because sellers of labour enter labour markets in order to subsist to that the price of labour as vital subsistence matter for them, while on the other hand, the buyer enters the market because they own the means of production. Problems in tertiary institutions often times are staff salaries and fringe benefits and if paid at all, are usually done in arrears. This cannot ensure industrial peace.

Conclusion:

Based on the findings of the work, it is however concluded that strike actions are an ongoing trend in tertiary institutions in Rivers State and it is caused by employers and the employees. Its effect on the tertiary institution is glaring on staff, students and the campus community.

Recommendations:

Based on the findings of the work, the following recommendations are made:

1. Conditions of service and working environment in tertiary institutions should be improved by government to enhance the dignity of labour for the staff.
2. Labour and management should see each other responding to the needs of tertiary institution workers, and aspirations of each other for cordial relationship.

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