

IMPLICATION OF ACADEMIC STAFF UNION STRIKE ACTION ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE: EX-POST-FACTO EVIDENCE FROM UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS, AKOKA, NIGERIA.

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ABSTRACT: *The study explored the implication of the incessant industrial action by academic staff unions on the students' academic performance: ex-post-facto evidence from University of Lagos, Nigeria. With the objective of carrying out relative analysis of the students' academic performances in the pre-strike semester to post strike semester capturing the academic performance by GPA. The study developed a theoretical framework and employed ex-post-facto research design. The research revealed that strike action disrupts academic calendar which bestowed on students psyche cost, disheartenment and unable to speedily regenerate themselves towards academic exercises at the resumption. Consequently, poor academic performance in the post-strike semester. The Study recommends amongst others that whatever the grievances, academic union and other bodies that operate in education sector should not resort to the strike as weapon of bargaining. Joint Consultation Committee should be set up and meet on periodic intervals to discuss impending matters that could generate dispute.*

KEYWORDS: Academic Performance, Industrial Action, Academic Staff Union, Educational Objectives, Curriculum.

INTRODUCTION

Could there be any meaningful transformation programme, structural adjustment programme and many point agenda in the absence of education imperative in a country? Education, the process that involves all round development of cognitive, psychomotor and affective ability of individuals in the society in order to promote the advancement of the individuals, society and the world at large should not be relegated to the background in whatever manner. The cacophony between the central authority and the staff unions should not be extended to the point of jeopardizing the success of our education system which will in turn have undesirable effects on the academic achievement of the students. Bearing in mind, no nation can develop beyond the capacity of her citizens. Staff industrial actions in Nigeria University, Polytechnic and College of Education systems have become the common phenomenon with the detrimental effects on the academic commitment and success of Nigeria students.

Despite the fact that tongue and mouth are inseparable, clash between the two is inevitable. As long as the academic staff union and employer (government) represented by politicians are at variance in belief and philosophy there is bound to be industrial dispute between the two. The action and counteraction of the academic staff union (ASUU, ASUP and COEASU) in recent years to recalcitrant attitude of the federal government towards the past agreement; conditions of service, salaries and allowances, adequate funding as prescribed by UNESCO, University autonomy, integration of polytechnic academic staff payroll had led to frequent industrial action by COEASU, ASUP and specifically ASUU. These unions have resulted to employment of strike as the last resort to balance the power between their staff and the government when the bargaining and consultation failed to yield desirable result. Implying that the only language understands by the government is strike action.

The counteraction of the academic staff unions to actions and inaction of the government is not self centered but incited by the quest to resuscitate the acclaimed fall in Nigeria education standard. The specific evidence to this fact are the agitation by ASUU and ASUP between 2013 and 2014 which includes improvement and provision of educational infrastructure in our dilapidated tertiary instructions; fulfilling 26% budgetary allocation to education as prescribed by UNESCO so that Nigeria education system would be able to turn out the graduates that are capable of taking up the task of national development and be globally competitive like in the 70's when Nigeria graduates were accorded high esteem at the global stage.

Furthermore, it is incontrovertible that agitations of academic staff unions are to foster the adequate conditions of service which would go a long way in stimulating advantageous atmosphere for students to accomplish the prerequisite curriculum objectives. And, this would reduce to the barest minimum if not to zero level the half-baked graduates or functional illiterates that Nigeria tertiary institutions are turning out lately. Unfortunately, the strike action that is always embarked upon by the staff unions whenever there is industrial dispute between them and their employer (government) always put students at the detrimental conditions. The reasons for this are not farfetched; they end up having lesser period to prepare for academic exercises before summative evaluation hence possibility of poor academic performance. After the whole struggle, the academic staff salaries and allowances that were withhold during the industrial action would end up being paid.

Aside the bad reputation the strikes conferred on Nigeria education system; delayed and extension of duration of students in school in the face of age sensitive or discriminating Nigeria labour market which plummet the economic value of the graduates in Nigeria labour market. And, unjust compression of the syllabus and academic calendar which deprived students of adequate academic preparation and eventually have undesirable effects on the students achievement of educational objectives as laid down in the prescribed curriculum which paved way for the production of half baked graduates by Nigerian tertiary institutions is of great concern to the study at hand. In view of this, the specific objective of this investigative study is to determine the repercussion effect of 2013/14 staff union strike action on the academic performance of the students of University of Lagos, Akoka, Nigeria and to proffer the policy prescriptions that would mitigate this undesirable incident in Nigeria education system.

Furthermore, the students' circumstances associated with the strike action of academic staff union by being at the receiving end because their educational success had always been in jeopardy whenever there was strike action justified the investigative attention paid to this study in one hand. At the other hand, out of all the related existing studies, no one has its focus as University of Lagos, Nigeria, one of the great citadels of learning in Africa (Edinyang and Ubi,

2013; Ige Akindele, 2014; Osuorji and David 2014; Michael Baker, 2013; Olaniyi and Aina, 2014, Ayeni and Kolawole, 2014; Olupaimo, 2014; Olusegun Ajayi, 2013 etc). Moreover, to the best of researchers' knowledge, the methodology of analysis of these existing related researches apart from few like Michael Baker, (2013) and Gabbrielle Wills (2014) that focused on primary school in Ontario, Canada and South African Primary Schools respectively were adjudged inappropriate because of subjectivity inherent in the responses in their various instruments hence such methodology suffered respondents' bias.

In an attempt to fill the gap inherent in the existing related studies, this study developed a model and employed Ex-Post-Facto research design. It proxies students academic performance by the students GPA and carried out relative analysis of the students academic performances in the pre-strike semester to post strike semester. The aforementioned justified the relentless efforts committed on this study by the researchers.

The current section introduced the study, section two carried out review of the related concepts, theories, and empirical literature. Section three presents the methodology and the model of the research. The empirical analysis is given attention in the fourth section and section five finally concluded the study and make policy recommendations.

REVIEW OF ISSUES

Conceptual Issues

Strikes

Ivancevich (2007) documented that strike is an effort by employee to withhold work so that the employer will make greater concessions at the bargaining table. It is opined that it is a major bargaining weapon used by the labour union. It is varied from economic strike where the employees stop work until the demand for better condition of employment is met to sit-down strike where employee strike but remain at work place. Michael Armstrong (2004) asserted that strikes are most politically charged of all the features of industrial relation. "Strikes are too often a weapon of first rather than last resort. However, labour unions have recognized that a strike is a legitimate last resort if all else fails" Armstrong M. (2004). Shokan (1997) sees strike as a temporary stoppage of work aimed at forcing the employers to accept employees demand.

Strike is seen as Collective organized, cessation or slowdown of work by employees, to force acceptance of their demands by the employer. The legality of the strike action requires: approval by the majority of employees by ballot; independent verification to ascertain the majority support the vote; the notice of impending strike must be given to employer in advance; the employer must be provided with the result of the ballot; final notice to embark on the strike must be issued to the employer (Business dictionary, 2015).

International Labour Organisation (2011) posits that strike is the most visible and controversial form of collective action in the event of a labour dispute and is often seen as the last resort of workers' organizations in pursuit of their demands. Section 2(q) of the Industrial Dispute Act defines strike as cessation of work by a body of persons employed in any industry acting in combination; a concerted refusal or a refusal under a common understanding of any number of

persons who are or have been so employed to continue to work or to accept employment (Saharay, 2013).

Labour (Academic Staff) Union

Ivancevich (2007) defined labour union as an organization of employees that uses collective action to advance its members' interest in regards to wages and working conditions. They form or join because of the belief that there is strength in unity. Trade Union Decree 1973 as cited by Shokan (1997) viewed labour union as any combination of temporary and permanent workers or employees, the purpose of which is to regulate the terms and conditions of employment of workers. Academic staff unions are in the context of labour relation, it is the continuous relationship between lecturers and the government. Their relation includes negotiation of contract about pay, hour and other terms and condition of employment. Rosemary (1993) established that trade unions are seen as the legitimate representative of labours and conflicts arising from the clash of interest are resolved, if possible by bargaining and compromise and if not, by overt power. Armstrong (2004) is of the opinion that the fundamental purpose of trade union is to promote and protect the interest of their members. They are to redress the balance of power between employers and employees.

The study adjudged it necessary to narrow down this conceptualization to the specific Labour union of interest, Association of Academic Staff of University (ASUU).

Academic Performance/ Achievement

Academic Performance is the outcome of students' evaluation in the educational process indicating to what level the students have achieved the educational goals as specified in the curriculum which is greatly influenced by internal and external classroom factors.

Wikipedia (2014) buttresses the above concepts by putting forward that academic performance is commonly measured by evaluation (examination) and continuous assessment but there is no general agreement on how it can best be captured. It emphasized among other factors that learning environments/ conditions have great influence on academic achievement of the student in the related study by Mellisa J. B (2012) emphasized that academic performance indicates how well a student meets standard set out by the institution. A student success is measured by academic performance. Scottk (2012) generally refers academic performance to how well a student is accomplishing his or her tasks and studies. The study emphasizes that Grades is the most well-known indicator of academic performance, grades are student's "scores" for their overall tenure. Grades are often the average of assignment, continuous assessment and semester terminal evaluation that are often affected by student psychological status, attendance, education environment etc. Arul Lawrence (2013) described academic achievement as the level of actual accomplishment or proficiency one has achieved in an academic area, as opposed to one's potential in the educational goal measured by examinations. Crow and Crow (1969) as cited in Arul Lawrence (2013) sees academic performance as the extent to which a learner is profiting from instruction in a given area of learning i.e. achievement is reflected by the extent to which skill and knowledge has been imparted to him. It is obvious that Crow and

Crow (2015) does not specify how best the profit from learning can be measured.

Ricarda Steinmayr et al. (2014) documented that academic achievement represents performance outcomes that indicates the extent to which a person has accomplished specific goals that were the focus of activities in instructional environments, specifically in school,

college and university. The study conceptualized academic achievement to be a multi-faceted construct that comprises various domain of learning, because of this wide-ranging of academic achievement and the fact that it covers a broad varieties of educational outcomes hence its definition depends on the indication used to measure it. Against this background, the researchers concluded that the more curricular-based as measured by G.P.A (Grade Point Average) is most reliable and objective indicator and it is being adopted by the study at hand.

Empirical Issues

The review of the existing related studies is necessary to determine the positions of the earlier authors which would facilitate the identification of the knowledge gaps inherent in these studies and be able to do justice to it by bridging the identified gaps.

Edinyang S. D and Ubi I. E. (2013) carried out empirical study on the effect of strike action on human development among social studies secondary school students in Uyo Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. With the objective of assessing the extent which disruption in academic program in secondary schools due to strike affect students' learning effectiveness in social studies. The methodology adopted by the study is survey inferential research design and the focus of the research is secondary school in Uyo. The study finds out that disruption in academic program resulting from strike leads to closure of schools for a period of time. This period may be specific or indefinite thereby affecting students' learning of the curriculum, hence their development. Disruptions of academic programme resulting from strike action give students undeserved study year extension.

Ige Akindele (2014) researched on towards the stemming of the tide of strikes in tertiary institutions in Nigeria: stakeholders' roles and responsibilities. The study used slight descriptive statistics and expository style in its analysis. The study finally recommended that to stem the tide of strike and move tertiary institution forward, an effective administration of tertiary institutions, adequate funding of education/tertiary education by government, orientation of staff of tertiary institutions are necessary.

Osuorji A. N. and David S. (2014) investigated the effect of incessant strikes on academic performance of business education students in Abu, Zaria. Aiming to determine the extent to which the strike action has affected academic performance of business education students in ABU, Zaria; and to assess the perception of students about incessant strikes on academic performance of Business Education in ABU, Zaria. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The result shows that incessant strikes by lecturers have a resultant effect on the academic performance of the students of business education programme in ABU, Zaria.

Olaniyi O. N. and Aina M. A. (2014) worked on the incessant strikes and its effects on business education programme; the study adopted the expository dimension in its analysis and brief survey of what industrial action is. It concluded that failure to resolve and find a lasting solution to the challenges posed by incessant strikes would amount to an evasion of the deeper roots of the problem in Nigeria education.

Ayeni O. G. and Kolawole O. (2014) explored the incessant conflicts and strikes and their effect on the achievement of goals of business education in tertiary institution in Ekiti State. It adopted descriptive research survey design. The finding shows that incessant strike contributed immensely to the challenges confronting tertiary institutions in the state. It was also revealed that incessant strikes contributed to the mass failure on the part of the student. And

concluded that the study showed that personnel policies have not been effective in preventing conflict and strike behaviours because management are not sincere and committed to matters that concern the staff.

Olupayimo E. O. (2014) examined the impact of incessant strikes on skills acquisition in business education with the aim of selecting the strike action within a specified period to project its impact on skill acquisition in business education programme with the help of survey methodological approach. It is revealed by the study that strike has become the order of the day in Nigeria educational system being the only language understood by the employer (government) and it has a great impact on business education which is essentially based on skill acquisition. The study concludes that incessant strikes had hampered basic skill acquisition business education students were supposed to acquire over the years.

Michael Baker (2013) explored Industrial action in schools: strikes and student achievement. The focus of the research is grade 3 and 6 students in Maths, Reading and Writing in 1996/97 academic year. The data used are student's scores from education quality and accountability Office (EAQAO). The study concluded that teachers strike in grade 5 or 6 have negative impact on test score growth between grade 3 and 6.

Gabrielle Wills (2014) researched on the effects of teacher strike activity on student learning in South African primary schools, the study adopted a cross section analysis using the students fixed effects to eliminate sources endogeneity bias at student's level. The findings of the study revealed that teachers strike have negative effects on learning of students in South Africa.

From the foregoing, the study uncovered the fact that none of the existing studies adopted Ex-Post facto Analysis and focuses on University of Lagos, Akoka, Nigeria. Moreover, the existing studies adopted descriptive and inferential survey design without representing the academic performance variable by Grade Point Average (GPA) except the few research works like Michael baker, 2013; Gabrielle Wills, 2014 which their centers of attention are Canada and South Africa respectively.

Theoretical Issue

Academic Performance is conceptualized as the outcome of students' evaluation in the educational process indicating to what level the students have achieved the *educational goals* as specified in the curriculum which is greatly influenced by internal and external classroom factors. In view of this, this research work adapted Tylers Rational Planning Approach or Objective Approach. The Approach emphasizes product (achievement of the educational objective-academic performance) or intent as prerequisite issues as far as curriculum development is concerned. Igwe R. O. (2000) documented the general assumption of Tyler's Rational Planning Approach:

- School is a purposive institution and that education is an intentional activity which ought not to be disrupted either by internal or external classroom factors.
- All rational activities are characterized by having both purpose, procedure, aims and goals. Curriculum as rational activity is no exception to this rule.
- Education is a process which involves changing the behavior of learners. To be successful in this activity depends on the learners' attention, intention, commitment to the activities.

- That the ends enumerate and justify the means. The accomplishment of the academic goals by the students is priority.

Based on the foregoing, staff union industrial action cannot come and go without leaving any aftermath effect on the educational achievement of the students.

METHODOLOGY AND MODEL

Design of the Research

The study takes ex-post facto analysis dimension with the use of student's Grade Point average as a proxy of academic achievement of the student which were analysed with parametric statistical tool Z-test by relating student's educational achievement in post strike semester to their academic achievement in pre-strike semester. The entire students of University of Lagos, Nigeria constitute the population of study. However, sample size of 448 was scientifically determined by Yard; $n = N/(1 + N(e)^2)$. The sampling selection technique used was Stratified and systematic random sampling technique due to the composition and strata of the population that comprise four levels of the various 7 faculties of the University; Education, Social Science, Sciences, Business Administration, Environmental, Engineering and Art. Four departments were randomly selected in each faculty and sixteen students were chosen considering the strata of 100level to 400 level. The source of data of the study is secondary; Grade Point Averages (GPAs) were extracted from the students' result sheets of first and second semester of ASUU-strike-disrupted 2013/2014 session.

Framework of the Research

The integrated model of staff union industrial action and academic success of the students is presented below indicating the repercussion effects of the emergence of strike action on academic achievement of the tertiary education students and other associated implications at large.

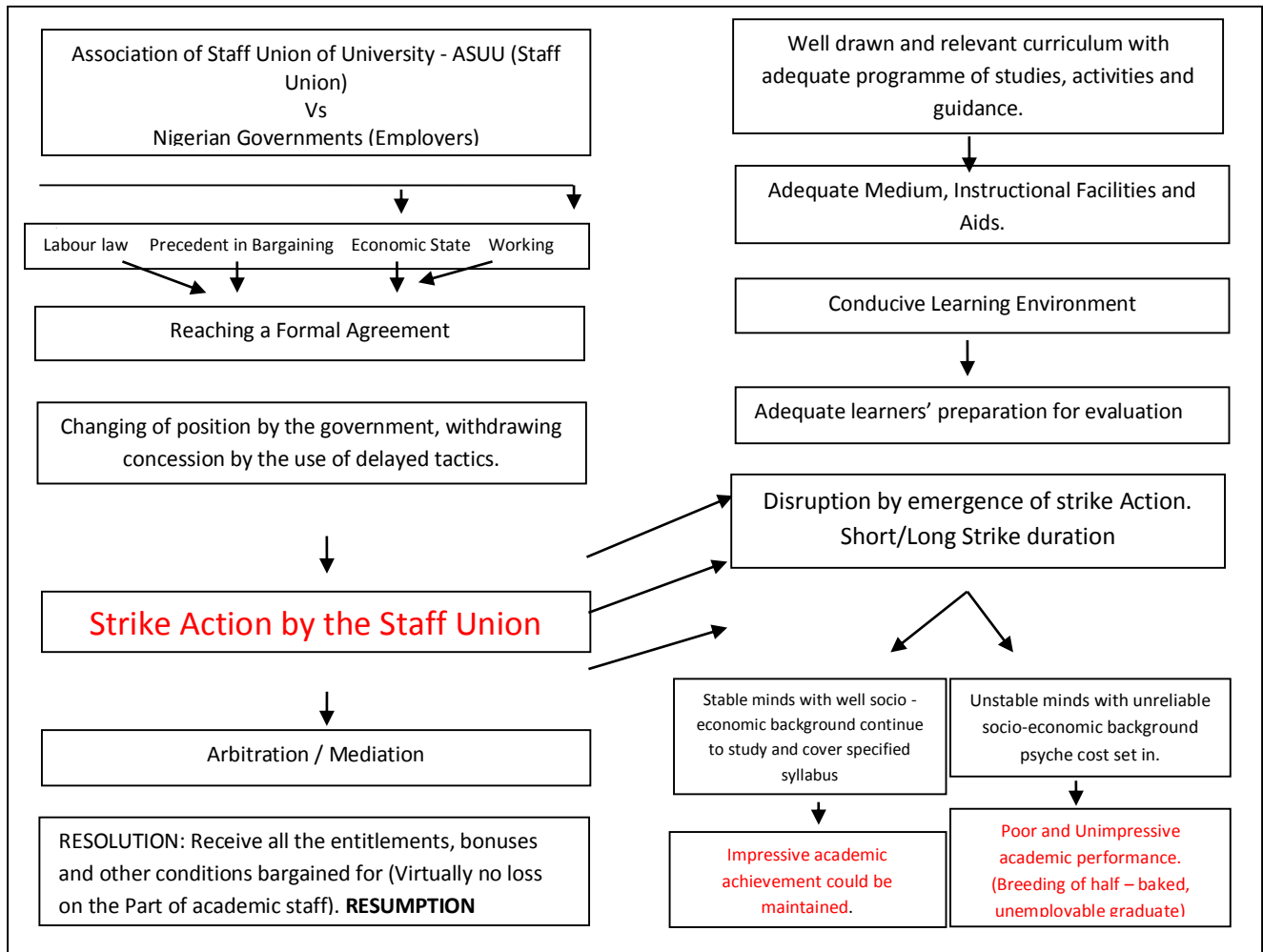


Figure 1. Framework of Strike Action and Students Academic Achievement. *Model: Yusuf S. A. (July, 2015).*

Research Questions

Is there any relationship between staff union industrial action and academic success of the students?

Does staff union industrial action have adverse effect on the academic achievement of the students?

Research hypotheses

Ho: Student's Pre-strike semester GPA is not significantly greater than student's Post-strike semester GPA.

Ho: Disruption of academic session caused by Staff union industrial action does not have significant negative impact on academic achievement of the students.

EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

The selected students' GPAs from seven faculties in the semester prior the 6 months industrial action embarked on by ASUU and the immediate students' GPAs of the post 6 months industrial action were analysed below.

Restatement of Hypotheses

1). H_0 : Student's Pre-strike semester GPA is not significantly greater than student's Post-strike semester GPA.

Or $H_0: \mu_{\text{Pre-strike Semester GPA}} = \mu_{\text{Post-strike Semester GPA}}$

H_1 : Student's Pre-strike semester GPA is significantly greater than student's Post-strike semester GPA

Or $H_0: \mu_{\text{Pre-strike Semester GPA}} > \mu_{\text{Post-strike Semester GPA}}$

2). H_0 : Disruption of academic session caused by Staff union industrial action does not have significant negative impact on academic achievement of the students.

H_1 : Disruption of academic session caused by Staff union industrial action has significant negative impact on academic achievement of the students.

Table 1. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test (Non Parametric Version)

Ranks					Test Statistics ^a	
PoststrikeactionGPA - PrestrikeactionGPA		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks		PoststrikeactionGPA -PrestrikeactionGPA
	Negative Ranks	368 ^a	246.99	90890.50		
	Positive Ranks	80 ^b	121.07	9685.50		
	Ties	0 ^c			Z	-14.809 ^b
	Total	448			Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. PoststrikeactionGPA<PrestrikeactionGPA
Signed Ranks Test

a. Wilcoxon

b. PoststrikeactionGPA>PrestrikeactionGPA
positive ranks.

b. Based on

c. PoststrikeactionGPA=PrestrikeactionGPA

Source: Researchers Computation (SPSS, 20.0)

Interpretation 1:

The parametric test above indicates the null hypothesis required to be rejected because the probability value of 0.000 is less than 0.05. Furthermore, Wilcoxon signed ranks test shows that mean rank of pre-strike semester GPA is greater than mean rank of post strike semester GPA as confirmed in condition 'a' above. Hence, acceptance of the alternate hypothesis that states

that Student's Pre-strike semester GPA is significantly greater than student's Post-strike semester GPA.

Table 2. T-Test Paired Samples Statistics (Parametric Version)

(A) Paired Samples Statistics								
	Mean	N	Std. D.	Std. E. Mean				
PostStrikeActionGPA	2.4737	448	.70056	.03310				
PreStrikeActionGPA	2.8966	448	.63698	.03009				
(B) Paired Samples Correlations								
	N	Correlation	Sig.					
PostStrikeActionGPA & PreStrikeActionGPA	448	.555	.000					
(C) Paired Samples Test								
	Paired Differences							
	Mean	Std. Dev	Std Error Mean	95% Conf. Int. of Diff				
PostStrike & PreStrikeGPA				Lower	Upper	t	df	Sig. (2tailed)
	-.42297	.63364	.02994	-.48180	-.36413	-14.129	447	.000

Source: Researchers Computation (SPSS, 20.0)

Interpretation 2

Descriptive statistics component of the above paired samples shows that the students' academic success represented by statistical Mean of prestrike action of 2.8966 is greater than the students' academic success of 2.4737. It is also revealed that the dispersion of the students' academic success of 0.63698 is lower and better during the pre-strike semester, than the variance of 0.70056 during the post strike semester. The paired samples correlations coefficient is 0.555. This implied that 55.5% of the students' academic achievements in the Pre-strike semester were maintained. And, 45% of the students are unable to achieve the academic achievement attained in the pre-strike semester.

T-test paired sample statistics with the Paired Differences mean value of (negative) i.e. -.42297 indicated that the post strike action academic performance is below the pre-strike semester academic achievement. The calculated 't' statistics of 14.129 which is greater than the table value of 2.326 required the rejection of null hypothesis. Hence, acceptance of alternative hypothesis which states that Student's Pre-strike semester GPA is significantly greater than student's Post-strike semester GPA at 1% level of significant.

Table 3. Kruskal-Wallis Test

Hypothesis Test Summary				
	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
1	The distribution of PrestrikeactionGPA is the same across categories of PoststrikeactionGPA.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	.000	Reject the null hypothesis.

Asymptotic significances are displayed. The significance level is .05.

Source: Researchers' Computation (SPSS, 20.0)

Interpretation 3

The non parametric independent samples test in table 3 above, indicated the rejection of null hypothesis which postulates that disruption of academic session caused by Staff union industrial action does not have significant negative impact on academic achievement of the students @ 5% significant level. Hence, acceptance of the hypothesis that postulates that disruption of academic session caused by Staff union industrial has caused significant negative impact on academic achievement success of the students.

Reliability Test

In view of the above descriptive and inferential (parametric and non-parametric) Statistical analysis the research work deems it necessary to conduct reliability test with the aid of Cronbach's Alpha reliability statistics.

Table 4. Reliability Test.

Case Processing Summary			Reliability Statistics	
	N	%	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Cases: Valid	448	100.0	.811	2
Excluded	0	.0		
Total	448	100.0		
a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.				

Source: Researchers' Computation (SPSS, 20.0)

Interpretation

The above Cronbach's Alpha reliability test indicates that 81.1 % of the analysis is consistence and dependable. This gives assurance that the result of the analysis is reliable, efficient and will be suitable for policy and decision making.

CONCLUDING REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The disruptions of academic session by Staff union industrial actions have significant undesirable negative impact on academic success of the students. The students academic success suffered greatly from the incidence of strike action in Nigeria tertiary institutions as the disruption of academic calendar bestowed on the students psyche cost, disheartenment and

unable to speedily regenerate themselves towards academic exercises at the resumption. Consequently, poor academic performance in the post strike semester is inevitable. This has been one of the prominent causes of the half-baked and unemployable graduates that Nigeria education system has been turning out lately. The findings of this research work conform to the work of Osuorji and David, 2014; Michael Baker, 2013; Gabbrielle Wills, 2014 Olaniyi and Aina, 2014, Ayeni and Kolawole, 2014; Olupaimo, 2014; Olusegun Ajayi, 2013. The research concludes that strike action serves as drag to the academic success of the students with the negative far reaching effect on the Nigeria education system. It causes unreasonable extension of the programme which has aftermath effect on the economy through millions of labour hours lost. The Study recommends that no matter the grievances, academic union and other union bodies that operate in education sector should not resort to the strike as weapon of bargaining. Joint Consultation Committee that would comprise government representative, academic staff representative, representative of other relevant stakeholders in the education sector should be set up and meet on periodic intervals to discuss impending matters that could generate dispute. This committee should be backed up with the necessary legislations and the decision made thereof should be final and binding on the governments, and the unions. Nigeria governments should also respect the sanctity of the contract and desist from defaulting whenever they enter into agreement with unions. More so, Nigeria government should abstain from action and inaction that would hampered the achievement of national objectives: a free and democratic society; a just and egalitarian society; a united, strong and self-reliant nation; a great and dynamic economy; a land of full opportunities for all Nigerians.

FUTURE RESEARCH

The outcome derived from the empirical analysis that only focused on one institution, University of Lagos, Nigeria to generalize the impact of strike action on academic achievement of the students is a drawback. More so, the restriction of academic performance to the students GPA is another limitation. All these drawbacks necessitate the future research to extend the empirical analysis to more tertiary institutions across the nation that would be representative of Nigeria condition. The students' academic performance variable should also be captured by other extra-curricular activities that students engage in, in Nigeria tertiary institutions to have a better robust evidence.

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