



Tertiary Education and Strike Actions in Nigerian Universities: Quest for Development and Quality Education

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Abstract. Advancement of human society is tied to scientific knowledge derivable through quality education that encompasses the transformation of the human mind and translate into socioeconomic development. Any action therefore that inhibits the functional capacity and operational efficiency of the educational system is inimical. This paper elucidates the functionality of education system in Nigeria and how strike has impacted severely the propensity of tertiary education to deliver on its mandate. It argues that education in Nigeria has been faced with myriad of challenges, the consequences of which have consistently result in strike actions, disruption of the academic calendar, extended graduation time for students and underdevelopment. Using a historical perspective and secondary data, the paper content analyses on one hand, the controversies associated with strikes and work-life of employees in Nigerian universities and on the other hand, traces strikes to the ills associated with government lackadaisical attitude towards education. It highlights the problems suffered by the Nigeria Universities, its plausible causes and effects and point that Nigeria government and the academic community are at a critical cross-road. Marx labour-conflict theory bears the burden of explanation and suggests the importance of synergy between gown and town and the adoption of a lasting solution to the incessant feuding.

Keywords: Academic/academia, Education/educational system, University/strikes, Development/growth

1. Introduction

Established as centres for learning and cultural transformation in a development context, the Nigerian university was designed to facilitate modernization and development. The university was conceived as a utilitarian learning system for

cross fertilization of productive ideas, and with the university autonomy, adequate funding and academic freedom, the Nigerian universities were a vista of great promises for the newly independent Nigeria. It ever should remain so but certain fundamentality quickly altered this expectation. At independence, the local comprador elites in Nigeria transformed into national bourgeoisie and hence, the post-colonial government began with a show of disinterest in research and development thus the universities began its descent into retrogression and ruins. The once highly esteemed citadel of learning now lay bereft of its historical *raison d'être* (Truscott & Donker, 2017; Andou, 2017; Bulfin, 2009). The act was a display of insouciance perceived as a derogatory attempt by the post-colonial administration to ridicule the academia. This sparked the earliest known agitation in Nigerian tertiary education. One may ask; has this agitation abated or it has become an insignia of higher education in Nigeria society today?

The agitation by Nigeria university system is captured in strike actions which often, disrupt academic calendars and results in academic setbacks and in some cases long closure of universities. This has become a challenge that affect the education system in Nigeria today (Ogunade & Abuakar, 2022), and the effect of strikes on academic development and staff welfare in Nigerian universities is better imagined than explained (Sunmonu, Abershi & Ogunode, 2022). The Nigerian educational system at the tertiary level has experienced tremendous setbacks owing to incessant strikes actions. This predisposes several universities and the staff to deplorable working conditions and poor livelihood. Consequently, academic development and quality education has waned beyond tolerable standard.

Obi (2004) expresses the concern that a university fundamentally, is in the business of providing knowledge and services; supposing that, a university is rated base on the quality of services it renders and the value it adds to human capital and social development. It is supposed to be heavily funded so as to deliver on it mandatory precept of teaching, research and development. However, this has not been the case with the Nigerian university system. The trajectory of university development in Nigeria is checkered with myriads of challenges. This perhaps is because of the detached priority and poor interest in education by the early comprador elites. The universities established in Nigeria were not designed for best global practice, and following the Liberalization Policy of University Ownership in 1979, university establishment was buoyed. However, underlying this development are challenges of meeting minimum standards of funding, academic-staffing, infrastructure, equipment and staff housing facilities among others. (Abdulrahman, 2017; Ejiogu & Nyewusira, 2014; Sule, 2012). The result is the endemic decay, decline and recurring crises in the academic institutions. The increase in the number of universities and enrolment without commensurate increases in facilities and resources in the country is expectedly met with grim outcome and this is evident in the quality and standards of university graduates produced annually. The Nigerian University Commission (NUC) estimates that Nigeria's 201 public and private Universities are manned by about 100,000 lecturers that teach and supervises about 2.1 million students. Some independent reports note that no public University in Nigeria has an automated library and no public Universities has high level quality internet access. A recent survey established that 76% of public universities lack access to pipe borne water; 45% of students in these institutions use pit-latrines and 67% of students in the institutions relief themselves in the bushes. More appalling is the fact that most Nigerian tertiary institutions are not in congruent with contemporary academic curricula of learning. Nigerian universities lack modern coordination congenial to growth, professionalism, efficiency and excellent academic work output. Though the United Nations in its attempt to improve the quality of in Nigeria proposed a 26% budgetary allocation to education, this has been a far cry from reality. Generally, Universities in Nigeria are underfunded and are falling short in addressing existential needs in which welfare issues are

germane. This accounts for the incessant strain in the relationship between university administrations, academic staff and the government (Tribune, 2022; Anyebe, 2014; Akinwumi, 2010).

Nigerian Universities and its staff are relegated to appalling working condition by the government (Abechi, 2016). Hudu, (2015) believed that the condition of educational service in Nigeria is deplorable. It seems the priority of government is not about the welfare of existing University but the floating of new ones, hence the Academic Staff Union of Nigerian Universities have crafted a means to press home their demands. Largely, strike which seems to be the only language the government understands. Though it usually brings the government to the negotiating table, strike has dire consequences. The narratives of the Nigerian Universities Academic Staff Union and the government is therefore one plaid with extreme hostility, continuous negative sentiments and endless infractions (Okolocha, 2023). ASUU has embarked on several notable strikes. In the 80s, the union embarked on strike actions 8 different times during this period, the union was proscribed by the government. In the 90s, the union again embarked on series of strike actions, 6 in total; at this time, the union was banned again. ASUU circa 21st century, has embarked on 9 gruelling strike actions. During this period, lecturers were not paid and dozens of them were dismissed from the University. The recent of these is the 8-month strike action of 2022 and more recently is the 2024 3day warning strike (Okolocha, 2023). Strike actions is frequent in Nigerian Universities with significant disruption to academic development (Academic Staff Union of University, 2025; Akinbobola, 2022). Currently in this 2025, the union is warming-up for another strike action.

2. Theoretical Underpinning

Labour-conflict is one of the most observable and continuous experience that characterizes employee-employer relationship. The same is true of Academic Staff Union of Universities and the Nigerian government. It is a common knowledge that the agitation between the government and Universities in Nigeria wears a historical face traceable to years of relentless struggle and tension. This struggles trails along the line of power, interest and economic gap. More specifically, the idea of class/labour conflict originates from Marx who sees labour as a commodity, a contractual relationship and an

interstice between the working class and the employer that form the basis for alienation characterized by exploitation, inequality and oppression (Blauner, 1964). Marx believes that power imbalance, economic and social factors are the primary cause of contention between workers and employers of labour. Labour-conflict often arise from employer's typical superior position, allowing them to give directive and make rules that usually cause employees to counter-respond through collective bargaining associations or individual actions (Bottomore & Rubel, 1963).

Employment terms and working conditions, significant level of recognition and respect, human dignity and dignity of labour appears to be among the subliminal concerns of worker in Nigerian Universities for which strike actions frequently occur. Another condition that usually provoke strike action is the concern for good remuneration, decent work environment and modest conditions of service which include hours of work, allowances and benefits as well as and job security. The major causes of strike actions in Nigerian Universities also bothers around these issues: wages, underfunding, security and the government's refusal to negotiate with workers. The experience of Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) in Nigeria has been one rife with the aforementioned and labour has assumed a form of feud in order to collectively express perceived grievances. Labour-conflict between academic staff and the government commonly escalate into events that slow-downs the pace of work, sabotage productive capacities of both staff and government, frustrate workers and pressure the government to seek resolution through effective, open communication and dialogue, and grievance procedures that reaches compromise and cooperation which tend to prevent escalating unrest. The latter typifies the functionalist school that believes cooperation rather than conflict is what engineers' development. However, the smouldering encounters between the government and the Nigerian Universities has proved otherwise.

3. Research Methodology

The paper adopts a qualitative approach. It uses the historical method, content analysis and secondary data. The historical method of research as used in this study, evaluate and interpret historical evidence to construct grounding understanding of past events, which involves

identifying and locating credible sources of survey/data, validity and accurate patterns to develop themes and interpretation that supports the research topic. The method involves the process of using critical thinking to assess and analyse the data (sources), and understanding the context and perspective in which to use them; while drawing deductions that support the research topic by interrogating and or accepting existing interpretations to construct facts.

4. Controversies of strikes actions in Nigerian Universities

Strikes actions have become part of the history in Nigerian public sectors and the university is in the thicket of it. Between when the first university was established till now, over 3415 workhours has been lost to work industrial action. This is because Nigerian university community perceive the government as renegade when it comes to implementation of agreements. According to (Arinze & Jakpa, 2025) approximately 75% of Nigerian public sector performance is marked by strike actions which depreciates public sector performance by 48.9%. Strike actions in Nigerian Universities lean towards welfare and economic matters, and in a study by Stanley and Jonathan (2011) economic challenges form 76% of the reasons workers embark on strike. It is undisputable that from 1992 till 2024, every agreement between the Federal Government and Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) has witnessed bending efforts of protests, warning strikes and indefinite strike actions to actualize. Often, the response of the union to government biases result in series of strikes which has a blanket effect. In the academic environment, it beats on both staff and students and affect the academic development and welfare of both. In the society, it generates pressures on families and ripples across various segment of the economy. It also generates strain for those who depend on the operation of the university for their livelihood. Though, organized to address germane academic issues, students and other members of the society are often caught in the cross fire of the crisis (Amadi & Urho, 2015). For example, due to strike actions, graduate unemployment rate increased by 5.9% from 5.4% while informal employment rate increased by 92.7% (National Bureau of Statistics, 2025).

The narratives of higher education in Nigeria is marked with instances of strikes (Monogbe & Monogbe, 2019). For various reasons and of

different natures, strike actions have become a common knowledge relating to government and the University system in Nigeria (Amede, Agbo, Ogunode & Adah, 2022). It has become a weapon, the only language used by Nigerian public Universities and understood by the government. Yet the agitations of the Universities that mirrors the ills in Nigeria educational system has never been satisfactorily addressed (Olajuwon, Ikpefan, Kola-Dare & Chinaza, 2023). The issue of strikes in Nigerian Universities have become a pendulum that swings back and forth; while in such instances, students suffer and academic calendars are disrupted creating a plausible ground for unforeseen contingencies, the government labels the universities and deployed arm-twisting tactics to repress its agitations. The case of the union presidents who were killed in shady circumstances are pointers to this fact. One was found dead by his car along a federal highway in 1998, while the other was smashed by a car in a State Governor's convoy with bullet wounds in 2013. Under the leadership of the latter, the union was proscribed (Lukman, 2013; Bangura, Beckham, Ibrahim, & Mustapha, 2007).

Understanding the issues and controversies that surround the Nigerian University system bears a contemptible coloration (Daily Post, 2022); because it seems since ASUU was established, no successive administration tenured without some forms of agitation. While some lasted for few weeks, others lasted for many gruelling months. The most recent strike ended in October, 2022 on the injunction of the National Industrial Court (Daily Post, 2022). Ogunode, Ugochukwu and Jegede (2022) believe that, the failure on the part of Federal Government to honour the agreement entered into with the union is a prime reason for incessant strikes in the university. Strike actions could be mitigated principally through adequate budgetary allocation for education, improved working conditions and robust staff welfare package. Nevertheless, as long as the Nigerian Universities are underfunded with derisory facilities and infrastructure, higher education will be uncertain, laughable and strikes will remain incessant.

5. Challenging Realities of Work Conditions in Nigerian Universities

Monogbe and Monogbe (2019) posited that the structure of most institutions in Nigeria Universities office complex, restrooms, laboratories, libraries, lecture theatres, students'

hostels and common rooms are a far cry from being decent and meeting global best standard. They argue that Nigerian University staff lack access to comfortable and decent working environment. While some staff are cramped into small offices with limited facility, others barely have a desk to themselves. Most university libraries are not up to date and needless to say they are not computerized nor are they well furnished. The laboratories in most public universities are dilapidated and have become an unsafe place to work. This according to Tomori (2022) discourages genuine commitment to work, academic excellence and slows down level of development in the society. The construction of good offices and laboratories with modern facilities, grants for research and conference allowance among others will bring about positive development. However, academic staff in Nigerian Universities are either being owed or short-paid (Arikewuyo, 2009). The quality of work and life should translate to social, economic and good standard of living among Nigerian academics and by extension, other staff of Nigerian Universities but the organization of this both is discouraging and dehumanizing. The experience has remained poor commitment to research and teaching, lack of motivation, low productivity, and poor students' performance due to poor quality of teaching and research output (Okolocha, 2023). It is the neglect of university academic work-life by government that result in half-baked graduates that cannot solve work place problems (if ever they get employed) nor be value-relevant to influence or perform on global stage. The quality of work-life is not negotiable if optimum performance of staff is what is expected.

Though the condition of work may change and improve either as a result of government policies or management decisions, the overarching state of poor working conditions in Nigerian Universities is very grievous. It is psychologically, emotionally and physically exerting. Work environment in Nigerian Universities tend to generate discomfort and induce stress which invariably results in low productivity, and health challenges and provoke desires in staff to seek better opportunities in other climes (Ogunode, Jegede & Musa, 2021). Several problems are prevalent which are endemic but the most serious being the brain drain is losing of quality manpower in Nigerian Universities to institutions abroad through organised migration better known as the *jakpa syndrome* (Ogunade & Abubakar, 2021). The reason for this is not farfetched. Poor

financial system and insurance scheme for workers and anticipated socio-economic dilemma upon retirement. The challenging socio-economic realities of the moment make it the more pressing, and causing staff to constantly evaluate and re-evaluate options of migration, a serious challenge bedevilling the educational sector in Nigeria today.

Nigeria government handles education and academic staff of Nigerian Universities with impertinence. This is manifested in poor budgetary allocation to education and government systematic withdrawal from commitment to academic excellence but directly influences the university staff by controlling issues relating to monthly income/allowances, employment and retirement benefits (Azenabor, 2022; Paul & Amadin, 2017). Expectedly, since the establishment of formal education in the country, Nigeria government has never met international standard of education nor the demands that comes with it.

6. Implication of Strikes for Academic Development in Nigeria

Like any social phenomenon, strike actions have both intended and unintended consequences. On the one hand, the consequences of strike are expressed in the immediate resolution of notable causes, but remotely, has far reaching and debilitating outcome. Though strike is an action organized around, and manifested by the cessation of work by employees in ways that communicate demands to employers, such actions could be quick and decisively resolved if parties demonstrate mutuality of respect and commitment to terms of engagement. However, it could be prolonged and injurious where parties involved are unyielding and averse to terms in the light of the negotiable trade-offs (Amadi & Urho, 2015); and whenever the latter happens, it engenders unpleasant consequences. For example, when the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) withdrew its services in order to force the government to meet her demands, the effect was crippling to societal development, it truncated academic activities, and prolong student's graduation time. Families and dependents also suffer in some way owing to the effect of no work no pay clause invoke by the government during this period. Accordingly, idle students seize the opportunity to become the human maxim of the proverbial "idle hand that is the devil's work shop". Thus, the rate of student-

migration and juvenile delinquency increased. While some student became constructive, majority were into clandestine activity to meet economic needs that serves the occasion of their interest (Okeke, 2003).

Furthermore, strike hinders development and spawn great distress for parties involved. From psychological experience and emotional drain to demotivation and socio-economic issues, the impact of strike is better experienced than explained (Sunmonu, Abershi & Ogunode, 2022). Living conditions often deteriorate at this period usually as a result of socioeconomic discontinuity and incapacity which leads to discomfort, ill-health and in some cases death of workers during. It also affects the academic rating of Nigerian Universities which often falls behind several others in world ranking (Amede, Agbo, Ogunode & Adah, 2022; Okeke, 2003). It implicates proper academic development in Nigerian Universities and negate the values place on education and the sociocultural environment that host it.

According to Sunmonu, Abershi, and Ogunode (2022), Nigerian Universities have lost prolific human resources to incessant strikes. Several academics have left for foreign institutions in the world (Amede et al., 2022). This is driven by perceived injustice and corruption which has become pervasive in the Nigeria system (Longe, 2019). Its compelling effect is more and more individuals moving out of the education system in the country. As a result, the education institution is becoming weakened, understaffed and lacking in professional expertise in key research and productive areas (Sunmonu, Abershi, & Ogunode Ibid.). This social current has become a 'new normal' that even when it seems the educational system is stable; academics continue to support the aspiration to move. This experience, while it is brain-gain for foreign institutions, it is brain-drain for Nigerian institutions thereby hampering academic development in the country.

7. Academic System in Nigeria: Wherewithal the Quest for Development

The tertiary institutions in Nigeria have witnessed decline since the university proliferation that begun in 1975. This is particularly seen in the structure of it curricula. The formal education introduced to the Nigeria social system was built around the *raison d'être* and interests of the colonial masters. It was designed to raise

comprador elites and not independent academic mind for leadership and the development (Yohanna & Diggah, 2022). Education was designed for subservience rather than innovative engagements. This construct is still observable in Nigerian education system today. In foreign nations, education plays vital role in the development of productive and functional social institutions that aid human, material and economic aspect of life, but the Nigerian experience appears to be the exact opposite. In order to shore up interest like the burgeoning developed societies, universities were founded without recourse to contents, structure and its ability to inspire development. The learning structure seems to be enmeshed in reticence that accommodates compliances rather than produce people who are creative and productive.

The educational system in Nigeria ignores what is important to the untrained human mind as well as the uniqueness of the cultural environment. What is meant to be developmental through quality erudition, conscious intelligence and the mastery of relevant forms of life became a thing that stunt intelligence, reverses growth and inhibits social development (Tomori, 2022). As it is today, academic institutions in Nigeria teaches orthodoxy rather than innovation, research and development. The system encourages the mind to obey rules, follow narratives without questioning contradictions thereby producing impressionable graduates that take ‘orders’, without trust of intuition. For the most part, the current educational system in Nigeria reflects the coloration of the colonial system and bears the imprint of the ‘colonial-ghost’ overlords that designed it (Jacob, 2002).

Furthermore, academic ventures and development in Nigeria are suppressed because politics which has leverage on the academia to its detriment. This impairs the capacity to be critical and think objectively since “he who pays the piper dictates the tune”. Contrary to the belief that education transforms the human mind, it seems to regress it. This is both challenging and confusing because individuals cannot improve on the local knowledge neither can they contribute significantly to personal and societal development. As a result, the ability to think critically is weakened, hence, the society is plunged into avoidable vicious circle of underdevelopment and retrogression. This captures the challenges and indicate the gap between Nigeria’s education policy that aims for

individual and national development, and the reality of its flaws (Otite, 2001).

The philosophy of education in Nigeria hinges typically on failure, dim hope of getting a job after school, and fear of strike actions among others. Learning is akin to passing examination instead of mental development. The burden of the academic system of the 21st century education in Nigeria is predicated on foundational contradictions. It characterizes issues that are fundamental in nature especially from the periods when tertiary institution was founded in Nigeria (Ogunode & Musa, 2020). To this end, Olanrewau, Akinjoi, and Niyi (2022) view the tertiary education in Nigeria as bedeviled by myriads of problems some of which are as follows:

A grueling challenge to Nigeria academic system is inadequate funding. It is a major factor threatening the survival of public institutions. In the face of harsh socioeconomic conditions, inadequate funding is inimical to the continuity of educational system in Nigeria. Underfunding affects the quality-of-service delivery, job performance and invariably the growth of the institution. This aid in producing unemployable graduates and also unseasoned academic staff. The society educational institutions struggle and cannot compete with its Western counterparts on a global stage especially as they lack strong financial support.

Another problem in this context is fraud and corruption in public universities. Its incident itself in ways involving unfair allocation of grades; sexual-harassment, admission racketeering, contract inflation, employment of staff without requisite qualifications, examination malpractice among others. Often, resources meant for infrastructure and project execution, procurement of utilities, remunerations for staff and welfare packages end up diverted into private accounts. This has prevented the successful evolvement of Nigerian education system into a truly global brand and has also resulted in the withdrawal of financial subvention from foreign multinationals and donor organizations.

There is the issue of lack of modern and sophisticated infrastructures. Several public universities in Nigeria do not have modern facility designed to aid learning and development. Infrastructural decay has become the order of the day in Nigerian universities. Littering the landscape of several universities are old

abandoned projects while new ones are not in any way better. This militates against academic excellence and makes education in Nigeria less desirable to foreign students. It constitutes a serious setback to academic development in Nigeria and a reason the academia is often at logger-heads with the government.

Moreover, there is the problem of academic staff. Academic Staff of Universities facilitate everyday teaching, project supervision and conducting of examination according to sessional academic calendars. However, the shortage of manpower both of teaching and non-teaching staff is a major setback that demonstrates a wide disparity between local and foreign universities. As Ogunode and Musa, (2020) rightly noted that lack of academic manpower is a dilemma confronting higher institutions of learning in Nigeria. Also, because several teaching and non-teaching staff have left the country, the Universities in Nigeria is now witnessing a decline in ability to organize quality teaching and research in various faculties. The implication is that the few hands left are overburdened with work-load without corresponding increase in remunerations and this has resulted in psychological, emotional and physical burn-out or breakdown.

Furthermore, is the issue of insecurity. Insecurity has become a concern at all levels of operation in Nigeria public Universities and it poses a threat to continuity of learning. Nigerian Universities are not secured any more, they have become theaters of violence, kidnapping and cult activities. An example is an incident where an academic staff was attacked and left for dead in 2024 at a university in South-South Nigeria while several others have suffered the experience of ransom-kidnapping. As noted by Okolocha (nd) cults have turned university campuses into their forts, and constitute themselves into a brutal gang, wreaking havocs, killing and preventing students and lecturers from going about their lawful businesses. The use of school libraries, faculty laboratories and common rooms in late hours are impossible in Nigeria universities.

Another challenge is the primary objective of establishing Universities, which is to conduct cutting-edge research. However, considering the enormous challenges faced by Nigerian Universities, researches in the Universities are almost defeated and *a priori* altogether unproductive in contributing meaningfully to economic and human capacity development.

Also, ethnic bigotry, power struggle and government biases have rendered the universities' ability to conduct credible cutting-edge researches ineffective (Okolocha, 2023; Obi, 2004).

Lastly, the contemptible attitude of the governments towards research and non-funding of research programmes is a major factor affecting the propensity of researchers to conduct quality studies that promote genuine home-grown pattern of development in the society. Though research is a key development indicator used to assess and measure performance of tertiary institutions, the organization of research programme in Nigerian Universities begs the question of funding, poor infrastructure, outdated facilities, brain-drain syndrome, fraud and corruption. These factors cripple the progress of Universities in the country and its ability to realize its mandatory goals and mission.

8. Findings

The broken window is a way of thinking and a subtle explanation of social reality in human society as a product of everyday thought-life and values. The prevailing socio-cultural experience and conditions in Nigeria Universities today is linked to neglect and deliberate abandonment of commitment to responsibilities. It stems first from the government and then to those saddled with oversight responsibility of the tertiary institutions in Nigeria. It is as a result of this neglect that the Nigeria Universities have become a social experiment and a caricature of education. This leads to the production of graduates that are neither employable nor competent. The wider effect is a continuous circle of unproductive pattern of social and economic engagements and a complex mixture of actions, counter actions and reactions. Also, various issue associated with Nigerian Universities have made it an environment associated with non-standard academic practices making people develop varying perspective of the academic institution and academics in Nigeria. For this reason, the virtues of learning in Nigeria Universities are derided while its deficits are highlighted. This to a great extent, influences the way staff and students conduct themselves within university environment. Consequently, academic activities become disconcerting and misdirected which is why the feud between the Nigerian government and the Universities remain unabated.

Furthermore, the deplorable state of Nigerian Universities system traceable to the failure to uphold academic excellence, university staff welfare and government control of activities within university space. Nigerian Universities have thus become the proverbial *Oliver Twist* that always asks for more in favour of academic advancement. Lastly, academic development in Nigeria is analogous to a reed in the wind; finding the lead to healing the festering wounds of academic development in Nigeria is a condition characterized by lack of will, merit, poorly coordinated social action and corruption. The latter shapes the characteristics of individuals within the system and it seems almost impossible to end.

9. Conclusion

Nigeria academic system deviates from international best standards. The Nigerian academic development is plagued with myriads of problems; however, these challenges can be dealt with holistically. Strike actions, poor infrastructure and learning facilities, brain drain and poor research funding in the academia can be a thing of the past if concerted effort is made by all concerned. To resolve the challenges confronting academic development in Nigeria there should be credible sources of funding of research in tertiary institutions, merit should be encouraged, facilities should be state-of-the-art and remunerations should be motivating. Also, fraud and corruption should be comprehensively addressed and provision of adequate security should be prioritized. This will stem the tide of agitation in the academia, and redirect academic focus to statutory responsibilities of research, teaching and mentorship rather than feuding with the government and embarking on strike actions. Failure to holistically prioritize academic development in Nigerian Universities will only lead to continuous labour-conflict between employer and employee, a state-of-being which Marx perceives as the only engine of development that produces meaningful development in human society.

10. Recommendations

So, where do we go from here? The rationale for the development of the academia requires a pragmatic approach. On the part of Academic Staff Union of Universities should be an attitude change with zero tolerance for mediocrity; while on the part of Nigerian government, should be a spirited effort against lack of will to honour

agreement with the union. Also, the matrix of academic development in the country should follow a prescribed template agreed upon by the government and ASUU. Furthermore, the challenges of Nigerian Universities should not be treated as isolated but interconnected entities which demand a holistic rather than singular approach.

Solving a problem that has replicated itself in different aspects of the Nigerian society demands an expertise because a short-cut to addressing it may be akin to uprooting a tree whose root has extended deep into the foundation of a wall. To pull down the tree will mean to pull down the wall seeing that the life force of the one is also the sustaining power of the other.

On the strength of the foregoing therefore, the following recommendations are made:

- Education policy should bear the input of both the government and Academic staff union of Universities in Nigeria. Terms and condition of service should be operational and clearly laid out which shall be binding on both parties. This will create a synergy of understanding and commitment between parties involved that will prevent unwarranted strike actions in Nigerian Universities.
- Academic Staff Union of Universities should implore legal and more productive alternatives rather than embarking on strike actions to press home demands with the government.
- Lastly, the government should establish a grant awarding body whose responsibility will be the development, funding, coordination and implementation of research programmes in Nigerian Universities. This will promote cordial relationship and healthy interactions between the academic institutions and the government; and in any case where there is a tone of misunderstanding, it can be quickly resolved given the existence of the frame-work that governs their engagement ab initio. This will uphold the essence of the axiom "the town and the gown."

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