

Towards the Stemming of the Tide of Strikes in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria: Stakeholders' Roles and Responsibilities

Ige Akindele, M

Deputy Director, Ministry of Education, Akure, Ondo State, Nigeria

dele_divine@yahoo.co.uk

Abstract: In Nigeria, tertiary education has over the years been enmeshed in crises, one of these being the incessant strikes by the staff of tertiary institutions, under the aegis of different trade unions. Without mincing words, strike is now a ritual that has to be performed in every tertiary institution in Nigeria. Many people are contending that it is the language which government understands. It is thus no longer strange to government, students, tertiary institutions' administrators, and other stakeholders in education. A new attempt is usually termed to be business as usual. This paper examines the issue of strike, as it affects tertiary education in Nigeria. Special focus is on the causative factors in Nigeria, such as: inadequate funding of education and tertiary institutions, interference in tertiary institutions' affairs, increase in fuel price, low wages/poor conditions of service, poverty, refusal to honour past agreement(s), introduction/implementation of obnoxious policies by Government. The paper also discussed the effects of the strike such as the delay in graduation of students, loss of jobs, lives, and confidence in tertiary education, proliferation of private tertiary institutions, particularly the universities loss of value of certificates and status of tertiary institutions, increase in crimes, delay in mobilisation of graduates of tertiary institutions for National Service, inactive economic activities, falling standard of education, conflicts among the unions and staff of tertiary institutions. To stem the tide in tertiary institutions and move tertiary education forward in this decade and beyond, an effective administration of tertiary institutions, adequate funding of education/tertiary education by government, orientation of staff of tertiary institutions, among other measures, are recommended.

Keywords: Toward, stem, tide, strike, tertiary institution, Nigeria, stakeholder, role, responsibility.

1. Introduction

Education acts as a system which encompasses the inputs, process, and outputs (i.e. the system's elements) [1]. Inputs in educational system include the pupils/students with limited knowledge (i.e. those seeking for knowledge and skills), teachers, buildings, equipment, and funds being provided by government, parents, and philanthropists into the system. There are also the non-physical inputs such as the theories, policies, educational aims and contents. Process includes the teaching and learning activities in schools/educational institutions, as well as the administration, coordination, evaluation, and accreditation activities taking place within schools/educational institutions. There is feedback, which is necessary for a system to adjust itself and provide opportunities for detecting the level of effectiveness of the processing of inputs. In educational system, results of tests, examinations (both internal and external), and reports from employers of labour, provides opportunities for feedback. Outputs of educational system include the educated people, with improved knowledge, values and skills. They are also the graduates of schools/educational institutions, who have received training and ready for graduation into the labor market. Benefits of educational system include the

individual and social benefits. Individual benefits include better job prospects, higher life time earnings, and richer cultural and civic dimensions to one's existence or a greater sense of participation in the activities of one's community, social unit, state or nation. Social benefits include the higher production or improved standard of living of the people, increased supply of effective leadership, enrichment of society's culture through regular creativity.

It is pertinent to note that of all the educational system's elements, process is unique because any defect at this stage will result in the production of poor quality outputs, just in line with the acronym 'Garbage in, Garbage Out (GIGO).

2. Tertiary Education in Nigeria: Scope and Purposes

Tertiary education is the last hurdle in the education ladder, which is designed to produce high-level manpower, for the turnaround of a nation [2]. It is the education which is provided after secondary education, in universities, polytechnics, colleges of education, schools of nursing, schools of health technology, and schools of midwifery, as well as other institutions of higher

status than the secondary [3]. Its duration varies but depends on the kind of tertiary institution a candidate wishes/chooses to attend. A candidate supposes to spend minimum of four years to acquire undergraduate degree in the university, two years in the case of postgraduate degree, three years for the National Diploma (OND) and Higher National Diploma (HND) sub-degrees in monotechnic/polytechnic, three years for the college of education, school of nursing, and health technology diploma, and one year in the case of school of midwifery certificate.

In Nigeria, there are three levels of education, including the primary, secondary, and tertiary. Each level has specific purposes, apart from the purposes of the entire educational system. Tertiary education is expected to:

- contribute to national development through high-level relevant manpower training;
- develop and inculcate proper values for the survival of the society;
- develop the intellectual capacity of individuals to understand and appreciate their local and external environments;
- acquire both physical and intellectual skills, which will enable individuals to be self-reliant and useful members of the society;
- promote and encourage scholarship and community services;
- forge and cement national unity, and
- promote national and international understanding and institutions [2]

3. Growth of Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria, in Retrospect

The first tertiary institution in Nigeria (i.e. Yaba Higher College, Lagos) was established in 1934. The establishment of the College serves as precursor to the establishment of University College, Ibadan in 1948, as an affiliate of the University of London, which was based on the need to train additional high-level manpower for the development of the economy. The attainment of independent status by the country in 1960 also served as impetus for expansion of the educational system, particularly at the tertiary level. In line with this development, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, was established in 1960; Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, University of Lagos, and University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife) in 1962, while the University of Benin came on board (from Mid-West Institute of Technology) in 1970. All these universities constitute the ‘first generation universities’.

In 1975, Federal Government established the seven ‘second generation universities’, which were located at Kano, Jos, Maiduguri, Calabar, Sokoto, Port Harcourt, and Ilorin. More universities, particularly the state universities emerged within the decade 1980s, sequel to the transition from the military to

civil rule in 1979 which placed education in a concurrent legislative list among the three tiers of government (i.e. federal, state, and local). Within the decade 1990s, the private universities emerged, even though twenty six universities of this category were established in 1983 but later cancelled due to anomalies in their operations [3].

During the early 1950s, Nigeria College of Arts, Science and Technology were established which were later absorbed by three among the first generation universities (i.e. University of Ife) (now Obafemi Awolowo University), Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, and University of Nigeria, Nsukka [4]. Within the early years of independence, colleges of technology were established in Lagos and three regions that existed at that time (i.e. at Ibadan (West), Enugu (East), and Kaduna (North)). Following the creation of additional regions and states in the country, new polytechnics (owned by state governments) emerged. In order to ensure geographical distribution of the facilities for technological education, Federal Government established federal polytechnic in various parts of the federation.

The first set of Advanced Teachers’ College (meant for producing qualified non-graduate teachers) was established in the wake of independence (i.e. early 1960s), at Zaria (North), Owerri (East), Ibadan (West), and Abraka (Mid-West). The creation of more states and the increasing demand for qualified teachers due to education expansion, led to the establishment of additional Teachers Colleges, now renamed Colleges of Education. Table 1 shows the number of federal, state and approved private universities, polytechnics and colleges of education in Nigeria as at year 2012.

Table 1: Federal, State and Approved Private Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Education in Nigeria

<i>Tertiary Institution</i>	<i>Federal</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Private</i>	<i>Total</i>
Universities	40	39	50	129
Polytechnics	20	38	17	75
Colleges of Education	21	43	37	101

Source: [5]

4. Concept ‘Strike’ and Past Cases in Nigeria

As indicated in [6], the word ‘strike’ means, to refuse to work, as a form of protest. It is the result of unresolved conflicts between employers and employees [7]. It can also be described as a situation whereby workers in organization, refuse to work or abandon their work, as a result of disagreement with the management over welfare or other issues. Two kinds of strike can be noticed in tertiary institutions in Nigeria: the internal and national strikes. Internal strike takes place within a tertiary institution which can be a university, polytechnic, monotechnic or college of education. Such strike is triggered by factors inherent in each tertiary institution. National strike involves many tertiary institutions. Strike can also be total if staff withdraws their services completely from their places of work. It is partial or work to rule when staff report at their places of work but refuse to work. It can also be definite or indefinite. Definite strike lasts for a specific period of time (i.e. days,

weeks, months or years), while indefinite strike does not have specific time limit. Warning strike lasts for few days and is meant to intimate government or institution's administration of intending total strike.

It is worthy of note that most strikes in tertiary institutions in Nigeria, are directed at the government in power, (either at state or federal level), few are internal. Strike can also start from a particular tertiary institution (i.e. as internal) but spread to other tertiary institutions and at the end becomes a national strike, if other tertiary institutions join as a mark of solidarity. National strike can also become internal strike, if government decides to implement an agreement signed with unions in some institutions but exclude others.

The history of strike in tertiary institutions in Nigeria dates back to 20th May, 1980, when a trade disputes was declared with the Governing Councils of Universities in Nigeria, which demanded for improved funding of the universities, academic freedom, autonomy, as well as the setting up of a special body, to review the conditions of service of the universities' staff. Early in 1992, members of Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) declared an industrial dispute, over gross underfunding of universities in Nigeria, poor conditions of service of the academic staff, university autonomy, as well as the need for academic freedom. The strike lasted for nine months nationwide but at the end, ASUU was proscribed while a separate Salary Scale tagged 'University Academic Staff Salary (UASS) was approved by government, which triggered another strike by the Senior Staff Association of Teaching Hospitals, Research Institutes and Allied Institutions (SSATHRIAI) and Non-Academic Staff Union (NASU) members, which sought parity in salary with the Academic Staff Union (ASUU).

In February, 1993, the University Academic Salary Scale (UASS), earlier approved for ASUU members, was cancelled while an Elongated University Salary Structure (EUSS) was approved in its replacement. Consequently, 1993/94 academic session was scrapped in most universities. On 3rd May, 1993, members of ASUU declared another strike, which lasted for five months and challenged the cancellation of the University Academic Salary Scale (UASS). In 1994, ASUU declared another politically motivated strike, which demanded the actualization of June 12th Presidential Election, won by Chief M.K.O Abiola, as well as proper funding of education. The report of the Monitoring Committee on federal tertiary institutions in Nigeria, in March, 2002, cited in [8] indicates that between 1992 and 1999, there were seven strike actions including industrial strike, trade dispute, internal strike, and nationwide strike. On 22nd June, 2009, the National Executives of ASUU declared a total and indefinite strike, to compel Federal Government to sign the agreement reached with ASUU on the re-negotiation of June, 2001 FGN-ASUU Agreement.

In October, 2010, all the Universities in the Southeast zone of Nigeria embarked on an indefinite strike, where they demanded for the implementation of the agreements signed with ASUU, particularly on salary and allowances. A report in the [9] also indicated that all the tertiary institutions in Kwara State (one of the 36 States in Nigeria) embarked on a strike, demanding for

one hundred percent implementation of the Consolidated Polytechnics and Colleges of Education Salary Structure (CONPCASS) and the Consolidated Tertiary Institutions Salary Structure (CONTEDISS), effective from January, 2009. Of recent, the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) declared a strike over the non implementation of the agreements reached with Federal Government since year 2000. The strike lasted for almost six months and was suspended during the last week of December, 2013. These are few cases of strikes that occurred in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

5. 'Dramatis Personae' in Strikes in Nigeria

In Nigeria, different categories of trade unions are involved in strike action in tertiary institutions. In the universities, there are: the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU); Non-Academic Staff Union of Universities (NASU); Senior Staff Association of Nigeria Universities (SSANNU), an affiliate of the Senior Staff Association of Training, Universities, Research and Allied Institutions (SSATURAI). In the polytechnics, there are: the Academic Staff Union of Polytechnics (ASUUP) and the Non-Academic Staff Union of Polytechnics (NASU), while in the colleges of education, there are the: the Colleges of Education Academic Staff Union (COEASU); Senior Staff Union of Colleges of Education in Nigeria (SSUCOEN); and the Non-Academic Staff Union of Colleges of Education (NASU), apart from the unrecognized unions that operate in the campuses. Members of the unions can be grouped into academic and non-academic staff. According to [10], academic staff are employees that handle chalk, beginning with Graduate Assistant to full Professor. They teach, set examinations' questions, and mark examinations' scripts. The non-academic staff include: the messengers, clerical officers, typists, secretaries, technicians, technologists, library officers, laboratory attendants and technologists, doctors, Director of Works and Planning, Bursar, Registrar, Deputy Registrar, and a host of others [10].

6. Factors Causing Strikes in Tertiary Institutions, in Nigeria's Context

Authors and researchers had attributed the incessant strikes in tertiary institutions in Nigeria to many factors, such as: lack of implementation of national agreements [11]; violation of local agreements or non-provision of basic facilities and poor students' welfare (Ojo, 1995, as cited in [11]; non-provision of municipal services (i.e. electricity, water, and telecommunication), poor sewage and refuse disposal, as well as transportation [12], According to [13], facilities play crucial role in the efficacy of tertiary education. The issue of inadequacy and decayed infrastructural facilities in tertiary institutions in Nigeria abounds in literature [14, 15]. While classrooms in most tertiary institutions in Nigeria are inadequate for the population of students and for effective teaching and learning, staff offices are also inadequate and poorly equipped for comfortable living of staff. Staff quarters are also insufficient for staff while many are substandard. It needs not be overemphasized that in a tertiary institution, there suppose to be regular supply of utilities such as electricity and water, to ensure comfortable living of staff living within the campus. There

should also be regular refuse and waste disposal in the campuses. When these are not carried effected, it usually leads to strike by staff. Attitudes of tertiary institutions' administrators, also leaves much to be desired. Many administrators have turned to 'thin gods' in campuses. Students and Staff dare not challenge them on any issue or policy/programme. Promotion of staff has been unnecessarily delayed, due to internal conflict with senior management. Many policies in tertiary institutions have not been staff and students' friendly. All these, make staff to embark on strike.

6.1. Victimization of Staff of Tertiary Institutions:

Victimization of staff of tertiary institutions, especially those that are indisposed to government's programmes and policies, are prevalent in Nigeria, although there seems to be improvement since the advent of the civilian administration in 1999, unlike during the military era of the past. During the military regime, staff of tertiary institution who dare criticize any government's policy or programme, would be selected for victimization, occasioned by threat to his/her life, arrest, detention, humiliation by security agents, delayed promotion, kidnapping, assassination, and willful damage to his/her properties by law enforcement agents, under the tutelage of the government in power. In the past, some lecturers had been retired and dismissed from service unjustly. [16] reported that in 1973, there was a face-off between universities' lecturers and Federal Government which led to evacuation order of Staff from their quarters. According to him, most lecturers then had no alternative accommodation outside their campuses and were highly embarrassed by the order. The case of the forty four (44) lecturers of University of Ilorin (one of the Universities in Nigeria) few years ago which generated controversies and led to strikes in many universities, is another example. The lecturers were dismissed for joining their colleagues in other tertiary institutions, to embark on strike, to press home there demand for increased welfare packages. Within the last decade, a particular Head of State in Nigeria, also gave the order that any lecturer in any of the universities in Nigeria who refused to resume from strike they embarked on then, should be ejected from his/her quarter. What seems to be a joke initially was eventually implemented where many lecturers were beaten by law enforcement agents and their properties thrown out of their quarters. It took the intervention of some influential citizens of the country to resolve the issue amicably. This action of government however forced many lecturers to exile where they felt their safety will be guaranteed.

6.2. Interference in Tertiary Institutions' Affairs by Government:

In Nigeria, government has been paying the piper and thus dictating the tune. Due to its commitment to the funding of education, government believes that it must exercise full control of activities in the public educational institutions. It is thus a norm in Nigeria for visitor to a tertiary institution (i.e. President/Governor/Administrator of State where an institution is located) to impose candidate on tertiary institution, against the interest of staff and students, when it is time to appoint leaders in institution. This has been associated with conflicts and rancour and often results to strikes and at times protest by students. Policies and programmes of government have impact on the life of the citizenry in a nation. The citizens thus want the

policies and programmes of government to be favourable. In the past, introduction of tuition fee, cancellation of meal subsidy in campuses, introduction of Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), deregulation of the downstream petroleum sector, are few policies that were rebuffed by staff of tertiary institutions because of their perceived effects on the citizenry.

6.3. Low Wages/Poor Conditions of Service: In Nigeria, salaries of lecturers of tertiary institutions are very low relative to what their counterparts earn in foreign countries. A survey by National Universities Commission (NUC) in 2007 revealed that a full professor in Botswana earned \$27,000 per annum, between \$21,000 and \$35,000 in Namibia, between \$5,000 and \$75,000 in South Africa. In the case of Nigeria, a full professor earned about \$12,000 as at year 2006. It is disheartening to note that the salary of a full professor in Nigeria is not up to that of a fresh graduate in the oil and banking sectors. Nigeria is even a country where the annual salary of a university Professor is not up to the amount being spent to hire a coach to train footballers. To worsen situation, there has been irregularity in the payment of staff emoluments. Many strikes had been observed in the past due to inability of government to pay the salaries and allowances of staff as and when due. In the recent past, staff of many tertiary institutions were at loggerheads with government, due to non-payment of their 'monetization arrears' which was promised to be paid to workers by the last civilian government, following the introduction of the obsolete 'monetization policy' in the country. Agitation for increased salary and allowances has thus continued to dominate the demands of trade unions from government. Unfortunately, staff of tertiary institutions in Nigeria, have been turned to dogs that must bark before being given food to eat.

6.4. Effects of Poverty on the Citizens: It needs not be over emphasised that there is high-level poverty in Nigeria. Official Statistics show that in 1980, the national poverty incidence was 28.1% of the population. This increased to 5.6% in 1996 and further to 70.0% in 2000

[17].Unfortunately, the population living below \$1.25 a day from 2000 to 2007 was estimated to be 64.4% [18]. Staff of tertiary institutions, are also having their share of the effect of poverty because they live within the same society with the ordinary people. The desire to earn extra income to cushion the effect of poverty, thus often lead staff of tertiary institutions into seeking for jobs in foreign countries. The call for measures to stem the tide of poverty in the country has also been parts of the demands of trade unions.

6.5. Inadequate Funding of Education and Tertiary Institutions:

Adequate funding is *sine qua non* to the survival of educational institution. No educational system can develop beyond the level of its funding. [19] asserted that the pattern of the commitment of funds to education usually reflects government immediate priority or future expectations, in terms of the general development of their countries. In educational institution, fund is needed to pay the salaries and allowances of staff, purchase the needed facilities, and put in place the necessary infrastructures. It is also needed for daily administration of institution. UNESCO emphasized that for

effective funding of education, 26% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of each country (i.e. annual budgetary provision) in the world, must be allocated to education. Over the years, the case of Nigeria portends a non-compliance with this standard. Allocation to education sector has been very low (within the range of between eight percent and twelve percent) when compared to the annual budget [20].

Table 2: Annual Budgetary Allocation to Education (in %) in 20 Selected Countries in the World, by World Bank

<i>Country</i>	<i>Allocated to Education (%)</i>
Ghana	31.0
Cote d Ivoire	30.0
Uganda	27.0
Morroco	26.4
South Africa	25.8
Swaziland	24.6
Mexico	24.3
Kenya	23.0
United Arab Emirates	22.5
Botswana	19.0
Iran	17.7
USA	17.1
Tunisia	17.0
Lesotho	17.0
Burkina Faso	16.8
Norway	16.2
Colombia	15.6
Nicaragua	15.0
India	12.7
Nigeria	8.4

Source: [21]

As indicated in table 2, it is unfortunate that allocation to education was the least (8.4%) among the selected countries while that of Ghana was the highest (31.0%). Even though external sources of funds such as tuition fees, user charges, and others, are available for tertiary institutions, they have not been adequate for their needs, hence the poor state of infrastructural facilities in the tertiary institutions in Nigeria [22, 23]. The need for adequate funding of tertiary education has thus continued to

be the core of the demands of campus trade unions in Nigeria.

6.6. Increase in Fuel Price: Fuel has been an essential commodity to the citizens of nation, being used to power vehicles that serve as means of transportation and many appliances in office and home. The price of fuel thus has a bearing on the cost and standard of living of the citizens in a country. When the price is high, it implies that prices of foodstuff, goods and services that depend on it will be high. In the past, government had on several occasions increased fuel price, which staff of tertiary institutions had resisted with much pressure through strikes.

6.7. Refusal to Honour Past Agreements: Inability to honour past agreement(s) reached with members of trade unions, often results to strikes in Nigeria. It is a norm that any agreement signed by Federal Government with staff of tertiary institutions, only concern the staff of the federal tertiary institutions and thus not applicable to the staff of the states' tertiary institutions. States' Governors/Administrators often declined to pay the salaries and allowances approved at the national level and at times, offered to pay less, which often results to strike. At times, issue(s) of international interest do cause strike in tertiary institutions. In the past, staff of tertiary institutions had reacted to the issue of apartheid in some countries in Africa such as South Africa, Namibia. There are also situations where staff will show solidarity with student, particularly when institutions are closed for several weeks or months and if government refuses to accede to the demands of the students.

6.8. Introduction/Implementation of Obnoxious Policies by Government: One of the characteristics of any government in power in any nation is the ability to formulate policies on the different sectors of the economy, including education. In some cases, some of these policies are viewed differently by the citizens, particularly the staff of tertiary institutions, who can be regarded as elites in the society, by virtue of the level of their education and knowledge they possess. In the past, issues such as the acceptance of World Bank Loan by Government, deregulation of the Petroleum sector, Introduction of Structural Adjustment Programme, had in the past drew public criticisms, and led to strikes by staff of tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

7. Effects of Strikes in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria

Incessant strikes in tertiary institutions in Nigeria have been having negative effects. Both government, parents, educational institutions' administrators are having their share of the effects. The effects of strikes include:

7.1. Delay in the Graduation of Students: There is a common saying that 'When two elephants fight, the grasses will suffer'. Students have been at the receiving end of strikes in Nigeria [7]. Strikes have been causing the closure of tertiary institutions and the disruption of academic calendar in the institutions. When closed institutions are however re-opened, academic calendar are compressed while examinations are hurriedly conducted and semester/session hurriedly brought to an end because of the fear that an extension of academic calendar by a day, will cost the institution much money. Incessant reduction of academic

calendar has thus been undermining the quality of training being provided for students in tertiary institutions. It is thus not a surprise that the declining quality of graduates of tertiary institutions in Nigeria, dominates literature [24, 25, 26].

7.2. Loss of Jobs: In the past, strikes had led to the dismissal and retirement of members of trade unions. In 1985, management of the University of Benin (one of the universities in Nigeria) dismissed a former President of ASUU, over his role in the strike in the university and the country as a whole. Forty nine (49) academic staff of University of Ilorin, Nigeria were dismissed in 2001 for taking part in a nationwide strike, embarked upon by members of ASUU [4]. The dismissal of staff further aggravates the unemployment crisis in the country and the crime rate, because many among the dismissed individuals often end up in robbery to keep the body and soul together.

7.3. Loss of Lives: Strike has been resulting to the loss of student's life. In 2009, ASUU embarked on three months strike, which was peaceful but resulted in the loss of lives of students, including those who had to travel back to their homes and others who indulged in criminal activities as a result of the idleness imposed on them by the suspension of academics. A report in the [27], also indicates that two universities' students were caught in armed robbery operation. There is the possibility that such students would be executed if they are found guilty by the court, except if their influential parents used their power and influence to secure their release, which has being a norm in Nigeria.

7.4. Loss of Confidence in Public Tertiary Institutions and Proliferation of Private Tertiary Institutions: Due to strikes, many parents and concerned citizens have lost confidence in public tertiary institutions in Nigeria and prefer to enroll their children in public tertiary institutions where uninterrupted academic calendar can be guaranteed. Many private tertiary institutions are now springing up in different towns, villages and cities in Nigeria. Report indicates that as at 2012, there were fifty (50) approved private universities, seventeen (17) polytechnics and thirty seven (37) colleges of education in Nigeria [5].

7.5. Loss of Value of Certificates and Status of Tertiary Institutions: At present, the worth of certificates of tertiary institutions, have diminished in Nigeria. Graduates of tertiary institutions are often subjected to qualifying tests by employers of labour and during admission process, due to lack of confidence in their quality. It is disturbing to note that universities in Nigeria have been ranked very low among the universities in the world and even in Africa. An online report in [28] indicates that as at year 2014, no university in Nigeria is among the world best five hundred (500) universities list. The best university from the Africa continent was university of Cape Town, South Africa. In Africa, the best university from Nigeria (Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile Ife) ranked 44th while university of Ibadan and Benin ranked 65th and 69th respectively. The issue of strike, among other factors, might have contributed to the low ranking of universities in Nigeria.

7.6. Increase in Crimes in the Society: During political period, many politicians are fond of recruiting students of tertiary institutions and use them as thugs, to kill opponents and destroy properties. Many students often use the opportunity created by idleness to enlist in armed robbery, prostitution, kidnapping, internet fraud (aka yahoo), and other social vices. After all, it is a saying that 'Devil finds work for idle hand'. The rate of crime has thus been increasing despite the efforts of government and law enforcement agents at curtailing it.

7.7. Delay in Mobilisation of Graduates for National Service: On many occasions, there had been postponements of the mobilization of graduates of tertiary institutions for National Service due to strike. The author is one of those that experienced this over two decades ago. Instead of commencing the National Youth Service in June of that particularly year, it was postponed till March of the following year. Such postponements of National Service, frustrates graduates and causes hardship for the parents, who have to fend for such students (their children) during the period. Many parents count it as relief if their children are enlisted in the National Service. Even though the stipend for members of Youth Service Scheme is meager, most Corpers do manage it, to fend for themselves during the service year without disturbing their parents who they believe, had tried amid all odds to provide for their education and feeding during the period of their studentship. It is worthy of note that the certificate being given to Corper at the end of the National Service, is one of the requirements for a graduate to be employed.

7.8. Inactive Economic Activities: The economic lives of those who depend on the tertiary institutions for survival are affected by strike because during the period, business activities are usually crippled.

7.9. Conflicts among Trade Unions and Staff of Tertiary Institutions: Strike has been causing rivalry among the trade unions in campuses. Members of unions no longer trust themselves. Any agreement signed by government with a particular union now, must be replicated for members of other unions. Due to incessant closure of tertiary institutions, no student can predict the year he/she will graduate. As a result of the prolonged stay in campus, many students are becoming frustrated while parents are losing hopes on public tertiary institutions which can account for the high rate of establishment of private tertiary institutions, particularly, the universities in Nigeria.

8. Falling Standard of Education: Over the years, there have been growing concerns about the fall in the standard of education in Nigeria [14, 24, 25]. One factor that can be attributed to this is the incessant strikes and the associated closure of institutions. While quoting the verdict of International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Governor of Ekiti State (one of the States in the South West in Nigeria), recently lamented that a sizeable number of graduates in Nigeria are half-baked and non-employable in a formal employment setting.

9. Towards the Stemming of the Tide of Strikes in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria: Stakeholders' Roles and Responsibilities

There are many stakeholders in tertiary education, each of whom needs to play his role in order to stem the tide of strikes in Nigeria. The stakeholders include:

9.1. Government: It is worthy of note that UNESCO has recommended that 26% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of each country in the world should be allocated and spent on education, to improve its status. There is thus the need for increase in the financial allocation to education sector, from where the tertiary institutions derive their funds. It has been noticed that at times, government do sign agreements with trade unions, so as to stop or avert strike. Unfortunately, most of these agreements are later rescinded by government, particularly where there is change of power. In Nigeria, each government wishes to sign new agreements with trade unions and thus not wish to honour past agreements it was not privy to. A report in [9] indicates that all the tertiary institutions in Kwara State (one of the states in Nigeria) embarked on strike, demanding for 100% implementation of the Consolidated Polytechnics and Colleges of Education Salary Structure (CONPASS) and the Consolidated Tertiary Institutions Salary Structure (CONTEDSS) effective from January, 2009. While reacting to a statement credited to the Chairman of the Union of Tertiary Institutions in the State over failed agreement, government's spokesman insisted that it was forced to sign the agreement because of the prevailing situation in the state then. To avoid situation like this in future, Government should not sign agreement it cannot or will not implement because such practice erodes the credibility and integrity of the officials involved and their statements, promises and undertakings. There should also be improved conditions of service of staff of tertiary institutions. Government should always engage trade unions in dialogue so as to ascertain their grievances. Increased and regular grant should be provided for the academic staff to enable them carry out research, teaching and public service aiming at production of quality graduates. Workshop, seminars, and conferences, should be organized for staff of tertiary institutions, so that they can be taught institutional practices and management. There should also be orientation for newly recruited staff of tertiary institutions, so that they can be taught institution practices, norms and the negative effects of strike. Government should also ensure that agreements with trade unions are centralized rather than being treated separately, which has been generating conflicts among trade unions. There should training of tertiary institutions' administrators so as to keep them abreast of global developments and modern challenges. Granting full autonomy to tertiary institutions can also enable them take vital decisions that would affect their daily activities.

9.2. Institutions' Administrators: Tertiary Institutions' administrators should be prudent in their spending of the allocated resources from government. They should carry staff along in daily activities, so as not to give room for rumour to thrive. Cordial relationship should be established with the academic and administrative staff. They should lead by example. Regular orientation should be organized for recruited staff, so as to provide forum for their briefing on policies, programmes, and activities of the institutions, as well as exposing them to rules and regulations guiding their conduct and behaviour in the institution. They should always liaise with

other tertiary institutions in the other countries, so as to be kept abreast of situations and developments, for comparison. They should seek alternative funds, apart from the funds allocated to their institutions by Government. Income generating ventures should thus be instituted.

9.3. Staff of Tertiary Institutions: When demands are too much and not feasible, it prolongs the period of strike and encourages government to maintain hard posture. Staff of tertiary institutions should thus be modest and reasonable in their demands. Trade unions must resolve their differences, so that they can present common demands to government, rather than different demands which Government may considered be too much and not feasible. They should work harmoniously and see themselves as working towards the same goals. According to [10], when academic staff embarks on strike, the students suffer but in the case of non-academic staff strike, both students and entire institutions are affected. It thus implies that trade unions should have the interest of students and institutions at heart, while agitating for strike and should thus stop calling for strike incessantly.

9.4. Parents/Guardians: Parents should support tertiary institutions in their efforts to curtail strike. They should instill a sense of responsibility in their children and help them to become good citizens in future. They should contribute to the development of tertiary institutions, through cash donation and provision of services, take ultimate responsibility for the upbringing of their children, as well as set good example for them to follow.

9.5. Community Members and Leaders: They should play advocacy and advisory roles on tertiary institutions' staff, so that they can shun strike and embrace dialogue with tertiary institutions' administrators.

9.6. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs): They should sensitize the staff of tertiary institutions on the implications of strike. In particular, they should organize workshop, seminars on the menace, so that they can be orientated on the negative implications of strikes in the educational system.

9.7. Religious Organizations and Leaders: They should play advisory and sensitization roles, particularly by counseling the staff of tertiary institutions on the effects of strikes in the educational system and society in general.

9.8. Media: They should orientate the masses on the effects of strikes and the need for the staff of tertiary institutions and institutions' administrators to embrace dialogue, to resolve crises in tertiary institutions.

10. Summary and Conclusion

Strike has been a nightmare in the educational system of Nigeria. It has particularly been a clog in the wheel of progress of tertiary education. In this paper, factors such as: weak economy, poor conditions of service of staff, inability of government to implement past agreements with unions, among

others which are causing strikes and how the menace can be curtailed were discussed. It behooves on government, staff of tertiary institutions, under the umbrella of different unions, and institutions' administrators, who are deeply concerned in the issue of strike, to implement these measures so that the menace can be nipped in the bud and the lost glory of tertiary education restored.

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Author's Profile

Ige Akindele Matthew (B.ED. M.ED, PhD),

Deputy Director,

Ministry of Education,

Akure, Ondo State, Nigeria