



Socio-Economic Effect of Strike Action in OSUN State, Nigeria

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Abstract

Strike, the most common obvious expression of industrial conflict is a common occurrence in Nigeria. Little wonder, this action affects the cost of production and productivity as in most cases strike costs are paid during the strike action. The paper, therefore, theoretically examines the effect of strike action on productivity the state of Osun, Nigeria. It is concluded that the strike action is caused mostly by performance-failure of government in the state and in Nigeria at large, which has serious dire effect on national productivity at large. The government is urged to always the window of notice period or warning as an opportunity time to dialogue with the labour union to avoid strike action.

Keywords: Effect, Strike, Labour, Osun State, Nigeria.

I. INTRODUCTION

Declining productivity in Osun State, Nigeria has become a persistent concern of researchers of economic literature in recent years. Generally, the effects of incessant strike have adverse impacts on the economy as a result of loss of national output, fall of Gross Domestic product (GDP), manpower loss and man-hour loss, cost-push inflation and increase in the poverty level as it constitutes the most significant quantitative cost to society (Fashoyin, 1992). Besides, goods and services are not accessible, while demand will be high resulting to inflation.

Productivity at the national level has been described as Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita, per employed person or per hour worked. It is viewed as a key indicator of the economic health of the country. Actions that improve productivity enable wage gains to occur without producing inflation. Therefore, productivity so defined is essential to an economy's ability to create real wealth (Heap & Burgess 2012). Productivity

implies reaching the highest level of performance with the least expenditure of resources. According to Adamu (1991), productivity is a type of relation between output and input.

Moreover, increase in productivity can also influence society more broadly, by improving living standards and creating income. They are central to the process generating economic growth and capital accumulation. Any society that is determined to survive and grow particularly in a competitive business environment must ensure that appropriate mechanism for increased work performances is created. There are strong indications that a lot need to be done by employers of labour in Nigeria especially the public sector to provide incentives such as would meet employees' expectation, increase to stimulate job satisfaction and in effect enhance productivity of the work force, (Burnstein & Fisk 2003).

Although, productivity is not everything, but in the long run, it is almost everything. A country's ability to improve its standard of living depends almost entirely on its ability to raise its output per worker (Saari, 2006). There are various factors responsible for low productivity in Nigeria, among which are, physical-organic, location, and technological factors; cultural belief-value and individual attitudinal, motivational and behavioural factors; international influences, managerial-organisational and wider economic and political-legal environments; levels of flexibility in internal labour markets and the organisation of work activities; and most importantly individual rewards and payment systems (OECD Manual, 2002). The paper, therefore, examines the effect of strike action on productivity state of Osun, Nigeria.



II. LITERATURE REVIEW

However, it is often misconstrued that industrial conflict also means strike action. According to Otobo (1987), discussing the variety of forms industrial conflict may assume, observes that industrial conflict is not the same thing as strikes, which is the impression generally created by news media, employers and some union officials themselves. Strikes are only but one form of industrial conflict, and thus that there is no strike in a given period does not mean that other forms of conflicts are not occurring within the work setting or shop floor. Examples of such latent forms of conflicts are pilferage; lateness to work, absenteeism, sabotage, poor quality of work, sick leave abuse, restriction of output, loitering from one floor or office to the other, trading within the office, peddling rumour, staff leaving office before closing hour, inciting staff against management policies, over time ban, etc. Some conflicts may not even be expressed at all; they remain latent but quite volatile, waiting to be ignited at the slightest further provocation.

The strike action has both costs and benefits to the three social partners and the society at large. These social partners are the government, labour and management. However, it should be noted that from experience the costs of industrial disputes have always outweighed the benefits. According to Imberman (1979), "strikes costs more than you think". Trade disputes as exemplified by strikes, to a large extent have a great bearing on the smooth and orderly development of the economy and the maintenance of law and order in the society. They sometimes arouse public resentment because they may hurt the public more than the parties involved in the dispute. In similar manner, (Ifedi, 1994) commenting on protracted strikes in Nigeria states that the common man is unfortunately the victim. Factories and government establishments are closed down.

All the stakeholders on university education – Government, parents and students – suffer financial losses as a result of incessant labour unrest. For instance, government is under obligation to pay the salaries of the staff even for the period they were on strike. Parents also will have to keep feeding their children and pay their house rents. Orifowomo, (2018) noted that employers, especially in the public sector, seldom invoke the no-work no-pay rule, possibly because the employers themselves are usually at fault by their failure to nip a looming strike in the bud. According to Igbaji,(2019), government suffers from financial losses from closure of schools, while students and their parents suffer unquantifiable losses. They further submitted that the above anomaly have contributed in no small measure to a steady decline in the quality of education as some students resorted to examination malpractice to make up for the lost time during conflicts in schools especially where these have resulted to closures.

III. METHODOLOGY

The paper intends to examine probable factors responsible for strike action among others in Osun State. In an attempt to achieve the objectives of the study, a survey of 120 was carried out at the State Civil Service commission, Osun State. The data were collected by the use of questionnaire. Out of 120 questionnaires administered in the selected environment, 102 were retrieved. Statistical package for social sciences was used to analyze the data.

IV. FINDINGS

Analysis of Respondents' Socio-Demographic Characteristics

The results in Table 1 present the demographic profile of the respondents used in this study. Out of 120 questionnaires administered, only 102 were successfully returned.

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Survey Items	Classification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sex	Male	53	52
	Female	49	48
	Total	102	100
Age	25-30 Years	21	20.6
	31-40 Years	41	40.2
	41-50 Years	33	32.4
	50 Years and Above	7	6.9
	Total	102	100
Marital Status	Single	14	13.7
	Married	87	85.3



	Others	1	1.0
	Total	102	100
Religion of Respondents	Christians	80	78.4
	Muslims	22	21.6
	Total	102	100
Years in Service	5-10 Years	54	52.9
	11-15 Years	23	22.5
	16-20 Years	13	12.7
	21 years and above	12	11.8
	Total	102	100
Educational Background	PhD	1	1.0
	M.Sc./M.Phil	13	12.7
	University Degree	40	39.2
	HND/ACA/ICAN/NCE/OND	43	42.2
	WAEC/GCE/SSCE	5	4.9
	Total	102	100

Source: Author's computation from the field survey (2016)

The table reveals that 53(52.00%) were males while 49(48%) of the respondents were females. The table also shows that 21(20.6%) of the respondents were between 25-30 years of age, 41(40.2%) followed by 31-40, 33(32.4%) were between 41-50 years of age while 7(6.9%) are 50 years and above. This shows that majority of the respondents are 40 years and below.

It is discovered that 14(13.7%) of the respondents were single, 87(85.3%) were married while 1(1.0%) is neither married nor single. This shows that most of the respondents are responsible.

The table shows that 80(78.4%) of the respondents are Christians while 22(21.6%) are Muslims.

The table also shows that 54(52.9%) of the respondents have spent 5-10 years, 23(22.5%) others have spent 11-15 years, 13(12.7%) have spent 16-20 years and 12(11.8%) respondents have spent 21 years and above. 1(1.0%) of the respondent is a PhD holder, 13(12.7%) are M.Sc. holders, 40(39.2%) are B.Sc. holders, 43(42.2%) of them have HND/ACA/ICAN/NCE/OND and just 5(4.9%) are Secondary School Certificate holders.

Table 2: Factors that Led to Strike in Osun State

Survey Items	Strongly Disagree f(%)	Disagree f(%)	Indifferent f(%)	Agree f(%)	Strongly Agree f(%)	Total
Late payment of wages/ salary	8 (7.8)	5 (4.9)	9 (8.8)	41 (40.2)	39 (38.2)	102
Government failure to implement agreement with labour unions and the workers	4 (3.9)	10 (9.8)	9 (8.8)	48 (47.1)	31 (30.4)	102
Poor condition of service	9 (8.8)	19 (18.6)	15 (14.7)	40 (39.2)	19 (18.6)	102
Unfavourable policies of government	10 (9.8)	8 (7.8)	16 (15.7)	42 (41.2)	26 (25.5)	102
Unlawful termination of appointment	12 (11.8)	27 (26.5)	17 (16.7)	27 (26.5)	19 (18.6)	102



Performance-failure of government	10 (9.8)	17 (16.7)	11 (10.8)	45 (44.1)	19 (18.6)	102
Inflation and economic instability	7 (6.9)	18 (17.6)	13 (12.7)	40 (39.2)	24 (23.5)	102

Source: Author's computation from the field survey (2016)

Table 2 reveals it can be deduced that 8(7.8%) strongly disagreed that late payment of wages/salary is not a factor responsible for strike action, 5(4.9%) disagreed, 9(8.8%) of the respondents are indifferent, 41(40.2) agreed, while 39(38.2%) of the respondents strongly agreed that late payment of wages/salary is one of the factors responsible for strike action.

Also, 4(3.9%) strongly disagreed that government failure to implement agreement with labour unions and the workers should not be considered as one of the factors responsible for strike in the state, 10(9.8%) disagreed, 9(8.8%) of the respondents are indifferent on the issue, 48(47.1%), representing the highest percentage agreed, while 31(30.4%) strongly agreed that government failure to implement agreement with labour unions and the workers should be considered as one of the vital factors responsible for strike in the state.

9(8.8%) strongly disagreed that poor condition of service should not be considered as one of the factors responsible for strike in the state, 19(18.6%) disagreed, 15(14.7%) of the respondents were indifferent on the issue, 40(39.2%), agreed, and 19(18.6%) strongly agreed that poor condition of service is one of the vital factors responsible for strike in the state.

Likewise, 10(9.8%) strongly disagreed that unfavourable policies of government should not be considered as one of the factors responsible for strike in the state, 8(7.8%) disagreed, 16(15.7%) of the respondents were indifferent on the issue,

42(41.2%), representing the highest percentage agreed and 26(25.5%) strongly agreed that unfavourable policies of government should be considered as one of the vital factors responsible for strike in the state.

Also, 12(11.8%) strongly disagreed that unlawful termination of appointment is not one of the factors responsible for strike in the state, 27(26.5%) disagreed, 17(16.7%) of the respondents were indifferent on the issue, 27(26.5%), representing the highest percentage agreed and 19(18.6%) strongly agreed that unlawful termination of appointment should be considered as one of the vital factors responsible for strike in the state.

Meanwhile, 10(9.8%) strongly disagreed that performance-failure of government is not one of the factors responsible for strike in the state, 17(16.7%) disagreed, 11(10.8%) of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed, 45(44.1%), representing the highest percentage agreed and 19(18.6%) strongly agreed that performance-failure of government should be considered as one of the main factors responsible for the strike in the state.

7(6.9%) strongly disagreed that inflation and economic instability is not the main factor responsible for strike in the state, 18(17.6%) disagreed, 13(12.7%) of the respondents were indifferent, 40(39.2%), representing the highest percentage agreed and 24(23.5%) strongly agreed that inflation and economic instability should be considered as one of the main factors responsible for strike in the state.

Table 3: Socio-Economic Effect of Strike

SurveyItems	Never f(%)	Rarely f(%)	Sometimes f(%)	Often f(%)	Always f(%)	Total
Do you provide partial/skeletal services during strike action	44 (43.1)	11 (10.8)	35 (34.5)	5 (4.9)	7 (6.9)	102
To what extent do you provide partial skeletal services (in hours) during strike	40 (39.2)	16 (15.7)	30 (29.4)	12 (11.8)	4 (3.9)	102
Do you get paid during/after strike action	29 (28.4)	6 (5.9)	28 (27.5)	10 (9.8)	29 (28.4)	102
Workers' salaries should not be paid during/after strike action	2 (2.0)	11 (10.8)	29 (28.4)	12 (11.8)	48 (47.1)	102



Strike action has effect on the economy	-	10 (9.8)	10 (9.8)	15 (14.7)	67 (65.7)	102
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Source: Author's computation from the field survey (2016)

Socio-economic Effect of Strike

The results reveal that 44(43.1%) of the respondents never provide partial/skeletal services during strike action, 40(39.2%) rarely provides partial/skeletal services during strike action, 35(34.5%) sometimes provides partial/skeletal services during strike action, 5(4.9%) often provides partial/skeletal services during strike action and 7(6.9.1%) always provides partial/skeletal services during strike action. Also, 29(28.4%) of the respondents affirm that they are not being paid during/after strike action, 6(5.9%) submit that they rarely get paid during/after strike action, 10 (9.8%) confirm that they sometimes get paid during/after strike action and 29(28.4%) belong to those who always get paid during/after strike action. The results also support the findings of Orifowomo, (2018) that submits that employers, especially in the public sector, seldom invoke the no-work no-pay rule, possibly because the employers themselves are usually at fault by their failure to nip a looming strike in the bud.

In the same vein, 2(2.0%) of the respondents concur to the fact that government should never pay workers' salaries during/after strike, 11(19.8) opine that government should rarely paid workers' salary during/after the strike, 29(28.4) agree that workers' salaries should be paid sometimes during/after the strike, 12(11.8) agree that workers' salaries should be paid often even during/after the strike and 48 (47.1%) representing the highest percentage of the respondents agreed that their salaries should always be paid during/after strike action. 10(9.8%) agree that strike has effect on the economy to an extent, 10(9.8%) agreed that strike sometimes has effect on the economy, 15(14.7%) agree that strike often has effect on the economy and 67(65.7%) representing the highest percentage of the respondents agreed that strike always has effect on the economy. The results are in line with the findings of Igbaji, (2019) that government suffers from financial losses from closure of schools, while students and their parents suffer unquantifiable losses.

Moreover, since government is under obligation to pay the salaries of the staff even for the period they were on strike thereby resulting to wastage of meager resources available. Most strikes involve attempts by either the labour union or government to change the bargaining position of the

other party or it may be used to effect a change in the structure of bargaining.

V. CONCLUSION

It is concluded that the strike action is caused mostly by performance-failure of government in the state and in Nigeria at large, which has serious implication on national productivity. The country's quest to be productive would only be possible when the issue of strike is given adequate and urgent attention it deserves. The government should be able to dialogue with the workers at the negotiation table with both parties willing to shift ground at the negotiation table to avoid strike action.

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