

Pedagogical Academic Instability Influences on Economics Undergraduates Pursuit in Select Higher Education Levels in Imo State-Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the pedagogical academic instability influence on Economics undergraduate academic pursuit in selected higher education levels in Imo State, Nigeria. The study has two research questions and two hypotheses. The study was also designed using a survey that adopted the inferential method. The population of the study is 57,881 students from Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education and Imo State University, Owerri. The sample for this study consisted of 400 respondents comprising 200 students from IMSU and 200 students from AIFCE. This sample was selected using simple random and cluster sampling techniques. The research instrument used is a rating scale titled: Pedagogical Academic Instability Influence on Economics Undergraduate Academic Pursuit Scale (PAIIEUAPS). The reliability of the instrument was established at 0.80 using Cronbach alpha statistic. Mean score and standard deviation statistics were used to answer the research questions. Independent sample t-test was used to test hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. It was found in this research that; the pedagogical academic instability influence study habit of Economics undergraduates is high; the pedagogical academic instability influence on academic calendar of Economics undergraduates is high; Based on these findings, the study recommended among others that, government should be a good listener and also make use of dialogue as an instrument for peaceful resolution, as was practically used in resolving strike action embarked upon by mostly Academic Staff Unions of Tertiary Institutions.

Keywords: Pedagogical, instability, economics undergraduates, academic pursuit, higher education, Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

Education is seen as the bedrock of any societal development. The role of universities and colleges of education as tertiary institutions of higher learning in human capital development, research and technological innovation cannot be under evaluated. All over the world investment in University education is a critical component of national development effort. Nations today depend increasingly on knowledge, ideas and skills which are Produced through researches in the universities. Nations invest in university education because society expects it to contribute to national development in three principal ways. First, society expects its university to produce the highly skilled personnel in technology, engineering, management and other professions; secondly, universities have the responsibility of producing their own corps of academic personnel that is, the intellectual resource pool that will. through scientific research generate new knowledge and innovation to solve developmental problems. Thirdly, universities produce teachers, administrators and managers for other levels of human resources development institutions (Ajayi, 2014).

The Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) was formed in 1978, a successor to the Nigerian Association of University Teachers formed in 1965 and covering academic staff in the University of Ibadan, University of

Nigeria, Nsukka, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, University of Ife and University of Lagos (Ajayi, 2014). In the 80's, the union was active in its struggles against the military regime. In 1988 the union organized a National Strike to obtain fair wages and university autonomy. As a result, the ASUU was proscribed on August 7, 1988 and all its property seized. It was allowed to resume in 1990, but after another strike, it was again banned on August 23, 1992. However, an agreement was reached on September 3, 1992 that met several of the union's demands including the right of workers to collective bargaining. The ASUU organized further strikes in 1994 and 1996, protesting against the dismissal of staff by the Sani Abacha military regime. After the return to democracy in 1999 with the Nigerian Fourth Republic, the union continued to be militant in demanding the rights of university workers against opposition by the government of President Olusegun Obasanjo. In July 2002, the national president of ASUU, petitioned Justice Mustapha Akanbi of the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission to investigate the authorities of the University of Ilorin for financial mismanagement and corruption (Ajayi, 2014).

In 2007, ASUU went on strike for three months. In May 2008, it held two one-week 'warning strikes' to press a range of demands, including an improved salary scheme and reinstatement of forty-nine lecturers who were dismissed from University of Ilorin in 1998. In June 2009 ASUU ordered its members in federal and state universities nationwide to proceed on an indefinite strike.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Academic performance according to Pandey (2008) is the attainment of the students in the subjects they study in the school. It is directly related to students growth and development of knowledge in educational situation where teaching and learning take place. To Usman (2010), academic performance is the measure of students' learning and acquisition of certain skills at the end of teaching and learning activities. As observed by Devis and Mayuri (2013) academic performance is excellence in all academic disciplines, in classes well as in extracurricular activities. However, Economics students' academic performance can be affected by academic instability in Nigerian tertiary institution.

Relating to Economics, Georgewill (2010), stressed that economics is relevant to the field of science and art, it enable the learners to think in the sense that he/she is able to apply its principles to solve practical problems and avoid unnecessary costly mistake, It is the importance placed on the teaching of the subject matter of Economics that has ensured the sustenance of the discipline in Nigerian secondary school curriculum since independence till date (Ilueje, 2009).

The emphasis on Economics increased since 1999 due to Nigeria's current democratization process and her quest for the consolidation of this democratic experience as one that is characterized by Economic stability, good governance, continuity and palpable poverty reduction. However, despite the importance of teaching the subject economics, there are numerous factors inhibiting it in Nigerian schools. Against this backdrop, this study reviewed the pedagogical academic instability influence on Economics Undergraduate academic performance in Imo State.

The demand of ASUU is that the government should fulfill an agreement it reached with it in 2009 on how to save the nation's universities from collapse. On the other hand, the government is proposing a piecemeal selective approach. There is no doubt that education is too vital to the survival of any nation that it should be treated as a subject beyond politics or evasive polemics. As far as the government is concerned, there are other competing items for the limited funds available. This has caused serious altercations between government and ASUU/COEASU resulting in persistent industrial strike actions. The incessant strikes action by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) and Colleges of Education Association of Staff Union has inadvertently affected the academics of Economics students (Ajayi, 2014); it usually poses a lot of challenges to their study duration, performance in examinations and their final grading. The students are kept away from school for a long time; most of them are completely cut off from academics as conditions at home may not favour productive and rigorous academic exercise. The students and their parents become frustrated because of the long expectation of school resumption that is far from sight. Some of the students while at home doing nothing get engaged in other things other than academics. In some cases they are easy recruits for criminal activities, such as armed robbery, kidnapping, and rape. This has made them a problem to the society peace and order in Nigeria. However the

extent to which the academic instability in the form of strikes affects students academic performance requires a close examination and this research is geared towards examining the extent to which it has affected the performance of Economics students particularly in Tertiary Institutions in Imo State. Academic performance of a child could also be defined as the learning outcomes of the child. This includes the knowledge, skills and ideas, soquino and obtained through their course of study within and outside the classroom situation (Agbala, 2016). It is the outcome of determination, hard work, of undergraduates in academic pursuit. Georgewill (2010) defined academic achievement as the performance of the pupils in the subjects they study in the school. This determines the pupils' status in the class. Academic performance relates to academic subjects a child studies in school and the skills the child is expected to master in each (Ike, 2007).

Pedagogical Academic pursuit refers to excellence in all academic disciplines, in a class as well as extracurricular activities. It includes excellence in sporting behaviour, it includes excellence in sporting behaviour, confidence, communication skills, and others. Zima, Wells and Freeman (2014) posit that academic performance encompasses students ability and performance; it is multidimensional; it is intricately related to human growth and cognitive, emotional and social physical development; it reflects the whole child; it is not related to a single instance, but occurs across time and levels, through a student's life in public school and into post secondary years and working life. Academic performance refers to how well a student is accomplishing his tasks and studies.

Academic pursuit in school is evaluated in a number of ways. For regular grading students demonstrate their knowledge by taking written and oral tests, performing presentations, submission of homework and participation in class activities and discussion. Teachers evaluate in the form of assignment, test and examination to describe how well a student has done. Poor academic achievement is a performance that is judged by the examiner and some significant others as falling below an expected standard (Ademologun, 2015).

David-West (2010) pointed out that some environmental variables in a home influence the learning capabilities of a child either positively or negatively and thus affect their academic performances. Some of the variables include parental socio-economic status, level of parental supervision of children, location home, and library facility among others.

According to Orji (2012), parental socio-economic status of the children of literate and high income parents perform better in school than those from poor and uneducated parents. Children from high socioeconomic homes eat a balanced diet, enjoy good health and facilities that stimulates their intellectual activity and make them perform better academically than their counterparts who indulge in smoking cigarettes, India hemp which has scattered their brain which may result in poor performance.

Pedagogical Academic Instability

This is characterized by a situation of educational unrest. Students' academic instability is a well known and recognized phenomenon in Nigeria, and Africa, even the world at large. One of the major causes of academic instability is students' crises. According to Adebayo (2009), its origin in Nigeria dates back to 1944, when students protested against the British authorities who were determined to use the premises of kings college, Lagos as base for housing the West African Frontier Force who were raised in British West African Colonies to help in the second world war. Agbala (2016) argued from the psychological poor welfare services, political and economic conditions prevalent at a particular point in time constitute students' restiveness. Apart from these psychological factors, Akin (2010) stressed that the failure of Institutional administrations to provide adequate atmosphere for free expression, deplorable conditions of infrastructural facilities, communication gap over the ban on students' union are also causes of students' unrest which leads to educational/academic instability. Ejiogu (2005) stated that the reason for teachers' proper remuneration might not be well appreciated if the word teacher and teaching in not well understood. Ukeje (2010) is of the view that performance orientation should be given to the teachers but first of all these problems caused by poor remuneration of teachers which is militating against effective teaching should be tackled or resolved.

Theoretical Review

Authority and Conflict-Ralf-Dahrendorf Ralf Darhendorf's (1959) conflict theory arose out of a critical evaluation of the work of Karl Marx. He accepted that Marx's description of capitalises was generally accurate

in the 19th century when Marx was writing, but he argued that in the 20th century, it has become outdated as the basis for explaining conflict. Darhendorf argued that important changes have taken place in countries such as Britain and the U.S.A. they are now "post-capitalist societies. Darhendorf claimed that, far from the two main classes becoming polarized, as Marx had predicted, the opposite has happened. The proportion of skilled and semi-skilled workers has grown, and has had the size of the "new middle class of white collar workers such as clerks, nurses and teachers. Inequalities in income and wealth have been reduced, partly because of measures taken by the state. Social mobility has become more common, and, crucially, the link between ownership and control in industry has been broken. Managers, rather than owners, exercise day to day control over the means of production. In these circumstances, Marxists claim that conflict based upon the ownership or non-ownership of wealth was no longer valid. This was because there was longer a close association between wealth and power. Shareholders, for example, might own the wealth of a company, but in practice they do not exercise close control over the management.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts survey research using the inferential method. The study examined extent of academic instability influence on Economics Students' academic performance in Imo State. In this study, the researcher collected relevant data, analyzed them, described and infer the results in a systematic manner. Ololube (2009) defined survey design as research which aims at gathering data from a sample on existing phenomena or attributes in order to describe and infer the results to the entire population. To achieve this, the researcher used a rating scale to collect the data, after which the data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The area of this study is Imo State, Nigeria. The research study was carried out in selected tertiary Institutions (Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education and Imo state University) in Imo State. Imo state is one of the 36 states of Nigeria and lies in the south eastern of Nigeria with Owerri as its capital. Imo state has 27 LGA's and it is bordered by Abia state on the east, by River Niger, and Delta on the west, by Anambra state to the north and Rivers state to the south state has many Institutions of higher learning which are Imo state versity, Owerri and Imo state polytechnic, Umungwo. Federal University of Technology, Owerri and Alvan Ikoku Federal college of Education, Federal technic, Nekede and FECOLART. The population of the study is 57,881 students (which comprised 25560 male and 32321 female) from Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education and Imo State University, Owerri. (Source: records obtained from the registrar of each of the Institutions, 2017). The sample for this study will comprise of 400 (third year) respondents comprising 200 students from IMSU and 200 students from AIFCE. This sample was selected using simple random and cluster sampling techniques. With this simple random sampling method, the researcher ensured a fair way of giving each member of the population and equal chance of being selected. The cluster sampling was done by grouping the two institutions (AIFCE and IMSU). The instrument for data collection is a rating scale-questionnaire developed by the researcher and titled: Extent of Academic Instability Influence.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question 1

To what extent does pedagogical academic instability influence study habits of economic undergraduates?

Hypothesis 1

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between the mean scores on the pedagogical academic instability influence on study habits of economics undergraduates in Imo State University (IMSU) and Alvan Ikoku Federal University of Education (AIFCE) all in Imo State, Nigeria.

Table 1a: Samples Size (n), Mean score (X), Standard Deviation (S) and Remark

S.L	Items Statement Rate the following with regards to academic instability	IMSU n=200		AIFCE n=200			
		X	S	Remark	X	S	Remark

1.	Students engage in tutorials during strike	2.72	0.81	High Extent	2.70	1.02	High Extent
2.	Students find it hard to read during strike	2.71	1.01	High Extent	2.71	1.01	High Extent
3	It reduces morale of students toward academics	2.75	1.12	High Extent	2.73	1.10	High Extent
4.	Most students find it hard to revise their books during strike	2.78	1.08	High Extent	2.76	1.01	High Extent
5.	Some female students are forced to go into prostitution during strike	2.69	97	High Extent	2.65	,99	High Extent
Cluster mean		13.65			13.55		
Mean of item means		2.730			2.710		

Table 1b: Sample size (n), mean score (x), standard deviation (s) and independent sample t-test statistics of significant difference between the means

Institutions	n	c	s	df	t _{cal}	t _{tab}	decision
IMSU	200	13.65	2.13				
				398	042	1.96	fail to reject
AIFCE 200	200	13.55	2.73				Ho

Table 1a above shows that considering the criterion item mean of 2.50, items 1 -5 were rated as high extent. The mean of item means were 2.73 and 2.71 for IMSU and AIFCE respectively. The standard deviation shows that the scores in the distribution were close to each other and were far from the mean.

The result therefore indicates that the pedagogical academic instability influences study habits of economics undergraduates.

The table (1b) further indicated that the t-cal of 0.42 is less than 1.96, since t-cal is less than t-tab, you accept the null hypothesis, leading to the conclusion that there is no significant difference between the mean scores on the pedagogical academic instability influence on study habits of economics undergraduates in IMSU and AIFCE.

Research Question 2

To what extent does pedagogical academic instability influence the academic calendar of economics undergraduates?

H₀₂: There is no significant difference between the mean scores on the pedagogical academic instability influence on the academic calendar of economics Undergraduates in IMSU and AIFCE.

Table 2a: Sample Size (n), Mean Score (X), Standard Deviation (S) and Remark

S/ N	Item statement: rate the following with regards to academic instability			IMSU n=200		AIFCE n=200
		X	S	Remark	X	Remark

6.	Disruption in academic programme	2.52	3.09	High Extent	2.51	High Extent
7.	Leads to closure of schools for a period of time	2.59	1.04	High Extent	2.56	High Extent
8.	Give students undeserved study year extension	2.65	1.01	High Extent	2.62	High Extent
9.	Creates distraction and disruption in the normal learning process	2.61	.89	High Extent	2.62	High Extent
10.	Elongates Time of graduation	2.62	.95	High extent	2.59	High Extent
Cluster mean		12.99			12.90	
Mean of item means		2.598			2.580	

Table 2b: Sample size (n), mean score (X), standard deviation (S) and independent sample t-test statistics of significant difference between the means

Institutions	n	X	S	df	T _{cal}	T _{tab}	Decision
IMSU	200	12.99	2.01	398	0.44	1.96	Fail to reject HO
AIFCE	200	12.90	2.07				

Table 2a above shows that considering the criterion item mean of 2.50, items 6-10 were rated as high extent. The mean of item means were 2.598 and 2.580 for IMSU and AIFCE respectively. The standard deviation shows that the scores in the distribution were close to each other and were far from the mean. The result therefore indicates that the pedagogical academic instability influencing the academic calendar of economics Undergraduates is high.

The table (2b) further indicated that the t-cal of 0.44 is less than 1.96, since t-calc is less than t-tab, you accept the null hypothesis, leading to the conclusion that there is no significant difference between the mean scores on the pedagogical academic instability influence on academic calendar of economics undergraduates in IMSU and AIFCE.

FINDINGS

Pedagogical academic instability influence on study habit of Economics Undergraduates;

It was revealed in this study that Pedagogical academic instability influences study habits of Economics undergraduates is high. The inference confirmed that there is no significant difference between the mean scores on the pedagogical academic instability influence on study habits of Economics undergraduates in IMSU and AIFCE. This finding implies that pedagogical academic instability significantly affects study habits of Economics undergraduates to a high extent as rated by the students. Due to academic instability, final year undergraduates who should have graduated this year may not be able to meet up. Law students and medical students who are supposed to go to law school or go for housemanship will not be able to meet up, the ripple effect is that there is a "standstill" for the children of this nation (Aidelunuoghene, 2014). The similarity recorded in this study could be attributed to the same impact of instability in schools irrespective of the location.

Extent of academic instability influence on the academic calendar of Economics students;

The study also found out that the pedagogical academic instability influencing the academic calendar of Economics undergraduates is high. The inference is that there is no significant difference between the mean scores on the pedagogical academic instability influence on the academic calendar of Economics undergraduates in IMSU and AIFCE. Disruptions in academic programs serve as non-motivational factors to the students. It

discourages them from learning. It is not surprising therefore that during strike actions, most students are seen involved in diverse activities such as sexual immorality, cyber scam, pool betting, unnecessary gossip, watching films and reading comic materials for entertainment purposes rather than reading their books. Motivation is essential in teaching-learning effectiveness. This has always subjected the students to pitiable conditions, disrupting academic programs, giving students' undeserved extension in their study years, poor students' concentration on academic programs and poor teacher-student relationships amongst others (Edinyang & Ubi, 2013). Consequently, students' academic performance has comparatively become so low while various forms of examination malpractice are on the increase. The situation has assumed such an alarming dimension that it affects attendance of students to higher education level.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on data analysis and findings, the following recommendations were made by the researchers.

1. Students should engage themselves in some other social gathering that will extend their frontier of knowledge rather than engaging themselves in all forms of cult activities and social vices.
2. That government should be a good listener and also make use of dialogue as an instrument for peaceful resolution, as was practically used in resolving strike action embarked upon by mostly Academic Staff Unions of Tertiary Institutions.
3. That student, while agitating for their right, should not take laws into their hands on violence demonstrations; rather student leaders should always make use of dialogue to resolve conflicting issues.

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