



## **Influence of Teachers' Strike on Students' Morale in Public Secondary Schools in Kabba/Bunu Local Government Area, Kogi State**

**Joseph I. Ige**

Department of General Education  
Kogi State College of Education (Technical),  
Kabba, Kogi State Nigeria.  
[josephige12@gmail.com](mailto:josephige12@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

*This study examined the influence of teachers' strikes on the morale of students. The respondents consisted of one hundred students selected from two secondary schools in Kabba/Bunu Local Government Area of Kogi state. A twenty-item questionnaire was administered to obtain the views of respondents. The findings revealed that teachers' strikes disrupted school academic programmes, sent student to the streets, exposing them to the vagaries of life; and the teachers began to take to other means of sustenance, at a time when salaries were not forthcoming, and the enthusiasm for teaching and learning fast disappearing. Therefore, it can be said that teachers' strikes have grave consequences on the students, and the society; hence it is recommended that parents should register their children for coaching lessons during teachers' strikes and students should be exposed to guidance and counseling in school as soon as teachers' strikes are over in order to boost their morale and ensuring that their minds are focused on becoming useful members of the society.*

**Key words:** Teachers' Strike, Students' morale, attitudes, self esteem

### **Introduction:**

The primary purpose of education is to improve the lives of people through knowledge, that is also a fundamental purpose of any democratic and progressive society, Igwe (2000) equally agrees with the general assumptions of Tyler's Rational Planning Approach process which involves changing the behavior of learners and to be successful in this activity depends on the learners attention, intention and commitment to the activities. As the school system developed into large bureaucratic organizations, conditions worsened for teachers. An important signs of the long range health of a nation is the spirit and quality of its teachers. There is no substitute for teachers who are dedicated to their nation and their students. It is for this reason that African nations are correct in emphasizing the importance of getting the very best people into teaching and making every effort to keep them there. Mellisa (2012) emphasized that academic performance indicates how well a student meets standard set out by the institution.

The future of the nation rests in the hands of its teachers; for the qualities they possess today will inevitably be reflected in the citizen of tomorrow. The spirit, which animates significant teaching, is hard to define. Obviously, there are good teachers who possess it and bad teachers who do not. Unfortunately, in many African nations, as in nations elsewhere in the world, many persons enter teaching profession either because there is no



place else for them to go or because teaching is viewed as a ladder by which they can climb into other positions. Equally fortunate, but often overlooked is the fact that some of the person who enter teaching profession for one of these reasons, come with experience to love teaching and make it their life's work by choice. Others, unfortunately, who enter teaching for one of these reasons, find that they can-not secure better or different position and hence, remain in teaching permanently disgruntled and unhappy. These groups constitute a serious drain on the vitality of the teaching profession. It is therefore urgent that those responsible for education note the qualities which mark that teaching spirit which will be suitable for the kind of Nigeria which is desired. Only when these qualities have been identified, can we encourage or reward the truly valuable teacher, weed out the undesirable teachers and build programmes of teacher education which meet the need of the country. The hard work of good teacher deserves greater compensation. Aruh (2013) noted that achievement is reflected by the extent to which skill and knowledge have been imparted.

A complete withholding of services by the teachers, with the union's open endorsement is a strike. This represents the union's demonstration of its ultimate political and economic muscle. ILO(2011) posited that strike is the most visible and controversial form of collective action in the event of a labour dispute. Strikes do not just happen, it is always possible that an inexperienced union or management may not be able to avert a spontaneous strike arising from an unpredicted, emotionally charged event, but for most times strikes and other militant actions are designed by union strategists to attain specific goals and objectives about which management has usually been adequately forewarned (for example, several weeks of impasse). Concerned unionists are often clearly enunciated during the organisation campaign and if not resolved, may fester into infectious causes of strikes. The decision of a union to call a strike is the product of a complex social, economic and political cost- benefit analysis. According to NEEDU (2012), interference in the appointment of school managers, the demand or supply of teachers and the way in which school managers' effectiveness is compromised in an environment of union management tensions. Lovell (2002) asserts that teachers' strike in secondary schools is attributed to defective home discipline and environmental influence.

Perhaps, it is well to keep in mind that teachers in Kogi State, like other employees, are interested not only in how much they make, but also in how their colleagues are faring. There is growing inclination among teachers and their organizations to take direct action (strike) over nonchalant attitude of concerned authorities on their welfare. Along with the increase in strike activity, there has been an increase in the membership of the teachers' union. International evidence of the effects of teachers' strikes on learning is contradictory in addition to negative effects of strike, Baker (2011 ). Teachers are more militant today than ever before, yesterday's teacher were older, less educated, and more content with their environment than the teachers today. Maton, (2014) asserts that young people ....possess sophisticated knowledge and skills with information technologies. Today's secondary school teachers are more educated; they are primary wage-earners and are anxious to contribute to the school system, which is their main source of livelihood and means of advancement. The teacher is also a product of the times – rise in cost of living, increase in use of technology for teaching and learning, which point to rising expectations. These rising expectations must be



fulfilled commensurately with the rest of society. Edinyang and Ubi(2013) observed that strike affects students' learning effectiveness.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to determine:

1. The consequences of teachers' strikes on the self esteem of the students.
2. The extent to which teachers' strikes hinder self confidence of students.
3. The level of influence of teachers' strike on the morale of students ;

### **Research Questions**

This study will focus its attention on answering the following three research questions:

1. What are the effects of teachers' strikes on the students self -esteem ?
2. What are the effects of teachers' strikes on students' attitudes and self confidence?
3. Have the strikes led to dampening of students' morale?

### **Null Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant effect of teachers' strike on the students self esteem.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant effect of teachers strike on students' attitudes and self-confidence.

**H<sub>03</sub>:** There is no significant effect of teachers strike on the morale of students.

### **Methodology**

This study is designed to investigate the influence of teachers' strikes on the morale of students, using selected schools in Kabba/Bunu Local Government Area of Kogi State as a case study. Questionnaires were used to elicit information from respondents. For the purpose of this study, a twenty-item questionnaire was used. This design made possible the collection of ideas, views, opinions and adequate information from the respondents who have experiences of teachers' strikes, and its attendant consequences. The information collected from the respondents helped in suggesting ways by which the consequences of teacher's strikes can be minimized. In order to make for an effective conduct of this study, one hundred students responded to the questionnaire administered out of a population of 2500 (two thousand five hundred students) from two secondary schools in Kabba/Bunu Local Government in Kogi State, Nigeria. The respondents were randomly selected, but adequate provision was made for a fair representation of both the male and female sexes. The students used were those who have experienced strikes and have had experience of stoppages of the teaching-learning process as a result of teachers' strikes. The researcher used a twenty-item questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered to elicit desired responses from students of the selected schools. In the course of this research, one hundred students responded to the questionnaire administered, these consisted of (50) fifty males and (50) fifty females. In collecting the required data for this research, the researcher visited two selected schools within Kabba/Bunu Local Government Area in Kogi State. There, the researcher administered the questionnaires. The students were one hundred; with both sexes having equal representation. This is to ensure that both male and female sexes were well represented. The students who have had experiences of teachers' strikes in their schools were able to provide substantial information regarding teachers' strikes.

**Null Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant effect of teachers' strike on the self esteem of students.



Respondent	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Total
Students	10	20	70	100

X<sup>2</sup> obtained = 9.24

X<sup>2</sup> critical = 5.99 (Degree of freedom = 2 and level of significance = 0.05)

In response to the hypotheses, the first hypothesis was rejected because X<sup>2</sup> obtained is greater than X<sup>2</sup> critical. 70% of the respondents asserted that there is a significant relationship between teachers' strikes and the lowering of students morale. It was revealed that in most cases, teachers' strikes made students stay at home idle and consequently lose interest in learning activities. This non-payment of salaries sometimes spanned over several months, resulting in the inability of the teachers to take care for themselves and their dependants. This spurred the Nigeria Union of Teachers into action and subsequently, they called their members out on strike to force government to show concern for their plight. The teachers were fast losing respect to the extent that landlords do not want to let their houses to teachers because they do not get paid regularly and consequently may not pay their rents as at when due.

**Null Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant effect of teachers' strikes on students' attitudes and self- confidence.

Respondent	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Total
Students	16	20	80	10s0

X<sup>2</sup> obtained = 7.54

X<sup>2</sup> critical = 5.99 (df = 2; level of significance = 0.05)

The null hypothesis was rejected because the calculated X<sup>2</sup> is greater than the critical value of X<sup>2</sup>. The second hypothesis was rejected because 80% of the respondents were of the view that there was a fall in the average performance of students in their various school subjects due to lack of self-confidence and poor attitude to learning, after teacher's strike, while 16% of the respondents accepted that teacher's strikes have no significant effect on the performance of students. Hence, it can be said that teachers' strikes caused back log of undone work for students; it became difficult for public schools to complete their scheme of work. The students, especially the final year students of the junior and secondary are worst hit because they are certificated. While these students were at home, not attending classes, students forget what they have been taught before the period of strikes, except for the children of a privileged few, who have the opportunity of attending lessons. Students from poor homes cannot afford the cost of enrolling in extra-mural classes. Hence, this led to loss of self-confidence.

**Null Hypothesis 3:** There is no significant effect of teachers' strikes on the morale of students.

Respondent	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Total
Students	4	24	72	100

X<sup>2</sup> obtained = 16.06



$X^2$  critical = 5.99 (Degree of freedom = 2 and level of significance = 0.05)

The third hypothesis was rejected because  $X^2$  calculated is greater than  $X^2$  critical. The hypothesis was rejected on the ground that 72% of the respondents agreed that teachers strikes sent students out of school, turning them into emergency hawkers of fast moving products like sachets of 'pure water', bus conductors, barrow pushers, idlers and eventually some of them become social deviants. Some of the female students took to the streets flirted with men; in their experimentation, they engaged in pre-marital sex, with its attendant unwanted pregnancies, which turned some of them into teenage mothers. There were reported cases of death of a few of the impregnated female students, in their attempt to abort the unwanted pregnancies. Some of the male students become 'street boys' and get used to making money. When strikes are over, this group of students find it difficult to adjust to normal school life and some of them turned to petty thieves; most of them have lost interest in academic work and the desire to return to the school system was no longer there.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The main purpose of this research was to investigate the perceived effects of teachers' strikes on the morale of students. Three null hypotheses were formulated at the beginning of this study. To test these hypotheses, a twenty item questionnaire was administered.. The questionnaire was administered on one hundred randomly selected students in Kabba/Bunu Local Government Area of Kogi State. They comprised of fifty male and fifty female students. After careful assessment of the views of respondents, the first hypothesis was rejected, as investigation revealed that there was significant relationship between teachers' strike and the lowering of the self-esteem of the students. The second hypothesis was rejected because the study unravelled that after teachers' strikes, students were no longer committed to academic work and consequently, this led to a decline or loss of self-confidence. The third hypothesis was also rejected, as findings revealed that most students after the period of strike no longer have the desire and enthusiasm to return to the school system. This is because their morale has been dampened.

### **Conclusion**

Qualitative education is expected to produce responsible and enlightened citizens that would prove to be an asset in the task of nation building. The huge financial resources being devoted to education by the local, state and federal governments are such that, at the end of the day, evidently, a vital key to the success of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) is the classroom teacher. Hence, the welfare of the teachers in terms of promotion and several other non - financial incentives should be given prominence. Teachers must continually seek avenues to broaden and update their knowledge in order to cope with the rapidly changing demand of the time. The teachers have strived to be morally upright, since as molders of characters, the young ones they teach, more often than not, take after them in learning and manners. This research findings revealed that lack of high remuneration for teachers may discourage the current crop of teachers and the brightest college graduates will not want to go into education and children will be taught by the less able. This position found expression in the non-implementation of the proposed Teachers' Salary Scale, which could have attracted the best brains in the society.



Teachers, apart from teaching, act as counsellors, house masters, and other required functions to ensure that the school represents a microcosm of the larger society. Finally, it should be noted that the professional of teaching and the adequate provision of infrastructural facilities in primary, secondary and post-secondary institutions will encourage the germination and development of specialization skills, ensure the optimal utilization of intellectual potentials leading to the production that will up light national development.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings from this study it is hereby recommended that:

1. Parents should register their children coaching lessons or-extra-mural classes during teachers' strike.
2. Parent associations should undertake development projects for example, construction of blocks of classrooms to ease the problem of congestion.
3. Education authorities should ensure that schools have functional guidance and counseling units where students can be advised on good societal values, self dignity and self confidence.

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I graduated from Secondary school in Nigeria in 2007, and one of the things I wished schools offered were extra activities to aid learning. Debate club was cancelled, French club same, No sporting activities, (Only a few people ran when sports day was approaching) afternoons were spent having after school lessons and evening were for prep. At the end of the day students get back home with theories they don't even understand. It quite unfortunate many of the public school(funded by government) are the ones facing this problem. Students in selected public secondary schools in surelere local. Government of lagos state, nigeria. Olaleye, F. O.1, Ajayi, A.,2 Oyebola O. B.3 and Ajayi, O. A.1. consisted of all the teachers and students in public secondary schools in Surulere Local. Government area of Lagos State. A total of thirty (30) students and (10) teachers were randomly. What are called public schools in the United States is called state schools in Britain. When a person is sent down from school, it means he or she has been thrown out. Recent reforms introduced local management of schools and allow state schools to become self-governing if voters approve the change in an election. The school then receives funds directly from the central government instead of from the local authority. In 1997 Scotland elected to form its own legislature, separate from the Parliament in London. Rugby School, private English secondary school, in Rugby, Warwickshire, founded in 1567 as a free school for boys of the area under the terms of the will of Lawrence Sheriff, a wealthy London grocer. The influence of teacher's strike on academic performance of secondary school students over the years have been an issue that cannot be overemphasized. Huge resources are annually put into educational expansion, as an investment intended to help reap corresponding returns. In this type of investment students are the prime inputs, their development is its prime objective, their attitude greatly affect its process and in the end they are its prime output. It was only when junior workers threatened strike action in Cross River state and teachers actually abandoned classes in Bendel State after not receiving January salaries as at April 1982 that both government cleared part of the outstanding amount .