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STRIKE ACTIONS AND ITS EFFECTS ON LIBRARY USERS' ACCESSIBILITY TO ACADEMIC LIBRARIES IN SOUTH, SOUTH NIGERIA

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Abstract
This study investigates strike actions and its effects on library users' accessibility to academic libraries in South South, Nigeria. A descriptive survey method was adopted for the study. The population of the study is 715. A total of 715 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents, only 677 were retrieved and found useful. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics of mean and percentage mean score of 2.5 was used as a basis for decision. The study revealed that the influence of strike actions on library users' accessibility to academic libraries are learning, reading, research, academic setbacks, and poor performance. The causes of strike actions on library users' accessibility to academic libraries are salary shortfall, negative attitude of the government towards education, non-implementation of allowances, and violation of legislation or rules. The study further revealed solutions to the causes of strike actions on users' accessibility to academic libraries to be: salaries should be paid at the appropriate time, Government should take education as priority, allowances should be implemented and legislative rule should be respected. The study recommends that all agreement made should be strictly adhere to and honoured.

Keywords: Strike Actions, Library Users, Academic Libraries

Introduction
Academic libraries, often known as university libraries play an important role in achieving the goals and objectives of higher institutions where they are located. A competent academic library and information centre has long been recognized as a necessary component of successful research, teaching, and learning. Academic libraries, according to Agyen-Gyasi, Lamptey, and Frempong (2010), are critical contributors to knowledge development and serve a diverse range of knowledge searchers. Academic libraries, according to Becher's (1989) organizational theory, are part of a wider organization. As such, the attitudes of faculty members towards the academic library are influenced by various factors that are associated with the larger organization, including the size of the academic institution, its reputation, its collections as well as library users.

The library user is thought to be the most reasonable source for determining whether the library is fulfilling its mission. A user, like the library personnel, is a vital part of a library and information system. The idea of librarianship is to provide the appropriate information to the right user at the right time in the right format. A user, according to Whittaker (2009), is someone who utilizes one or more library services at least once a year, such as students, academic staff, research scholars, administrative personnel, and management committee members. Similarly, Sewa (2011) sees a user as the one who derives a measurable advantage from information services. Users' accessibility to academic library resources is critical. The library should be open to library users at all time in order to meet their information needs. One of the major challenges to access the academic library is when there is strike action.

Strikes are described as refusal of employees of an organisation to work in protest of specific flaws in their working circumstances. Strikes impede users' access to organisations or institutions including the library. A strike is a work stoppage caused by a large number of employees refusing to work. It is usually embarked upon in reaction to staff grievances, and they might result in library closures. Strikes have occurred often over the last two decades, making completion of a complete academic calendar year appear implausible. During these repeated strikes, Wole Soyinka portrays the school system as "dead" (Hughes, 2005). Strikes may have a negative impact on library services and make library users the scapegoat by denying them access to the library, which may have an impact on library users' learning, reading, and research.

The Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) likes to embark on strikes during the academic year in order to gain an unfair advantage. Engaging in a strike during the academic year is not an act of fate, but rather a determined strategy that sees endangering students' education as well as library users' access to university libraries as a way to gain negotiating leverage. It's a pity that library patrons are made the scapegoat of the issue and that nothing is done to help them. A systemic self-destruction process is created by neglect and frequent strike interfering with library users' research. In light of this, the importance of this title on the impact of strike activities on library user accessibility in university libraries in South, South Nigeria is critical.

Statement of the Problem

An academic library is an integral part of an academic and research organization, and users are the key stakeholders who require information. The accessibility of library users is critical to their academic development. The basic objective of a library or information resource centre is to fulfil users' information needs. Improving the quality of user services is a matter of deep concern for the libraries of the modern age. Strike actions usually have adverse effects on the educational sector in general, as students who are supposed to make use of their library for meeting their learning needs will remain redundant at home which will encourage them to engage in negative vices. Allowing such strike actions to continue will affecting the use of learning as students in some cases are told to vacate their hostels making it difficult for them to access their university libraries.

It has been observed that literature exist on effect of strike actions on user's accessibility in academic libraries, but none has been researched on effect of strike actions on user's accessibility to academic libraries with a particular reference to South-South, Nigeria. It is as a result of this gap in knowledge that prompted the researcher to embark on this study in order to find a lasting solution to frequent strike actions as it affects user's accessibility to academic libraries.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to examine the effect of strike actions on users' accessibility to academic libraries in South-South, Nigeria. The specific objectives are:

1. To find out the effect of strike actions as it affects library users' accessibility in academic libraries in South-South, Nigeria
2. To find out the causes of strike actions as it affects library user's accessibility in academic libraries in South-South, Nigeria
3. To proffer solutions to the causes of strike actions as it affects library user's accessibility in academic libraries in South-South, Nigeria

Research Questions

1. What are the effects of strike actions on library user's accessibility to academic libraries in South-South, Nigeria?
2. What are the causes of strike actions as it affects library user's accessibility to academic libraries in South, South, Nigeria?
3. What are the solutions to the causes of strike actions as it affects library user's accessibility to academic libraries in South-South, Nigeria?

Review of Related Literature

A library has traditionally been thought of as a repository for information. The ideal place to learn through books and electronic media is in a library, which is defined as a structure or room having an accumulation of books. Libraries play an important role in the development of countries; they have evolved into a location dedicated to the creation, organization, conservation, storage, retrieval, and dissemination of data in any form (Olanlokun & Salisu, 1993). Academic libraries, according to Agyen-Gyasi, Lamptey, and Frempong (2010), are critical contributors to knowledge development and serve a diverse range of knowledge searchers.

The academic library, according to Lesikar and Petit (1995), is a natural place to start an orderly search for secondary information when conducting research. This raises concerns about educational institutions that lack this critical resource (the library). According to Aina (2004), the services supplied by a university's library reflect the university's excellence. Academic libraries, according to Ubogu and Okiy (2011), are those associated with universities, polytechnics, colleges of education, and other similar higher learning institutions. While agreeing with Ubogu and Okiy, Adeniran (2011) also stated that university libraries fulfill the research needs of students and faculty. These libraries, according to Ugwuanyi, Okwor, and Ezeji (2011), contain a plethora of information resources, making them a possible learning environment in a university. They argue that a good academic library should give a multifunctional environment within the library space since this would provide a platform for people to attain their aims and objectives.

Library users are known by a variety of names, including readers, clients, customers, and patrons, although they are most commonly referred to as users. According to Nwalo (2003), he is anyone who comes to the library with the intention of using its resources to meet his information needs. In the twenty-first century, the underlined word "visits" refers to remote access to the website or portal for the library According to Nwalo (2003) defined him as anybody who visits the library with the purpose of exploiting its resources to satisfy his information need. The underlined word "visits" as used in the 21st century, include remote access to the library portal or website. Aina (2004) sees the term "user" to include all those who avail themselves

of the services offered by a library. The term encompasses various terms such as patrons, clients, information users, information seekers, consumers, readers, etc. these terms can be used interchangeably, because they all apply to those seeking the services of a library. Users are one of the most significant elements in a library's trinity of books, readers, and staff, though in an academic library, the users are students, teachers, and researchers.

The library user is thought to be the most reasonable source for determining whether the library is fulfilling its mission. According to Sewa (2011), a user is someone who gains a demonstrable benefit from information services. A user can also be defined as someone who visits a library for one or more of the following reasons: to look through a collection of the library's newest arrivals, current journals, and comparable materials; to look for a certain document in the library for consultation or study, or to borrow one; to obtain current references on a given topic or a reference bibliographies for a specific time period; to use reference sources to gather factual knowledge on a topic, event, action, or other subject; to obtaining a photocopy of a journal article, a conference paper, or a technical report, for example. The library system can be best designed around the users to suit their requirements if library and information professionals, with their daily contact with library users, give informed assessments of user demands for documents, informational material, and services. This is significant since a library system's primary goal is to meet customers' information needs through library resources and services.

There is a call from university administrators asking library directors to demonstrate their library value to the institution (Kaufman, 2008). Due to these increased calls for accountability, libraries have been stimulated to study the perception of users on library services in anticipation that it is a key factor in determining usability of these services. Service perception is the user's judgment and evaluation of a service performance received and how it compares to their need (Jiang and Wang, 2006). Since University libraries are an integral part of the education system, how they are perceived determines their smooth existence and value to the users.

Ranganathan (1961) segmented the user community based on the several categories of services he outlined. They could be a novice, an ordinary inquirer, or a specialist inquirer. The term "freshman" refers to a new library member, whereas "ordinary inquirer" refers to a regular reader, and "specialist inquirer" refers to someone who specializes in a specific topic.

According to Ravi Kumar and Phil (2009), library customers are categorized into the following categories: There are three types of readers: general readers, special readers, and non-readers. A general reader is linked with public libraries and uses light lending materials, whereas a subject reader focuses their library use on their area of knowledge. Specific readers, on the other hand, are users with special needs as a result of physical or mental disabilities of various kinds. Non-readers are a subgroup of library users who use library materials but not reading materials. The best illustration of a non-reading user is someone who comes to the library solely to borrow a DVD or audio cassette. Depending on the nature of the courses and mode of study they have chosen, users can be both on campus and off campus. Furthermore, on-campus users are those who visit the libraries on a regular basis, whereas distant users are those who do not visit the libraries on a regular basis. According to Cooper et al. (1998), remote users are likely to be highly motivated, have a lot of expertise with library research and electronic resources, and have a lot of success with information technology.

As a result of the strike actions, the university system of education has experienced a significant setback, which has had a significant impact on university libraries as well as library users. Strike is defined as the cessation of work by a group of employees acting together, or the concerted refusal of any number of employees to continue working for an employer as a result of a dispute, done as a means of forcing their employer, or any person or group of employees, to resolve the dispute, or to assist other employees in pressuring their employer, or any individual or group of individuals employed, to accept or reject terms of employment and working conditions (Wage Indicator, 2022). According to Chijioke (2013), a strike is an organized stoppage by a group of workers to compel an employer or a group of employers to comply with demands put on them.

Strikes, according to Armstrong and Shokan (1997), are a short suspension of work intended to force employers to adopt the employees' demands. Strikes, according to Clerk (2012), are about putting pressure on the employer. According to Ivanrevich (2007), a strike is an attempt by employees to withhold employment in order for workers to make significant concessions at the negotiating or negotiation table. The unfair treatment that workers suffer from their employers leads to a strike (Clark, 2012). Employees who believe they are not being treated fairly with respect to pay and condition of service, there is bound to be disagreement between the employees and the employers.

Strikes in Nigerian universities have become commonplace during the last two decades. According to Albert (2015), universities in Nigeria went on a nationwide strike for the second year in a row to press the government for a salary raise. Such industrial action, according to Hominh (2014), is likely to become more widespread on college campuses. Academic activities have been affected in practically all of Nigeria's institutions; teaching and semester examinations have been halted in 38 of the country's universities (Albert, 2015). Unfortunately, neither the university staff nor the government appears to recognize the harm done to educational quality and students' information seeking activities.

The Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) prefers to go on strike during active academic session, with hopes of giving them undue advantage. Going on strike during academic session is no act of fate, but a calculated process that sees jeopardizing students' education, as one that will yield advantage during negotiation. A follow-up to the 2007 strike by the University and College Staff Union (UCSU) in the United Kingdom, when union leaders welcomed a successful strike action (Taiz, 2008). Striking employees' demands appear unlikely to be met without the use of students as human shields. Even students from the University of Ibadan returned to class to discover teachers adamant that classes would not continue (Fatunde, 1996). Literature were reviewed exhaustively on the effects of strike actions on library user's accessibility to academic libraries, the causes of strike actions as it affects library user's accessibility to academic libraries and the solutions to the causes of strike actions as it affects library user's accessibility to academic libraries.

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design using questionnaire as instrument for data collection. The academic librarians were 104 while the library users which were randomly selected were 611, making a total population of the study to be 715. A total of 715 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents, only 677 were retrieved and found useful. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics of mean and percentage mean score of 2.5 and above and percentage score

of 50% were considered as acceptable by the respondents while below 2.5 mean score below 50% score is considered as not acceptable by the respondents.

Table 1: Federal University Libraries studied

S/N	Name of the Library	Librarians
1	University of Benin Library (UNIBEN)	16
2	University of Calabar Library (UNICAR)	18
3	Federal University of Petroleum Resources Effurun Library (FUPRE)	9
4	University of Portharcout Library (UNIPORT)	23
5	University of Uyo Library (UNI-UYO)	28
6	Federal University of Otuoke Library	10
	Total	**104**

As shown in the table 1 above, the numbers of librarians consist of 104 in the Federal University Libraries under study. The breakdown of the number of librarian's in the federal university libraries in South South Nigeria is as follows: University of Benin Library (16); University of Calabar library (18); Federal University of Petroleum Resources Effurun Library (9), University of Portharcout Library (23); University of Uyo (28); and Federal University Otuoke Library (10) respectively.

Table 2: Users of the Universities Libraries Studied

S/N	Name of the Library	Total Number of users
1	University of Benin Library (UNIBEN)	101
2	University of Calabar Library (UNICAR)	102
3	Federal University of Petroleum Resources Effurun Library (FUPRE)	98
4	University of Portharcout Library (UNIPORT)	121
5	University of Uyo Library (UNI-UYO)	103
6	Federal University of Otuoke Library	86
	Total	**611**

As shown in the table 2 above, the actual users of the universities libraries under study were randomly picked, and consist of 611. The breakdown of the number of actual library users in the federal university libraries in South South Nigeria is as follows: University of Benin library (101); University of Calabar library (102); Federal University of Petroleum Resources Effurun Library (98), University of Portharcout Library (121); University of Uyo (103); and Federal University Otuoke Library (86) respectively.

Research Question 1

The effect of strike actions on library user's accessibility to academic libraries

Table 3

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	-X	Decision
1	Learning	363	255	55	4	3.4	Accepted
2	Reading	342	287	31	17	3.4	Accepted
3	Research set back	290	310	56	21	3.3	Accepted
4	Academic set back	321	307	40	9	3.3	Accepted
5	Lack of accessibility to the library	342	317	12	6	3.5	Accepted
6	Poor performance	327	305	30	15	3.3	Accepted

The data presented in table 3 revealed that six (6) identified effects possible of strike actions on library user's accessibility to academic libraries includes the following (3.4) learning, (3.4) Reading, (3.3) Research, (3.3) Academic setback, (3.5)

Lack of accessibility to the library and (3.3) Poor performance. The findings are supported with Wole Soyinka speech when he describes the education system as dead during these frequent strikes (Hughes, 2005).

Research Question 2

The causes of strike actions on library user's accessibility to academic libraries

Table 4

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	-X	Decision
1	Salaries shortfalls of workers	405	260	9	3	3.6	Accepted
2	Negative attitude of Government towards Education	331	286	39	21	3.4	Accepted
3	Non implementation of allowances	389	212	58	18	3.4	Accepted
4	Unfair treatment by government	285	337	44	11	3.3	Accepted
5	Poor application of collective bargaining	409	238	21	9	3.5	Accepted
6	Violation of legislation or rule	375	282	13	7	3.5	Accepted

The data presented in table 4 shows six (6) possible causes of strike actions on library user's accessibility to academic libraries to includes (3.6) Salaries shortfalls of workers, (3.4) Negative attitude of Government towards Education, (3.4) Non implementation of allowances, (3.3) Unfair treatment by government, (3.5) Poor application of collective bargain, and (3.5) Violation of legislation or rule. This is supported by Albert (2015) who observes that universities in Nigeria embarked on nation-wide strike to pressure government for a pay increase and other entitlements.

Research Question 3

Solutions to the causes of strike actions on user's accessibility to academic libraries

Table 5

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	-X	Decision
1	Salaries should be paid at the appropriate time	301	313	58	5	3.3	Accepted
2	Government should take education as priority	349	279	34	16	3.4	Accepted
3	Allowances should be implemented	294	313	53	17	3.3	Accepted
4	Fair treatment from government	365	267	37	8	3.5	Accepted
5	All the stakeholders and parties to collective bargaining should comply	289	367	15	6	3.4	Accepted
6	Legislative rule should respected	356	302	9	10	3.5	Accepted

The data presented in table 5 indicates that six (6) possible solutions to avert strike actions in user's accessibility to academic libraries are (3.3) Salaries should be paid at the appropriate time, (3.4) Government should take education as priority, (3.3) Allowances should be implemented, (3.5) Fair treatment from government, (3.4) All the stakeholders and parties to collective bargaining should comply and (3.5) Legislative rule should respected.

Conclusion

The library users in every university libraries should be treated and attend to whenever the need arises. The actual users are the ones that make use of the library

daily, weekly, and monthly in order to learn, read, research, and for self-development. The frequent strike action experienced by universities workers has hindered the accessibility of library users to access the library, which will therefore have negative impact on them. The government should try as much as possible to see that strike actions in universities should be averted. One way of doing this is to adhere strictly to workers' demands as well honor all agreement made.

Recommendations

The study recommends the following:

1. Salaries should be paid at the appropriate time to avert frequent strike actions;
2. Allowances should be implemented as at when due to prevent strike actions;
3. Government should take education as priority to avoid the frequent strike actions.

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