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# Labour relations and human capital development crisis: Implications for academic calendars and annual leave in Nigerian universities

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## Abstract

Universities in Nigeria have struggled to maintain stability in their academic calendars without much success. Data, randomly collected from 137 lecturers from 37 universities across the six geopolitical zones in the country, were analyzed to answer two main questions: One, the most rampant cause of crisis in the Nigerian university system; and two, whether industrial crisis often warrant the difficulty in utilizing annual leave by academic staff. Analyses showed that unresolved face-offs between the Federal Government of Nigeria and Academic Staff of Union of Universities (FGN-ASUU), constitute a single major factor responsible for disruption in academic calendars, while this often results in dragged academic sessions and partly responsible for cases of staff's inability to access academic staff annual leave among others. While a paltry 21.9% of the respondents had regular experience, the majority had none or had irregular experience of annual leave after putting in at least 10 years of active service. For some respondents (34.3%), deferment of annual leave was not recognized in their institutions; while 68.6% reported failing health among various perceived effects of unutilized annual leave. It is hereby suggested among others, that, the Nigerian government prioritizes educational development in the country, and institutionalize proactive resolution of FGN-ASUU issues. The ASUU should establish a resolution towards enforcement of a compulsory annual leave for academic staff members nationwide.

**Keywords:** Labour Relations; Human Capital Development; Annual Leave; Nigerian Universities; Conflict Quality Service Delivery

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## **1. Introduction**

The last three-and-a half decades have witnessed high incidence of unstable academic calendars in the Nigerian university system (Noah et al., 2017). The instability, no doubt, has contributed immensely to reduction in quality service delivery, perennial decline in educational standard and declining quality of manpower development in the country (Okotoni and Okotoni, 2003). Quality and standard will be compromised when the curriculum is often crashed for the purpose of catching up with institution's calendar (.Kakkad, 2006). Usually, after such moments of instability, both students and lecturers are in a rat race, either to conduct examinations earlier disrupted by a strike, or meet deadline for submission of names for the mandatory annual National Youth Service Corp (NYSC) programme (The Nation, 2009; National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS), 2009; Gulloma, 2009). Besides, several university programmes such as convocations, matriculations and conferences, have been negatively affected. These states of affairs portend negative consequences for labour relations and human capital development in the nation's universities (Oyetakin et al., 2012). The focus of this paper is the current nature of labour relations between the government and the university unions and how this impacts negatively on human capital development process in the universities.

While other levels of university crisis have impacted negatively on academic activities on campuses, crisis between the federal government and ASUU (FGN-ASUU) tends to assume a critical dimension due to its relatively prolonged nature and far -reaching consequences. According to scholars, strike actions caused by the FG-ASUU unresolved conflicts usually center on one or more of the following: failure on the part of the government to implement collective agreements entered into sometime in the past; poor funding as a result of consistent reduction in annual budgetary allocations, stagnant staff salary structure; tussle over university autonomy and freedom by lecturers (Oni, 2013; Offem et al., 2018; Akinkugbe, 2010; Ukeje et al., 1992). The nature of labour-management relations in the Nigerian universities for over two decades now tends to portray the classical adversarial capitalist mentality which emphasizes goal attainment without commensurate commitment. This has called out various industrial unions in the universities especially ASUU, for industrial actions. One of the often-neglected consequences of disruptions in the academic calendars is inability of academic staff to regularly observe annual leave, which is the main focus of the paper.

Several studies have examined effects of strike actions on educational systems of countries but virtually none has examined its linkage with labour/ management relations posing as obstacle to the utilization of annual leave by academic staff. The difficulty in the utilization of academic staff annual leave, possesses the danger of not only undermining that significant provision of the Nigerian labour law in the short run but, the human capital development aspect of the intellectual worker and that of the student whom he teaches, in the long run. Thus, the human capital development in this sense is said to be in a state of crisis due in part to, the fact that the necessary time -input for its qualitative development seems unattainable. Consequently, the qualitative service delivery by the academic seems undermined. Hence, this study seeks to empirically analyze the causes and effects of this perceived labour /management relations and human capital development crisis in relation to difficulty imposed on the academic staff in the Nigerian universities concerning the utilization of their annual leave.

To achieve this, from here, the paper is structured as follows: Review of relevant literature, method of data collection, analysis and results, discussion, conclusion and policy recommendations.

## 2. Review of relevant literature

Labour relations refer to any relationship regarding conditions of service between employer and workers (or their union) in an organization (Stockley, 2010; Kaufman, 1993). The concept has been widened to include issues bothering on external social environment of the organization and state's relevant institutions (Encyclopedia.com, 2019; John, 2010; Ozaki, 1996). While the primary focus of the relationship may be on grievance handling and the likes, it includes a round-table for union-management negotiations on matters concerning work and its benefits (Bingham, 2016; Accounting-Management, 2016). That is why although the labour law has spelt out issues on employee annual leave, its effective administration rests on engagement between the employer and workers (or union) regarding modality for its application.

In Nigeria, Chapter 198 Paragraph 7 subsection 1 of the 1990 Act (The Nigerian Labour Act (1990) provides that:

*Not later than three months after the beginning of a worker's period of employment with an employer, the employer shall give to the worker a written statement specifying that (sic) particulars of the employer, the particulars of the worker and terms and conditions relating to: Hours of work or Holidays and holidays due pay, or Incapacity for work due to sickness or injury including any provisions for sick pay and any special conditions of the contract.*

The above forms part of the contract of employment and it is usually embodied in the employment handbook which constitutes the platform for labour-management relations in Nigerian universities. The annual leave aspect of the contract of employment, for example, concerns the ensuing analysis. The Labour Act (1990) requires that every employee in Nigeria, who has been on the employment of an employer for a continuous period of 12 (twelve) months, is entitled to a holiday with full pay of at least 6 (six) working days pay (The Nigerian Labour Act, Chapter 198, Section 18). The same Act recognizes that it may be necessary for an employer and its employees to, by mutual consent, defer an employee's annual holiday but this holiday must still be taken with pay (Adesegun, 2015). Deferment of annual leave in such cases is on the condition that the cumulative leave is not extended beyond a twenty- four month period of the employee being in the employer's continuous employment (Udo, 2018; Oserogho, 2006). It is even an illegal act for any employer to commute annual leave to cash for an employee (Subsection 3 of Section 18 of the Labour Act). This is because the law envisages the labour relations and human capital development implications of such act (Oserogho, 2006).

The academic staff annual leave experience in Nigeria, is that of outright neglect and/or non-observance due to session- in, session-out activities occasioned by the ofte disrupted academic calendars. In some universities in the country, policy of deferment of accumulated leave years is not yet a policy, and in some, where it is even recognized, the statutory extension limit of 24 months is not observed. For example, in Adekunle Ajasin University (formerly Ondo State University), academic staff are made to complete the annual leave form but not all staffers are in the know about the deferment clause. Completion is a mere annual ritual

as its purpose is already realized by the management. At a particular period, the deferment clause was outrightly removed by the university administration, but later restored in 2015 after series of ASUU engagements with the university management. In the Republic of South Africa, the extension limit by which the annual leave of an employee could be delayed is 18 months (South African Employment Act (No.75), 1997). However, in Ghana, deferment or any other arrangement that could prevent the utilization of annual leave by an employee is not recognized by law (Ghana Labour Act (No. 651), 2003).

Empirical evidence from this study confirms that a good number of academics in the Nigerian universities have never utilized their annual leave after ten years or more of assumption of duty as lecturers. For the non-academic staff, non-observance phenomenon does not arise. The academic staffer works directly with the students and if the university calendar that dictates when an academic session terminates and another begins, drags, due to strike actions (which have now become perennial), how does labour observe some moment of work rest (annual leave) and mental renewal necessary for quality service delivery in the academia? This is where the issue of human capital development is subsumed in the concept of human development.

The concept of human development has been viewed by the United Nations Development Report (UNDP, 2010: 12), as:

*“a development paradigm that is about much more than the rise or fall of national incomes. It is about creating an environment in which people can develop their full potential and lead productive, creative lives in accord with their needs and interests. People are the real wealth of nations. Development is thus about expanding the choices people have to lead lives that they value. Fundamental to enlarging these choices is building human capabilities, the range of things that people can do or be in life. The most basic capabilities for human development are to lead long and healthy lives, to be knowledgeable to have access to the resources needed for a decent standard of living; without these, many choices are simply not available, and many opportunities in life remain inaccessible*

In the above conception of human development by the UNDP, ‘enlarging people’s choice and building their capabilities to enhance the range of things that can do or be in life’, impact on the related concept of human capital development. Human capital may be viewed as a sum total of competences, knowledge and attributes which enable an individual to perform labour resulting in economic value. This, in Marxist parlance, is referred to as ‘labour power’ (Fine and Saad-Filho, 2010). It is also viewed by Perreira, Harris and Lee (2006: 16) as “the practical knowledge and skills and learned experiences that make individual productive especially at work”. Adam Smith (1776) also emphasized education and experience in acquiring human capital development. From the foregoing, human capital is viewed as a subset of human development as there cannot be real development of ‘things’ in a sustainable sense without the development of ‘people’. It may be submitted here that utilization of annual leave for the purpose of rejuvenating human intellect, body and soul, constitutes one of the means of attaining human capital development (Marshall, 2010). It has also been argued that the level of human capital development is an indirect index of a nation’s per capital income and consequently her level of economic development (UNDP, 2010). Therefore, the variable of annual leave thus mediates between human capital development and quality service delivery by the academic staff.

The literature recognizes several health-deficit effects associated with non-utilization of staff annual leave. However, the current study focuses on one important area which is stress. According to Nweze (2005:45), 'stress is a disruption of the emotional stability of the individual, a distortion that induces a state of disorganization in personality and behaviour with potential to lower performance by the individual (It is more of external or environmental inducement that distorts the physiological and anatomical balance of the individual)'. It is akin to workplace or academic stress which is one important area that necessitates observance of annual leave in order to mitigate the negative results of its non-utilization. According to report by *Bhui et al., (2016)*, two out of every five employees were highly stressed as compared to one in every five in other industries. A similar trend is reported in the finance sector especially in the banking industry in Nigeria where stressful situations became more rampant following the 2005 Nigerian banking reforms (Balogun, 2007).

Stressful situations could arise through many aspects of the teaching profession, for instance. These include stiffened progress on the work, poor work climate, poor salary, unpaid entitlements, heavy workload especially due to incessant strikes, unrest through management's Ph.D demand and incessant management changing of promotion criteria among others (Laal, 2013). Studies have further indicated stress arising from confusing work demands, pressures from home, monitored working hours and increasing punishable offences by managements (Brookes, et al., 2013; Aniedi et al., 2010; Siyanbola, 2013). Stressing on its human development benefit, Etzion (2010) finds that people who take their leave tend to develop reduced occupational stress and are more productive. Lunau (2013) finds that workplace stress can result to incessant headaches, high body temperature and high blood pressure. Blix and Mitchell (2004) contends that some countries in Europe have passed legislations towards encouraging stress prevention programmes. One of such enabling programmes includes observance of holidays and compulsory annual leave. Studies have further reported improved well-being and productivity derived through utilization of annual leave (Etzion, 2010; Gilbert and Abdullah, 2002).

Research has also shown that for one reason or another, some academics do not regularly utilize annual leave. Cairncross and Waller (2004) identified reasons such as uncertainty relating to staff tenure, thought of high workload after resumption from leave, among others. Research has further demonstrated that heart attacks and obesity may result from overwork (Dennis 2004; Pocock, 2001). Also, those who regularly worked longer hours per week tend to be more susceptible to certain mental disorders (Heiler, 1998). This study tentatively argues that the preponderant ASUU-government conflict precipitates crises which ultimately presents difficulty towards realization one (annual leave) of the significant contents of the bond between labour relations and human capital development.

The underlying causes of the unresolved and patently perennial crises between the Federal or the State Government or the university management and ASUU, reflects the nature of industrial relations approach being adopted by the government (Keith, 2006; Ejumudo, 2009). Types of approaches dictate the ensuing mode of relationship between parties. Several perspectives, which include the unitary, pluralist, Marxian and systems approaches, to mention just a few, are recognized by the literature. However, only the first three will be succinctly examined in this study. The unitarist approach assumes that in every organization there exists a common purpose thus emphasizing mutual cooperation of parties concerned. This approach is based on a

paternalistic conception as government or the university management (as employers) demands loyalty of the other parties in the industrial relations system. Here, unionism or union agitations are considered unnecessary since the employer knows and centrally manages what everyone needs. Conflict is here considered as negative reflections of labour agitations (Ackers and Wilkinson, 2003).

The pluralist perspective conceives organizations as comprising groups with divergent interests (Kraatz and Block (2008). In this approach, both the government or the management prerogative and labour interests are recognized. This perspective enables the employer to rely more on consultations and dialogue rather than use of force (Fox, 1972). Here, conflict is recognized and institutionalized (Dahrendorf, 1959; National Academy of Sciences, 2009) through process of collective bargaining. Conflict is considered a veritable avenue for improvement and necessary change (Cyert and Masrch, 1959). The third approach represents the Marxist perspective which focuses the problem of power inequality in the capitalist systems as breeding grounds for labour- management conflicts. Here, inevitability of conflict and trade union agitations are a natural response due to perceived exploitation (Hyman, 1975). By application, the display of unitary mentality by the federal/state government during negotiations, tends to dictate direction of issues. Such university employer views conflict as absurd always threatening sanctions against agitating lecturers. In such situations, the unitarist employer may resort to taking court retraining injunctions to deter workers' strike actions.

In the case of annual leave, such managements might say "we are looking at your request" or "as soon as the situation improves" without opportunity for exhaustive dialogue. The Nigerian situation is more of this. And where such university management has strong influence on the government in power as in the case with Adekunle Ajasin University, it employs that vantage position to collaborate with the government in power to keep local ASUU branch at bay. The government or university management that holds the pluralist ideology of recognizing union power and interest more often than not sues for round table to iron out areas of differences. They tend to be on top of the situation rather than allow such to degenerate to unresolved crisis which often gives rise to strike actions that disrupt academic activities. The radical/Marxian thesis has its relevance in the labour relations system as well. A carefully moderated radical posture is necessary to avoid being bought over either by the government or smart university managements.

### 3. Data and method

Data for this study was collected from a survey of 180 participants who attended an ASUU organized meeting held recently at the University of Calabar in Nigeria, through simple random and quota sampling techniques. The meeting had been attended by lecturers from across universities in the country. The study was designed to elicit information from many universities covering the six geopolitical zones of the country. A country-wide information gathering especially from a cross-section of the academia, it is hoped, would facilitate generation of high-level body of data that such a study as this requires. Breakdown of respondents' characteristics is captured in Table 1 below. With a total of 13 items, the questionnaire is divided into two sections. Section A covers 4 bio-social questions comprising universities of affiliation, sex, age, length of service and status grades of respondents. Section B comprises 9 items centering on most frequent causes of strikes, effects of strikes on

academic activities on students and lecturers, branches' annual leave experience, patterns of annual leave experience, etc. Nominal scales were used to measure variables of the study. As a basically descriptive study, analytical strategy remained the use of descriptive statistics, while hypotheses of the study are examined through correlation and chi-square tests.

#### 4. Analysis and results

One hundred and thirty-seven (137) out of 180 pieces of the questionnaire administered were completed and returned representing 76% of the total questionnaire distributed. The respondents represented 51 universities across the country. A geo-political zonal breakdown in Table 1 reveals that 17.5% of the lecturer-respondents came from northeastern part of the country representing 10 universities, while 12.4% representing 8 universities attended the meeting from north -west; another 12.4% respondents represented 5 universities from the north-central zone.

**Table 1. Social Characteristics of Respondents**

		Number	Percent (%)
Geopolitical Zones in Nigeria			
	North East	24	17.5
	North West	17	12.4
	North Central	17	12.4
	South East	29	21.2
	South West	26	19.0
	South South	24	17.5
Sex			
	Male	104	75.9
	Female	33	24.1
Age			
	30-39	70	51.1
	40-49	53	38.7
	50-59	12	8.8
	60+	2	1.5
Job Tenure			
	1-10	64	46.7
	11-20	60	43.8
	21-30	12	8.8
	31-40	1	0.7

Status Grade			
	Assist. Lecturer	4	2.9
	Lecturer Two	27	19.7
	Lecturer One	36	26.3
	Senior Lecturer	49	35.8
	Reader	15	10.9
	Professor	6	4.3

Similarly, 21.2% of the participant-respondents came from the southeast geopolitical zone of the country representing 12 universities; 19.0% representing 10 universities were from the South West; while 17.2 % representing 8 universities came from the south-south geo-political zone; 75.9% were male, while 24.1% were female, a greater proportion, 89.8%, were aged between 30 and 49 years, while majority of them (90.5%) had served for between 1 and 20 years in their respective universities. Some good number of them (35.8%) were senior lecturers, followed by Lecturer 1 cadre (26.3%), Lecturer 2 (19.7%), Reader (10.9%), Professorial (4.3%) and Assistant Lecturer cadre (2.9%). The professorial and assistant lecturer cadres were the least represented groups, thus confirming the low-level awareness of ASUU- related activities among academic new members and disengaging tendencies of old ones.

Regarding causes of strikes in Table 2, a relative majority of the respondents (68.6%) reported continued face-off between the Federal Government and ASUU constitutes the most frequent cause of strikes in the Nigerian universities. management lax accounted for 22.6% while respondents scored student unrest (6.0%) and political situation in the country low (0.7%). Among the respondents, 22.6% reported having experienced strikes within the last 1 to 2 years in their universities (both local and national cases combined), as against 28.5% reporting occurrence of strike action within the last 3 to 4 years; while 48.2% reported strike action within the last 5 to 6 years, only a very few (0.7%) reported 1 period around the last 7 years. With over 50% undergoing strike action within 5- year period tells much of incessant strike experience of the Nigerian universities. Majority (86.1%) of the respondents reported that strike action left negative effects, while 13.9% reported that the outcome of such industrial actions did not leave a negative effect.

**Table 2.** Causes, Trends, and Effects of Strikes

Item	Variable	Number	Percentage
Causes			
	Management lax	31	22.6
	Student unrest	11	6.0
	ASUU-FG crisis	94	68.6
	Political situation	1	0.7
Trends			
	1-2	31	22.6
	3-4	39	28.5
	5-6	66	48.2
	7+	1	0.7



Effects of strikes (negative)			
	Yes	118	86.1
	None,	19	13.9

In Table 3, 13.9% of the respondents said that they do not observe annual leave at all in their own universities. Slightly over two-thirds (64.2%) of them said that although they access their annual leave, they do so irregularly. Only 21.9% of them said that their annual leave experience was regular. With regard to management practice of annual leave deferment, 65.7% reported that their university management recognized deferment while 34.3% responded in the negative. The distribution above suggests that full compliance with the labour law dictates regarding staff annual leave in work organizations is yet to be realized in the Nigerian universities.

**Table 3.** Patterns of Academic Staff Experience of Annual Leave

Items	Variables	Number	Percentage
Leave experience			
	None	19	13.9
	Irregular	88	64.2
	Regular	30	21.9
Mgt. practice			
	Recognizing accumulation	90	65.7
	Not recognizing	47	34.3

In Table 4, 80.3% of the academic staff surveyed claimed that an important effect of the disrupted academic session to them, was their inability to enjoy their annual leave; 68.6% said continuous work without period of leave resulted in physical and emotional stress to them. Failing health (68.6%), hindrance to personal development (70.8%), poor quality lecture delivery (30.7%) and frustration (29.2%) were some of the effects of the disrupted academic session reported.

Two research questions are put forward for in-depth analysis in this study.

- 1- Could crisis between the Government and the Academic Staff Union of Universities in Nigeria be held responsible as the preponderant cause of prolonged industrial action in the Nigerian university system?
- 2- Could the prolonged industrial action be held responsible for inability of academic staff to access their annual leave?

Consequently, two hypotheses are presented for analysis.

- 1- Ho: There is no significant relationship between ASUU- Federal Government disagreement and prolonged or dragged academic calendar in the Nigerian universities.

**Table 4.** Perceived Overall Effects of Inability to observe Annual Leave

Perceived overall Effects		Respondents	Percentage to grand Total Respondents
	Inability to observe annual leave	110	80.3
	Physical & emotional stress	94	68.6
	Failing health	94	68.6
	Obstructed personal development	97	70.8
	Poor quality lecture delivery	42	30.7
	Frustration	40	29.2

**Table 5.** Summary of Correlation showing the relationship between ASUU-FGN on strike actions and dragged academic calendar

Variables	N	Mean	SD	df	R	P
1. ASUU-Federal govt disagreement	137	.686	.466	135	.189	< .05
2. Has any of such strike resulted in prolonged or dragged academic calendar in your university?	137	.88	.327			

The result of correlational analysis at 0.05 significance level shows that there is a significant relationship between ASUU-Federal government disagreement and prolonged or dragged academic calendar in the Nigerian university system [ $r(135) = 0.189, p < 0.05$ ]. The result negates the formulated null hypothesis 1, thus it was rejected. Although there were other factors such as management lax, students' unrest, political situation, etc, analyses implied that ASUU-FGN disagreements often result to dragged academic calendar for universities in Nigeria. This analysis however, excludes private universities as they are not members of ASUU.

- 2- Ho: Disrupted academic calendars do not result to academic members' irregular observance of staff annual leave

**Table 6.** Chi-Square Summary on possibility of disrupted academic calendar affecting regular utilization of staff annual leave

		Observed N	%	Expected N	df	X <sup>2</sup>	p
Disrupted academic calendar may result in irregular annual leave observance.	Strongly Agree	62	45.3	34.3	3	63.321	< .05
	Agree	51	37.2	34.3			
	Disagree	20	14.6	34.3			
	Strongly Disagree	4	2.9	34.3			
	Total	137	100.0	100.0			

The result of the chi-square analysis shows that majority of the respondents (82.5%) supported the view that disrupted academic calendar caused their irregular experience of staff annual leave. This was also confirmed with the chi-square result ( $X^2 = 63.32$ ,  $p < .05$ ) at 0.05 significance level, therefore the null hypothesis 2 was rejected. The above result implies that there is high possibility of irregular observance of staff annual leave whenever the academic calendar is disrupted as a result of unresolved industrial action between the academic staff union and the Federal Government of Nigeria.

## 5. Discussion

Pre-empirical guesses had speculated that the ASUU-FGN unresolved face-offs were responsible for disrupted academic calendar and by implication, the obstacle towards accessing their annual leave. Empirical analyses in this study confirmed that unresolved ASUU-FGN crises more than any other factor may be held responsible not only for the disrupted academic calendar in the Nigerian university system, but staff inability to observe annual leave. This result finds relevance in the observation made by the former Executive Secretary of National University Commission (NUC) in Nigeria, Professor Peter Okebukola. Okebukola (Adesulu, 2012) who argued that “there is no doubting the fact that one of the major causes of educational backwardness in this country is incessant strikes by university lecturers, which are always precipitated by disagreements between government and teachers (see also Offem et al., 2018). “Although the Nigerian universities’ five unions should be discussed in matters relating to effects of strikes on the Nigerian university system, ostensibly, it is the strike by ASUU that is apparently most impactful. It is most impactful for its damaging effects on the educational system as a whole”.

Lecturers are sometimes unable to access work-free time for personal rejuvenation due to prolonged strike. Although, it might be said that work-free periods exist during strikes, arguably, the psychological feelings of unrest that comes to mind and suspension of certain benefits in the interim, tend to rubbish such perceived opportunity. Opportunities for personal academic development which include adequate time for developing new lecture notes, and attending to family needs which for long had been denied for lack of time, are forfeited due to increased work overload after such strikes. Similarly, students receive condensed content of the

curriculum that should have been taught for the period of the strike and this opens opportunity for ‘half-baked products’. This may in turn signal a negative effect on manpower development in the country. Besides, first-class universities that are desirous of staff and student exchange would decide to partner with universities with stable academic calendar in other parts of the world. More often than not these situations open opportunities for social vices such as internet fraud, immoral practices which sometimes result in unwanted pregnancies during the strike period (Adesulu, 2012).

Analyses reveal that some academic members of staff in the Nigerian universities who observe annual leave do so irregularly. As noted earlier, several reasons account for the situation which includes ignorance on the part of some lecturers concerning availability of provision for annual leave in the services of the university. Some ignorantly view leave utilization as unnecessary since it may be said that it has been observed during the strike period. As earlier maintained, this thinking may not be right as the salary which is paid during annual leave and its leave bonus are not paid as long as the strike lasts. Moreover, the government often threatens to evoke the legal provision of ‘no work, no pay’ at such times.

Analyses further indicated a breach of the labour law in the area of unutilized annual leave, cumulating in effects such as physical and emotional stress, failing health, obstructed personal development, poor quality lecture delivery, and personal frustration among others. According to Public and Commercial Services Union (PCSU) (2010), a Non-Governmental Organization based in the United Kingdom, stress is viewed as “the term used to describe what occurs when pressure becomes unimaginable. When it persists, according to PCSU over time, significant ill-health such as high blood pressure, increased risks of stroke, heart attack, ulcer, colitis, and other mental health diseases may result. PCSU further maintains that 60% of all work absences are stress-related. In its counsels, ‘Take your annual leave’ is the antidote”. PCSU further stresses that “workers need this time away from the workplace to recharge their batteries”. Hindrance to personal capital development accounts for why some academic staff may use the same old lecture notes for a long time; although personal laziness could also be found responsible. This situation often results to low quality lecture delivery and substandard scholarship as consequences.

## **6. Conclusion**

This study has fleshed out issues involved in the crises between the worklife of the academic staff and the realization of an important provision in the labour-management relations. This crisis has challenged the quality of the human capital development being displayed by the academic staff without observation of annual leave. A resolution of the National Executive Committee (NEC) of ASUU should be established, in consonance with the existing ILO and the Nigerian Labour Law provisions on enforcement of a compulsory annual leave for academic staff nationwide. ASUU has to embark on vigorous enlightenment champagne in order to sensitize members on the availability of staff annual leave provision in the labour law. An important aspect of this gap is the experience of work stress which in the long-run is capable of undermining the goal of tertiary education for national development. FGN-ASUU conflict has been found to be mostly responsible for lingering strike actions by lecturers, which was found responsible for inability of academic staff to access their annual leave.

To this end, the unitarist, hyper-radical mentality and the mistrust shared by both government and ASUU on labour relations issues are to be relaxed.

Besides, experience has shown that government negotiators during joint meetings between government and the unions lack adequate powers to make sound commitment on vital issues. Such negotiators need more powers to make necessary commitments on behalf of the government in the future. Of course, the divide-and-rule tactics are often noticed in the government at such times. This attitude is more pronounced when government asks ASUU to negotiate with their respective councils or state governments during strikes. This should be jettisoned in order to pave way for effective collective bargaining practice.

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