

Impact of Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) Disputes on the Output of Public Universities in North-East Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the impact of Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) disputes on the output of public universities in North-East Nigeria. Four objectives, four research questions and four null hypotheses guided the study. Ex-post facto-survey research design was used for this study. The population of the study is 5,434 academic staff in seven Federal Universities in North Eastern Nigeria. The sample size for the study comprised 372 Academic staff as respondents. This size was determined using Taro Yamane formula for sample size determination. The instruments used for data collection were two self-structured questionnaire namely "Impact of Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) Disputes Questionnaire (IASUUGNDQ)" with 15-items and "Output of Public Universities Questionnaire (OPUQ) with 15-items developed by the researcher. The validity and reliability of the instruments were established. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation. Inferential statistics of linear and multiple regression analysis were used in testing the null hypotheses. Based on the analysis of data, the study revealed that Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute on University autonomy, funding and proliferation have positive significant impact on the output of Federal universities in North Eastern Nigeria, $F(3, 371) = 68.528, p < 0.05$. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended among others that; the Federal Government should engage in dialogue with ASUU to develop a comprehensive policy that respects university autonomy while ensuring accountability. This policy should clearly define the roles and responsibilities of universities, allowing them the freedom to manage their internal affairs without undue interference, while establishing mechanisms for oversight and support. The Federal Government should increase and stabilize funding for universities through a well-structured and predictable financial support system. This could include revising the funding formula to ensure that universities receive adequate resources for infrastructure, research, and teaching, and implementing a transparent and accountable financial management system.

Keywords: Academic Staff Union of Universities Dispute, Autonomy, Funding, Proliferation, and Output of Federal Universities.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The goal of every university is to impart knowledge, skills, attitude, values and norms to learners in other to bring about development in the lives of every student and for national transformation and development. The vision of Universities is to be pace-setting institutions in terms of learning, character building and service to mankind with a mission to produce competent and resourceful graduates with high moral standards in society, and the total development of men and women in an enabling environment through appropriate teaching, research and service to humanity, influenced by the constitutional ethics and culture of the Nigerian state. Over the years, universities have played dominant roles in the developed world. Universities are usually in the forefront of any social, economic and political challenges, especially with the power of research being focused on areas that will promote human development and solve existential problems. According Amadi and Urho, (2015), industrial dispute arise between workers and managers chiefly because of their different ideologies and

opposing interests. Students across various institutions of higher learning in Nigeria are constantly faced with industrial actions either by the academic or non-academic staff, the disagreement or lack of understanding between government and academic community often result in deadlock that usually disrupt academic calendar. In 1997 and 2000, statistics showed that federal government expenditure on education was below 10% of overall expenditure. The fervent interruption of our education system is not limited to higher institution. These fervent interruptions have hampered the provision, acquisition and utilization of quality education.

ASUU a union of intellectuals seeking not only the socio-political and economic welfare interest of its members within the framework of promoting the cause of university education in Nigeria but the entire good of Nigerians and Nigeria. The Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) is a Nigerian union of university academic staff, founded in 1978. ASUU is an offshoot of the Nigerian Association of University Teachers (NAUT) which was established in 1965. At that time, NAUT consisted of only 5 universities in total including University of Ibadan, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, University of Ife and University of Lagos. Professor Victor Emmanuel Osodeke emerged as the body's president on 30 May 2021 (Tumba, *et al.*, 2020). As a successor to the Nigerian Association of University Teachers that was founded in 1965, ASUU was formed in 1978 to cater for the interests of all academic staff in Federal and State universities in Nigeria. The formation of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) in 1978 has brought about some changes and challenges in the academic system of Nigerian universities. The academic members staff see the union as a general body through which they can dialogue and channel their request and grievances to the school management and government (Tumba, *et al.*, 2020).

The union came into prominence when it staged its first-ever strike and was proscribed by the military government of President Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida on August 7, 1988, and all its properties were seized. This was because of the national strike it organised that year to get fair wages and university autonomy. Though the union was allowed to resume activities in 1990, the government again banned it on August 23, 1992, after another strike. An agreement was, however, reached on September 3, 1992, that met several of the union's demands, including the right of workers to collective bargaining. ASUU organised further strikes in 1994 and 1996 to protest against the dismissal of university teachers by the Sani Abacha military regime (Wikipedia, 2016). ASUU organised further strikes in 1994 and 1996 to protest against the dismissal of university teachers by the Sani Abacha military regime (Wahab, 2018).

If its first industrial action was in 1988, its longest was in 2020 when it downed tools for nine months. The lecturers, based on their union's aims and objectives to secure adequate funding, improved salary package, autonomy and academic freedom to curb brain drain and ensure the survival of the university system, hinged their action on the lack of funding of universities and functionality of the Integrated Payment Portal System (IPPIS), arguing that IPPIS negates autonomy for universities. On December 17, 2013, ASUU declared a strike that lasted six months over the non-implementation of a 2009 agreement between it and the federal government, which was eventually called off after the latter agreed to some of its demands.

To enhance the provision, acquisition, utilization and appraisal of quality education, different fora and societies have advocated for the application of all humanly possible means available to improve the quality and quantity of learning that goes on both in the school and outside the school needs. In the university system, Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) is one of many unions whose responsibility is to ensure quality education (Yawe, Ijov & Okwori, 2019). All over the world, academic staff are recognized as the personnel whose primary assignments are instructional delivery, research and public service (Abiodun-Oyebanjo, 2010). They include personnel who hold academic rank with titles such as Professor, Associate Professor, Lecturer or the equivalent of any of the academic ranks. It includes personnel with other titles such as Deans, Directors, Associate Deans, Assistant Deans, Chair or Heads of Department (Education System Data, 2001). Arogundade (2010) regards an academic staff as a member of an institution of higher learning (in this case, a university) who has an academic view point or a scholarly background. The National Policy on Education (FRN, 2013) attributes the success of any educational institution to the academic staff. The academic staff are very essential in any educational system; they interpret the aims, goals and plans of education and ensure that students are educated in the direction of those aims and goals (Yawe, Ijov & Okwori, 2019). Tertiary education in Nigeria has suffered tremendous setbacks as a result of industrial actions by both the academic (ASUU) and the non-teaching staffs. This has always subjected the students to pitiable conditions, disrupting academic

programs, giving students' undeserved extension in their study years, causing poor students' concentration on academic programs and poor lecturer-student relationships amongst others. Abiodun-Oyebanji (2015) revealed that many factors among which are inadequate funding, interference with university autonomy, poor condition of service are some of the factor responsible for disputes between ASUU and Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) especially in Federal universities in Nigeria.

A dispute is an argument or disagreement between people or groups. According to Chand (2016), in common parlance, dispute means difference or disagreement of strife over some issues between the parties. Dispute in an argument or disagreement, especially an official one between, for example, workers and employers (ASUU Vs FGN). Dispute refers to workers' refusal to work as protest for inadequate service or poor conditions of service (Edinyang & Ubi, 2013). Amadi and Urho (2015) state that dispute is an aspect of industrial conflict used by ASUU to express their grievances to her employer (FGN) especially on issues pertaining university autonomy, funding, proliferation of universities, teaching, research, community service, revitalization and working conditions. It is a collective, organized, cessation or shut down of work by employees, to force acceptance of their demands by the employers. Disputes are known as the periods for which workers, as a result of disagreement with their employers, decide to withhold or withdraw their services (Ohiwerei & Onimawo, 2016). Ohiwerei and Onimawo add the following as subjects for which disputes could be inevitable; "university autonomy, poor funding, proliferation of universities when the existing ones are inadequately taken care of, poor teaching conditions, inadequate research and publication funding (Ohiwerei & Onimawo, 2016). According to Badekale, Ngige and Hammanjoda (2016), the causes of industrial dispute in Nigerian tertiary institutions with the staff unions, include factors related to university autonomy, poor funding, proliferation of universities when the existing ones have not been adequately taken care of, poor teaching conditions, inadequate research and publication funding often due to failure on the part of the federal government to fully implement the 2009 agreement between it and the Academic Staff Union of Universities. Badekale *et al.* add that, government control is one of the major factors responsible for industrial dispute in Nigerian institutions. The issue of university autonomy and academic freedom has also been a vexed matter between governments and ASUU.

University autonomy refers to the right of universities to govern themselves without external control (Mukoro, 2013). It therefore denotes self-governance or independence and academic freedom of universities to pursue their work within the limit of the law establishing them. Indeed, the overriding challenge of the university is how to have full autonomy and academic freedom. It is difficult to harness and consolidate the Nigerian universities' capacity to employ their own staff, admit their students, determine the balance between teaching and research, establish and maintain their own standard without any external interference. In Mukoro's opinion, autonomy allows the university to stand as an independent legal structure without undue interference from government and its respective agencies. In order to achieve this, universities are expected to be adequately funded. It is however observed that universities in Nigeria generally and the North East Zone in particular, are not adequately funded in order to meet the relevant needs of the universities (Mukoro, 2013). Badekale *et al.* (2016) add that, underfunding of educational system is one of the major factors responsible for industrial dispute in Nigerian institutions. ASUU, for instance, has gone on strike several times, namely; in 1992, 1993, 1994, 1996, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2013, 2017, 2018, 2020 and 2022 to press home its demand for increased funding for the system. Perhaps the government fails to understand the fact that: the success of any school depends upon the resources available to it. Higher education plays a crucial role in the supply of high-level manpower for the socio-economic development of a nation. To this end, effective management of this sector through adequate funding becomes necessary (Ekundayo & Ajayi, 2009).

The issue of funding and facilities have been the cause of friction between ASUU and the government in almost all instances. But it appears the government is unable to meet these demands owing to the dwindling economic situation in the country. UNESCO (2000) reported that unlike Nigeria which spends an average of 1.1% of its GDP/GNP on education, other countries like Ghana, Kenya and Zimbabwe spend 3.6%, 6.2%, and 9.5%. The effect of poor funding of universities is evidenced in the brain drain, a phenomeon which has depleted manpower of universities in Nigeria seriously. The country has lost most of its experienced academics to even smaller African countries, such as Ghana, Rwanda, Kenya, South-Africa, to mention a few (Isa & Ezekiel, 2022).

Funding is a system of apportioning available capital belonging to an organization for meeting a need (Isa & Ezekiel, 2022). Funding refers to a form of financial support that is given for the achievement of a project (Odoziobodo, 2015). Funding is the provision of financial resources in order to meet a need, project or programme. The issue of funding has been a source of crisis in the Nigerian University system. Overtaking, Alabi and Kayode (2009) reported that between 2006 and 2010, the average expenditure on education by the Federal Government as a percentage of the annual budget was 5.1 %. On why the government does not release funds to the universities, Odoziobodo (2015) queries the explanation government gives to the people over unemployment, poverty, over lack of electricity, corruption and poor health statistics. Often times, the Federal Government has no explanation other than to say there is no money. Where did the funds generated from taxes and oil revenue go? They are applied to the wrong priority; that is why you find that many more Nigerians are now buying private jets. When related to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Federal government expenditure on education averages 1.1%. In addition, Arikewuyo (2010) observed that since the advent of democracy in 1999, funding of education dropped from 11.12% to 1.81% in 2003. According to data made available by The African Debt Report for 2000, Nigeria spent 0.76% of its GDP on education. Ukeje (2002) reaffirms that quality education requires quality resources and consequently adequate funding. To vindicate the positions of Muhammad and Allahnana (2018), over the situation of under-funding in the Nigerian University system, the education sector got 9.88% of the budget in the year 2000, 7.68% in 2001, 12.64% in 2002, 8.32% in 2003, 8.21% in 2004, 5.97% in 2005, 8.77% in 2006, 8.09% in 2007, 6.49% in 2008, 6.98% in 2009, 6.42% in 2010, 8.43% in 2012 and 8.72% in 2013 (Halidu, 2015). In a similar line of reasoning, Muhammad and Allahnana observed that Nigeria needs a total of ₦811, 459 per student for quality education (at university level). Sanni (2009) posited that if the recommendation of Ukeje is followed, enrolments need to be reduced by almost 80% with the current level of funding. The Federal Government allocation to education has declined steadily since 1999 and is much lower than the average in the last five years of military rule (Muhammad & Allahnana, 2018). This according to the Muhammad and Allahnan maybe responsible for proliferation of universities across Nigeria. As Smith (2022) noted, it is still observed that public education today has been faced with various challenges ranging from mismanagement of allocated resources, to falling academic standards due to proliferation of private and public universities when existing ones are inadequately taken care of.

Proliferation of Universities is the rapid increase in numbers or rapid growth of universities across the country without first, taking full responsibility of the existing ones (Offem, Anashie & Aniah, 2018). The proliferation of universities both public and private in Nigeria, despite the economic recession in the country since the 1980s, has increased the problems of the universities and their products so much that now their future seems uncertain (Offem, Anashie & Aniah, 2018). In spite of the poor funding and its negative consequences, university population grew exponentially, leading to further strain on dilapidated structures. As student population outstripped available lecture spaces and teaching resources, lecturers became overburdened with crowded classrooms and excessive grading responsibilities (Tunde & Kelvin, 2018). According to the authors, rather than respond to the quality issues resulting from over population, federal and state governments resorted to the proliferation of universities. The Nigerian government on June 21, 2021 announced the establishment of four new universities to address shortfall in technology, medicine and nutrition. Despite this, Nigeria's National Assembly on August 24, 2022 raised the idea of establishing 63 new universities. The federal government on October 21, 2022 curiously announced the establishment of nine new private universities with the argument of improving access to education. It can be recalled that the Federal Executive Council, FEC, had on May 15, 2023, approved the registration of 37 private universities in Nigeria at a time existing ones were on crutches struggling to pass accreditation. Yet, no provisions were made for capacity building opportunities for existing lecturers and the training of new ones. These developments have resulted in poor teaching and learning outcomes in Nigerian Universities. One of ASUU's contention has been governments proliferation of public universities; as this could undermine the capacity of universities to maintain standards at desirable levels, especially in this era where the use of advanced technology is a prerequisite for quality teaching. Proliferation of universities has made staff and students not to have access to the latest books and journals, laboratories lack equipment, so experiments cannot be conducted and local research funds have virtually dried up (ASUU, 2013). Teaching is closely related to learning, the students activity of appropriating knowledge.

Analysis by The PUNCH revealed that while ASUU embarked on strike 19 times since 1992-2022. It

continually blamed its decision on the failure of the federal government to meet its demands. Similarly, Adamu and Nwogo (2014) revealed that, ASUU strike has negative effect on the quality of university graduates that the country produces. University worldwide is regarded as the citadel of learning, the fountain of intellectual development while the role of universities in human capital development, research and technological innovation cannot be under evaluated (Yusuf, 2020). All over the world investment in University education is a critical component of national development effort.

Output of universities are the final products of learning outcome of the university; e.g., number of employable graduates, awards, research publications, etc acquired through years of teaching, research and community service (Ozurumba & Amasuomo, 2015). In addition, the findings indicate that there exists a significant influence of staff attendance of workshops on their development through output from research, teaching and community service. Attendance of workshops has an impact on staff output in that it is an indicator for staff promotion, growth and development in the university system. Based on the findings of their study, Ozurumba and Amasuomo concluded that in-service training given to academic staff influence and enhanced their output. This output is seen in the areas of research, teaching and community service. Similarly, when staff are exposed to the opportunity of attending conferences and workshops, it tends to enhance their output and contribute tremendously to their professional growth and development. Nations today depend increasingly on knowledge, ideas and skills which are produced through researches in the universities.

For instance, Ajayi (2013) findings showed that the incessant strikes action by ASUU in Nigeria has disrupted the academic calendar of universities and this has in turn affected students' academic pursuit and performance. The study showed that 71.2% of the respondents had experienced ASUU strikes while 51.6% admitted that ASUU strikes had negative influence on their academics. Albar (2016) revealed that strikes have become synonymous with university education systems more than two decades ago, and as university lecturers cannot be stopped from exercising their civil rights to industrial action so too it should be ensured that university students' rights to learning are not compromised. Despite the importance of stability on school calendar on education, the incessant ASUU strikes action in the country has become worrisome and destabilized the programme of educational sector. It is on record that, from 1988 to 2022, the national body of the union had embarked on 19 major strike actions.

It has therefore been observed by the relevant stakeholders such as educationists, students and the general public that the Academic Staff Union of Universities' dispute with Federal Government of Nigeria may be impacting either positively or negatively on the output of Federal universities in North East Nigeria, in the areas of; teaching, research and community development. This is because, the university system as the citadel of learning may not function effectively if it is not autonomous, adequately funded, properly regulated (improved conditions of service and adequately revitalized), and if previously signed Memorandum of Understanding are not implemented. This may therefore affect the effective and efficient management of public universities across the country, especially in North East Nigeria. It is against this background that the researcher investigated the impact of Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU) and Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) disputes on the management of public Universities in North Eastern Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) disputes on the output of public universities in North-East Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to;

1. examine the impact of Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of universities' autonomy on the output of Federal Universities in North Eastern Nigeria.
2. ascertain the impact of Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of funding on the output of Federal Universities in North Eastern Nigeria.
3. ascertain the impact of Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of proliferation on the output of Federal Universities in North Eastern Nigeria.

- ascertain the level of output of Federal Universities in North Eastern Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study;

1. What is the level of Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of university autonomy?
2. What is the level of Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of university funding?
3. What is the level of Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of university proliferation?
4. What is the level of output of Federal Universities in North Eastern Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide study and were tested at 0.05 level of significance;

1. Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of university autonomy does not significantly impact on the output of Federal universities in North Eastern Nigeria.
2. Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of funding does not significantly impact on the output of Federal universities in North Eastern Nigeria.
3. Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of proliferation does not significantly impact on the output of Federal universities in North Eastern Nigeria.
4. Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute (of autonomy, funding, proliferation) does not significantly impact on the output of Federal universities in North Eastern Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed ex-post facto-survey research design. Ex post facto design was considered a quasi-experimental type of study, which means that participants are not randomly assigned, but rather grouped together based upon specific characteristics or traits they share. The area of study is North East Nigeria. The population of the study is 5,434 academic staff in seven Federal Universities in North Eastern Nigeria. The sample size for the study comprised 372 Academic staff as respondents. This size was determined using Taro Yamane Sample size formulae. Multistage sampling method was used to select the sample at different stages. Two self-structured questionnaire were used for data collection. A structured questionnaire titled "Impact of Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) Disputes Questionnaire (IASUUFQNDQ)" with 15-items and "Output of Public Universities Questionnaire (OPUQ) with 15-items developed by the researcher were used to elicit information from the target respondents.

Three experts from Educational Management Unit of the Department of Physical Sciences Education, Faculty of Education, Modibbo Adama University, Yola. Cronbach Alpha statistic was employed to compute the internal consistency of the items of the instruments. An overall reliability estimate of 0.86 was obtained for (IASUUFQNDQ). An overall reliability estimate of 0.84 was obtained for (OPUQ). Descriptive statistics of Mean and Standard Deviation was used to answer the research questions. Real limit of numbers were used. Simple Linear and Multiple Regression Analysis were used to test null the hypotheses at 0.05 level of

significance. The decision rule was that if the p-value of .00 is less than the set alpha value of 0.05 ($p < .05$), the null hypothesis was not rejected.

RESULTS

Research Question 1

What is the level of Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of university autonomy?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Level of Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) Dispute of University Autonomy

| S/N | ITEM (n = 372) | Mean | S.D | Remark |
|-----|---|-------------|-------------|-----------|
| 1 | University's ability to determine her own budget enhances management | 3.27 | 0.74 | ML |
| 2 | University's ability to appoint their staff facilitates administrative effectiveness | 3.52 | 0.67 | HL |
| 3 | University's ability to set her own staff pattern based on prescribed curriculum contents | 3.59 | 0.49 | HL |
| 4 | University's ability to implement all professional development for teachers enhances administration | 3.73 | 0.44 | HL |
| 5 | University's ability to determine their compensation policy enhances efficient service delivery | 3.58 | 0.56 | HL |
| | Grand Mean | 3.54 | 0.58 | HL |

The results presented in Table 1 indicate the level of dispute between the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) and the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) regarding university autonomy. The grand mean score is 3.54 with a standard deviation of 0.58, suggesting a generally high level of concern among respondents. Specific items highlight various aspects of university autonomy, with "University's ability to implement all professional development for teachers enhances administration" receiving the highest mean score (3.73) and a standard deviation of 0.44. This implies strong agreement that professional development is crucial for effective administration. Other notable items include the ability to appoint staff (mean = 3.52, S.D = 0.67) and determine compensation policies (mean = 3.58, S.D = 0.56), both of which also reflect concerns about autonomy impacting university management.

Research Question 2

What is the level of academic staff union of Universities (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of university funding?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Level of Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) Dispute of University Funding

| S/N | ITEM (n = 372) | Mean | S.D | Remark |
|-----|---|------|------|--------|
| 6 | ASUUs' ability to solicit for Foreign Donations/Aids impact the management of public universities | 3.78 | 0.42 | HL |

| | | | | |
|----|---|-------------|-------------|----|
| 7 | Governments' ability to employ funding initiatives such as ETF/TEFUND (Endowments, Capital Campaign) impacts university management positively | 3.74 | 0.44 | HL |
| 8 | ASUUs' ability to mobilize alumni association to procure equipment for classrooms | 3.58 | 0.49 | HL |
| 9 | ASUUs' ability to solicit for Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) improves the management of public universities | 3.65 | 0.48 | HL |
| 10 | Attraction of foreign students into universities | 3.67 | 0.53 | HL |
| | Grand Mean | 3.68 | 0.47 | HL |

Table 2 illustrates the level of dispute concerning university funding. The grand mean score is 3.68 with a standard deviation of 0.47, indicating a high level of perceived issues in this area. The highest mean score (3.78) is for "ASUU's ability to solicit for Foreign Donations/Aids," suggesting that respondents believe external funding significantly impacts university management. Similarly, the ability to employ funding initiatives such as ETF/TEFUND (mean = 3.74, S.D = 0.44) and mobilizing alumni associations to procure classroom equipment (mean = 3.58, S.D = 0.49) are seen as critical factors in funding disputes. These results highlight the importance of diverse funding sources for university management.

Research Question 3

What is the level of Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of university proliferation?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of Level of Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) Dispute of University Proliferation

| S/N | ITEM (n = 372) | Mean | S.D | Remark |
|-----|---|-------------|-------------|--------|
| 11 | ASUUs' ability to enforce government to immediately release report of Presidential Visitation Panels of 2021 university output | 3.73 | 0.44 | HL |
| 12 | ASUUs' ability to enforce government to maintain accredited unified admission standards through strike | 3.52 | 0.50 | HL |
| 13 | National Universities Commission ability to ensure residential buildings are not used as universities improves university output | 3.64 | 0.66 | HL |
| 14 | Governments' ability to ensure the end of part time teachers facilitates the administration of public universities | 3.71 | 0.46 | HL |
| 15 | Governments ability to immediately act on the recommendations of the Committee on State Universities enhances university management | 3.44 | 0.50 | HL |
| | Grand Mean | 3.61 | 0.51 | HL |

In Table 3, the results reflect the level of dispute regarding university proliferation, with a grand mean score of 3.61 and a standard deviation of 0.51. The highest mean score (3.73) pertains to "ASUU's ability to enforce the government to immediately release the report of Presidential Visitation Panels of 2021 university output," indicating a strong belief in the importance of accountability and transparency. The ability of the National

Universities Commission to ensure residential buildings are not used as universities (mean = 3.64, S.D = 0.66) and the government's role in ending part-time teaching (mean = 3.71, S.D = 0.46) are also significant concerns. These results highlight the complexities of managing university expansion and maintaining quality standards.

Research Question 4

What is level of output of Federal universities?

Table 4: Mean and Standard Deviation of Level of Output of Federal Universities

| S/N | ITEM (n = 372) | Mean | S.D | Remark |
|-----|--|-------------|-------------|-----------|
| 1 | Trained graduates with sufficiently developed skills in their programme of study | 3.66 | 0.48 | HL |
| 2 | Transfer of knowledge and learning in alignment with industrial need to make graduates more viable | 3.56 | 0.50 | HL |
| 3 | Effective guidance and counselling services | 3.76 | 0.43 | HL |
| 4 | Essential skills development for students that is sufficient to ensure positive career prospects | 3.85 | 0.35 | HL |
| 5 | Global research collaboration across borders that ensures linkages with key international partners | 3.56 | 0.50 | HL |
| 6 | Widespread global visibility due to recency of research output | 3.79 | 0.41 | HL |
| 7 | Regular university curriculum reviews to ensure skills mismatch needed for community development | 3.77 | 0.42 | HL |
| 8 | Produce graduates who are fulcrum for national development | 3.61 | 0.49 | HL |
| 9 | Raise social awareness of community members on the danger of social vices | 3.86 | 0.35 | HL |
| 10 | Advice students to do community service in order to get work-related knowledge/skills | 3.76 | 0.44 | HL |
| 11 | Priority-setting to preferentially support internationally competitive or niche fields | 3.49 | 0.50 | HL |
| 12 | Set performance indicators to benchmark against international standards by shaping priorities | 3.76 | 0.43 | HL |
| 13 | Establishment of research clusters/centres capable of winning external funding | 3.39 | 0.49 | ML |
| 14 | Facilitate research innovations across all Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) | 3.56 | 0.67 | HL |
| 15 | Supporting Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) objectives for diverse institutional mission | 3.75 | 0.45 | HL |
| | Grand Mean | 3.68 | 0.46 | HL |

Table 4 presents the level of output of federal universities, with a grand mean score of 3.68 and a standard deviation of 0.46. The highest mean score (3.86) is for "Raise social awareness of community members on the

danger of social vices," indicating a strong focus on community engagement and social responsibility. Other significant items include developing essential skills for positive career prospects (mean = 3.85, S.D = 0.35) and ensuring global visibility through recent research output (mean = 3.79, S.D = 0.41). These findings reflect the multifaceted roles of universities in education, research, and community service, highlighting their impact on both local and global scales.

Hypothesis Testing

H₀₁: Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of university autonomy does not significantly impact on the output of Federal universities in North Eastern Nigeria.

Table 5a: Results of ANOVA from Regression Analysis of Impact of Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) Dispute of University Autonomy on the Output of Federal Universities in North Eastern Nigeria

| Model | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|--------------|----------------|-----|-------------|--------|-------------------|
| 1 Regression | 2.901 | 1 | 2.901 | 19.848 | .000 ^b |
| 1 Residual | 54.073 | 370 | .146 | | |
| Total | 56.973 | 371 | | | |

1. Dependent Variable: OUTPUT OF PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES
2. Predictors: (Constant), Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute over university autonomy

The result of analysis in Table 5a provides a summary of ANOVA-based linear regression analysis, which was employed to investigate whether Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute on University autonomy has a significant impact on the output of Federal universities in North Eastern Nigeria. The results reveal that Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute on University autonomy has a significant impact on the output of Federal universities in North Eastern Nigeria, $F(1, 371) = 19.848, p < 0.05$. Since the p-value (0.000) is lower than the predefined significance level of 0.05, we can reject the null hypothesis.

Table 5b: Model Summary

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | .226 ^a | .051 | .048 | .38229 |

1. Predictors: (Constant), Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of university autonomy

Table 5b shows a model summary that demonstrates how the independent variable accounts for the variance in the dependent variable. The results reveal that 4.8% of the variation in the output of public Universities could be attributed to the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute over university autonomy. The r-value of 0.226 reveals that there is moderate relationship between Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of university autonomy and the output of Public Universities.

Table 5c: Coefficient of Beta

| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|---|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| (Constant) | 4.298 | .135 | | 31.883 | .000 |
| 1 Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of university autonomy | -.173 | .039 | -.226 | -4.455 | .000 |

1. Dependent Variable: OUTPUT OF PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

The result in Table 5c indicates the Beta coefficient of the regression analysis of Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute on university autonomy and the output of public Universities. The result shows a beta coefficient of 0.226, $t = 2.010$, $p < 0.05$. This indicates that Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute on university autonomy has a significant impact on the output of public Universities.

H₀₂: Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of funding does not significantly impact on the output of Federal universities in North Eastern Nigeria.

Table 6a: Results of ANOVA from Regression Analysis of Impact of Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) Dispute of Funding on the Output of Federal Universities in North Eastern Nigeria

| Model | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|--------------|----------------|-----|-------------|--------|-------------------|
| 1 Regression | 3.769 | 1 | 3.769 | 26.212 | .000 ^b |
| 1 Residual | 53.204 | 370 | .144 | | |
| Total | 56.973 | 371 | | | |

1. Dependent Variable: OUTPUT OF PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

2. Predictors: (Constant), Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of funding

The result of analysis in Table 6a provides a summary of ANOVA-based linear regression analysis, which was employed to investigate whether the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute on funding of universities has a significant impact on the output of Federal universities in North Eastern Nigeria. The results reveal that Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute on funding of Universities has a significant impact on the output of Federal universities in North Eastern Nigeria, $F(1, 371) = 26.212$, $p < 0.05$. Since the p-value (0.000) is lower than the predefined significance level of 0.05, we can reject the null hypothesis.

Table 6b: Model Summary

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | .257 ^a | .066 | .064 | .37920 |

1. Predictors: (Constant), Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of funding

Table 6b shows a model summary that demonstrates how the independent variable accounts for the variance in the dependent variable. The results reveal that 6.4% of the variation in the output of public Universities could be attributed to the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute over funding of universities. The r-value of 0.226 reveals that there is moderate relationship between the Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute over the funding of universities and the output of Public Universities.

Table 6c: Coefficient of Beta

| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|---|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 (Constant) | 4.813 | .218 | | 22.128 | .000 |
| 1 Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute over funding | -.298 | .058 | -.257 | -5.120 | .000 |

1. Dependent Variable: OUTPUT OF PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

The result in Table 6c indicates the Beta coefficient of the regression analysis of Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute over funding of universities and the output of public Universities. The result shows a beta coefficient of 0.104, $t = 2.010$, $p < 0.05$. This indicates that Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute over funding of universities has a significant impact on the output of public Universities.

H₀₃: Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of proliferation does not significantly impact on the output of Federal universities in North Eastern Nigeria.

Table 7a: Results of ANOVA from Regression Analysis of Impact of Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) Dispute of Proliferation on the Output of Federal Universities in North Eastern Nigeria

| Model | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|--------------|----------------|-----|-------------|--------|-------------------|
| 1 Regression | 5.827 | 1 | 5.827 | 42.150 | .000 ^b |
| 1 Residual | 51.146 | 370 | .138 | | |
| Total | 56.973 | 371 | | | |

1. Dependent Variable: OUTPUT OF PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

2. Predictors: (Constant), Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of proliferation

The result of analysis in Table 7a provides a summary of ANOVA-based linear regression analysis, which was employed to investigate whether Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute on proliferation has a significant impact on the output of Federal universities in North Eastern Nigeria. The results reveal that Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute on proliferation has a significant impact on the output of Federal universities in North

Eastern Nigeria, $F(1, 371) = 42.150$, $p < 0.05$. Since the p-value (0.000) is lower than the predefined significance level of 0.05, we can reject the null hypothesis.

Table 7b: Model Summary

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | .320 ^a | .102 | .100 | .37180 |

1. Predictors: (Constant), Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of proliferation

Table 7b shows a model summary that demonstrates how the independent variable accounts for the variance in the dependent variable. The results reveal that 10.0% of the variation in the output of public Universities could be attributed to the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute over proliferation. The r-value of 0.320 reveals that there is a moderate relationship between the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute over proliferation and the output of Public Universities.

Table 7c: Coefficient of Beta

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|-------|---|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 5.015 | .203 | | 24.729 | .000 |
| | Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of proliferation | -.366 | .056 | -.320 | -6.492 | .000 |

1. Dependent Variable: OUTPUT OF PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

The result in Table 7c indicates the Beta coefficient of the regression analysis of Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute on the proliferation and the output of public Universities. The result shows a beta coefficient of 0.320, $t = 6.492$, $p < 0.05$. This indicates that Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute on proliferation has a significant impact on the output of public Universities.

H₀₄: Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute (of autonomy, funding, proliferation) does not significantly impact on the output of Federal universities in North Eastern Nigeria.

Table 8a: Results of ANOVA from Regression Analysis of Impact of Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) Disputes (of autonomy, funding, proliferation) on the Output of Federal Universities in North Eastern Nigeria

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|-------|------------|----------------|-----|-------------|--------|-------------------|
| 1 | Regression | 34.277 | 8 | 4.285 | 68.528 | .000 ^b |
| | Residual | 22.696 | 363 | .063 | | |
| | Total | 56.973 | 371 | | | |

1. Dependent Variable: OUTPUT OF PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

2. Predictors: (Constant), Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of working conditions, Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of research, Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of university autonomy, Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of teaching, Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of revitalization, Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of funding, Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of community service, Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of proliferation

The result of analysis in Table 8a provides a summary of ANOVA-based linear regression analysis, which was employed to investigate whether Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) disputes have significant impact on the output of Federal universities in North Eastern Nigeria. The results reveal that Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) disputes has significant impact on the output of Federal universities in North Eastern Nigeria, $F(8, 371) = 68.528, p < 0.05$. Since the p-value (0.000) is lower than the predefined significance level of 0.05, we can reject the null hypothesis.

Table 8b: Model Summary

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | .776 ^a | .602 | .593 | .25005 |

1. Predictors: (Constant), Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of working conditions, Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of research, Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of university autonomy, Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of teaching, Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of revitalization, Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of funding, Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of community service, Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of proliferation

Table 8b is a model summary that provides the R, R Square, and Adjusted R Square values. The Adjusted R Square value (.593) suggests that about 59.3% of the variability in the output of public Universities can be explained by the model. The R-value of 0.776 indicates that there is a strong relationship among Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) disputing working conditions, research, university autonomy, teaching, revitalization, funding, community service and proliferation, and the output of public Universities.

Table 8c: Coefficient of Beta

| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|--------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|------|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 (Constant) | 2.190 | .496 | | 4.417 | .000 |

| | | | | | |
|---|--------|-------|--------|--------|-------|
| Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of university autonomy | -0.119 | 0.028 | -0.154 | -4.165 | 0.000 |
| Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of funding | -0.022 | 0.045 | -0.019 | -4.485 | 0.628 |
| Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of proliferation | -0.236 | 0.048 | -0.206 | -4.870 | 0.000 |

1. Dependent Variable: OUTPUT OF PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

The analysis in Table 8c shows the coefficients of multiple regression analysis. The regression analysis presented reveals how each variable included in the model contributed in predicting the output of public Universities. Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute over university autonomy has a beta value of -0.154. This means that Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute over university autonomy explains 15.4 % of the aid in the output of public Universities, at $t = -4.165$, p-value of 0.000. Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute over funding has a beta value of -0.019 which means that Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute over funding explains 19.0 % of the variance in the output of public universities, at $t = -4.485$, p-value of 0.628.

Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of proliferation has a beta value of -0.206 that is Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of proliferation explains 20.6 % of the variance in the output of public universities, at $t = -4.870$, p-value of 0.000.

It can be concluded that Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of proliferation make the strongest unique contribution to explaining the output of public universities, when the variance explained by all other variables in the model are controlled for since it has the largest beta coefficient of 0.206. The Beta value for Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of autonomy were slightly lower (0.015) respectively, indicating that they made less of a unique contribution in predicting output of public universities.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The following findings emanated from the study.

1. The study reveals that there is high level of Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of university autonomy as indicated by mean of 54 and a standard deviation of 0.58. The results reveal that Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute on University autonomy has a significant impact on the output of Federal universities in North Eastern Nigeria, $F(1, 371) = 19.848$, $p < 0.05$.
2. The study also reveals that there is high level of academic staff union of Universities (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of university funding as indicated by the mean of 68 and a standard deviation of 0.47. The results reveal that Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute on funding of Universities has a significant impact on the output of Federal universities in North Eastern Nigeria, $F(1, 371) = 26.212$, $p < 0.05$.
3. The finding of the study reveals that there is a high level of Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute of university proliferation as indicated by the mean of 61 and a standard deviation of 0.51. The results reveal that Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute on proliferation has a significant

4. impact on the output of Federal universities in North Eastern Nigeria, $F(1, 371) = 42.150, p < 0.05$.
5. The finding of the study reveals that there is high level of output of Federal universities as shown by the grand mean of 68 and a standard deviation of 0.46. The results reveal that Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) disputes has significant impact on the output of Federal universities in North Eastern Nigeria, $F(3, 371) = 68.528, p < 0.05$.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study investigated the impact of Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) disputes on the output of public universities in North-East Nigeria. The following are the discussion of findings of this study.

The results reveal that Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU)-Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) dispute on University autonomy has a significant impact on the output of Federal universities in North Eastern Nigeria. The study's findings indicate that the ongoing disputes between the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) and the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) regarding university autonomy have a notable impact on the productivity and output of federal universities in North Eastern Nigeria. University autonomy is critical for academic institutions to function effectively, manage their resources, and make independent decisions that enhance educational quality. Disputes in this area often lead to disruptions in administrative processes and academic activities, thereby affecting the overall performance and output of these institutions. The significant impact of the ASUU-FGN dispute on university autonomy on the output of Federal universities in North Eastern Nigeria is well-documented in the literature. The finding agrees with that of Nwagbala, Okafor, and Ani (2023) who reported that that autonomy issues disrupt academic activities and institutional governance, leading to a decline in the quality of education and overall institutional effectiveness. The researchers emphasize that autonomy is critical for universities to operate effectively and efficiently. When universities are not autonomous, they face bureaucratic constraints that hinder decision-making processes and academic freedom. This lack of autonomy leads to delayed implementation of policies, stifles innovation, and results in a rigid administrative structure that cannot adapt to changing educational needs. Yawe, Ijov, and Okwori (2019) similarly found that disputes over autonomy create an environment of instability, where frequent interruptions and uncertainties disrupt the academic calendar and affect the quality of education delivered to students. This ultimately impacts the universities' ability to produce high-quality graduates and conduct impactful research.

Similarly, the conflicts between ASUU and FGN over the funding of universities significantly impact the output of federal universities in the region. Adequate funding is essential for maintaining infrastructure, providing resources for teaching and research, and supporting student services. When disputes arise over funding, universities face financial instability, which can lead to strikes, suspension of academic activities, and a decline in the quality of education provided. This instability hinders the universities' ability to produce graduates who are well-prepared for the workforce and to conduct meaningful research. The finding that the ASUU-FGN dispute on funding has a significant impact on the output of Federal universities highlights a critical issue in the Nigerian education system. The study's finding corroborated the finding of Gbaa (2022) who reported that inadequate funding results in insufficient resources for teaching, research, and infrastructure development. Without adequate financial support, universities struggle to maintain facilities, procure necessary academic materials, and support research initiatives. This lack of resources leads to overcrowded classrooms, outdated laboratories, and a general decline in the quality of education. Similarly, Fejoh, Boyede, and Sanusi (2021) found that funding disputes lead to infrastructural decay and poor educational outcomes, reinforcing the conclusion that financial instability severely hampers university performance. The inability to secure consistent funding exacerbates these issues, making it challenging for universities to sustain long-term improvements and meet the needs of their students and staff.

The proliferation of universities without corresponding investment in infrastructure and staff also emerges as a significant issue affecting the output of federal universities in North Eastern Nigeria. Disputes over this proliferation often lead to a dilution of resources and can strain the existing educational infrastructure. This situation compromises the quality of education and research, as universities struggle to accommodate an

increasing number of students without adequate facilities and faculty. The impact of the ASUU-FGN dispute on the proliferation of universities is significant is corroborated by Isa and Ezekiel (2022). They argue that the rapid establishment of new universities without adequate planning and resources leads to a dilution of available resources. This proliferation results in universities competing for limited funding, qualified staff, and students, which in turn lowers educational standards across the board. This finding is further supported by Abanobi, Abanobi, Ibeh, and Airiavbere (2022), who highlight that this proliferation contributes to overcrowded classrooms, inadequate facilities, and overburdened academic staff, all of which negatively impact the quality of education and research outputs. The uncontrolled expansion of universities without corresponding increases in funding and infrastructure support creates an unsustainable situation that undermines the overall effectiveness of the higher education system.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that the disputes between the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) and the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) have had a profound and multifaceted impact on the output of Federal universities in North Eastern Nigeria. The significant effects of these disputes on various aspects of university operations, including autonomy, funding, teaching conditions, research, community service, revitalization, and working conditions, underscore the urgent need for effective resolution strategies. Addressing these issues is critical to restoring stability and enhancing the quality of education and research at these institutions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The Federal Government should engage in dialogue with ASUU to develop a comprehensive policy that respects university autonomy while ensuring accountability. This policy should clearly define the roles and responsibilities of universities, allowing them the freedom to manage their internal affairs without undue interference, while establishing mechanisms for oversight and support.
2. The Federal Government should increase and stabilize funding for universities through a well-structured and predictable financial support system. This could include revising the funding formula to ensure that universities receive adequate resources for infrastructure, research, and teaching, and implementing a transparent and accountable financial management system.
3. A thorough assessment of the need for new universities should be conducted before establishing additional institutions. The Federal Government should prioritize enhancing the quality and capacity of existing universities through targeted investments and reforms rather than focusing on proliferation.
4. To address the broader issue of ASUU-FGN disputes impacting the output of Federal universities, it is crucial to establish a sustained and effective conflict resolution mechanism. This mechanism should involve regular, structured negotiations between ASUU and the FGN, with the aim of reaching mutually acceptable agreements. Additionally, an independent mediation body could be set up to facilitate discussions and ensure that agreements are implemented and monitored effectively. This approach would help to minimize disruptions, promote a more stable academic environment, and improve the overall productivity and output of Federal universities in North Eastern Nigeria.

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