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# IMPACT OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING ON INDUSTRIAL CONFLICTS RESOLUTION IN NIGERIAN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

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## ABSTRACT

Nigeria has recently witnessed a huge increase in the number of industrial actions. No day passes in Nigeria without strikes or threats of strikes in one form or another. In fact industrial actions have become so endemic in Nigeria that even our courts would be prepared to take judicial notice of them. In the light of this, to avert this unhealthy trend, the promotion and development of collective bargaining has been proclaimed to be the most desirable medium in settling industrial conflicts in a work environment. This study is designed to critically examine the impact of collective bargaining on industrial conflicts resolution in Nigerian public universities. The study targeted academic staff of both states and federal universities in South-West geo-political zone of Nigeria, owing to their active participation in industrial actions. The sample size of 600 academic staff were selected from 6000 ASUU members in South-West geo-political zone. The use of collective bargaining has been found to have meaningfully contributed to industrial peace and harmony as well as effective medium in checking incidents of strikes, labour unrests and brain drain in Nigerian public universities. Hence, government should recognize and strengthen collective bargaining to have conducive atmosphere in Nigerian Universities.

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**Keywords:** Collective Bargaining, Industrial Conflict, Resolution, Public Universities

## Introduction

**T**HE right to bargain collectively is no longer subject to doubt or debate. This right is accorded to both the employee and the employer although in practice the former seeks recognition and enforcement of the right more often than the latter.

One must not fear to negotiate, and our negotiation must not be in fear. Inherently, bargaining and human existence are inseparable to an extent that where more than two persons are gathered, the next possible party is or should be bargaining. The

right to bargain collectively with an employer enhances the human dignity, liberty and autonomy of workers by giving them the opportunity to influence the establishment of workplace rules and thereby gain some control over a major aspect of their lives precisely their work. Collective bargaining is not simply an instrument for pursuing external ends, rather it is intrinsically valuable as an experience in self-government as it permits workers to achieve a form of workplace democracy, to ensure the rule of law in the workplace and allow workers to gain a voice to influence establishment of rules that control major aspects of their lives. (Fashoyin, 1992)

The promotion and development of collective bargaining has often been proclaimed as one of the major concerns of Nigerian labour policy. Basically, of all the models of industrial relations practices in contemporary capitalist economic settings, the one based upon the principle of free and voluntary collective bargaining has been acclaimed to be most desirable.

According to Fashoyin (1992), an individual employee is obviously too weak to be able to fully regulate all aspects of his employment relation through his employer, thus collective bargaining serves as the basic channel of expression of each actor's total experience, needs, desires and aspiration of life which are transformed into some form of verbal negotiation and consensus.

According to Mamoria, Mamoria and Gankar, (2010) the importance of peaceful resolution of conflict in every employment is in fact not unknown to both employers and employees, but because both have different objectives which are pursued from different directions and methods has made the attainment of peaceful resolution a mirage. Different factors and reasons paved way to conflicts between Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) and the Federal and State Governments as experienced between 1993 and 2013. Specifically, some of the factors in question include conditions of service and welfare of workers. However, wages are always the upshot of industrial crises especially in the less developed countries like Nigeria with its characteristics. Significantly, several methods have been employed to handle industrial conflicts engulfing the Nigerian Public Universities including fact finder, mediation and arbitration. The most common approach is industrial action which always pitches the employees against the government either as sympathizers or directly affected group of individuals thereby aggravating the issue to demonstration (peaceful and violent). (Catinz and Zylberber, 2009). Unfortunately, the outcome of such a method has been the inability to achieve the pursued objectives, loss of man hour, brain drain, and at the extreme, loss of lives and properties. This therefore study examined the impact of collective bargaining and industrial conflict resolution in Nigerian public universities.

### **Statement of Hypotheses**

- H0<sub>1</sub> Collective bargaining does not resolve workplace conflicts in Nigerian Public Universities.
- H0<sub>2</sub> There is no relationship between collective bargaining and cost of industrial disharmony in Nigerian Public Universities.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Conceptual Definitions

Okpanachi (2003) asserts that, the practice of collective bargaining starts with the registration of employee's union after which the executive or management of such union will then bargain collectively on matters pertaining to wage, hours of work and other conditions of employment. Agreement arrived between the two parties will govern all the present and future employees. Collective bargaining was developed over a period of time as a method of utilizing democratic procedures in employer-employee relationship. The individual worker in the labour union exercises has voice in the bargaining process through his union representatives (Fashoyin, 1992).

The concept of collective bargaining is the offshoot of trade union activity. It is a civilized bipartite confrontation between the workers and management with a view to arriving at an agreement. It assumes willingness on each side not only to listen and to consider the representations of the other but also to abandon fixed positions where possible in order to find common ground. Thus, it is a strategy for industrial democracy and machinery adopted for joint resolution of conflict between workers and management, bothering on wages, conditions of works and other related issues.

Fashoyin (1992) defined collective bargaining as a machinery for discussion and negotiation, whether formal or informal between employer(s) and workers' representative, aimed at reaching mutual agreement or understanding on the general employment relationship between the employer(s) and workers. The aims are to accommodate, reconcile and often times compromise the conflicting interests of the parties.

However, it is pertinent to note that under this agreement, the management is forced to negotiate certain areas and conditions of work with workers' representative. The results of negotiation are usually binding on the parties but not all are implemented to the letter. Yoder (1979) describes collective bargaining as the process in which conditions of employment are determined by agreement between representatives of an organized group of employees and one or more employers. According to him, it is called "collective" because employees form an association that they authorize to act as their agent in reaching an agreement and because employers may also act as a group rather than as individuals. It is described as "bargaining" in part because the method of reaching an agreement involves proposals and counterproposal offers and counter offers.

According to Armstrong (2012), collective bargaining involves employers and unions reaching agreement on terms and conditions of employment and the ways in which employment issues such as disputes, grievances and disciplinary matters should be resolved. Bargaining arrangements result in collective agreements, which are formal agreements between management and trade unions dealing with terms and conditions of employments or other aspects of the relationships between the two parties. They may be substantive agreements dealing with terms and conditions of employment, or they may be

procedural agreements dealing with the procedures for collective bargaining. According to Fashoyin (1992), these are sometimes called framework agreements because they provide a structure for the bargaining process. Therefore, collective bargaining is a means through which industrial democracy can be accomplished in a work environment provided the parties are willing to understand and cooperate with the terms and conditions of the agreement.

Lemay (2000) defined the concept as the bargaining mechanism of union on behalf of employees as opposed to an individual worker representing himself. This definition emphasizes collectivism as against individualism between employers and employees.

Collective bargaining is both the process of negotiating between unions and employers on issues directly affecting conditions of employment and a means of limiting unilateral decisions and actions by employers and governments. (This Day, September 17, 2012). The approach to collective negotiations depends on the view that conflict of interests is inevitable between employer and employee because there is an authority relationship in which the aims of the two parties will at least sometimes conflict. According to Sivarethinamohan (2010), conflict and the need to manage it occurs every day in organizations. A worker entering an industrial organization to work is automatically subjected to an infinite set of rules, instructions and commands. The organization also is subjected to certain obligations which have to be met to the worker. This is a power relationship that usually breeds conflict right from the onset. Industrial conflict is a disagreement, controversy, quarrel, argument or divergence of interest over issues relating to wages and working condition between workers and management. Sivarethinamotian, (2010)

Sivarethinamohan (2010) coined industrial conflict as the total range of behaviour and attitudes that express opposition and divergent orientations between individual owners and managers on the one hand, and working people and their organizations on the others. Conflict resolution therefore implies the diagnostic processes, interpersonal styles, and negotiation strategies that are designed to avoid unnecessary conflict and reduce or resolve existing and excessive conflict. The ability to understand and correctly diagnose conflict is essential to managing.

## **2.2 Theoretical Framework**

### **Theories of Wages**

#### **(i) Bargaining Theory of Wages.**

Yoder (1979) revealed that the union view and union policy lean heavily on a bargaining theory of wages. In its simplest form, it holds that levels of wages in each labour market are set by the opposing economic strengths of employers and workers. If employees, by acting in concert through their union as bargaining agent, increase their economic strength, they can thereby raise wages. In effect, economic strength is measured by ability to withhold labour and thus force employees to forego employment or to find substitutes for labour.

$$\frac{10 \times 6000}{100} = 600$$

The study adopted the simple random sampling method because it gave every member of the population equal chances of being selected.

### Method of Analysis

#### i. Cramer's V

Cramer's V is used to describe the magnitude or association between categorical variables (nominal) when the number of rows, the number of columns, or both is greater than two. Cramer's V must lie between 0 (reflecting complete independence) and 1.0 (indicating complete dependence or association) between the study variables. If the number of rows or the number of columns in the contingency table is two, the value of Cramer's V is identical to the value of phi.

Cramér's V is computed by taking the square root of the chi-squared statistic divided by the sample size and the minimum dimension minus 1:

Mathematically, it is expressed as;

$$V = \sqrt{\frac{\chi^2/n}{\min(k-1, r-1)}}$$

Where,

$\chi^2$  is the chi-square value

$n$  is the number of observation,

$k$  is the number of columns, and

$r$  is the number of rows

### 4. Results and Discussions

#### *Socio-economic Characteristics of Sampled Population*

Table 1 shows the summary of the socio-economic characteristics of the survey respondents. 78% of the respondents were male while 22% were female academic staff of the various universities under study. Approximately 61% of the total study population were between the ages of 55 years and below with a mean age of 52 years. These academic staff had at least 14 years of experience in the teaching profession and were active members of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU). About 540 respondents representing 90% of the total study population agreed to have participated on strike/industrial action for a minimum of 12 times or more in the last decade.

**Table 1: Socio-economic Characteristics of the Respondents**

|                         | Variable  | Frequency | Percent | Mean |
|-------------------------|-----------|-----------|---------|------|
| Gender                  | Male      | 468       | 78      |      |
|                         | Female    | 132       | 22      |      |
|                         | Total     | 600       | 100     |      |
| Age                     | <45 Years | 117       | 19      |      |
|                         | 45-55     | 250       | 42      | (52) |
|                         | >55 years | 234       | 39      |      |
|                         | Total     | 600       | 100     |      |
| Years of Exp.           | <10 years | 117       | 19      |      |
|                         | 10-15     | 282       | 47      | (14) |
|                         | >15       | 201       | 34      |      |
|                         | Total     | 600       | 100     |      |
| Industrial Action       | Yes       | 540       | 90      |      |
|                         | No        | 60        | 10      |      |
|                         | Total     | 600       | 100     |      |
| No of Industrial Action | <6        | 81        | 13      |      |
|                         | 6-10      | 99        | 16      |      |
|                         | >10       | 421       | 70      |      |
|                         | Total     | 600       | 100     |      |
| Type of University      | Federal   | 523       | 87      |      |
|                         | State     | 77        | 13      |      |
|                         | Total     | 600       | 100     |      |

*Figures in parenthesis are average values*

Source: Researcher's Survey, 2015

### **Causes of Industrial Conflict**

There were eleven (11) hypothetical items thought to affect industrial conflict; these items includes but not limited to; *Wage Rate (A1)*, *Working Conditions (A2)*, *Working Hours (A3)*, *Welfare Packages (A4)*, *Work Schedules (A5)*, *Professional Training or Training Matters (A6)*, *Poor Academic/ Research Funding (A7)*, *Unfavourable Institution Policy (A8)* , *Poor Working Condition (A9)*, *Poor Infrastructure (A10)*, and *Unfair Labour Practices (A11)*. Respondents were requested to state how often (always, sometimes, rarely, at least once and never) these items have generated industrial conflict in their respective institutions. The analyses of the items are as summarized in Table 2.

The result shows that no fewer than 85% of the academic staff from the selected public universities in Nigeria agreed that a major cause of industrial conflict between

management and staff members of their institutions are always or sometimes due to wage rate. Wage rate as used here is defined to mean low income or poor earning on the part of the workers which is not commensurate with or equal to the services being provided. A further test using measure of central tendency or location shows that the opinions of these respondents are symmetrical<sup>9</sup>. Poor working conditions was another item believed to have caused industrial disharmony between managers and staff in Nigeria public universities. Approximately 92% of respondents agreed that this item was always or sometimes responsible for industrial conflict (past or present) in Nigerian public universities. Again the test of location (mean, median and mode) shows that respondents' opinions were symmetrical. According to the respondents, other important items believed to have always or sometimes caused industrial conflict includes: welfare packages (82%), poor academic/research funding (89%), unfavourable institution policy (82%), poor working conditions (82%), poor infrastructure (82%) and unfair labour practices (86%). The symmetrical nature of the respondents' opinions reveal how strong or convinced they feel about these items.

**Table 2: Analysis of items on Causes of Industrial Conflict**

| Item | Always |    | Sometimes |    | Rarely |    | At Least Once |    | Never |   | Total | Mean | Median | Mode |
|------|--------|----|-----------|----|--------|----|---------------|----|-------|---|-------|------|--------|------|
|      | Freq   | %  | Freq      | %  | Freq   | %  | Freq          | %  | Freq  | % |       |      |        |      |
| A1   | 387    | 65 | 120       | 20 | 34     | 6  | 43            | 7  | 16    | 3 | 600   | 5.0  | 5      | 5    |
| A2   | 345    | 58 | 202       | 34 | 11     | 2  | 32            | 5  | 10    | 2 | 600   | 4.8  | 5      | 5    |
| A3   | 55     | 9  | 120       | 20 | 321    | 54 | 89            | 15 | 15    | 3 | 600   | 3.3  | 3      | 3    |
| A4   | 388    | 65 | 100       | 17 | 45     | 8  | 36            | 6  | 31    | 5 | 600   | 4.9  | 5      | 5    |
| A5   | 83     | 14 | 120       | 20 | 333    | 56 | 31            | 5  | 33    | 6 | 600   | 2.6  | 3      | 3    |
| A6   | 89     | 15 | 0         | 0  | 221    | 37 | 234           | 39 | 56    | 9 | 600   | 3.8  | 3      | 4    |
| A7   | 422    | 70 | 110       | 18 | 34     | 6  | 22            | 4  | 12    | 2 | 600   | 5.0  | 5      | 5    |
| A8   | 180    | 30 | 314       | 52 | 45     | 8  | 32            | 5  | 29    | 5 | 600   | 4.3  | 4      | 4    |
| A9   | 314    | 52 | 179       | 30 | 48     | 8  | 31            | 5  | 28    | 5 | 600   | 4.7  | 5      | 5    |
| A10  | 325    | 54 | 166       | 28 | 44     | 7  | 33            | 6  | 32    | 5 | 600   | 4.8  | 5      | 5    |
| A11  | 300    | 50 | 214       | 36 | 39     | 7  | 25            | 4  | 22    | 4 | 600   | 4.6  | 5      | 4    |

*Ratings (Always=5, Sometimes=4, Rarely=3, At least once=2, Never=1)*

Source: Researcher's survey, 2015

**Table 3: Overall Rating of Item on Industrial Conflict**

| Rating        | Frequency | Percent | Mean | Median | Mode |
|---------------|-----------|---------|------|--------|------|
| Always        | 263       | 43.8    |      |        |      |
| Sometimes     | 150       | 25.0    |      |        |      |
| Rarely        | 107       | 18.1    | 4    | 4      | 4    |
| At Least Once | 55        | 9.2     |      |        |      |
| Never         | 26        | 4.5     |      |        |      |
| Total         | 600       | 100     |      |        |      |

Source: Researcher's survey, 2015

### Factors Affecting Industrial Relation Environment

The industrial relation environment which defines the harmonious or cordial working relationship that exists between an employer and employee was believed to generally act as a catalyst that facilitates collective bargaining leading to industrial peace and harmony. Therefore to have proper view or understanding of the collective bargaining processes and procedures in Nigerian public universities, the following eight items were used to describe the industrial relation environment: *Management union cooperate well (B1)*, *Mutual regard between management & union or members of staff exist (B2)*, *Union and management are willing to confer (B3)*, *Management facilitate union operations (B4)*, *Union participates in decision making (B5)*, *Management and union resolve disputes amicably (B6)*, *Management attitude towards the union is favorable (B7)*, *Management and union share information freely (B8)*. The analyses of these items in Table 4 shows that an overwhelming majority (88%) of academic staff of Nigerian public universities strongly disagree or simply disagree that management and union cooperate well, while mutual regard between management and union or staff members does not exist at all (88% strongly disagree or disagree). Majority of the respondents also strongly disagree or simply disagree that management and union are willing to confer and as a result it was difficult and almost impossible for the two parties to be open to any agreement especially in resolving issues that could lead to industrial conflict.

The practice of not letting the union take part in decision making was decried by 93% of the respondents. The management of Nigerian public universities are also not willing to share information freely with union members or members of staff (59% strongly agree or agree). The overall rating of industrial relation in Nigerian public universities as found in Table 5 shows that the relationship between management and union or academic staff was poor on the average.

**Table 4: Analysis of items on Industrial Relation Environment**

| Item | Strongly Disagree |    | Disagree |    | Neutral |    | Agree |    | Strongly Agree |    | Total | Mean | Median | Mode |
|------|-------------------|----|----------|----|---------|----|-------|----|----------------|----|-------|------|--------|------|
|      | Freq              | %  | Freq     | %  | Freq    | %  | Freq  | %  | Freq           | %  |       |      |        |      |
| B1   | 185               | 31 | 340      | 57 | 27      | 5  | 20    | 3  | 28             | 5  | 600   | 2.3  | 2      | 2    |
| B2   | 183               | 31 | 342      | 57 | 27      | 5  | 20    | 3  | 28             | 5  | 600   | 2.3  | 2      | 2    |
| B3   | 406               | 68 | 136      | 23 | 24      | 4  | 12    | 2  | 22             | 4  | 600   | 2.3  | 2      | 2    |
| B4   | 154               | 26 | 266      | 44 | 80      | 13 | 40    | 7  | 60             | 10 | 600   | 2.5  | 2      | 2    |
| B5   | 89                | 15 | 466      | 78 | 15      | 3  | 20    | 3  | 10             | 2  | 600   | 2.1  | 2      | 2    |
| B6   | 235               | 39 | 167      | 28 | 180     | 30 | 10    | 2  | 8              | 1  | 600   | 2.3  | 2      | 2    |
| B7   | 16                | 3  | 26       | 4  | 489     | 82 | 49    | 8  | 20             | 3  | 600   | 3.2  | 3      | 3    |
| B8   | 12                | 2  | 342      | 57 | 166     | 28 | 60    | 10 | 20             | 3  | 600   | 2.5  | 2      | 2    |

*Rating (Strongly Disagree=1, Disagree=2, Neutral=3, Agree=4 and Strongly Agree=5)*

*These items were adapted from Patrick et al, 2013.*

Source: Researchers' Survey

**Table 5: Overall Rating on Industrial Relation Environment**

| Rating        | Frequency | Percent | Mean | Median | Mode |
|---------------|-----------|---------|------|--------|------|
| Very Good (5) | 59        | 9.9     |      |        |      |
| Good (4)      | 106       | 17.6    |      |        |      |
| Neutral (3)   | 116       | 21.3    | 2    | 2      | 2    |
| Poor (2)      | 237       | 37.8    |      |        |      |
| Very Poor (1) | 83        | 14.0    |      |        |      |
| Total         | 600       | 100.5   |      |        |      |

Source: Researchers' survey, 2016

### **Collective Bargaining Process and Procedure**

One of the major objectives of this study was to investigate the collective bargaining processes and procedures as practised in Nigerian public universities. To do this, the following eight (8) items were evaluated using five point likert scale; fairness of the process (C1), willingness of management/government to negotiate (C2), time taken to reach an agreement (C3), concern for other parties view point (C4), willingness to give and take (C5), degree of feedback given to members (C6), degree of members' participation (C7), and implementation of the agreed terms (C8). Respondents were asked to rate these item on a five (5) point likert scale from extremely dissatisfied, dissatisfied, neutral, satisfied, and extremely satisfied.

The result of the analysis on collective bargaining procedure shows that 84% of the academic staff in Nigerian public universities were extremely satisfied or simply satisfied with the fairness of the process while 13% and 2% respectively were dissatisfied or extremely dissatisfied with fairness of the process. Only 2% were neutral. Similarly, approximately 83% of respondents were extremely satisfied or satisfied that government and/ or management are willing to negotiate when called upon for collective bargaining.

The time taken to reach an agreement were rated by 20% of the respondents as extremely satisfied or satisfied while about 80% of respondents were either neutral or dissatisfied with time taken to reach an agreement. This is not a surprise since in recent times industrial actions have crippled Nigerian public universities and sometimes has shut down academic activities for as long as complete academic calendar.

Furthermore, the study shows there was little or no concern for other parties' view point. Only 27% seems to be satisfied with this process. Ironically, 86% of the academic staff sampled were extremely satisfied or simply satisfied with the parties willingness to give and take. This spirit of give and take exhibited by the two parties coupled with high degree of feedback given to members has no doubt played a major role in maintaining industrial harmony. More than 80% of the total respondents were extremely satisfied or satisfied with members' participation in collective bargaining processes. Only 13% were dissatisfied with degree of members' participation. When it comes to the implementation of agreed terms, approximately 63% of the academic staff were extremely dissatisfied or

**Testing the Study hypotheses**

**H0<sub>1</sub>:** Collective Bargaining does not resolve industrial conflict in Nigerian Public Universities.

To test this hypothesis, the respondents were asked the following questions;

- i. *Do you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree that collective bargaining makes peaceful settlement of conflict between ASUU and the Government? (CB1)*
- ii. *Do you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree that collective bargaining has been used by ASUU and the Nigeria Government to resolve conflict in the Nigerian public universities? (CB2)*
- iii. *Do you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree that collective bargaining has been used to avert strikes over the years in Nigerian public universities? (CB3)*

The responses of the sampled academic staff to the above questions were scaled to reflect those in favour and those not in favour (i.e. true or false). The Mann Whitney U or Wilcoxon W test which is the non parametric alternative test to difference of two means was conducted and the result was presented in Table 8: The results in Table 8 show that the response of those in favour of collective bargaining making for peaceful settlement of conflict between ASUU and the management of Nigerian public universities (Government) were significant compared to those who were not in favour. The significant value of test on CB2 implies that respondents strongly agree or simply agree that collective bargaining has been used by ASUU and Nigeria Government to resolve conflict in Nigerian Public Universities. Furthermore, the significant value of the test on CB3 shows that collective bargaining has also been used to avert strikes or industrial actions in Nigerian Public Universities over the years. From the foregoing, it can be concluded that collective bargaining has been used extensively to avert and /or resolve industrial conflicts in Nigerian public universities. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected.

**Table 8: Efficiency of Collective Bargaining in Resolving Industrial actions**

|     | Response | Mean Rank | Sum of Ranks | Mann Whitney U | Wilcoxon W | Z      | Asymp. Sig. |
|-----|----------|-----------|--------------|----------------|------------|--------|-------------|
| CB1 | TRUE     | 79.10     | 9175.50      | 1438.50        | 1999.50    | -2.485 | 0.013*      |
|     | FALSE    | 60.59     | 1999.50      |                |            |        |             |
| CB2 | TRUE     | 79.10     | 9175.50      | 1438.50        | 1999.50    | -2.485 | 0.013*      |
|     | FALSE    | 60.59     | 1999.50      |                |            |        |             |
| CB3 | TRUE     | 79.70     | 9245.50      | 1368.50        | 1929.50    | -2.739 | 0.006*      |
|     | FALSE    | 58.47     | 1929.50      |                |            |        |             |
| CB4 | TRUE     | 79.70     | 9245.50      | 1368.50        | 1929.50    | -2.739 | 0.006*      |
|     | FALSE    | 58.47     | 1929.50      |                |            |        |             |
| CB5 | TRUE     | 81.79     | 9487.50      | 1126.50        | 1687.50    | -4.037 | 0.000*      |
|     | FALSE    | 51.14     | 1687.50      |                |            |        |             |
| CB6 | TRUE     | 82.36     | 9553.50      | 1060.50        | 1621.50    | -4.364 | 0.001*      |
|     | FALSE    | 49.14     | 1621.50      |                |            |        |             |

\*significant at  $p \leq 0.05$

Source: Researcher's survey, 2015

**H<sub>02</sub>** There is no relationship between collective bargaining and cost of industrial disharmony.

The following questions were used to test the hypothesis H<sub>20</sub>.

- iv. *Do you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree that collective bargaining reduces cost due to industrial disharmony?*
- v. *Do you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree that lack of collective bargaining has led to greater loss of revenue due to elongated industrial dispute?*
- vi. *Do you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree that lack of collective bargaining in resolving industrial dispute has led to prolonged strike which has caused poor performance by both students and lecturers alike?*

The analyses of variables iv, v and vi were done and they were represented as CB4, CB5 and CB6 respectively (see Table 8). The result shows that respondents' opinion differed significantly at 5% for questions iv, v and vi respectively. This implies that (1) overwhelming majority of the sampled academic staff believe that collective bargaining directly or indirectly reduces cost due to industrial disharmony in Nigerian public universities, (2) lack of collective bargaining has led to greater loss of revenue due to elongated industrial action and (3) Poor use of collective bargaining in resolving industrial dispute has led to undue or prolonged strike actions which has caused poor performance by both students and lecturers alike. Summarily, it can therefore be inferred that collective bargaining has to a greater extent reduced cost due to industrial disharmony and has further cut loss of revenue that otherwise could have resulted from

elongated industrial actions. Therefore, the null hypothesis of zero relationship between collective bargaining and cost of industrial action was rejected.

### Relationship between Collective Bargaining and Industrial Relation Environment

It was thought that good industrial relation environment provides fertile ground for collective bargaining. Therefore, the study further investigated the relationship between industrial relation environment and collective bargaining. Table 10 shows the impact of industrial relation on collective bargaining. Approximately 81% of academic staff who agree or strongly agree that collective bargaining resolves industrial conflict have good or very good industrial relation environment. The Cramer's V statistic shows a significant relationship between collective bargaining and industrial relation environment while the gamma statistic shows that the relationship was positive and significant.

The uncertainty coefficient which is a measure of association that indicates the proportional reduction in error between two dependent variables was 0.76. The value of 0.76 indicates that having a good industrial relation environment raises the probability of use of collective bargaining by 76%.

**Table 10: Relationship between Collective Bargaining and Industrial Relation**

|           | Collective Bargaining |             |          |           |                   | Total      |
|-----------|-----------------------|-------------|----------|-----------|-------------------|------------|
|           | Strongly Disagree     | Disagree    | Neutral  | Agree     | Strongly Disagree |            |
| Very Poor | 10<br>(17%)           | 11<br>(19%) | 8 (14%)  | 12 (20%)  | 18<br>(31%)       | 59 (100%)  |
| Poor      | 21<br>(27%)           | 13<br>(16%) | 10 (13%) | 19 (24%)  | 16<br>(20%)       | 79 (100%)  |
| Neutral   | 10<br>(17%)           | 8 (15%)     | 15 (29%) | 13 (25%)  | 6 (12%)           | 52 (100%)  |
| Good      | 6 (3%)                | 9 (4%)      | 16 (8%)  | 88 (42%)  | 90<br>(43%)       | 209 (100%) |
| Very Good | 11 (5%)               | 7 (3%)      | 19 (9%)  | 79 (39%)  | 85<br>(42%)       | 201 (100%) |
| Total     | 58<br>(10%)           | 48 (8%)     | 86 (11%) | 211 (35%) | 215<br>(36%)      | 600 (100%) |

*Gamma=0.876, Cramer's=0.552, Uncertainty Coefficient=0.76*

Source: Researcher's survey, 2015

### Conclusions

Given the analysis in this study, some conclusions can be drawn. The intense conflict between the workers and management makes collective bargaining inevitable. To avert or survive any form of conflict in the Nigerian public universities, collective bargaining serves as an impetus or instrument to achieve maximum result by arriving at a mutually acceptable agreement.

The use of collective bargaining has been found to have successfully contributed to industrial peace and harmony as well as effective medium in checking incidents of strikes and labour unrests in Nigerian public universities, hence, collective bargaining is not merely a labour - marketing process as was originally considered to be, rather, it encourages independent opinions and facilitates cordial and harmonious relationship between labour – union (employees) and management (employer).

### 5.1 Conclusion and Recommendations

Drawing from above, to forestall the looming dangers of the foreseen industrial crises in the Nigerian public universities, collective bargaining as a mechanism should be recognized and strengthened as an instrument of realizing the public objectives of the government and labour unions. The government and labour unions should not always believe in war-war but jaw-jaw and should bear in mind that 'compromise' is a necessary ingredient for the delivering of their own demands and 'public goods'. Both the union and the government should see one another as partners in progress for the development of their members and the nation. Also, the cost of living should be used to initiate adjustment in salaries and wages in the public sector. Lastly, government should improve the finances of the universities, payment of staff salaries, adequate increment, payment of allowances and other fringe benefits.

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