

**University of KwaZulu-Natal**

**IMPACT OF EMPLOYEE STRIKE ACTION ON EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS IN  
SELECTED ACCRA, GHANA, PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES**

**By**

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## DECLARATION

I, Lawrence Abiwu declare that:

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate the entire thesis to the Lord Almighty for His protection and guidance throughout my stay in South Africa and during my time at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Part of this work is dedicated to my lovely family for their support in diverse ways to enable me to complete this study.

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## ABSTRACT

The study investigated the impact of employee strike action regarding employment relations in selected public universities in Accra, Ghana. The study sought to explore the effect of strike action on employment relations, determine its impact in the workplace, identify its causes, determine the factors that promote sound employment relations and identify the measures of addressing strike action in the public universities.

The study adopted both descriptive and exploratory research as the main research design. It employed mixed method design where both quantitative and qualitative data was collected from the participants. A sample size of 306 was chosen for the participation in the study based on the total population of about 1500 staff. Purposive and stratified sampling techniques were used to select the participants for the study. The study utilised both questionnaires and interviews as the main data collection instruments. Reliability and validity of the research instruments were tested using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient and Factor Analysis. The quantitative data was analysed using SPSS version 21.0, while the qualitative data was analysed manually using thematic analysis. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were also employed in the study.

The quantitative results revealed that employee strike action affects employment relations in terms of loss of remuneration (67.5%) and unhealthy relationship (73.5%). The qualitative result on the other hand complimented the quantitative results which revealed that strike action leads to loss of remuneration (n= 5) and unhealthy relationship (n = 5). Furthermore, the quantitative results showed that the main causes of strike action in Ghanaian public universities include demand for increment in wages and salaries (87.5%), inadequate funding (79%), books and research allowances (82%) and poor working conditions (87.5%). The results of the qualitative study also agreed with these findings.

In light of these findings, the study recommends payment of adequate salaries, improvement in working conditions and payment of books and research allowances for lecturers as measures to address strike action in the public universities in Ghana.

**Keywords: Strike action, employment relations, mixed method and pluralism.**

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## CHAPTER ONE

### GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

#### 1.1 Introduction

This study investigated the impact of employee strike action on employment relations in Accra Ghana public universities. This chapter provided the general overview of the study. It begun with the background of the study and was followed by statement of the problem. It continued with the aims of the study. The next part of this study outlined the research questions and research objectives. The chapter further outlined the significance of the study. Finally, it presented the outline or summary of the various chapters and the conclusion.

#### 1.2 Background of the study

Nowadays strikes have literally become a certainty worldwide, especially in countries such as Canada, China, South Africa, Ghana, Nigeria, Zimbabwe and Kenya (Chan, 2011; Lee, 2012; Murwirapachena & Sibanda, 2014; Olusegun Ajayi, 2014; Rapatsa & Matloga, 2014; Seniwoliba, 2013). According to Olusegun Ajayi (2014), strike action is perceived as a global phenomenon due to its prevalence worldwide. Studies (Momodu, Matudi & Momodu, 2014; Seniwoliba, 2013) have suggested that the university education systems in Ghana, South Africa and Nigeria continue to suffer from perennial interruptions of academic sessions as a result of constant strikes being embarked upon by the employees of the universities, as well as by students. Strike action is a common mechanism through which workers express their dissatisfaction with their working conditions in order to achieve a desired result. They are legitimate deadlock breaking tactics used by employees when negotiations between trade unions and management reach an impasse (Matudi *et al.*, 2014).

Section 175 of the Ghana Labour Act, 2003 (No. 651) defines strike as any action taken by two or more persons acting in concern, which is intended by them to restrict the service they usually provide to the employer or reduce the output of such service in order to put more pressure on the employer to meet their demands (Gyamfi, 2011). The consequence of these actions does not only affect the country and the university activities, but they have an impact on employment relations (Arputharaj & Gayatri, 2014; Awe & Ayeni, 2012; Selala, 2014). The incessant strikes in most of these countries (Ghana, Nigeria and South Africa) are as a result of the

perceptions held by employees that it is the only language which governments and employers understand (Ige Akindele, 2014).

In Sub-Saharan Africa, countries such as South Africa, Ghana and Nigeria have embarked on more strikes than their counterparts, namely: Zimbabwe; Botswana; Morocco; Ethiopia and Kenya (Gyamfi, 2011; Edinyang & Ubi, 2013; Odeku, 2014; Rapatsa, & Matloga, 2014; Rossouw, 2012). This indicates that there is a growing number of strike actions in these countries. In South Africa, studies (DoL, 2014; Odeku, 2014; Murwirapachena, & Sibanda 2014; Rapatsa, & Matloga, 2014; Van Rensburg & Van Rensburg, 2013) have shown that there is a prevalence of strikes in the country. According to the DoL (2014), a total of 57 strikes took place in 2008. However, in 2009, the total number of strikes that took place decreased to 51. In 2010, the total number of strikes that took place increased to 74. This number decreased to 67 in 2011. However, in 2012, 99 strike actions were reported. In the year 2013, a total of 144 strikes were recorded. In 2014, a total of 88 strikes were reported. However, in 2015, the total number of strike actions that were reported increased to 156. A careful analysis of these figures suggests that there is a prevalence of strike in South Africa. According to Rapatsa and Matloga (2014), not all of these strikes were protected.

According to the DoL (2014), more than 50% of the strikes that took place in 2014 were protected, whilst approximately 48% of them were unprotected. The DoL (2014) suggests that KwaZulu-Natal municipalities has recorded the highest unprotected strikes in 2014. It was reported that some of these strikes resulted in violence which led to the death and injuries of some strikers (Odeku, 2014). For example, in South Africa about 181 protesters were killed, 313 injured, and over 3,058 arrested during the periods of 1999 to 2012 as a result of violent strikes (South African Institute of Race Relations [SAIRR] (2013). These strike actions were spread across various industries in South Africa namely: Transport, Community, Wholesale and Retail, Finance, Construction, Utilities, Manufacturing, Mining and Agriculture (DoL, 2014). According to the DoL (2014), Community recorded the highest number of strikes in South Africa from 2013 to 2014.

Similarly, in Nigeria, statistical data on strikes have shown that there has been an increasing number of strikes in the country. Unlike in South Africa, in Nigeria the prevalence of strike action was determined using the number of periods in which workers embarked on such strikes. According to Aidelunuoghene (2015), employees in the Education sector went on a one- week

strike in 2008. In 2009, they embarked on a four- month strike. This increased to seven months in 2010. In 2011 and 2012, they went on three month strikes. Furthermore, in 2013, they embarked on 3 months of strike action. However, in 2014, they embarked on a seven- month strike. Finally, as at the end of 2015, they embarked on eight months of strike action. In Nigeria, another study was conducted by Ezeagba (2014), which discovered that there is prevalence of strike action in the country. According to Ezeagba (2014), in 1997, the official number of strikes that were recorded in Nigeria was 89. Furthermore, in 1998, the total number of strikes that took place increased to 108. As at the end of 1999, the total number of strikes recorded increased to 131. The analysis of the number of strikes and the periods of these strikes in Nigeria depicts that there is a prevalence of strike action in the country.

According to the Ghana Statistical Service (2015) and van der Velden (2012), there is an increasing number of strike actions in Ghana. An average of 22 strike actions were recorded across all the sectors in the year 2008. However, in 2009, the total number of strikes recorded increased to 47. The year 2010 saw a dramatic decrease in total number of strike actions from 47 to 14. In 2011, the total number of strikes that took place was 46. Furthermore, in 2012, 43 strikes were recorded nationwide. Moreover, in 2013, the total number of strikes recorded further decreased to 13. In 2014, the total number of strikes that took place in the country further increased to 30. Finally, in 2015, the number of strike actions that were reported further increased to 34.

The frequent cases of labour unrest or strikes in Ghana is a serious concern to most Ghanaians as they tend to undermine the peace and growth the country is currently enjoying (Seniwoliba, 2013). According to Seniwoliba (2013), it is very difficult to quantify the economic and financial cost to the nation, parents and students as a result of numerous strikes in the education sector. Serious attention is therefore needed by all the stakeholders (government, trade union representatives, university management, employers, NGOs, parents and community leaders) to address the incessant strikes in the country. This study has been undertaken to provide the stakeholders of the universities with mechanisms to address strikes in the public universities in Ghana, as well as in the rest of the world. Also, the study aims to look at how strike action impacts on employment relations. Furthermore, it will provide governments, employers and employees with guidelines on how to ensure sound employment relations.

### **1.3 Problem statement**

The tertiary education system in Ghana has been marred with incessant strikes, especially from 2010 to 2013 over disagreement between university staff, their management and the government (Gyamfi, 2011; Seniwoliba, 2013). Seniwoliba (2013) suggests that Ghanaian workers and their trade unions often regard strike action as the only avenue through which they can protect and promote their socio-economic interests. Hence, they frequently embark on strikes. According to Seniwoliba (2013), the incessant strike actions by the employees of public universities in Ghana have inadvertently affected not only academic activities in the universities but also the whole country. Selala (2014) also suggests that strike action has a varied and wide-ranging effect on employment relationships. The occurrence of strikes in the public universities in Ghana is very alarming and if serious action is not taken, the education system in the country will suffer dire consequences. It appears that the government, university management and other stakeholders have done little to resolve strikes in the country.

Thorough review of previous literature suggests that there is abundant literature regarding strikes in Sub-Saharan Africa. (Gyamfi, 2011; Seniwoliba, 2013; Momodu *et al.*, 2014; Ige Akindele, 2014). However, to the best knowledge of the researcher, research on strike actions and employment relations in the Ghanaian context has been very limited. Furthermore, the review of various literature on strike action in Ghana revealed that little has been done to address strike action in the public universities even though it is evident that there is an increasing number of strikes in these institutions. For example, previous studies conducted by researchers (Gyamfi 2011; Seniwoliba, 2013) in Ghana on strike actions only examined strikes in the health sector without any emphasis on the education sector.

In addition, the few studies that were conducted in Ghana failed to establish the prevalence of strike action in country. Previous studies in Ghana have suggested that there is a growing number of strikes in the country but, unfortunately, none of these studies has utilised statistical data to justify their findings, as has been done in this study (Gyamfi, 2011; Seniwoliba, 2013). In South Africa and Nigeria researchers have used the statistical data available to demonstrate that there is a prevalence of strikes (DoL, 2014; Ezeagba, 2014). Additionally, most of these studies do not consider both the international and local laws that regulate the right to strike in Ghana as has been done in this study.

Also, there is limited research in Ghana on strike action that has adopted mixed method design, as has been the case of this present study. Previous studies (Gyamfi 2011; Seniwoliba, 2013) in Ghana on strike action tended to be descriptive and quantitative in nature. Thus, a combination of both the qualitative and quantitative research in examining the impact strike action has on employment relations will provide a better and a more holistic understanding of the subject under investigation. Finally, to the best knowledge of the researcher, there is limited research on how to address the numerous strikes in the education sector in Ghana. Despite the numerous strike actions that took place in Ghanaian public universities, little research has been done to investigate the causes of the strikes and possibly to provide recommendations to address or reduce the occurrences of these strikes. It is against this background that this study seeks to investigate the impact of employee strike action on employment relations in Accra, Ghana, public universities.

#### **1.4 Aims of the study**

The overarching aim of this study is to investigate the impact of employee strike action on employment relations in Accra, Ghana, public universities. Furthermore, the study aims to investigate some of the causes of strikes at the universities. Finally, the study seeks to provide mechanisms for reducing the number of strike actions in the institutions of higher learning under investigation.

#### **1.5 Research questions**

This study sought to address the following research questions:

- 1.5.1 How does strike action impact on employment relations in Accra, Ghana, public universities?
- 1.5.2 How does employee strike action affect Accra, Ghana, universities and the country as a whole?
- 1.5.3 What factors are responsible for strike actions in Accra, Ghana, public universities?
- 1.5.4 What factors promote sound employment relations in Accra, Ghana, public universities?
- 1.5.5 What measures can be put in place to address strike actions in the Accra, Ghana, public universities?

## **1.6 Research objectives**

This study had the following objectives:

- 1.6.1 To investigate the impact strike action has on employment relations in Accra Ghana public universities.
- 1.6.2 To identify the extent to which the employees' strikes affect the public universities in Accra, Ghana, and the country as a whole.
- 1.6.3 To determine the causes of strikes in Accra, Ghana, public universities.
- 1.6.4 To examine factors that promote sound employment relations in Accra, Ghana, public universities.
- 1.6.5 To establish measures that can be put in place to minimise the occurrence of strike actions in the Accra, Ghana, public universities.

## **1.7 Significance of the study**

The study is significant in various ways. Firstly, it will contribute to the existing body of knowledge regarding strike action and employment relations. Secondly, it will provide measures which will help employers and governments in minimising or preventing strike actions. Thirdly, it will also serve as a policy-shaping document to governments and organisations in addressing issues regarding strikes and employment relations. Fourthly, it will assist organisations in building sound employment relations, thereby reducing the negative impact of strike actions. Finally, it will serve as a source of reference to students and researchers who intend to conduct similar studies in this field elsewhere, where such research has not been done

## **1.8 Summary of the chapters**

The study was organised into eight (8) main chapters as follows:

### **1.8.1 Chapter one: Overview of the study**

This chapter briefly discussed the background of the study, the research problem, aim of the study, research objectives, research questions, significance of the study and conclusion.



### **1.8.2 Chapter two: Literature review**

This chapter reviewed related literature regarding strike actions. It helped in the conceptualisation of the key words in the study. The chapter presented the meaning of strike action, and the historical background of strikes in Ghana. It examined both the right to strike in Ghana and the International Labour Organisation's (ILO) Conventions on the right to strike. The chapter proceeded to provide empirical evidence of strike actions in Ghana, South Africa and Nigeria. It integrated the impact of strike actions on employment relations. Also, the chapter provided an account of the impact of strike action on the public universities as well as on the country as a whole. It further discussed the causes of strike actions in public universities. It discussed measures for resolving strike actions in the public universities.

### **1.8.3 Chapter three: Literature review**

This chapter reviewed empirical and theoretical literature regarding employment relations. It began with definitions of employment relations and follows with discussions on various theories that underlie the study of employment relations. It continued to discuss the role of the players in employment relations. Further, it examined factors that promote sound employment relations in organisations. In addition, the chapter presented the discussions on the importance of employment relations in an organisation. It also discussed the consequences of poor employment relations. Finally, it discussed the relationship between strike actions and employment relations.

### **1.8.4 Chapter four: Research design and methodology**

This chapter presented a detailed discussion on the research methodology and research design. It covers the discussion of the research approach which includes exploratory study, descriptive study and explanatory study. There was the description of the various research methods used in collecting data and a justification for using them. Furthermore, it explained the sampling design used and justifications for each of the designs. It also explained the way data is analysed. The final part shown how ethical considerations have been adhered to in conducting this investigation.

### **1.8.5 Chapter five: Presentation of quantitative results**

This chapter presented the quantitative results. Quantitative data was analysed using the

Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) version 21. It employed both descriptive and inferential statistics in the analysis of the results. Descriptive statistics, like frequency and percentages, were employed to analyse the demographic data of the respondents in terms of sex, age, educational background, years of working experience, employment status, the participants' schools and their departments.

### **1.8.6 Chapter six: Presentation of qualitative results**

Chapter six presented the results of the qualitative study. Qualitative data was analysed manually. It employed “thematic analysis” in determining or identifying the various themes.

### **1.8.7 Chapter seven: Discussions of the findings**

This chapter presented the discussion of both the quantitative and qualitative results. It begun with the discussion on the quantitative results and was followed by qualitative results

### **1.8.8 Chapter eight: Conclusions and recommendations**

The final chapter summarised the main findings, conclusions and recommendation for reducing strike actions in the public universities in Accra, Ghana, based on the findings of the study. Lastly, this chapter provided the direction for further research as far as strike action and employment relations are concerned.

## **1.9 Conclusion**

The chapter provided detailed discussions about the background of the study, the research problem and aims of the study. It continued to outline the key research objectives and questions. It further outlines the significance of the study. Finally, it presented a summary of each chapter. The next chapter of this study focused on the review of literature regarding strike action.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **OVERVIEW OF STRIKE ACTION IN THE WORKPLACE**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter presented the review of literature pertaining to strike action. It focused attention on previous studies that have addressed strike action in the global context. The chapter commenced with definition and historical background of strike action in Ghana. It proceeded to discuss the ILO Conventions and Ghanaian laws that regulate the right to strike. Further, the chapter discusses the impact that employee strike action has on employment relations. Furthermore, it focused the discussion on the impact of strike action on both the public universities and the country as a whole. In addition, the chapter discussed various causes of strikes in the public universities. It also discussed measures that can be put in place to minimise the prevalence of strikes in the education sector and the country as a whole.

#### **2.2 Definition of strike action**

Generally, strike action has been referred to as the refusal of employees to work due to unresolved grievances, with the aim of enforcing their socio-economic demands. The term “strike” has been defined in several ways by international and local researchers (Ahmed, 2014; Edinyang & Ubi, 2013; Gikungu & Karanja, 2014; Ige Akindele, 2014; Venter & Levy, 2011). This explains the fact that the meaning of strike action varies from one researcher to another. The following are some definitions and explanations of the term “strike action”:

According to Venter and Levy (2011, p.513), s213 of the South African Labour Relations Act [LRA] 66 of 1995 define strike as:

*the partial or complete concerted refusal to work, or the retardation or obstruction of work, by persons who are or have been employed by the same employer or by different employers, for the purpose of remedying a grievance or solving a dispute in respect of any matter of mutual interest between employer and employee, and every reference to work in this definition includes overtime work, whether it is voluntary or compulsory.*

According to Venter and Levy (2011, p.514), “the definition of strike action as set out in the LRA includes concerted action that amounts to both a complete stoppage of work and retardation in the workplace. Venter and Levy (2014) suggest that the above definition has three main elements. The first element is that a strike must constitute either a complete

cessation of work or retardation of work process, hence incorporating go-slows, work-to-rule and the like. The second element in the definition is that the said action must be concerted. However, the authors argue that a cessation or retardation of the work process by one individual does not amount to strike action. The final element, according to Venter and Levy (2014), is that a strike action can be embarked only in furtherance of a demand.

Grogan (2014) also ascribes to the definition offered by the LRA. The author argues that s64 of the LRA legitimises industrial action by granting workers the right to strike and the employers the right to lockout. According to Grogan (2014), by common law, workers who embark on industrial action would be in breach of contract due to fact that they may not be able to perform their duties and therefore they could be dismissed by their employers. On the other hand, the employer would be breaching employment contracts if he/she prevented the employees from entering the workplace to carry out their duties. However, the new LRA allows both the employee and employer the right to strike and to lockout.

According to Bendix (2015, p.612), a strike may be broadly defined as a “a temporary, collective withholding of labour, its objective being to stop or impede the continuation of business and thereby to oblige the employer to take notice of the employee demands”. Bendix (2015) further adds that the fact that strike is a temporary measure is important. The author argues that workers embark upon industrial action to temporarily withhold their services from the employer in order to force the employer to negotiate with them.

According to Seniwoliba (2013), s175 of Ghana Labour Act [GLA] 2003 (No 651) defines a strike as:

*any action taken by two or more workers acting in concert, which is intended by them to restrict in any way the service they normally provide to the employer or diminish the output of such service with a view to applying coercive pressure upon the employer and includes sympathy strike and those activities commonly called a work-to-rule, a go-slow or a sit down strike.*

The above definition by GLA also includes certain key words, as in the case of the LRA. Firstly, a strike action must be any action that is taken by two or more workers acting in concert. This clarifies the fact that the retardation of the work process by an individual does not in any way constitute a strike action. Secondly, the said action must be intended by employees to restrict

the service they normally provide to the employer or diminish the output of such service. Thirdly, the action must include applying coercive pressure upon the employer. This may include sympathy strikes. Finally, the activities of the strike action may include a work-to-rule, a go-slow or a sit-down. The key elements in the definition offered by GLA can also be found in the LRA definition.

According to Ige Akindele (2014), a strike is the medium through which workers refuse to perform their work due to disagreement with their employer(s) over conditions of work. The author argues that there are two kinds of strikes that workers and their trade unions can embark on, namely, internal and nationwide. The internal strikes take place within the organisation while the nationwide strike involves many institutions across the country withdrawing their services. A careful look at this definition suggests that there are some technical gaps in it. Firstly, the definition of strike action is limited to employees of the primary employer. Thus it fails to make reference to secondary employers or sympathy strikes as contained in the definitions offered by the LRA and GLA. Furthermore, this definition by Ige Akindele (2014) falls short of mentioning what constitutes either a complete cessation of work or the refusal to work. Unlike the definitions of LRA and GLA, no reference is made to activities such as a work-to-rule, a go-slow or a sit-down strike. Although the definition by Ige Akindele (2014) gives a clear picture of what a strike action is, it cannot stand the test of time because of its technical gaps.

Edinyang and Ubi (2013) also define strike action as a deliberate stoppage of work by workers which is intended to put more pressure on the employer to satisfy their demands. The definition by these authors suggests that strike is stoppage of work by employees with the view to enforce their socio-economic demands. The definition by Edinyang and Ubi (2013) is similar to that of Ige Akindele (2014). Thus, the two definitions emphasise stoppage of work by workers or employers. Edinyang and Ubi's (2013) definition also contains key words such as: stoppage of work by workers and putting pressure on the employer to accede to their demands. This has a conceptual meaning but it also has some technical gaps. To begin with, the definition does not include secondary or sympathy strikes. By implication, it means that the definition is limited in scope to only the employees of the primary employer(s). In addition, the definition falls short, as it fails to incorporate actions such as go-slows, work-to-rule and sit-down.

According to Ahmed (2014, p. 301), “strike is a deliberate stoppage of work by workers in order to put pressure on their employer to accede to their demands”. A critical look at this definition suggests that it falls in line with the definitions provided by Ige Akindele (2014) and Edinyang and Ubi (2013). The definition by Ahmed (2014) also has two key elements. The first element is work stoppage and the second one is the employer acceding to the demands of the workers. From the authors’ point of view, any action taken by workers in the form of work stoppage in furtherance of a demand is called “strike action”. A careful scrutiny of the definition provided by Ahmed (2014) reveals that it shows conceptual understanding but lacks some legal technicalities, as seen in the first two definitions above.

From the above discussion, strike can be defined by the researcher as any deliberate attempt by workers to restrict the services they provide to the employer or to abandon their work in order to exert strong influence on their employer(s) to meet their demands. Having conceptualised the term strike action, one would need to ask: What are the types of strike actions that workers embark on? The discussion below focuses on the various types of strikes that employees embark on worldwide.

## **2.3 Types of strike actions**

There are different types of strike action prevalent in the place of work worldwide. These are wildcat, economic, and secondary or sympathy, general, sit-down, go-slow, sick-out and work stoppage strikes.

### **2.3.1 Wildcat strike**

Wildcat strike is one of the most popular types of strike action often embarked upon by workers worldwide. A wildcat strike is normally regarded as a fast, sudden and unapproved type of work stoppage. It is often regarded as an unapproved or unauthorised type of work stoppage because the union leaders are not in support of it (Bendix, 2015). According to Odeku (2014), wildcat strikes arise as a result of ‘fractional bargaining’ by some specific subgroups of workers to have their own interest satisfied by the employer. Researchers (Adaviele, 2015; Clark, 2012) have argued that a wildcat strike is often masterminded by a subgroup of workers who are not satisfied with the collective bargaining procedures. In law, this type of strike is regarded as unprotected or illegal.

Nel *et al.* (2012) also support the views of the above authors that a wildcat strike is a sudden and unauthorised work stoppage, with no notice to the employer. The purpose is to surprise the employer. This strike can result in absolute chaos of violence because usually there is no negotiation that takes place between the parties. According to Nel *et al.* (2013), wildcat strikes often arise as a result of perceived unfair dismissal or unresolved disputes. Bendix (2015) also expresses the similar view that wildcat strikes occur without any prior warning.

This type of strike is unprotected because it does not follow the laid down regulations by the LRA & GLA.

For instance, the 2012 Marikana strike that took place in South Africa is an example of a wildcat strike (Odeku, 2014). Similarly, in Ghana, a similar strike took place in March 2015 where a group of opposition parties went on strike in demand for a new voter register for the upcoming 2016 elections. Violence broke out between the police personnel and the strikers and this led to the injuries of some of the strikers.

### **2.3.2 Economic strike**

Economic strike is one of the popular worldwide strikes which workers usually embark upon. In South Africa, Nigeria and Ghana, it is a form of common strike among workers (Adavbiele, 2015; Bendix, 2015; Seniwoliba, 2013). Bendix (2015) is of the view that an economic strike arises due to the refusal or failure by employers to meet the demands of workers related to wages and other economic issues namely: benefits and working conditions.

According to Nel *et al.* (2013), an economic strike occurs as a result of the demands that pertain to wages, fringe benefits or any other matter of an economic nature regarding the interest of workers. Workers usually initiate this strike with the view to putting pressure on the employer in order to enforce their economic demands, for instance, an increase in wages, salaries and bonuses. Employees agitate for an increase in their wages and salaries, allowances, bonuses, and other entitlements, like an increase in annual leave, privilege leave and casual leave (Odeku, 2014). Clark (2012) also expresses the similar view that an economic strike is the most common and popular form of strike that workers frequently embark upon worldwide.

For instance, during 2013, the University Teachers Association of Ghana (UTAG) went on economic strike in an attempt to put pressure on the government to pay their research allowances, bonuses and salaries (Seniwoliba, 2013). Similarly, in South Africa, “in August

2013, technicians from the South African Transport and Allied Workers Union (SATAWU) went on economic strike regarding the refusal of South African Airways to add a 0.4% once off payment to their offer of 6.5%” (Murwirapachena & Sibanda, 2014, p.555). In addition, in September 2013, approximately 70, 000 petrol attendants and vehicle industry workers, mainly members of the National Union of Mine Workers of South Africa (NUMSA), went on a three-day strike in demand for a 12.5% annual increase in wages and salaries. The above scenarios support the fact that economic strike is the most common type of strike that workers in Ghana, Nigeria and South Africa embark upon. The discussion below is centered on sympathy or secondary strike.

### **2.3.3 Sympathy or secondary strike**

Sympathy or secondary strike is another type of strike that workers and their trade unions often embark on in Africa (Clark, 2012). As the name suggests, this type of strike is a solidarity action that is often embarked upon by workers who are not part of the labour dispute. A sympathy strike is normally used by trade unions to express moral and fractional support of other employees who are on strike with the view to putting pressure on the primary employer to address the concerns of the employees. Clark (2012) also argues that this type of strike is embarked upon as a form of solidarity for other unions. It is a deliberate attempt by other unions to put indirect pressure on the employer to meet the demands of his or her employees. Adaviele (2015) also expresses the same view that a sympathetic strike is where workers of one organisation or unit join their colleagues in other organisations who are on strike to compel the primary employer in meeting the demands of his employees.

According to Nel *et al.* (2013, p.241), secondary strike is defined in terms of s66(1) of the LRA as a “strike or conduct in contemplation or in furtherance of a strike, that is in support of a strike by other employees against their employer but does not include a strike in pursuit of a demand that has been referred to the council if the striking employees, employed within the registered scope of the council, have a material interest in that demand”. Grogan (2014) also expresses the view that a secondary strike is an action which is in support of employees who are already on strike in another organisation or establishment. According to Grogan (2014, p.284), “a sympathy strike is protected if the prescribed procedures in the LRA are followed and if its nature and extent are justified in terms of the effect it has on the employer



in the other organisation”. The employees who intend to embark on a secondary strike must give their employer(s) seven days’ notice of such intention.

For example, in 2015, the Trade Union Congress in Ghana embarked upon a sympathy strike in support of workers in the Ghana Jubilee Field who went on strike due to unfair treatment and poor conditions of service. Similarly, in Nigeria, the 2014 Non-Academic Staff Union of Universities (NASUU) went on sympathy strike in support of a strike action declared by Academic Staff Union of Universities (Adaviele, 2015).

#### **2.3.4 General strikes**

A general strike also falls within the categories of strike. According to Odeku (2014), this form of strike is usually embarked upon by all the registered trade unions in a country to enforce demands common to all the employees or workers across the country. A general strike is most often planned to exert political pressure on the ruling government rather than on any single employer. General strike is an extension of sympathy strikes by all the trade unions to express their concerns. For example, In South Africa, the 1992 Rand Rebellion is a classic example of general strike. Another example of a general strike is in 1948 in Ghana when several pro-independence politicians were arrested in a struggle for freedom. The arrest of these pro-independence politicians led to a nationwide strike action by the Trade Union Congress (TUC) and this resulted in the release of the politicians. Similarly, in 2014, all registered trade unions in Ghana went on a nationwide strike in protest against poor conditions of service in the country (Adeniji, 2015).

#### **2.3.5 Sit -down strike**

A sit-down-strike is among the types of strike which often take place across the world. As the name implies, it is a kind of strike where employees lay down their tools in order to force the employer to accede to their demands. According to Adaviele (2015), a sit-down strike is where employees are present at work but they refuse to perform their work in demand for their new conditions of work. Clark (2012) contends that with sit-down strikes, the employees’ refusal to absent themselves from work may make it impossible for the employer to use replacement labour. This type of strike is very dangerous because the employer stands to lose so much.

According to Gyamfi (2011), in October 2008 more than one thousand registered nurses and other health workers in California, United State of America, went on a 24 hour sit-down strike in demand for a reduction on their working hours. Similarly, nurses at Cavan General Hospital, Ireland, also went on a three-day sit-down strike in protest against poor conditions of service.

Gyamfi (2011, p.1) contends that “the strike action of nurses went beyond worsening the economy to raise questions of mortality, morbidity, and the misalignment of healthcare resources and expenditures caused by unnecessary hospitalisations when patients drop out of care”. It was reported that most of the patients in these countries were denied emergency health delivery services when the nurses embarked upon the strike actions. A similar strike took place on August 8, 2008 by nurses in Kinshasha, Democratic Republic of Congo. In Sri Lanka six deaths were recorded due to a similar strike action embarked upon by nurses (Gyamfi, 2011). The situation in Ghana is not different from the above countries. For example, in 2012 and 2013 Ghana Medical Association (GMA), Pharmaceutical Society of Ghana (PSGH), University Teacher Association of Ghana (UTAG) and National Association of Graduate Teachers (NAGRAT) laid down their tools in protest against poor conditions of service (Seniwoliba, 2013).

### **2.3.6 Go-slow strike**

Go-slow strike is another type of strike action which is often embarked upon by workers. This is the most powerful type of strike that workers embark upon. Adaviele (2015) argues that with a go-slow strike, the employees are present or remain on their jobs but they limit the rate of output or productivity in an organised manner. The employees adopt a strategy called ‘go-slow’ in order to put more pressure on the employer to meet their demands. Adaviele (2015) adds that this kind of strike arises when employees spend more time than usual to complete a given task. However, in order for this type of strike to fall within the ‘statutory definition of strike, and hence protected, it must be concerted, retard the progress of work and be accompanied by an industrial demand’ (Adaviele, 2015). This strike can only enjoy the full protection of the LRA, if it follows the procedure requirements as laid down in s 64 of this Act. Nel *et al.* (2013) are also of the view that with this type of strike, employees do not leave the organisation but instead they perform their duties at a slow pace. Pons and Deale

(2010) also contend that go-slow strike is a strategy which is often employed by workers to bring demands to the attention of the employer by causing disruption during the production process without halting operations in the organisation.

According to Venter and Levy (2014, p.514), go-slow strike arises when employees spend more than the usual time to complete their work. The authors suggest that for this type of strike to fall within the legal definition of strike action in terms of the LRA, and hence “deserve protection, it must be concerted, retard the progress of work, and be accompanied by an industrial demand”. Venter and Levy (2014), assert that in keeping with this definition, employees do perform their duties, but at a much slower pace than usual time. In order for this type of strike to enjoy the maximum protection of the LRA, it must follow certain laid down procedures. The LRA provides that the employer is not mandated to remunerate workers during a protected strike. However, Venter and Levy (2014) argue that it is very difficult for the employers to enforce the provision in the LRA since employees are still present at their workplaces. In this situation, it is extremely difficult for the employer(s) to justify a wage cut, or even commence a disciplinary action against the employees.

### **2.3.7 Sick-out or in-strike**

Sick-out or in strike is another form of strike that workers or trade unions can embark upon. According to Adavbiele (2015), with regard to this type of strike, all the employees or trade unions call in sick on the same day. Adavbiele (2015) argues that in terms of this type of strike, the employees do not contravene any rules of the organisation but they rather all use the sick leave that they are entitled to on the same day. However, the sudden disappearance of a significant number of employees is an indication to the employer that the employees are striking. The technique is that the employees want to prove a point to the employer of what would occur if they really decided to embark on a strike. This kind of situation usually forces the employers to negotiate quickly with the employees to reach good terms for them to return to work.

### **2.3.8 Work stoppage**

Work stoppage is another form of strike which is a collective refusal to work that is not related to a demand or, if it is, such a demand is not in any way related to the employment relationship (Nel *et al.*, 2012). This explains the fact that work stoppage has nothing to do with the demands

of work. Work stoppage could relate to unfair treatment of the employees in the organisation. According to Bendix (2015), work stoppage occurs when workers lay down their tools during working periods and decline to continue their work when they should be doing so. Bendix (2015) further opines that work stoppage must constitute the refusal to work which the workers are contractually obliged to perform and which is lawful to perform. Also, work stoppage must occur when the workers collectively refuse to perform overtime. The final discussion under the types of strike actions focuses on work-to-rule.

### **2.3.9 Work-to-rule**

Work-to-rule is one of the most popular industrial actions workers embark upon nationwide. According to Venter and Levy (2014), with regard to work-to-rule, workers comply with the terms and conditions of employment and/or the inherent requirements of the job. Venter and Levy (2014, p.514) argue that the industrial action must be seen as “anomalous, the rule must be interpreted and applied in restrictive ways and, without the usual fluidity, and give what is typical of everyday practice in the workplace”.

Having discussed the various type of strikes that workers embark upon, it is important now to render an account of the historical background of strikes in Ghana.

## **2.4 The historical background of strike action in Ghana**

In this study, it is important to provide a brief historical background about strike action in Ghana. It will help appreciate the difference between the past and the present in terms of strikes in the country. The first industrial action in Ghana took place in the year 1919, by the country’s miners (Adeniji, 2015). During this period, Ghana was called “Gold Coast” under the leadership of colonial government. The first strike action by mine workers led to a series of successful collective industrial actions in the subsequent years. During 1919, permanent associations in the Gold Coast were formed. Due to a series of strikes that characterised the 1920s, the colonial government reacted by outlawing strikes in the country.

According to Adeniji (2015), in the 1940s, the Trade Union Ordinance of 1941 was formed, which legalised the formation of trade unions in the colony. The British government at that time encouraged the formation of a national trade union centre with the view to preventing the kind of labour agitations in the country. Consequently, on September 8, 1945, the Gold Coast Trade Union Congress (TUC) was formed which was comprised of 6,030 members as well as

14 affiliates at the offices of the Railway Action Employee Union in Sekondi. This was largely an appendage of the ruling Convention People's Party (CPP). In 1945, the struggle for better conditions of service began and this accompanied calls for independence. In 1948, several pro-independence politicians were arrested in a struggle for freedom. The arrest of the pro-independence politicians led to a nationwide strike action by TUC. This resulted in the release of the politicians. However, this weakened the federation. During 1954, the TUC launched an attempt to re-group and re-organise itself in order to inform the general public about political freedom. The struggle for change was met with strong opposition from the United Africa Company (Adeniji, 2015; van der Velden, 2012).

Adeniji (2015) posits that in 1957, Ghana gained independence and as a result of that, the name of the Gold Coast Trade Union Congress was changed to Trade Union Congress of Ghana (TUCG). During the 1950s, there were several groups across all ten regions of Ghana. Many of these groups were much more militant than the TUCG and violent demonstrations and strikes were common. Owing to the numerous strike actions that characterised almost all the organisations, the employers responded by forming "yellow unions". In 1958, the government of Ghana intervened by passing the Industrial Relations Act of 1958 with the view to protect and strengthen the TUCG. The Industrial Relations Act of 1958 not only gave legal backing to the TUCG but it also made collective bargaining mandatory. The Industrial Relations Act of 1965 eventually replaced the Industrial Relations Act of 1958 (Adeniji, 2015). The new Industrial Relations Act of 1965 forced any person who intended to register a trade union to do so through the TUCG. Most people saw this directive as a contravention of the ILO Convention No. 82.

In 1969, a new government took over power from the military government. The new president (Kofi Abrefa Busia) pledged his support for a free and independent labour movement and also assured the TUC that his government would assist them in gaining power. There was massive inflation in 1969. Furthermore, a new levy, a tax for all workers, was introduced. These new policies led to numerous strike actions during this period which subsequently led to the overthrow of Kofi Abrefa Busia (Adeniji, 2015).

Adeniji (2015) reports that, around 1981, there was another coup and a new government called Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) came into power. The PNDC's government

attempted to seek cooperation with the TUCG but unfortunately failed. During 1982, the new government issued a decree for the formation of the People's or Workers' Defence Committees (PWDC). The idea behind the formation of the PWDC was to undermine the power of the TUCG. In this same period, there were several workers who called themselves the Association of Labour Unions (ALU) who, with the full support of the ruling government, attacked the TUC headquarters. Consequently, the ALU formed an Interim Management Committee as head of both the TUCG and the trade unions within it to democratise them. After that the relationship between the governing party and TUCG members was very poor. In 2003, a tripartite National Labour Commission was formed with a view to help address all labour disputes in the country. Despite the establishment of the National Labour Commission, the country continued to witness a high volume of strike actions in the past few years.

## **2.5 International Labour Organisation [ILO] an overview on the right to strike**

The ILO is a special institution of the United Nations that engages in labour matters (Venter & Levy, 2014). It has its head office in Geneva, Switzerland. It is responsible for hosting annual International Labour Conferences in Geneva in June every year. According to the authors, the ILO remains very important for employment relations due to the fact that it focuses on quality employment relations across the globe. It ensures that Conventions and Recommendations are crafted and adopted by a majority decision during the conference. The core mandates of the ILO include: “formulating and supervising international labour standards in the form of conventions and recommendations, setting minimum standards of basic labour rights; freedom of association, the right to organise, collective bargaining, abolition of forced labour, equality of opportunity and treatment and other standards regulating conditions across the entire spectrum of work-related issues” (Venter & Levy, 2014, p.63).

According to Venter and Levy (2014), the ILO aims at ensuring that labour standards are respected in practice as well as in principle while working with all its member states. It also ensures that all its member states comply with the minimum labour standards. However, failure of any of its member states to adopt human conditions of labour is an obstacle in the way of other nations which desire to improve the conditions in their countries. According to Somavia, (the ILO Director-General) “the primary goal of the ILO today is to promote opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work, in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity” ( Venter & Levy, 2014, p.64).

According to Venter and Levy (2014), the ILO has four main strategic objectives namely: to promote and realise standards and fundamental principles and rights at work; to create greater opportunities for women and men to obtain decent employment and income; to enhance the coverage and effectiveness of social protection for all and to strengthen tripartism and social dialogue.

According to Ahmed (2014), the ILO has a number of Conventions which include the Freedom of Association and the Right to Organise Convention No 87 of 1948, the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention No.98 of 1949, Discrimination (Employment and Occupational) Convention, No. 111 of 1958, Equality of Treatment (Social Security) Convention, No. 118 of 1962, Vocational Rehabilitation (Disabled) Recommendation, No. 99 of 1955, Unemployment Convention, No. 168 of 1988. However, Freedom of Association and the Right to Organise Convention No 87 of 1948, The Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention No.98 of 1949 are the main ILO Conventions that support this study.

Ahmed (2014) contends that among these Conventions the ILO has two Conventions which recognise that the right to strike is an intrinsic corollary to the right to organise and a fundamental right of every worker and their organisation to collective bargaining. Rapatsa and Matloga (2014) also argue that the right to strike emanates from international instruments. According to Rapatsa and Matloga (2014), strike is recognised worldwide as a human right. The authors further state that Article 18(1)(d) of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) requires every nation who is a member of the ILO to covenant, to promote, protect and respect the right to strike, provided this right is exercised in accordance with the laws of the land or the country.

The ILO through the recommendations made by the Committee of Freedom of Association (CFA) and Committee of Experts on Appliance of Conventions and Recommendations has recognised the right to strike as one of the avenues where workers and their trade unions can advance their economic and social interests. The Committee recommended that the right to strike is a right which workers and their organisations are entitled to (Ahmed, 2014).

As indicated above, there are two ILO Conventions that recognise the right to strike namely: 'Freedom of Association and the Right to Organise Convention No 87 of 1948 and Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention No. 98 of 1949' (Deacon, 2014; La Hovary,

2013; Matee, 2014; Rapatsa & Matloga, 2014). The ILO's Committee of Experts on the Application and Recommendation are of the view that these Conventions give rise to the workers' right to strike.

According to Ahmed (2014), Article 3 of the ILO Convention No.87 of 1948 recognises the right of trade unions and employer organisations to organise their activities and formulate programmes that will help them to promote their socio-economic interests. Mbah and Ikemefuna (2011) also argue that Convention No.87 of 1948 is fundamental to the exercise of collective labour rights by workers' associations. Ahmed (2014) emphasises that the Committee on Freedom of Association has given full recognition to strike action as a right and not a mere social act and it has also made it states that the right to strike is a right that workers and their trade unions or associations may exercise. Article 3(1) of this Convention encourages workers to form and join associations of their choice without any previous authorisation. In addition, it states that workers have the right to draw up their own constitutions and rules and to elect their own representatives (Malik, 2014).

The Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention No.98 of 1949 is another instrument that recognises workers' right to strike (Ahmed, 2014; Odeku, 2014). According to Ahmed (2014), the protection of the right to strike within Convention 87 is enhanced in practice by the protection contained in Convention 98. The Convention protects the right of workers to exercise their right to organise, free from anti-union discrimination. The Committee of Experts considers that without Convention 98, the guarantees set out in Convention 87 may be rendered nugatory (Ahmed, 2014).

According to Rapatsa and Matloga (2014), the protection of workers and their associations against acts of anti-union discrimination constitutes the most important aspect of freedom of association. Such an act may lead to the denial of guarantees set out in Convention No.87 of 1948. According to Odeku (2014), the ILO Freedom of Association Conventions implement the principles of freedom of association through voluntary collective bargaining as specified in the Article 4 of Convention No.98. The author argues that the model of 'voluntary collective bargaining' is protected by freedom of association provisions and it consists of the role players such as workers and their associations and employers and their organisations. It is now important to look at the right to strike in the Ghanaian context.



## **2.6 The right to strike in the Democratic of Republic Ghana**

For this study, it is important to identify the provisions or the legislative instruments that recognise the right to strike in Ghana. Ghana became a member state of the ILO in 1957 and has complied with the Conventions and Recommendations of the ILO. The right to strike is one of the fundamental rights in Ghana. The 1992 Constitution of the Democratic Republic of Ghana guarantees every worker the right to strike. Chapter five of the Ghanaian Constitution is about fundamental human rights and freedom. This is not limited to the right to strike only. The Constitution guarantees every worker the right to strike and the employer the right to lockout (Seniwoliba, 2013).

According to Seniwoliba (2013), s160(1) of the Ghana Labour Act, 2003 (No. 651) also reaffirms the right to strike as enshrined in the Constitution. Kaufman (2010) states that s160(1) of the Act provides that any party to a labour dispute who has served notice of intention to embark on strike action or lockout under s159 has the right to strike and lockout after the expiration of the seven days' notice starting from the date the notice was served only. This explains the position of the law that the party to an industrial dispute cannot go on strike before the expiration period (seven days' notice). Section 160(2) also states that if the dispute is not resolved within seven days from the commencement of the strike or lockout, the matter will be resolved by compulsory arbitration under s164 of the Act.

However, s161(1) states that a party to a labour dispute will not proceed on strike or lockout during the period of negotiation, mediation or arbitration. The provision of the Labour Act provides that no party will embark on a strike when negotiation, mediation or arbitration proceedings are on-going. Section 161(2) provides that any party who contravenes s161(1) will be liable for any loss or damage or injury suffered by the other party in the industrial dispute (Seniwoliba, 2013).

According to Kaufman (2010), s162(1) states that in any labour dispute that affects workers who perform an essential service, the parties involved shall try as far as possible through negotiation to resolve the matter within three working days. Section 162(2) also states that if, after three days, the dispute is still not resolved, the parties will refer the matter to the National Labour Commission within twenty–four hours for speedy settlement by compulsory arbitration under s164 of the Act. Section 162(3) also confirms that the commission will take necessary

steps, within three days of the matter being referred to it to ensure that it is settled by compulsory arbitration.

Section 163 of the Act basically deals with the prohibition of strikes or lockout with regard to essential services. Section 163 allows workers, “except for the armed forces, police, the prison service, and some other security and intelligence agency personnel, to form and join unions of their choice without previous authorisation or excessive requirements” (Kaufman, 2010). According to s163, any employer or worker who is engaged in an essential service will not embark on strike or lockout in relation to any labour dispute (Seniwoliba, 2013).

Kaufman (2010) posits that the s164 (1) provides that when any labour dispute is referred to compulsory arbitration with regard to ss160-162, the National Labour Commission shall constitute the arbitrator and shall serve notice on all the parties: (a) stating the fact of the case and in its views the issues that are not addressed; and (b) seeking from all the parties concerned information as to whether they agree to the issues. Section 164(2) also states that the National Labour Commission shall, resolve the dispute by compulsory arbitration within fourteen days of having served notice on all the parties to the dispute. Section 144(3) states that there shall be three panels who shall serve as arbitrators and also one representative from government, the trade union concerned and the employer’s association. Seniwoliba (2013) asserts that section 164(4) emphasises that the final decisions by the majority of the arbitrators shall form the basis of the arbitration award in a compulsory arbitration and this shall be binding on all the parties to the dispute.

Section 168 of the Act covers unprotected strikes and lock-outs. It states that a strike or lockout shall be lawful if it is in sympathy with or in support of further strike action embarked upon by another worker or group of workers against their employer with regard to an industrial dispute with the employer. However, s168(2) states that any person, or group of persons, who declares or instigates or incites others to go on strike or lock-out in furtherance of the strike or lock-out which contravenes s168(1) is liable for any damages, loss or injury suffered by the other person as a result of the contravention of s168(1). Section 168(3) provides that any action taken in the form of a strike or lock-out in sympathy with another group of workers or body shall be in a form agreed upon by management of the sympathisers and this shall not affect operational activities of the organisation whose members are sympathisers. Section 168(4) states that without prejudice to s168(2), anybody or a worker who participates in an unlawful or

unprotected strike may have his/her contract of employment terminated by the employer, without notice of termination for the breach of contract of employment, or may forfeit his/her salary during the period of the illegal strike. According to s168(5), without prejudice to s168(2), any employer who locks-out his/her premises illegally shall be liable to pay the unpaid remuneration of the employees (Seniwoliba, 2013).

Section 169 of this Act regulates the legal effect of a lawful/protected strike and lock-out. S169(1) states that during the period of a protected or lawful strike, the employment relationship between the parties (employer and employees) shall not be affected by the strike or lock-out and it is void to terminate the contract of employment as a result of the protected strike. Section 169(2) provides that no legal action or civil proceedings shall be brought against any employee, employer, trade union, employers' organisation or officer or member of such trade union or employers' organisation who participated in the protected strike or lock-out (Seniwoliba, 2013).

Seniwoliba (2013) contends that s170 of this Act deals with temporary replacement of labour. Section 169(1) provides that an employer may not engage any worker or person to carry out the work of an employee participating in a protected or lawful strike unless the work is vital to secure essential minimum maintenance services in the work setting. Section 169(2) also states that a worker has the right to refuse to perform any work which is normally performed by the striker(s) except that the worker not refuse to carry out the work if it is necessary to secure minimum maintenance services. Section 169(3) states that any dispute regarding whether work is necessary to secure minimum maintenance services will be referred to the Commission for Determination and the decision shall be deemed, subject to any other provision or law, to be final.

The following discussion covers the empirical evidence of strike actions in Ghana, South Africa and Nigeria.

## **2.7 Empirical evidence of strike actions in Ghana, South Africa and Nigeria**

One important aim of this study is to establish or demonstrate whether there is prevalence of strike action in Ghana by utilising on statistical data from the Ghana Statistical Service and previous studies. The study also compares strike data from Ghana, South Africa and Nigeria to establish the fact which of these countries has recorded the highest number of strikes over the

years. This is very important, as it will help understand the dynamics of strikes in these three African countries. Furthermore, it will help researchers to support their claims when arguing that there is a prevalence of strikes in their countries. Below are the statistical data on strike actions from each of these countries.

**Table 2.1 Data on strikes in Ghana, Nigeria and South Africa from 2008-2015**

Ghana		Nigeria		South Africa	
Year	No. of strikes	Year	Strike duration	Year	No. of strikes
2008	22	2008	1 week	2008	57
2009	47	2009	4 months	2009	51
2010	14	2010	7 months	2010	74
2011	46	2011	3 months	2011	67
2012	43	2012	3 months	2012	99
2013	13	2013	5 months	2013	144
2014	30	2014	7 months	2014	88
2015	34	2015	8 months	2015	156

*Sources: (Aidelunuoghene, 2015; DoL, 2014; Ghana Statistical Service, 2015; van der Velden, 2012).*

Table 2.1 above depicts the number of strikes that were recorded in Ghana, Nigeria and South Africa. Unlike Ghana and South Africa, the prevalence of strikes in Nigeria was determined based on the length of the periods during which the strikes occurred (Aidelunuoghene, 2015). According to the Ghana Statistical Service (2015) and van der Velden (2012), in Ghana, an average of 22 strike actions were recorded across all sectors in the year 2008. However, in 2009, the total number of strikes recorded increased to 47. The year 2010 saw a dramatic decrease in the total number of strike actions from 47 to 14. In 2011, the total number of strikes that took place was 46. Furthermore, in 2013, 43 strikes were recorded nationwide. Moreover, in 2013, the total number of strikes recorded decreased to 13. In 2014, the total number of strikes that took place in the country increased to 30. Finally, in 2015, the number further increased to 34. The analysis of the figures presented in the Table 2.1 above shows that there is a prevalence of strikes in Ghana. Despite the statistics which reveal that there is a prevalence of strikes in Ghana, there is limited study in this field.

There is limited research in this field that has up-to-date data on the number of strikes that took place in the country.

In South Africa, previous studies and current statistical data from the Department of Labour all suggest that there is a prevalence of strikes in the country (DoL, 2014; Odeku, 2014; Murwirapachena, & Sibanda 2014; Rapatsa, & Matloga, 2014; Van Rensburg & Van Rensburg, 2013). From Table 4.1 above, statistics from the DoL (2014) reveal that a total of 57 strikes took place in 2008. However, the figure decreased to 51 in 2009. In 2010, the total number of strikes that took place increased to 74. However, in 2011, the number of strikes recorded decreased to 67. The figures increased again to 99 in 2012 and to 144 in 2013. However, in 2014, a total of 88 strikes were recorded nationwide. In 2015, the total number of strikes reported increased to 156. Careful analysis of these figures indicates that there is a prevalence of strikes in South Africa. The figures reaffirmed the findings of previous researchers (Odeku, 2014; Murwirapachena, & Sibanda 2014; Rapatsa, & Matloga, 2014; Van Rensburg & Van Rensburg, 2013) that there is prevalence of strike action in South Africa. According to Odeku (2014), South Africa is regarded as a strike nation because of the persistent strikes in the country.

According to Aidelunuoghene (2015), employees in the education sector went on a one-week strike in 2008. In 2009, they went on a four-month strike. This increased to seven months in 2010. In 2011 and 2012, they went on three-month strikes. Furthermore, in 2013 they embarked on a three-month strike action. However, in 2014, the employees went on strike for seven months. Finally, at the end of 2015 they embarked on an eight months strike action.

The analysis of the figures from the Table 2.1 above show that there is a prevalence of strikes in these three countries. The comparison of the three countries suggests that workers in South Africa embarked on more strikes than did their counterparts in Ghana and Nigeria. This analysis supports the findings of researchers that South Africa is a strike nation (Odeku, 2014; Murwirapachena & Siband, 2014).

## **2.8 Impact of strike actions on employment relations**

There are different ways in which strike action impacts on employment relations. The overarching aim of this study is to establish the extent to which strike action affects employment relations. Previous studies (Awe & Ayeni, 2012; Arputharaj & Gayathri, 2014;

Selala, 2014) have shown that strike action impacts negatively on employment relations.

Although a strike is regarded as a constitutional right, it has several implications on the employment relationship and the country as a whole. The impacts of strike action on employment relations are discussed below.

### **2.8.1 Unhealthy employment relationship**

Unhealthy employment relationship has been identified as one of the negative implications of strike action on employment relations. Researchers (Arputharaj & Gayatri, 2014; Awe & Ayeni, 2012; Selala, 2014) have found that one effect of strike action is that it leads to poor employment relationships, especially between the employers and employees. Arputharaj and Gayatri (2014) found that when employees and their unions embark on strike action there is the possibility of unhealthy relationships in the organisation. According to Arputharaj and Gayatri (2014), each time employees embark on a strike action the trust in the organisation is said to be broken and this eventually affects the employment relations. A similar study conducted by Awe and Ayeni (2012) on the effect of conflict on employment relations in Nigeria has discovered that strikes have negative implications for employment relations in an organisation. According to the authors, action can bring about division between the parties in the workplace which can have lasting effects on the kind of relationship that exists between them. Awe and Ayeni (2012) contend that due to strike action, parties might view each other as enemies and this may have a major implication on the employment relations that exist within the working environment.

Selala (2014) also found that strike action can impact negatively on the employment relationship. According to Selala (2014), during strike action there is hostility between employees and the employer because the employer may perceive the employees as opposing his authority. Findings by Awe and Ayeni (2012) and Selala (2014) affirm the previous assertion made by Arputharaj and Gayatri (2014) that strike action may contribute to unhealthy relationship among the parties. The following discussion focuses on how strike action may lead to employee dismissal.

### **2.8.2 Dismissal of employees**

Employee dismissal is a common phenomenon worldwide. Strike action has been identified as one of the leading causes of global employee dismissals. According to Venter and Levy (2014),

dismissal refers to the termination of a contract of employment for reasons that relate to misconduct, incapacity and operational requirements of the job. There are several reasons for which employers can dismiss employees and one such reason is when an employee participates in an unprotected strike (Grogan, 2014). Previous studies (Ahmed, 2014; Arshad & Nadeem, 2012; Odeku, 2014; Majokweni, 2013; Olusegun Ajayi, 2014; Surujlal, 2014) have also found that participation in unprotected strikes may constitute the basis for dismissal of employees.

Majokweni (2013) suggests that although the ILO Conventions and other laws permit industrial action or strikes, yet the employer can dismiss the strikers when the strike is unprotected. Odeku (2014) notes that even though s23 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa guarantees the right to strike, s65 of the LRA imposes restrictions and limitations on this right. Similarly, s12 of the 1992 Constitution of the Democratic Republic of Ghana guarantees every worker the right to strike. However, s168(4) of the Ghana Labour Act 200 (No.651) states that without prejudice to s168(2), anybody who participates in an unlawful or unprotected strike may have his/her contract of employment terminated by the employer, without notice of termination, for the breach of contract.

A study conducted by Arshad and Nadeem (2012) revealed that, in 2005, more than 31,000 employees were dismissed for union activities in the United State of America. Jordaan (2016) discovered that one possible effect of strike action on the employment relations is that it could result in job loss in the organisation. According to the Jordaan (2016), a total of 24,989 full-time equivalent jobs were lost in the year 2012 due to the impact of the strike actions in South Africa.

Ige Akindele (2014) also contends that strike action has the potential to affect the employment contract of employees, especially when the employees embark on unprotected strikes. According to Ige Akindele (2014), in 1985, management of the University of Benin dismissed a former President of ASUU, due to his active role in the strike at the university and the country wide. Furthermore, forty nine (49) academic staff members of the University of Ilorin, Nigeria, were dismissed in 2001 for their involvement in a nationwide strike.

In light of the above discussion, Bendix (2015) argues that participation in a lawful strike does not justify dismissal of the strikers. According to Bendix (2015), participation in a lawful strike does not amount to breach of contract and such an employee cannot be dismissed. However,

the author adds that the employee can be dismissed if guilty of offences such as intimidation, assault, and damage to the employer's properties while taking part in the strike action.

Venter and Levy (2014) also purport the view that the strikers are granted immunity by the LRA against dismissal when they take part in protected strikes. Therefore, employees cannot be dismissed for their participation in lawful strikes unless the strikes are unprotected or there was some form of criminal action, such as stealing or destroying the property of the employer during the strike. The discussion below covers the extent to which strikes lead to organisational conflict.

### **2.8.3 Organisational conflicts**

Organisational conflict is one of the ways in which strike action can negatively impact employment relations. Previous studies (Olaniyi & Aina 2014; Olusegun Ajayi, 2014; Osakede & Ijimakinwa, 2014) have found that industrial action or strike action can lead to organisational conflicts which may have major implications for employment relations within the workplace. Olusegun Ajayi (2014) found that strike action by the Academic Staff Union of Universities in Nigeria created conflict between the management of the universities and trade unions and this impacted on the working relationships among the parties. Ige Akindele (2014) notes that conflict is inevitable in every organisation but it can be worsened when employees disobey employers and embark on unprotected strikes. Ige Akindele (2014) continues to suggest that conflict may arise between the employees and union leaders as a result of mistrust regarding the decision to embark on strike action. According to Ige Akindele (2014), the agreement between the employer and trade union leaders pertaining to strike action may not be fully welcomed by the employees and this too could result in conflict. Ige Akindele (2014) in his study discovered that strike had been causing conflict or rivalry among trade union members in Nigeria because they no longer trusted each other.

Ayeni and Kolawole (2014) explored continual conflicts and strikes within selected organisations in the Ekiti State in Nigeria. The study found that there is a direct link between strike and conflict. Ayeni and Kolawole (2014), further discovered that strike action can increase the possibility of conflict in the organisation if there is no proper dialogue between the trade union members and the employer. Despite these findings in other countries, there is



limited research in Ghana that has established the link between strike action and organisational conflict.

#### **2.8.4 Loss of remuneration**

Loss of remuneration is one of the negative consequences of employee strike action on employment relations. It is a priority of this study to find out how strike action affects employees' remuneration. Researchers (Odeku, 2014; Murwirapachena & Sibanda, 2014) have found that strike action could affect the employment relationship through loss of remuneration. Odeku (2014), contends that strikers may lose their salaries or remuneration for the duration of the strike, whether the strike is protected or unprotected. According to Odeku (2014), a report by the DoL revealed that about R6.6 billion worth of wages were lost due to strike action in 2012. This is in accordance with the provision of the LRA (s67(3) that the striking employees may not be entitled to remuneration, even if the strike is protected.

Bendix (2015) also makes reference to the fact that striking employees may forfeit their salaries for the period of the strike action. According to Bendix (2015), the employer has the prerogative not to remunerate employees taking part in strike action irrespective of whether the strike is legal or unprotected. The principle of no-work- no pay applies in this situation. However, the author suggests that employers may not deny the striking employees any payment in kind, such as accommodation, or other basic amenities.

Venter and Levy (2014) also agree with the above authors that an employee may lose his or remuneration whilst on strike irrespective of whether the strike action is protected or unprotected. Venter and Levy (2014) express the view that, despite the protection of strikers against civil liability, they are not entitled to salaries or remuneration for services not performed during a protected strike action or lockout in terms of s67(3) of the LRA. However, the authors also acknowledge that the loss of remuneration may not include payment in kind namely: accommodation; provision of food and other social or basic amenities. However, despite the payment in kind, the employer may initiate civil proceedings against the strikers to recover the monetary value of such basic amenities after the strike.

Murwirapachena and Sibanda (2014) state that one of the consequences of strike action is that workers may forfeit their remuneration from the period they participated in the strike, whether it is protected or unprotected. In Ghana, s16(4) of the Labour Act, 2003 (No. 651) states that

anybody who participates in an unlawful or unprotected strike may be dismissed for breach of contract of employment or may forfeit his or her salary during the period of the strike. For example, in 2006, when members of the Ghana National Association of Graduate Teachers (NAGRAT) went on strike, the government refused to pay them for the period they were on strike (van der Velden, 2012). This underlines the fact that an employer may not be liable to remunerate the employee should he or she embark on strike action. However, when employees are not remunerated it may have serious consequences on the employment relations in the organisation.

### **2.8.5 Intimidation of strikers**

Intimidation of strikers is one of the negative effects of strike action on employment relations. In South Africa, intimidation of strikers or employees is a common feature that often accompanies strike action (Odeku, 2014; Serfontein, 2015). According to Odeku (2014, p.695), in South Africa, “strike breakers are often intimidated, beaten and sometimes murdered by striking workers”. Labour experts often attribute this phenomenon to the way in which trade unions organised and engaged in collective bargaining, especially during the apartheid era. As discussed above, in South Africa and Ghana, the right to strike is a constitutional right which is generally regulated by the Constitution and other legislation that governs employment relations (Odeku, 2014). Despite this, most employees and employers engage in other acts such as the violation of the law the guide the strike action, destruction of property and violence that often result in intimidation.

Murwirapachena and Sibanda (2014) support the views expressed by the above authors that intimidation of strike breakers is a common phenomenon in South Africa. In South Africa, the perfect example is the Marikana strike (Rapatsa & Matloga, 2014). Similarly, in Nigeria, strikes have often been accompanied by intimidation over the years (Olusegun Ajayi, 2014). According to Olusegun Ajayi, 2014), workers in Nigeria over the years were faced with intimidation from their employers for their involvement in strikes.

The situations in the above two countries are not different from Ghana. In the past, Ghanaian workers faced several forms of intimidation from their employers and government officials for their decision to embark on strike action (Seniwoliba, 2013). According to Seniwoliba (2013), most strikers in Ghana were threatened with dismissal, retrenchment and loss of remuneration.

Some strikers were also beaten for their participation in strike action. This situation is common in the public sector in Ghana.

### **2.8.6 Retrenchment of workers**

Retrenchment has been identified as one of the negative consequences of strike action on employment relations. According to Ochieno (2013), retrenchment is a global phenomenon. The author suggests that there are numerous factors that account for retrenchment in the global context namely: globalisation, deregulation, mergers and acquisitions, technological change and increasing costs as a result of constant agitation of workers and other economic factors. In addition, Ochieno (2013) contends that constant industrial action may have dire consequences on the business which may lead to retrenchment.

Maunganidze, Mupezen and Pfebeni (2013) also found that one negative implication of strike action in an organisation is that it contributes to the retrenchment of employees. According to Maunganidze *et al.* (2013), when strike action affects business operations and the employer decides to cut costs, one way of doing this is through retrenchment. Retrenchment is a stressful occurrence, not only for employees but for their families as well. Maunganidze *et al.* (2013, p.293) discovered that “Ugandan retrenchment exercise has contributed to loss of skills, energy, morale, commitment, physical and mental health degradation that resulted from employees withdrawing physically and emotionally”. In the present study, the author argues that strike action is one of the contributing factors to retrenchment in the Uganda.

In Ghana, employee retrenchment is not a new phenomenon. Section 65 of Ghana Labour Act 2003 (No.651) empowers the employer to undertake redundancy exercises. Section 65(1) of the Act provides that the employer may implement a redundancy exercise when he contemplates the introduction of major changes in production, programme, organisation, structure or technology of an undertaking. This redundancy exercise is likely to entail termination of employment of workers. (Seniwoliba, 2013). However, s65(1) (5) laid down the procedural requirements for the employer to follow in conducting a redundancy exercise. According to Seniwoliba (2013), some teachers were retrenched in Ghana for their participation in an unprotected strike in 1998. Seniwoliba (2013) posits that a group of teachers went on an indefinite strike in demand for better conditions of work. Although the strike was illegal or unprotected, the government was willing to negotiate with them if they would return

to the classroom. Seniwoliba (2013) explains that the teachers refused to return to the classroom in order for the negotiation to take place. Subsequently, the government had to close down many of the schools because the teachers' demands were outrageous and the government could not meet them. During that year, the government embarked on redundancy exercises which led to 5000 teachers being laid off across the ten regions of Ghana.

### **2.8.7 Mistrust**

In addition to the above, mistrust has been identified as another impact of strike action on employment relations within the workplace. Chaudhuri (2012) found that mutual trust is a key variable for building harmonious relationships in the workplace. Chaudhuri (2012) recommends that the parties involved in employment relations must develop an atmosphere of mutual cooperation, confidence and respect. Chaudhuri (2012) posits that "when there is trust there is peace". However, when there is a strike it sometimes leads to broken trust between the parties. Therefore, mistrust results and affects the kind of relationship that exists between the parties. Once there is mistrust, it will certainly affect the continuity of the relationship.

Siddiqua *et al.* (2014) discovered that there is a relationship between industrial action, conflict and trust. According to Siddiqui *et al.* (2014), once there is an industrial action it gives more room for broken trust within the organisation. The authors recommend that both the employer and employees must help in creating an environment of mutual cooperation, confidence and respect because these are important elements for promoting industrial harmony. Siddiqua *et al.* (2014) further suggest that the employer must adopt a progressive outlook and should respect the rights of workers. On the other hand, trade unions must in turn persuade their members to work towards the common goal of the organisation.

## **2.9 Impact of strike action on Ghanaian public universities**

There are several ways in which strike action impacts on universities. One important objective of this study is to examine the impact that strike action has on the Ghanaian public universities and on the country as a whole. In Africa, several studies (Ayeni & Kolawole, 2014; Ige Akindele, 2014; Michael, 2013; Osuorji & David, 2014; Wills, 2014) have been conducted to examine the effects that strike action has on the universities. These studies have discovered that strike action has a number of negative impacts on or implications for public universities across the world. Strike action affects public universities in the following ways:

### **2.9.1 Poor student performance**

Poor student performance has been identified as one of the negative consequences that strike action has on students and universities. Strike action does not only affect the universities but it affects students as well. In Sub-Saharan Africa, several studies (Ayeni & Kolawole, 2014; Edinyang & Ubi, 2013; Ige Akindele, 2014; Michael, 2013; Osuorji & David, 2014; Wills, 2014) have been conducted to examine the effect of teachers' strikes on student performance. All of these studies have found that strike action has the potential to affect students' performance negatively. For example, Osuorji and David (2014) investigated the effect of incessant strikes on academic performance of business education students in Abu, Zaria. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. It was discovered that incessant strikes by lecturers had a serious impact on the academic performance of the business education programme of in Abu, Zaria.

Similarly, Ayeni and Kolawole (2014) explored the incessant conflicts and strikes and their effects on the achievement of goals of business education in the tertiary institution in the Ekiti State. The findings revealed that incessant strikes accounted for the massive student failure rates in all tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Olusegun (2014) also found that teachers' strikes have an impact on student performance. Olusegun (2014) argues that student performance during industrial action is hampered to the extent that even brilliant students end up graduating with low classes.

However, Maliki and Ekpekin-Ekanem (2011) disagree with the above researchers that strike action contributes to low student performance. Maliki and Ekpekin-Ekanem (2011) are of the opinion that 'quality and quantity of students' performance is determined by individual study habit'. According to the authors, when teachers are on strike it has been found that the students are more organised in their studies, they interact effectively with their fellow students, consult regularly with teachers, read with understanding, and study with full attention and concentration in order to have improved academic performance. Though there is disagreement between researchers on the effect of strike action on students' performance, it has largely being acknowledged that strike action has a negative impact on students' performance.

### **2.9.2 Disruption of effective learning**

Disruption of effective learning has been identified as one of the negative consequences of strike action in universities worldwide. Many studies in Ghana, South Africa and Ghana have found that incessant strike actions have contributed to disruption of learning over the years (Asaolu, 2010; Isangedighi, 2011; Odubela, 2012; Olukunle, 2011; Maliki & EkpekinEkanem, 2011; Wills, 2015).

Asaolu (2010) argues that learning is one of the core activities of university education. Asaolu (2010) believes that effective learning in school occurs when the stakeholders adequately perform their roles. Also, effective learning is achieved when students are emotionally and psychologically stable. Contrary to this, when there is strike action, effective learning among students is disrupted. According to Asaolu (2010), disruption arises when academic activities are substantially impeded due to strike action by university employees.

Olukunle (2011) in his study discovered that effective learning in schools is disrupted when there is strike or industrial action. Olukunle (2011) agrees with Asaolu (2010) that effective learning occurs when learners are emotionally and psychologically stable. Therefore, disruption in effective learning may occur when the staff of the university decide to embark on strike action.

### **2.9.3 Disruption of academic calendar or programme**

Disruption of the academic calendar is a major effect of strikes in universities across the world. There is no strike action which occurs without a disruption to the academic calendar unless the strike takes place whilst the university is on vacation. Researchers (Kazeem & Ige 2010; Olukunle, 2011) have discovered a relationship between strikes and academic calendar. Olukunle (2011) in his study discovered that disruption in academic programmes occur because of strike action by university staff. The author suggests that the disruption of academic programmes as a result of strikes may impact on students emotionally and psychologically. According to Olukunle (2011), when a disruption in an academic programme occurs as a result of a strike, students become emotionally and psychologically affected, particularly when they fear that the strike may cause them to stay at school longer than expected. Olukunle (2011) further argues that disruption in academic programmes may demotivate learners and this

discourages them from learning. Whenever there is strike, the university is forced to close temporarily and this may affect the academic programme (Olukunle, 2011).

Furthermore, Kazeem and Ige (2010) found that strike action often brings about disruption in the institution's academic calendar. Kazeem and Ige (2010) agree with Olukunle (2011) that once there is strike action there is a need for calendar adjustments which variably affect the institution's programme. Usoro and Ogbuanya (2012) also found that once there is strike action it will give rise to calendar adjustments which will inevitably affect the smooth running of the institution.

Many schools in Africa have extended their academic calendars over the years due to persistent strikes. For example, in 2015 and 2016, the University of KwaZulu-Natal extended its academic calendar due to strike action by students on the various campuses. Similarly, in the early part of 2016, all the universities in South Africa had their academic calendars disrupted when they were closed for almost a month as a result of strike action. In Ghana, the year 2013 saw massive strikes in the public universities which had serious implications for the academic programmes and calendars. The massive strike by the university employees led to the postponement of the reopening date which affected the academic calendar (Seniwoliba, 2013).

#### **2.9.4 Loss of confidence in public institutions and proliferation of private institutions**

Loss of confidence in public institutions is one of the impacts of strike action in the public universities. According to Ige Akindele (2014), frequent strike actions in public tertiary institutions have the potential to contribute to the loss of confidence in public tertiary institutions. The author is of the view that due to the massive strike actions in the public universities in Nigeria, many parents and concerned citizens have lost confidence in the public institutions and they prefer to send their wards to institutions where there is no disruption of the academic calendar. In Ghana and Nigeria, many private universities and colleges are now springing up in different towns, villages and cities. Currently, Ghana has more than sixty (60) private universities across the ten regions. Ige Akindele (2014) notes that in Nigeria, studies show that in 2012, there were fifty (50) accredited universities, seventeen (17) polytechnics and thirty seven (37) colleges of education. All these private institutions are competing with the public tertiary institutions for students. The frequent strike actions in the public institutions leave parents no other choice than to send their children to private institutions where

uninterrupted academic calendars can be guaranteed. When this happens, it may lead to loss of confidence in the public tertiary institutions.

### **2.9.5 Delay in students' graduation**

Delays in students' graduations is one of the negative consequences of strike action in public tertiary institutions in Ghana. Studies have found that there is a relationship between strikes and student graduation (Aidelunuoghene, 2014; Edinyang & Ubi, 2013; Ige Akindele, 2014). According to Ige Akindele (2014), the prolonged strikes in Nigerian public universities have led to delays in student graduations over the years.

Aidelunuoghene (2014) also supports the view of Ige Akindele (2014) that prolonged strikes tend to disrupt graduation dates. Aidelunuoghene (2014) shows that prolonged industrial actions in Nigeria seriously impacted on student graduations: over the years many graduations have been rescheduled because of the strikes that have characterized Nigerian public institutions. For example, in 2009, final year students in Nigerian tertiary institutions held their graduation late due to the prolonged strike actions during the year.

Edinyang and Ubi (2013) also found that prolonged strike action has an effect on student graduation. They found that most public universities in Nigeria held their graduations very late because of the nationwide strike that took place in 2009. The situation in Nigeria is not different from the Ghana education sector. The prolonged strikes in the public universities in Ghana have led to the delay in students' graduation over the past years. However, although the situation is evident in all the public universities across the country, there no research to support this evidence.

### **2.9.6 Poor employment relationship**

Poor employment relationship has been identified as one of the consequences of strike action within the workplace. According to Arputharaj and Gayatri (2014), strike action could bring about conflict which may affect the employment relationship in the workplace. Arputharaj & Gayatri (2014) suggest that strike action is not a healthy tool in an organisation because it has the potential to affect the employment relationships between the employees and employers. The authors are of the view that each time employees embark on strike action, whether protected or unprotected, it shows some kind of betrayal. To buttress this further, Arputharaj & Gayatri (2014) acknowledge that strike action is a constitutional right which every employee



can exercise. However, this may bring some kind of tension between the employer and employees (strikers) which will go a long way to negatively affect the employment relationship.

Gyamfi (2011) also found that strike has a negative impact on the employment relationship. According to Gyamfi (2011), any form of industrial action has a potential effect on the employment relationship in an organisation.

### **2.9.7 Disruption of effective teaching**

In addition to the above, disruption of teaching is another consequence of strike action in the public universities. Studies (Wills, 2014; Clotfelter, Ladd & Vigdor, 2010) found that strike action in the universities affects teaching. According to Wills (2014), the adverse effects of strike action in South African universities are obvious in terms of disruption to teaching programmes. Wills (2014) found that in recent time effective teaching has been disrupted in most South African universities due to frequent strikes embarked upon by learners and staff. The author asserts that in the past few years the government has considered declaring teaching an essential service because of massive strike action in almost all the universities in the country. The main reason behind this proposed policy is to prevent disruption of teaching in most schools.

Clotfelter *et al.* (2010) also found strike action in universities affects academic activities, including teaching. According to Clotfelter *et al.* (2010), evidence suggests that teaching has been disrupted in some schools over the past few years due to strike action. Clotfelter *et al.* (2010) state that teaching is one of the core activities of every institution, private or public. Therefore, a disruption in teaching will occur when the academic activities are affected due to strike action.

### **2.9.8 Disruption of research and publication**

Research and publication are other important activities of universities which can be affected when there is strike action. According to Kazeem and Ige (2010), research and publication are the core activities of every institution of higher learning. This means that disruptions in the academic calendar will have major implications for these activities. They show that once an institution of higher learning is shut down it affects not only teaching and learning but also research and publication.

Usoro and Ogbuanya (2012) also found that incessant strike action in higher institutions of learning affects activities including research and publication. According to Usoro and Ogbuanya (2012) once there is strike action in the higher institution of learning it affects every activity and research and publication are no exception.

Olakunle (2011) in his study also found that strike action affects not only teaching and learning but also affect research and publication. He contends that strike action has major implications on academic research in technical education. He continues to explain that academic research is an integral part of education because it plays a crucial role in revamping and enhancing the quality of teaching and learning. According to Olakunle (2011), once there is strike action, students and researchers may not be willing to go into academic research. He posits that during strike action, students may find it very difficult to meet their supervisors and this may affect the volume of research in the institution. Having examined the impact of strike action on public universities, it is also important to determine the effect of such strike on the country as a whole.

## **2.10 Impact of strike action on the country or economy**

One important aspect of this study is to examine the extent to which strike action by employees of public universities affects the country as a whole. There are several ways in which strike action may impact on a country. According to Ige Akindele (2014), teachers' strike action does not only affect educational institutions but it also has a negative impact on the country as a whole. Several researchers (Aidelunuoghene, 2014; Israelstam, 2011; Majokweni, 2013; Murwirapachena & Sibanda, 2014; Nweke, 2015 Surujlal, 2014) have also revealed that strike action has a number of negative consequences on a country. The following are the negative impacts that strike action has on a country:

### **2.10.1 Loss of investment**

Loss of investment is one of the major consequences of strike action in a country. Murwirapachena and Sibanda (2014) found that loss of investment is one of the negative impacts that is associated with strikes in a country. Murwirapachena and Sibanda (2014) are of the view that a country's loss of investment is a long term effect of strike action because the strike has the potential to affect the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). According to Murwirapachena and Sibanda (2014, p.557), "investment is stimulated through boosting investor confidence, which is normally perceived through a country's economic stability".

Murwirapachena and Sibanda (2014) suggest that some strikes are politically motivated in an attempt to improve working conditions. Politically motivated and prolonged strike action may affect both domestic and foreign investment. The authors further assert that investors are often risk averse and rely on the stability of a country in terms of political, economic, and social stability before investing their capital. Generally, investors prefer to invest in a country where there is stability and peaceful co-existence. Therefore, persistent or frequent strike action in a country will affect the investors' confidence.

According to Majokweni (2013), strike action tends to destroy the reputation of a country and its ability to attract foreign investment. Majokweni (2013) contends that even though international and local laws recognise the right to strike, strikes negatively affect a country's economy through their impact on investor confidence.

### **2.10.2 Loss of productive hours**

As well as loss of investment, loss of productive hours has also been identified as one of the negative consequences of strike action in a country. It is an undeniable fact that there is no strike without loss of productive hours. This is corroborated by Murwirapachena and Sibanda (2014), who state that industrial actions have the potential to contribute to the loss of productive hours in a country. They further assert that for strike action to be successful, employees and their union leaders have to hit hard at the employer where it hurts and that mostly means halting production. Murwirapachena and Sibanda (2014) show that when workers and their union(s) embark on industrial action, many productive hours are lost as a result of picketing, seat-ins and negotiations. Usually, employers and union representatives spend productive hours in negotiating, in an attempt to address the employment issues which brought about the strike action. Murwirapachena & Sibanda (2014) further state that the longer the strike, the more productive hours are lost.

This is borne out by statistics by the DoL (2014) which show that, in 2012, approximately 3.3 million (3,309,884) productive working days, involving 241,391 employees, were lost as a result of strike actions. In 2011 2.8 million (2,806,656) days were lost involving 203,138 employees. The analysis of these figures suggests that there is an increase in the incidence of strikes in South Africa and this has affected the profit margin of many firms. Economic Research Division (2010) revealed that the South African economy was hugely affected by the

Transnet strike in 2010. Given that the transport sector is the engine of growth, the South African economy recorded a huge loss in production as a result of the three-week strike by Transnet. The then-acting Chief Executive of Transnet indicated that the organisation lost approximately R60 million as a result of loss of productive hours and damages caused to infrastructural and equipment.

Coetzee (2011) maintains that the Transnet strike cost the South African economy between R300 million and R500 million per day. Currently, South Africa has lost huge amounts of money and productive days as a result of the frequent strikes in the country, especially in the mining sector. Pulse (2012) alludes to the fact that the forty one-day strike that took place at Lonmin's Marikana mine led to the loss in production of about 15% of mine's 2011 annual output. The situation in South Africa is not very different from Ghana. Ghana has recorded huge losses in production due to strike action over the last decades. A study conducted by Gyamfi (2011) revealed that the massive strikes that took place in Ghana led to great loss of productive hours. However, there is no empirical research in Ghana which quantifies the amount of money the country lost in terms of loss of productive hours whereas in South Africa there is research to back up the evidence.

### **2.10.3 Loss of revenue**

In addition to the loss of productive hours and investment, loss of revenue is another impact of strike action in a country. There is no doubt that strike action affects government efforts to mobilise revenue. Researchers (Aidelunuoghene, 2014; Gyamfi, 2011; Murwirapachena & Sibanda, 2014; Olusegun Ajayi, 2014) hold that there is a positive correlation between strike action and a country's revenue. Thus strike action has the potential to affect a country's revenue. In a study conducted by Gyamfi (2011) to assess the effects of industrial unrest on the Ghana health service, it was found that strike action by health workers affected revenue mobilisation in the whole country. According to the author, about 88% of the respondents (nurses) acknowledged their strike action affected revenue mobilisation in Ghana.

Similarly, Olusegun Ajayi (2014) shows that strike actions in Nigeria over the years affected revenue mobilisation in the country. According to him the government lost huge sums of money in the education sector over the years because of incessant strikes. He contends that many students in Nigeria prefer universities in neighboring African countries such as Ghana,

South Africa, Togo and Benin, not because of the superiority of their academic programmes but because of the disruption of the academic calendar as a result of many strike actions in the public tertiary institutions in Nigeria. In view of this, these countries earn huge amounts of money from Nigerian students at the expense of Nigerian universities. He further suggests that the Nigerian government loses many billions of Naira per month due to strikes in the public universities.

Aidelunuoghene (2014) also alludes to the fact that strike action leads to loss of revenue. The study focuses on strike action that has the potential to lead to loss of revenue since the students will no more pay their fees and other charges during the period of strike. He further suggests that any university or government who depend on student fees to grease the system will not meet such target due to the strike action and further asserts that there is financial loss to the universities and the nation due to the fact that the staff will be eventually paid for the services that they have not rendered. The following is the discussion on the loss of job due to strike action in a country.

#### **2.10.4 Loss of jobs or employment**

In addition to the above consequences of strikes, loss of jobs is another impact of strike action on a country. Studies have shown that one potential effect of strike action is loss of jobs (Chamber of Mines of South Africa, 2012; DoL, 2014; Ige Akindele, 2014; Murwirapachena & Sibanda, 2014). According to Ige Akindele (2014), in the last decades, strike actions in Nigeria have contributed to the loss of many jobs in the country. Ige Akindele (2014) contends that the prolonged strikes in Nigeria have forced the government and many employers to cut jobs and this too has serious consequences for the Nigerian economy.

Murwirapachena and Sibanda (2014) add that prolonged strikes in South Africa have had substantial impact on jobs (employment). South African employers have recorded huge losses in production due to loss of productive hours which subsequently led to loss of jobs. According to Murwirapachena and Sibanda (2014), the most affected employees are those who work under the piece-rate system.

Statistics from the DoL (2014) reveal that wages to the value of R6.6 billion were lost because of the massive strikes that took place in 2012. According to the DoL (2014), the prolonged

strike in 2012 led to the loss of many jobs. The DoL (2014) notes that many firms were shut down after the prolonged strike and this led to employees losing their jobs. The DoL (2014) further indicates that even more employees were retrenched or dismissed due to strike-related issues in South Africa. Rapatsa and Matloga (2014) claim that in October 2012, Amplats - a Platinum Mining Company terminated employment of 12,000 striking miners due to the prolonged strike. It can be concluded, therefore, that there is a correlation between strike action and job loss.

### **2.10.5 Loss of lives and injuries**

Loss of lives and injuries to strikers are some of the effects of strike action in a country. Sometimes, strikes are characterised by violence which results in loss of lives and injuries to strikers. Previous studies show that strikes in many parts of the world have led to loss of lives and injuries over the years (Ige Akindele, 2014; Jacobs, 2013; Odeku, 2014; Rapatsa & Matloga, 2014) According to Odeku (2014), in South Africa, violent strikes have resulted in a lot of ugly incidents which have led to the deaths of many strikers. Odeku (2014) asserts that strikes in South Africa were frequently accompanied by violence and strikers were regularly beaten, arrested and shot by the police. Strike breakers were intimidated, beaten and sometimes murdered by striking workers.

In South Africa, intimidation, assaults and murders of strike breakers have been a persistent feature of many large-scale strikes (Rapatsa & Matloga2014). Rapatsa and Matloga (2014) also allude to the fact that South Africa has lost prominent people through violent strikes over the years. A classic example is the Marikana Massacre which took place in 2012. According to Rapatsa and Matloga (2014, p.119), “on the 10th August 2012, workers at Lonmin Platinum Mine Marikana in North West Province went on an unprotected (wild cat) strike demanding amongst other things a monthly salary increment from ZAR 4,000 (US\$ 500) to ZAR 12,500 (US\$ 1,500) and the expulsion of National Union of Mine Workers leaders or rather non-recognition of those leaders”. The strike turned violent which led to the death of many strikers and police officers. The Marikana strike alone claimed a total of 43 lives. SAIRR (2013) claim that more than 181 people were killed, at least 313 injured, and 3,058 arrested as a result of violent strikes in South Africa between 1999 and 2012.

This phenomenon is not different from Nigeria. In Nigeria, many strikers or employees have lost their lives due to violent strikes over the years. Ige Akindele (2014) maintains that strikes have contributed to the deaths of many Nigerians. For example, in 2009, the

Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) went on a three-month nationwide strike which was generally peaceful but still resulted in the death of 27 people. Adavbiele (2015) also found that in some circumstances, union leaders have been attacked and some of them have sustained serious injuries; and some have paid with their lives due to the violent nature of strike action in Nigeria.

The situation in South Africa and Nigeria is not different from Ghana. In Ghana, a few strikes have been accompanied by violence. Therefore, Ghana has witnessed the situation where some strikers have lost their lives due to violent strikes. However, there is limited empirical study to support this finding (Gyamfi, 2011).

#### **2.10.6 Falling standard of education**

A falling standard of education in Sub-Saharan Africa is partially attributed to the prevalence of strike action in some universities. Ghanaian universities are no exception. Some researchers (Ige Akindele, 2014; Olusegun Ajayi, 2014) have claimed that strike action tends to contribute to falling s of education in the country. In recent times, there have been growing concerns among stakeholders about the falling standard of education in Ghana and Nigeria (Ige Akindele, 2014). The author argues that the falling standard of education in these countries is a result of frequent strike action in the tertiary institutions. Ige Akindele (2014) believes that strike action is one of the factors that contributes to the falling standards of education, although there are other contributing factors as well. According to Ige Akindele (2014), evidence suggests that the performance and standard of education in Nigeria is declining as a result of prolonged strike action in almost all of the public tertiary institutions. For instance, the education performance in Nigeria has declined significantly between 2006 and 2011. The average score has declined from 51% to 47.6%. Also, Nigeria has dropped in the universities' ranking in Africa. Ige Akindele (2014) found that Nigeria's rank has declined from 21<sup>st</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup>.

Olusegun Ajayi (2014) also ascribes the falling standard of education partially to rampant strike action in the education sector. Olusegun Ajayi (2014) further claims that when teachers embark on strike action, it affects teaching and learning which further have a long term effect on the

standard of education. Ajeyalemi (2013) found that strike action has a spiral effect on the nation's education system.

### **2.10.7 Bad reputation**

A bad reputation has been identified as another effect of strike action in the country. Aidelunuoghene (2014) found that strike action by the employees of higher institutions of learning may affect the image of the country. According to Aidelunuoghene (2014), frequent strike action in the public universities gives a very poor image of the country.

Gyamfi (2011) also observed that strike action has the potential of affecting the image of the country. Gyamfi (2011) conducted a study to assess the effects of industrial unrest on Ghana's health service and it was found that the strike action embarked upon by Ghanaian nurses tarnished the reputation of the country abroad.

Odeku (2014) maintains that strike action has a long term effect on a country. According to him strike action affects the reputation of a country in the long run. The author argues that South Africa has been recognised as a strike nation because of the prevalence of strikes in all the sectors of the country. Odeku (2014) argues that the worst part is that most of these strikes are characterised by violence which further aggravated South Africa's reputation. As mentioned above, the reputation of South Africa has been brought into question by the number of people killed, or injuries sustained during violent strikes in the country. The situation has negatively affected the image of the country internationally.

### **2.10.8 National security threat**

It has been suggested that strike action in the public universities may have security implications for the country. Ige Akindele (2014) suggests that nationwide strike action among tertiary institutions may pose a security threat to the country. According to him, during parliamentary sessions, many politicians recruit students from higher institutions of learning and use them as thugs to execute their evil agenda by killing their rivals and destroying their properties. Ige Akindele (2014) asserts that once there is a strike and the universities are shut down, many students use the opportunity created by idleness to engage themselves in social vices such as armed robbery, prostitution, kidnapping and internet fraud.



Olusegun Ajayi (2014) also asserts that strike action in the public universities may pose a security threat to the country. Olusegun Ajayi (2014) postulates that when there is strike action in the universities, students often use the opportunity created by the idleness to engage in deviant behaviour like armed robbery, arson, rape and touting. He argues that the crime rate is increasing in Nigeria because of the massive strikes that have characterised Nigerian tertiary institutions. This leads students to use the idleness to engage in social vices. Odeku (2014) also found that strike action has security implications for South Africa because in South Africa, strikes are frequently accompanied by violence and strikers are often beaten, arrested and shot by the police. Also, in the past some strike breakers were intimidated, beaten and sometimes murdered by strikers. Odeku (2014) contends that the act of beating, arrest and shooting may pose a national security threat to the country.

#### **2.10.9 Cost implications**

Last, but not the least, the cost implication is another negative consequence of strike action. According to Aidelunuoghene (2014), in Nigeria, the socio-economic costs of strike actions in the country cannot be quantified. The author claims that the Nigerian government continues to incur costs every year because of massive strike actions in the country. He asserts that sometimes the government has to incur extra costs by providing security for the strikers because of the violent nature of strike action. Also, there are cost implications for the country because of the loss of productive hours as a result of work stoppages.

Gyamfi (2011) also holds that strike action has cost implications for a country. According to him, nationwide strike action has the potential of increasing government expenditure because the government has to ensure maximum protection of all the citizens. The author contends that during strike action, the government needs to provide maximum security for the strikers, as well as for the employers. The additional responsibility of providing security in the country during strike action has serious consequences for government budgets.

Having considered the impact of strike action on Ghanaian universities, it is important to examine the causes of strike action in the universities.

#### **2.11 Causes of strike action in Ghanaian public universities**

There are many factors that are lead to strike action all over the world. These factors can be classified into economic and non-economic factors. Researchers have identified various factors

that are responsible for strikes in the public universities worldwide; and Ghana is no exception (Adavbiele, 2015; Aidelunuoghene, 2014; Deacon, 2014; Edinyang & Ubi, 2014; Ige Akindele, 2014; Momodu, Matudi & Momodu, 2014; Olusegun Ajayi, 2014; Rossouw, 2012; Seniwoliba, 2013; Seniwoliba, 2014; Wills, 2014). However, the causes of strikes in public universities vary from one university to another. In Ghana, the common causes of strikes in the public tertiary intuitions are as follow:

### **2.11.1 Demand for wage increments**

Globally, workers' demands for wage increments is a common phenomenon that has been responsible for many strikes. Studies (Gyamfi, 2011; Ibrahim & Alhaji, 2015; Ige Akindele, 2014; Jamasmie, 2013; Murwirapachena & Sibanda, 2014; Osakede & Ijimakinwa, 2014; Seniwoliba, 2013; Seniwoliba, 2014; Surujlal, 2014) have shown that the demand for wage and salary increments is the main cause of strikes, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa. According to Murwirapachena and Siband (2014), a large number of strikes in South Africa are the result of petitions by employees to increase their wages. They refer to the 2013 edition of the Industrial Action Report which indicates that wages, bonuses and compensation are the main reasons for strikes in South Africa. Statistics from the DoL (2014) show that a total of 99 strikes were recorded in South Africa and most of these strikes were related to wage issues. Murwirapachena & Siband (2014) are of the view that most employers in South Africa fail to meet the demands of employees, hence the strike action.

Jamasmie (2013) found that in in July 2013, the Chamber of Mines of South Africa (CMSA) which represented gold producers, proposed a 5% wage increase. However, during the negotiations, the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) considered the offer an insult to employees and went ahead to declare a deadlock in the negotiations. NUM demanded a 60% salary increase for gold miners from entry-level up. The Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union (AMCU) also demanded an increase in salary, this time as high as 150%. According to Jamasmie (2013), the employers viewed various demands as ludicrous. In August 2013, the South African Transport and Allied Workers Union (SATAWU), working at the South Africa Airways, embarked on a strike due to the failure of the airline to add a 0.4% once off payment to its offer of 6.5%.

The situation in South Africa is not very different from the situation in Ghana. In Ghana, poor wages are the main cause of strikes in almost all sectors. The education sector is no exception (Gyamfi, 2011). In 2010, health workers embarked on numerous strikes due to the inability of the government to meet their demands for an increase in wages. In that same year, education workers also went on strike due to low wages. Seniwoliba (2013) also claims that remuneration is the major cause of strikes, not only in Ghana, but in other part, of the world as well, including Nigeria, South Africa, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Canada, Australia and United State of America. According to Seniwoliba (2013), the causes of strikes can be categorised into two main streams, namely: economic and non-economic factors. He is of the view that the economic causes relate to issues of compensation like wages, bonuses and allowances. In 2012, Ghanaian education workers demanded a 15% increment in their wages and salaries. However, the government said that such a demand was outrageous and that it could only pay 8% due to the economic crisis worldwide (Seniwoliba, 2013). The workers refused the government proposal to pay 8% and they subsequently went on a nationwide strike to press home their demands.

Ige Akindele (2014) suggests that low wages are a major issue in Nigeria and they have triggered many strikes, especially in the education sector. According to Ige Akindele (2014), in Nigeria, the salaries of university lecturers are relatively low compared with their counterparts in other Africa countries such as South Africa, Kenya, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe and Ghana. He maintains that in 2009 a full-time professor in Ghana received \$4,800 per annum. In Zimbabwe, a full-time professor earned \$48,000. In the case of South Africa, a full-time professor earned between \$55,000. However, in Nigeria, a full-time professor earned \$439.2. Also, with regard to lecturers, a full-time lecturer in South Africa earned \$15000 in 2009. A full-time lecturer in Zimbabwe earned \$12000. In Ethiopia and Kenya, full-time lecturers earned \$3,600 and \$3,600 respectively. However, in Ghana and Nigeria, fulltime lecturers earned \$1800 and \$222 respectively. Analysis of these figures reveal that there is a great disparity in salary structures between countries. It is evident that Ghanaian and Nigerian lecturers and professors earned far less than their counterparts in the other African countries reviewed. The situation triggered many strikes in Nigerian and Ghanaian universities in an attempt to force the government to increase salaries of the universities' employees, especially the lecturers.

### **2.11.2 Poor working conditions**

Apart from remuneration, poor working conditions has also been identified as a major cause of strike action, particularly in Africa (Gyamfi, 2011; Ige Akindele, 2014; Momodu *et al.*, 2014; Nweke, 2015; Seniwoliba, 2013). According to Gyamfi (2011), the deplorable working conditions of Ghanaian workers have led to many strikes over the last decades. There is no doubt that Ghanaian teachers and lecturers work under deplorable conditions which sometimes affect their health. Seniwoliba (2013) also expresses the view that in Ghana, poor conditions of work have been identified as a factor which has led to many strikes. In 2012 education workers embarked on strike action in demand for better conditions of work (Seniwoliba, 2013).

Nweke (2015) states that the issue of poor conditions of work in Ghana is not different from Nigeria. According to Nweke (2015), in Nigeria, some workers still work under deplorable conditions, much worse than in other countries in the sub-region namely, Zimbabwe, Egypt and South Africa. Nweke (2015) further comments that workers in Nigeria, especially those in the education sector, have embarked on several strikes in order to force the government to provide them with better conditions of work.

Momodu *et al.* (2014) support the contention of Nweke (2015) that in Nigeria, poor conditions of work are a major factor contributing to strikes in the country. Momodu *et al.* (2014) found that the poor working conditions amongst academic staff of universities in Nigeria have led to a number of strikes in these institutions.

### **2.11.3 The introduction of new research fund**

In Ghana, the introduction of the new research fund by the ruling government (National Democratic Congress) is one of the contributing factors to strike action in the public universities across the country. According to Seniwoliba (2014), the decision by the government to replace the old books' and research allowances with the new research fund has been a major cause of strikes in the public universities in Ghana. The tertiary education system in Ghana has witnessed frequent strikes in the last few years following the decision by the government (President John Dramani Mahama) to scrap the lecturers' books and research allowances.

The university lecturers expressed the view that they could not understand why the government had scrapped their book and research allowances. They argued that the old book and research allowances were attached to their conditions of service as this allowance was part of the collective decision taken by both the government and the University Teachers Association of Ghana (UTAG). UTAG argues that the removal of the books' and research allowances could not be a unilateral decision taken by the government. According to the UTAG, s9(13) of the Unified Conditions of Service for Public Universities in Ghana states that, "the existing books and research allowances guarantee minimum and immediate support across the board for all lecturers and research fellows". The purpose of the above mentioned provision is to assist lecturers and researchers in Ghana to start their professional development and careers in terms of buying their research books and other instructional materials. The UTAG is of the view that the removal of the books and research allowances would hinder the career development of their members. Several attempts by UTAG to stop government from scrapping the old research and books allowances proved futile. The unilateral decision taken by the government led to a number of successful strikes in the public universities, especially in 2013 (Seniwoliba 2014).

#### **2.11.4 Poor implementation of the new pay policy (single spine salary structure)**

The introduction of the new pay policy by the government is one of the causes of strikes, not only among public university employees but across the entire public service in Ghana. Researchers (Aliu & Fuseini 2014; Edward & Nyame, 2014; Seniwoliba, 2014) found that the implementation of the new pay policy or single spine salary structure led to numerous strikes across the country, especially in the health and education sectors.

According to Edward and Nyame (2014), the single spine pay policy (SSPP), also known as single spine salary structure (SSSS), is a pay system that ensures efficiency and effectiveness in managing the government's wage bill and removing disparities in public service salaries (Edward & Nyame, 2014). This policy has been used by several nations as a means of determining the salaries of public servants. For example, Norway and Denmark operate a uniform pay scale which covers all public workers. In 2005, the government of Ghana appointed a consulting group called Co-En to advise him on a sustainable pay policy. At the end of the assignment, the consulting group proposed the single spine pay policy or single spine salary structure. The motivation behind the new pay policy was to address the disparity in the government administrative pay system. The recommendations by Co-En were accepted by the

government. According to Edward and Nyame (2014), in January 2010, the government of Ghana implemented the new pay policy despite having had many salary structures based on the Ghana Public Service Article 190 of the 1992 Constitution for more than one hundred years.

Aliu and Fuseini (2014) assert that, despite the beauty of this policy, some challenges were encountered in its implementation. As a result of the poor implementation of the pay policy, the country witnessed several labour unrests. For instance, public university lecturers across the country went on a nationwide strike from August to September 2013 over issues relating to nonpayment of allowances, which were part of benefits supposed to be derived from the implementation of the new pay policy. Similarly, in February, 2013, the Ghana Medical Association (GMA) embarked on a nationwide strike as a result of unresolved migration to the new pay policy.

Seniwoliba (2014) agrees with the above researchers that the poor implementation of the new pay policy is one of the leading causes of strike actions in Ghana. According to Seniwoliba (2014), the current industrial action in Ghana is not because the public workers do not appreciate the government's effort to bridge the salary gap but because the Fair Wages and Salaries Commission has failed to provide proper education to the workers on the implementation of the policy. He continues, adding that one problem with the implementation is that some labour unions do not benefit from the new pay policy. Because of this, Ghanaian workers, including university staff members embarked on several strikes in an attempt to draw government attention to the poor implementation of the policy.

#### **2.11.5 Government failure to fulfill or honour promises or agreements**

Government failure to honour his or her the agreements made with trade unions or employees has been another cause of strike action in Ghana. Studies (Ige Akindele, 2014; Seniwoliba, 2014; Ezeagba, 2014) show that government failure to honour its promises made to employees is a contributing factor to strikes in many countries. According to Seniwoliba (2013), Ghanaian workers, over the years, embarked on several strike actions because of the failure of the government to fulfill its part in agreements. For example, the first quarter of 2013 was a historic time in Ghana with a lot of strike action because the various organisations, such as the Fair Wages and Salaries Commission and the National Labour Commission charged with the responsibility of addressing labour issues, failed woefully to address the concerns of workers.

Government failure is a common phenomenon in every country but the situation in Ghana is very alarming because the government has failed on several occasions to address the concerns of workers (Seniwoliba, 2013). This situation in Ghana is similar to the situation in Nigeria.

According to Ezeagba (2014), university lecturers and students in Nigeria embarked on several strikes in the past years because of government failure to honour its agreements. For instance, the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) strike which took place 1988 and petroleum price hike of 2001 are incidents that occurred in Nigeria. Ezeagba (2014) suggests that government failure emanates from poor leadership, lip service and lack of accountability. According to Ezeagba (2014), most strikes in Nigeria occurred as a result of government inability to fulfill its part of the agreements made with universities lecturers.

#### **2.11.6 Non-enforcement of the labour regulation**

Non-enforcement of labour regulation has been identified as one of the factors that has contributed to strikes all over the world (Gyamfi, 2014; Rapatsa & Matloga, 2014; Seniwoliba, 2013). According to Seniwoliba (2013), recent industrial actions in Ghana could have been properly addressed using the Labour Act. The large amount of labour unrest or strike actions in Ghana is an indication that labour experts and government and union leaders fail to apply the Labour Act in an attempt to resolve emerging labour issues. Seniwoliba (2013) suggests that the role players (government, labour unions and employer associations) in the labour market should be aware of the provisions in the Act and use them during their arbitration proceedings. The problem in Ghana is that parties to the employment often tend to negotiate on a positional basis and often the negotiations end up in a deadlock. The Fair Wage and Salaries Commission sometimes is unable to implement the rulings of the National Labour Commission or refuses to respect agreements signed with some labour unions.

Gyamfi (2011) is of the view that most employers and employees are not fully aware of the legislation that pertains to employment issues in Ghana. In Ghana, it appears that labour practitioners and labour union leaders do not apply the labour regulation in their efforts to provide solutions to their issues (Gyamfi, 2011). Rapatsa and Matloga (2014) share the view of the above researchers that non-enforcement of labour regulations is a contributing factor to strikes especially in Africa. According to Rapatsa **and** Matloga (2014), the Marikana strike is

a classic example of the fact that the parties to the industrial dispute failed to utilise the labour law or regulations in addressing the problem.

### **2.11.7 Unnecessary delays in payment of salaries and other emoluments**

Delay in payment of salaries and other benefits has been found to be a contributing factor to strikes in Ghana and Nigeria (Ezeagba, 2014; Gyamfi, 2011; Seniwoliba, 2013). Ezeagba (2014) suggests that in Nigeria, most organisations have failed to pay their worker on a timely basis. The author opines that many organisations delay the payment or refuse to pay their workers' salaries and other emoluments even if they have the capacity to do so.

According to Ezeagba (2014), in recent years many schools in Nigeria went on strike due to non-payment of salaries and other benefits. The issue of delays in payment of salaries and other emoluments is a common phenomenon in Ghana especially in the education and health sectors.

According to Gyamfi (2011), over the past years, Ghanaian workers embarked on several industrial actions because of delays in payment of wages. For example, in the early part of 2012, teachers in Ghana went on a nationwide strike because of non-payment of salaries and other entitlements. A similar situation occurred in the health sector where the health workers went on a nationwide strike in 2013 (Seniwoliba, 2013). Seniwoliba (2013) states that delays in payment of salaries is a serious matter in Ghana because it puts unnecessary stress on workers and their dependents. However, the situation in South Africa is different from the above two countries. In South Africa, workers receive their salaries before the end of the month. Though there is no study to support this assertion, it is generally accepted that most South Africans receive their salaries at the end of the month as opposed to Ghana and Nigeria.

### **2.11.8 Funding constraints**

Inadequate funding of public universities in Ghana, Nigeria and South Africa remains a major problem that accounts for many strikes in these countries (Awuzie; 2010; Momodu *et al.*, 2014; Olanipekun, 2011). In Ghana, government remains the major financier of public universities. According to Awuzie (2010), studies have shown that in spite of the government funding of the public tertiary institutions, the funds are insufficient to run these institutions. Awuzie (2010) asserts that funding of public institutions in Ghana has worsened to the extent that the university management is not able to pay salaries and other emoluments of staff.



Further, Momodu *et al.* (2014) also suggest that poor funding remains a key issue in Ghana and Nigeria which has been resulting resulted in strikes over the last decades. According to Momodu *et al.* (2014), the Nigerian government and the federal state are the major financers of the public tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The authors assert that these financers provide approximately 80% of the funds for the running of public universities. Momodu *et al.* (2014, p.8107) found that “since the advent of democracy in 1999, the budget allocation to the education sector continues to fall”. Momodu *et al.* (2014, p.8108) assert that “Nigeria’s gross domestic product (GDP) for the year 2012 was 262.2 billion USD, out of which allocation to the education sector for 2012 was 1.96 billion USD”. In the 2013 budget, the government allocation to all the public tertiary institutions \$2.69 billion. The budget allocation was far less than the 2013 budget of two universities in United States of America namely Penn State University which is \$4.42b billion and University of Texas which is \$2.48 billion.

According to Ghana and Peprah (2015), Ghana operates on cost-sharing system in funding for higher education but government provides a higher percentage of the funds than other institutions. This cost-sharing system was established in 1979. The government provides 70% of the funds and the remaining 30% come from internally generated funds, such as grants, school fees, public-private partnerships, donations and so forth. In spite of the government funding to the public tertiary institutions in Ghana, the funds are not adequate to run these institutions. For example, the 2015 budget presented to parliament shows that only GHC6,740,437,383.00 was allocated to the education sector (Ghana & Peprah 2015). This situation has contributed to several strike actions amongst the public universities across the country.

### **2.11.9 Poor employment relations between the government and workers**

According to Seniwoliba (2013), good industrial or employment relations are seen as an antidote to labour disputes. However, in Ghana poor employment relations between the labour unions and employers or government is a major factor which has contributed to numerous strikes over the years. This includes strike action in the education sector. Seniwoliba (2013) claims that poor working relationships between all the actors is a cause of strikes in Ghana. In addition, Gyamfi (2011) observes that there exists the perception of master servant relations in Ghana. Thus the government sees its role as exercising

‘managerial prerogatives’ whereas the unions see their role as opposing this exercise of power. There is no harmonious working relationship between government and public university employees and as a result the employees believe that the only way they can enforce their demands is through strikes.

#### **2.11.10 Mismanagement of the economy**

Mismanagement of the economy has been identified as a cause of strikes in Ghana. In the past few years, Ghanaian workers embarked on strike action due to the inability of the government to properly manage the economy (Seniwoliba, 2013). According to Seniwoliba (2013), the success of every nation depends largely on how well the economic resources are managed. However, in Ghana, the situation is different because the government is unable to manage the economic resources more efficiently. Seniwoliba (2013) contends that one aim of the perennial strikes in Ghana is to force the government to address the economic challenges facing the country because of poor management of the economy. The mismanagement of the economy has brought about high level of corruption, unemployment and a drop in the standard of living.

Olusegun Ajayi (2014) found that mismanagement of the economy is also one of the contributing factors to strike action in Nigeria. According to Olusegun Ajaria (2014), in 2009, the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) went on a one-week strike because of national economic mismanagement. Olusegun Ajayi (2014) further posits that for some years the Nigerian economy has been performing poorly due to mismanagement by politicians. The situation does not only lead to strike action in the tertiary institutions but in other public institutions as well. In 1984, ASUU embarked on strike action due to the deregulation of the economy.

#### **2.11.11 Poor handling of employee grievances**

Furthermore, poor handling of employee grievances is a contributing factor to strike action in Ghana. According to Gyamfi (2011), employee grievances are critical matters that need urgent attention and if not handled well can lead to strike action. The author adds that most of the strike action that took place in the past was as a result of the inability of the management to address the grievances of the employees. Gyamfi (2011) postulates that most grievances that have resulted in strike actions over the years could have been resolved using the Labour Act

2003. In addition to this, most labour practitioners and leaders failed to apply the Act in an effort to provide solutions to employee grievances. In Ghana, it is a known fact that the Fair Wages and Salaries Commission has failed on several occasions to address employee grievances. The Fair Wages and Salaries Commission is one of the weak institutions in Ghana because of its inability to resolve issues between the employees and their employers. (Gyamfi, 2011).

Similarly, in Nigeria, it was found that poor handling of employee grievances is one of the numerous causes of strike actions in the country. Olugbenga (2011) confirmed that unresolved grievances is a major cause of strikes in Nigeria. According to Olugbenga (2011), the lack of an institutionalised mechanism for dealing with labour disputes in Nigeria is worrisome. In Nigeria, the ASUU has constantly embarked on strike actions over the last decades due to government's shabby handling of employee grievances. On 4<sup>th</sup> December 2011, the ASUU resolved and painfully directed all its members to proceed on an indefinite strike because the government had failed to address their grievances. This strike affected academic activities in all public universities in Nigeria.

#### **2.11.12 Lack of negotiation skills**

Lack of negotiation skills among the parties to the employment relations is another factor responsible for strikes in Ghana. Seniwoliba (2013) asserts that many of the strike actions that took place in Ghana were as a result of the inability of the parties to negotiate due to the fact that they did not have the kind of skill needed for effective negotiation. He contends that strike action normally occurs when parties are unable to reach an agreement during the negotiation process. He suggests that in order to minimise strike action, the parties to the collective bargaining table should be apprised of the negotiation skills to enable them to bargain or negotiate with one another. According to Seniwoliba (2013), worker strikes in Ghana are sometimes the result of a lack of professional negotiating skills.

A study conducted by Ogunbanjo (2014) on doctors' strikes in Nigeria revealed that most of the leaders who were sent to the bargaining table to negotiate with government did not have the necessary skill. He asserts that most of the negotiations were not fruitful because the parties did not have the skill to bargain effectively and this resulted in many strikes over the years.

#### **2.11.13 Lack of trust**

Lack of trust has been identified as another cause of strikes worldwide. In Ghana, it is a known fact that lack of trust is an important issue that has contributed to strikes (Gyamfi, 2011). According to Gyamfi (2011), most workers have lost their trust in the government because government has constantly demonstrated that it does not keep its promises. In a study conducted by Gyamfi (2011), it was confirmed that lack of trust is one of the causes of strikes action in Ghana.

Olusegun Ajayi (2014) also discovered that lack of trust is among the leading causes of strike action in Nigerian tertiary institutions. He contends that sometimes workers are forced to declare strikes due to the fact that they have lost trust and confidence in their leaders. He further argues that in some circumstances workers lose trust in their leaders because they leaders have been bought by the government and they may not fight for the interest of their members. As a result, workers may be forced to declare unofficial strike action against their leaders. In addition, workers may lose trust in the ruling government for failing to honour its promises or agreements. According to Olusegun Ajayi (2014), most governments in Nigeria could not be trusted because of their failure to honour their promises made to organised labour and this resulted in many strikes. An example of this was when the Academic Staff Union of Universities went on an unofficial strike in 2009 because they had lost confidence and trust in the leaders. Ezeagba (2012) found that mistrust is also one of the causes of strike action in Nigeria. According to him, mistrust occurs when the government or the employer fails to fulfil its promises. Ezeagba (2012) continues to say that failure to honour promises or agreements may lead to mistrust which may lead to strike action.

#### **2.11.14 Unnecessary interference in the affairs of the universities by government**

Lastly, unnecessary interference in the affairs of the institutions by the government is another cause of much strike action in the public universities worldwide. In Ghana and Nigeria, every ruling government has tried to interfere in the affairs of the public tertiary institutions (Ige Akindele, 2014). According to Ige Akindele (2014), the Nigerian government has paid the piper and thus dictated the tune. The government exercised control over the activities of the public tertiary institutions because of its commitment to the funding of these institutions. Ige Akindele (2014) posits that the government often interferes in the affairs of the institutions by imposing candidates on the tertiary institutions against the will of the staff and students when it comes to appointing leaders in high positions. In Ghana, it is a known fact that the

government plays a crucial role in the appointment of Vice Chancellors of the institutions of higher learning (van der Velden, 2012). This situation has resulted in conflict which has often lead to strike- or protest action by students.

## **2.12 Positive effects of strike action**

Generally, people perceive strike action as disruptive and destructive because it has so many effects on the employers, employees and on the country as a whole (Nweke, 2014). However, researchers have found that there is a positive side to strike action despite its disruptive and destructive nature. (Edinyang and Ubi, 2013; Ige Akindele 2014; Olusegun Ajayi, 2014; Seniwoliba, 2014). Despite the fact that strikes are perceived to be bad, illogical and unhealthy, there are a few benefits that are associated with the action.

According to Olusegun Ajayi (2014), although strikes have a lot of negative implications both for the organisation and the country as a whole, they serve as mechanisms for workers to express their grievances. Olusegun Ajayi (2014) argues that strike action is an effective tool which workers use to voice their grievances without fear of intimidation. Again, the author opines that successful strike action leads to improvement in the working conditions of employees. Olusegun Ajayi (2014) further suggests that when strikes are successfully implemented, they are an indication of the positive human rights posture of government and its democracy.

Nweke (2015) adds that there are some benefits associated with protected strike action. According to him, one positive impact of a strike is that it helps to meet some demands of the workers. For example, in 2013, the strike action by the public universities' employees in Ghana regarding the increment in wages and salaries was met by the government (Seniwoliba, 2013). Nweke (2015) further argue that strikes are used as mechanisms to put pressure on governments to change certain policies that do not support the interests of the larger society. In 2013, the majority of Ghanaians went on strike in order to put pressure on the government to reduce the price of petrol. As a result, the government was forced to reduce the price of petrol (Seniwoliba, 2013).

The following discussion leads to ways in which strike action can be addressed in public universities.

## **2.13 Measures to address strike action in the public universities**

There are several measures that can be put in place by the government, universities' employees and management to address frequent strike action in public universities, not only in Ghana but across the world.

The following are the measures that can be put in place by the above stakeholders to address the effect of strikes in the public universities.

### **2.13.1 Payment of adequate wages and salaries**

Payment of adequate or better wages and salaries is one of the measures that can be employed by government and other stakeholders in addressing labour unrest in public institutions. As discussed above, poor wages have been identified as the major cause of strikes in public tertiary institutions across the world (Gyamfi, 2011; Ibrahim & Alhaji, 2015; Ige Akindele, 2014; Jamasmie, 2013; Murwirapachena & Sibanda, 2014; Osakede & Ijimakinwa, 2014; Seniwoliba, 2013; Seniwoliba, 2014; Surujlal, 2014). Therefore, in order to minimise the high number of strikes in public universities, the government should ensure that wages and salaries paid to employees in the public universities is adequate.

Gyamfi (2011) maintains that adequate emolument is a key factor that will help to reduce industrial action in Ghana. He suggests that since remuneration is the main issue contributing to massive strikes in the country, the government must try as far as possible to ensure that adequate salaries paid to employees. Ige Akindele (2014) shares Gyamfi's (2011) view that government should increase the remuneration of workers. In Nigeria, the agitation for an increment in wages and salaries is a contributing factor to strikes as is the case in Ghana. It is against this background that Ige Akindele (2014) proposes that there should be an increment the remuneration of university employees, especially the lecturers.

### **2.13.2 Improvement in working conditions of employees**

One way to reduce strike action in public universities is to ensure that there is an improvement in the working conditions of employees. Poor conditions of work have been identified by researchers (Ahmad & Basheer, 2012; Gyamfi, 2011; Ige Akindele, 2014; Momodu *et al.*, 2014; Nweke, 2015; Seniwoliba, 2013) as one of the causes of strikes in Sub-Saharan Africa. Since time immemorial, Ghanaian teachers and lecturers have been agitating for improvement

in their working conditions. The situation has resulted in many strike actions over the years. Hence, in order to reduce this phenomenon in the educational system, the working conditions of the employees must be improved.

Nweke (2015) suggests that as part of addressing strikes in tertiary institutions, the government must intervene to ensure reasonable standards of working conditions. Ahmad and Basheer (2012) suggest that an improvement in working conditions would be key to addressing strikes in Nigeria. According to Ahmad and Basheer (2012), the working environment and working conditions are directly linked to industrial action. It is against this background that they recommend that working conditions of employees must be improved. Ige Akindele (2014) supports the view of the above authors that improved working conditions would serve as a means of minimising the frequency of strikes in organisations.

### **2.13.3 Collective bargaining or collective agreements**

Collective bargaining has been identified as an important tool to help addressing or preventing strikes in an organisation (Ahmad & Basheer, 2012; Gyamfi, 2011; Ige Akindele, 2014; Odeku, 2014). According to Ahmad and Basheer (2012), strike action is seen as part of the collective bargaining process within an organisation. Ahmad and Basheer (2012, p.423) elaborate, saying that collective bargaining is directly linked to industrial action because it determines whether the party should embark on strike or not. The Collective bargaining process ensures cooperation and coordination among the parties. Ahmad and Basheer (2012) add that in the collective bargaining process the occurrence of strikes will be very low if there is cooperation and coordination. It is against this background that they recommend that parties to industrial disputes should explore collective bargaining as a means of preventing strikes in organisations.

Odeku (2014) posits that collective bargaining is a powerful tool which has the potential of minimising strike action in an organisation. He defines collective bargaining as a negotiation process between the representatives of labour and employers with a view to negotiating the terms and conditions of the employment. According to Odeku (2014), collective bargaining is a legal document that outlines how disputes are to be settled or addressed when the need arises. Odeku (2014) opines that collective agreement is an alternative to strike in industrial dispute because it helps both parties to reach voluntary agreement on the matter at hand. In addition, Gyamfi (2011) recommends collective bargaining as an important tool in dealing with

industrial action. Gyamfi (2011) found that strike action could be prevented through an effective collective bargaining process.

#### **2.13.4 Honouring agreements**

One way in which strike action could be minimised is when government is able to fulfil the agreements made with labour unions. As already discussed, studies (Gyamfi, 2011; Ige Akindele, 2014; Ezeagba, 2014; Momodu *et al.*, 2014; Seniwoliba, 2014) have found that failure by governments to honour their agreements or promises is a major cause of strikes, not only in Africa but also in the rest of the world. Ezeagba (2014) asserts that if government is able to honour its part of agreements made with employees it will help in addressing strikes. According to Ezeagba (2014), agreements are meant to be honoured. Once agreement has been reached between parties (employer and employees) it will help avoid disputes which often lead to strike action.

Momodu *et al.* (2014) support the view of Ezeagba (2014) that governments must honour their agreements so as to minimise the frequent occurrence of strikes worldwide. According to Momodu *et al.* (2014), the government must demonstrate a strong sense of commitment and sincerity by honouring the agreements entered into with labour unions. Momodu *et al.* (2014) assert that when governments honour their agreements it will help to maintain industrial peace or harmony which will contribute to minimising the occurrence of strikes.

Gyamfi (2011) also maintains that governments must honour collective agreements with union leaders in order to avoid the possibility of strikes. Ige Akindele (2014) shares the views expressed by the above authors that governments must honour agreements in order to avoid industrial actions. Ige Akindele (2014) asserts that over the years public universities in Nigeria went on strikes due to government failure to honour its agreements. Ige Akindele (2014) contends that often, the Nigerian government enters into agreements with trade unions in order to avert strike actions. However, most of these agreements are later declined by the government, especially when there is change in government. Ige Akindele (2014) recommends that in order to address the phenomenon of strikes in the future, the government should not sign agreements it cannot or will not implement.

#### **2.13.5 Restoring the old books and research allowances**



Labour unrest in the public universities across all the regions of Ghana could be minimised if the government took the bold step of restoring the old books and research allowances. As previously discussed, government decision to replace old books and research allowances with the new research fund is a major contributing factor to strikes in the public universities in Ghana (Sarfo & Ngula, 2014; Seniwoliba, 2014). According to Sarfo and Ngula (2014), the Ghanaian government should try to restore the old books and research allowances of university lecturers in order to limit the agitations in the education sector.

Seniwoliba (2014) expresses a similar view that the government must restore the research and books allowances in order to avert strikes in the public universities. Okoampa-Ahoofe (2013) also support the views of the above authors. Okoampa-Ahoofe (2013) opines that Ghanaian lecturers deserve their research and books allowances. He therefore, recommends that the government must, as a matter of urgency, restore the research and books allowances of lecturers across the public universities in order to avoid strike action.

#### **2.13.6 Prompt payment of wages and salaries**

Prompt payment of wages and salaries by the government is one of the measures that will help to address strike action, especially in the public sector organisations in Ghana. In the above discussions, it was identified that delays in payment of wages and salaries is a major cause of strikes in Ghana and Nigeria. It is in view of this that researchers (Ezeagba, 2014; 2014; Gyamfi, 2011; Seniwoliba, 2013) have recommended the prompt payment of wages and salaries in order to avert future industrial actions in public universities.

According to Ezeagba (2014), prompt payment of lecturers' salaries and other benefits are imperative if the government intends to address the strike actions that have bedeviled the education sector. Ezeagba (2014, p.33) contends that prompt payment can be achieved in the following ways: "budgets, stating reliable sources of recurrent expenditures; adequate cash management, and revolving overdraft facility with financial houses. Other researchers, (Gyamfi, 2011; Seniwoliba, 2013), in Ghana have also recommended that the government should ensure prompt payment of salaries in order to avoid industrial conflict which often leads to strike action.

### **2.13.7 Maintaining sound or well-defined employment relations**

Maintaining well-defined employment relations is a factor that will help in addressing strike action in the public universities. According to Ezeagba (2014), well-defined employment relations are important in the prevention of industrial action. Ezeagba (2014) claims that sound employment relations are an important factor to promote industrial peace in order to help avert industrial disputes that might lead to strike action. Ezeagba (2014) opines that industrial relations helps to maintain good employer-employee relationship. He is of the view that every organisation must readdress its industrial relations system in order to ensure the rights of employees so as to minimise the possibility of industrial action.

Murwirapachena and Sibanda (2014) also recommend that sound stakeholder relationships should be created in order to avert any industrial dispute that might lead to future strike action. Murwirapachena and Sibanda (2014) are of the view that a harmonious relationship between all the stakeholders is necessary to minimise strikes in an organisation. Ige Akindele (2014) also advocates that there should be cordial relationship between government, academic staff, non-academic staff and management in order to reduce the occurrence of strike action in the universities. According to Ige Akindele (2014), all the stakeholders should work harmoniously together and see themselves as working towards the same goals.

### **2.13.8 Proper implementation of the new pay policy**

It has been mentioned that addressing the challenges associated with the implementation of the new pay policy will help in dealing with the agitations and strike actions in the Ghanaian public universities. Aliu and Fuseini (2014) hold that if the challenges associated with the implementation of the new pay policy are adequately addressed, it will help minimise the frequent strike actions in the public sector. According to Aliu and Fuseini (2014), one of the challenges associated with the new pay policy that has resulted in strikes over the years is market premium. Aliu and Fuseini (2014) found that in order to address perennial strike in the public sector, all workers must be paid the market premium. In addition, the authors suggest that there must be continuous education for public awareness regarding the implementation of the new pay policy.

Seniwoliba (2014) observes that despite the challenges, the new pay policy has been found to be a worthwhile intervention and, if properly and fully managed, it could play a significant role

in harmonising the remuneration in the public sector and enhance the pay of the workers in a way that is equitable and consistent with the country's quest to ensure improvement in efficiency and productivity of the entire public sector. Seniwoliba (2014) recommends that in order to address the challenges associated with the implementation of the new pay policy, the Fair Wages and Salary Commission must ensure that the public is educated about the pay policy. The author asserts that the previous strike actions in the country is not because the public sector workers do not appreciate the new policy but it is because the Fair Wages and Salary Commission failed to do proper education in terms of who qualifies for the market premium and the various categories of allowances for the workers. Seniwoliba (2014) further suggests that the new pay policy should not be seen by the politicians as a tool for winning votes.

#### **2.13.9 Adequate funding of the universities**

Adequate funding of the public universities has been identified as one of the measures for addressing strike action in the public universities. Momodu *et al.* (2014) found that adequate funding of the universities would assist to address strike action in the universities in Nigeria. They recommend that the Nigerian government should progressively improve funding to the public universities so as to reduce the numerous strike actions in the system. Ige Akindele (2014) further declares that funding is an important tool which will help minimise the frequent occurrence of strike action in the universities. According to Ige Akindele (2014), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) recommended that every nation must allocate 26% of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to be spent on education. Ige Akindele (2014, p.24), further states that there is the "need for increase in the financial allocation to education sector, from where the tertiary institutions derive their funds". When this is properly done, it will reduce the financial burdens on the universities which will go a long way in addressing the frequent strike action in the universities.

#### **2.13.10 Proper management of the economy by the government**

As discussed above, mismanagement of the Ghanaian economy by the ruling government is one of the causes of industrial actions in the country. Therefore, it was found that in order to address strike actions in the country there must be effective or proper management of the economy by the government (Seniwoliba, 2014). According to Seniwoliba (2014), the

government must take proactive steps to address the economy challenges facing the country in order to address the numerous industrial actions in the country. The author contends that it is the responsibility of the government to ensure that the economy improves so as to address poverty and unemployment.

Olusegun Ajayi (2014) also found that proper handling or management of the economy will help in addressing frequent strikes in Nigeria. According to him, the Nigerian government must implement better economic policies to help fix the alienating economy. There is no doubt that Nigeria and Ghana are facing serious economic crises due to poor management of the economy and a high level of corruption. The situation does not only affect the education sector in both countries, it affects every sector. Olusegun Ajayi (2014) claims that this challenge has contributed to several strikes in both countries. Therefore, in order to address strike action, the governments of both countries must introduce reforms that will save the economy from collapsing.

#### **2.13.11 Proactive management of disputes**

Proactive management of disputes or employee grievances is another important measure that will help in addressing strike action in Ghana. As discussed above, most strike action in Ghana has been a result of the inability of the government or employers to take proactive steps to address the concerns of workers (Olugbenga, 2011). Aidelunuoghene (2014) recommends, that in order to address strike action in Nigeria, the government and employers must design a system that will help in addressing conflicts or disputes that are likely to result in industrial actions. According to Aidelunuoghene (2014), proactive management of disputes in the workplace will help to avoid or at least to minimise strike action.

Oludele (2014) concurs that proper management of disputes is an important tool for dealing with the occurrence of strikes within the workplace. He posits that most often workers embark on strike action when their concerns have not been properly addressed by management. Therefore, in order to avoid future strikes, the employers and government must take proactive step in dealing with disputes that are likely to result in strike action. Seniwoliba (2013) also recommends that there must be effective systems to ensure that the parties resolve their disputes through a consensus-based process namely, conciliation and mediation, before reverting to arbitration and/or adjudication through a tribunal or labour court. Gyamfi (2011) adds that

crises intervention committees should be established at the various universities in order to address issues such as lecturers' strike action through dialogue. Ige Akindele (2014) suggests that government should always engage trade unions in dialogue so as to ascertain the workers' grievances and find lasting solutions to them.

#### **2.13.12 Good negotiation skills among the parties**

Good negotiation skills are also another important measure which will help to address disputes and strikes within the workplace. Previous studies have identified poor or lack of negotiation skills among the parties as a contributing factor to strike actions in Ghana and Nigeria (Gyamfi, 2011; Ogunbanjo, 2014; Seniwoliba, 2013). It is against this background that Seniwoliba (2013) recommends that the parties to the negotiation table must possess certain skills that will enable them to bargain effectively in order to prevent deadlocks that might lead to strike action. He asserts that strikes often take place when the parties are not able to resolve their disputes or grievances. Therefore, in order to deal effectively with disputes, the parties must have the skills that will enable them to bargain or negotiate with one another.

Ogunbanjo (2014) agrees with the above author that negotiation skills are key to addressing strike action in the workplace. He argues that good negotiation skills will enable the parties to reach amicable resolution of disputes that could potentially result in industrial action. Ogunbanjo (2014) suggests that the parties to the bargaining table must be trained to enable them to acquire the necessary skills to effectively negotiate during the bargaining process.

Gyamfi (2011) also found that negotiation and dialogue are important factors that contribute to addressing strike action within the workplace. According to him, the parties must try as far as possible to negotiate or dialogue with one another in order to reach consensus so as to avoid the possibility of strike action.

#### **3.13 Working environment conducive to productivity**

Ensuring a favourable working environment within the workplace is another factor that could contribute to addressing strike action. Seniwoliba (2013) suggests that a work-friendly environment is necessary in addressing industrial disputes that may have the potential of resulting in strike action. It was found that a poor working environment is a contributing factor to strike action in Ghana. It is against this background that he recommends that the government and employers must take reasonable steps to ensure that employees work in a satisfactory

health and safety environment. Gyamfi (2011) also made recommendations to the government to ensure the provision of a favourable working environment for nurses and teachers in order to address industrial action.

#### **2.14.14 Mutual respect**

Lastly, mutual respect between parties is also a key factor that could help in diminishing the occurrence of strikes. Mutual respect is a key variable which promotes harmonious working relationships between the employer and employees. Venkatesh and Kala (2013) assert that mutual respect is important in addressing strike action within the workplace. According to them, the parties should respect each other's views when dealing with disputes that might result in strike action. Venkatesh and Kala (2013) contend that mutual respect will assist the parties to reach amicable resolution of disputes that have the potential of causing strike action within the organisation.

Kumari (2013) also holds that mutual respect between the employer and employees is key in addressing workplace dispute and strikes. In a study conducted by Kumari (2013) on problem and prospect of industrial relation in the coal industry with special reference to Central Coalfields Limited, Ranchi, it was found that mutual respect is a key variable which ensures harmonious relationships within the workplace. The author suggests that when there are harmonious relationships there is less possibility of dispute and industrial action.

A study conducted by Olusegun Ajayi (2014) on the Academic Staff Union of Universities and the academic performance of students at Ekiti State University revealed that mutual respect among stakeholders plays a crucial role in addressing employee disputes and strikes. Olusegun Ajayi (2014) recommends that the government must respect the views expressed by the union leaders and the union leaders must do same if they intend to deal with disputes and strike actions that often occur.

#### **2.14 Conclusion**

Literature on strike action, most importantly in the context of Ghana, Nigeria and South Africa has been examined and reviewed. The chapter commenced by reviewing various definitions of strike action by prominent authors or researchers around the world. These included Ghanaian, Nigerian and South African authors. It also provided discussion on various types of strikes namely: wildcat, economic, sympathy, general, work-to-rule, sit-down, go-slow, sick-out and

work stoppage. The chapter continued to give an account of the historical background of strike action in Ghana. It also discussed the right to strike in both the ILO and Ghanaian contexts. Furthermore, it examines the impact of strike action on employment relations. This includes poor employment relations, dismissals, retrenchment, and loss of remuneration, organisational conflicts and intimidation. The chapter further discussed the impact that strike action has on public universities namely: disruption of the academic calendar, poor student performance, disruption of effective learning, delay in graduation of students and disruption of teaching. Further, the chapter examined how university strike action impacts negatively on the country. The causes of strike actions in public universities are extensively discussed in this chapter. Finally, it presented extensive discussion on the measures that should be put in place by stakeholders of the public universities in order to address strike action.

## CHAPTER THREE

### NATURE OF EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP

#### 3.1 Introduction

Chapter two was devoted to discussion of strike action. This chapter reviewed empirical and theoretical literature regarding employment relations. It began with definitions or conceptualisation of employment relations and thereafter is followed by discussion of various theories that underlie the study of employment relations. The chapter also gave an account of industrial relations practice in Ghana. It continued to discuss the role of the players in employment relations or the labour market. Furthermore, it examined the factors that promote sound employment relations. In addition, it focused the discussion on the importance of employment relations within an organisation. The chapter also presented the conceptual framework on strike and employment relations which guides the entire study. Lastly, it discussed the consequences of poor employment relations.

#### 3.2 Conceptualisation of employment relations

The term “employment or industrial relations” has existed for a long time but has gained a lot of popularity in the 21<sup>st</sup> century due to the important role it plays in sustaining harmonious relationships between the employer and employees in the workplace (Akhaukwa, Maru & Byaruhanga, 2013). Employment relations mostly deal with the general interactions that exist between people in organisational settings. According to Akhaukwa *et al.* (2013), employment relations is concerned with promoting harmonious relationships between the employer, employees and even the government. The authors contend that a harmonious or peaceful atmosphere in the workplace contributes to an improvement in organisational performance, efficiency and productivity. This explains the fact that the success or otherwise of an organisation largely depends on the relationships that exist between parties involved in the organisation.

Pyman, Holland, Teicher and Cooper (2010) suggest that harmonious working environments lead to positive attitudes to the organisation, reduced absenteeism, reduced staff turnover, fewer conflicts, greater innovation, more customer satisfaction and improved product quality. According to Pyman *et al.* (2010), employment relations contribute to the promotion of



industrial peace, social stability and economic and social development. A stable industrial relations environment is important for the economic growth of any country.

According to Kipsang, Chepkuto and Kwonyike (2015), a good industrial relations system leads to the prevention and resolution of labour disputes in the workplace. A good industrial relations system includes the setting up of mechanisms to resolve problems confronting both managers and employees through consensus building.

Having provided a general overview of what employment relations are all about, it is then important to look at various definitions given by researchers and scholars.

The term employment relations has been defined in several ways by researchers (Adigun, 2013; Awe & Ayeni, 2010; Giudice, 2014). However, Adigun (2013) is of the view that there is no one acceptable definition of employment relations. Adebisi (2013) agrees with Adigun (2013) that conceptualisation and scope of employment relations is a subject of controversy as a result of the differences in ideologies or intellectual persuasions among the researchers who attempt to define or conceptualise it. This suggests that the meaning of employment relations varies across researchers. However, most of the definitions provided by the above scholars have one thing in common. Thus, they all emphasized on the relationship that exist between the parties to the employment. Below is the review of some of the definitions offered by researchers.

According to Venter and Levy (2014), employment or labour relations is all about the interactions that exist between people in an organisational setting. Venter and Levy (2014, p5) further contend that “employment relationship is tripartite in nature and involves interactions that occur between three industrial players namely employees (or collective employees), employers (and employer organisations) and the government”. The authors further maintain that the interactions between the role players are dynamic in nature and occur within a social, economic, legal and political framework. They suggest that when defining employment or labour relations the definition must be contextualised within a particular environment.

Bendix (2015, p.18) defines employment relations as “a system of rules that deals with certain regulated or institutionalised relationships in the industry”. According to Bendix (2015), employment relations as a field of study is relatively new. It has its root in the “Industrial Revolution” and in subsequent attempts to regulate the relationship or interactions that exist between the new breed of employers and employees in the industrialised society. Bendix

(2015) holds that employment relations is concerned with people because of their mutual involvement and cooperation in the work situation. According to him, the relationship is a human one and as such, it contain features that are common to other human relationships, namely friendship, marriage, business partnerships, social, religious and political liaisons. While Bendix's (2015) definition is similar to others, it has an added dimension. It suggests that the relationship that exists between parties or role players must be regulated by a system or rules.

According to Awe and Ayeni (2010), employment relations refers to the kind of interactions that exist between the employer and the employees within the workplace. They authors suggest that employment relations can also be referred to as industrial relations. Employment relations is said to have direct and indirect impacts on the activities of an organisation. The success and failure of an organisation, to some, extent depends on the kind of employment relations which occur within the organisation. A thorough review of this definition suggests that it is limited in scope. Thus it only focuses on the interaction between the employer and the employees without any consideration of other stakeholders such as the government, customers, trade unions and employers' organisations. These stakeholders also play an important role towards the success of an organisation. Hence, it is important to consider them as well.

Osad and Osas (2013) define employment relations as the interaction between the employer and their associates, employees and their unions and the government. They add that the kind of interaction that exists between these role players in the employment relations pertains to issues such as employment problems and security; working conditions; labour and employment grievances; level of production efficiency; remuneration; health, safety and welfare of employees; social security and employee development. It also includes totality of orientations, policies, concepts, theories, procedure and sound practices of managing conflict at work. A critical look at this definition suggests that it is broad and covers all issues that pertain to employment relations and its role players. Having contextualised the concept of employment relations, the discussion below focuses on the theories of employment or industrial relations.

### **3.3 Theoretical framework**

There are several theories that underlie the study of employment or industrial relations namely: unitary; pluralist; Marxist; social action and societal corporatism. However, each of these

theories applies to appropriate or unique study. According to Francis, Ikemefuna and Ekwoaba (2012), theories are important in providing an understanding of phenomena and problems in the real or practical world. Theories are also relevant in predicting events or phenomena before they occur. Francis *et al.* (2012) add that theories are relevant in finding answers to questions such as why, who, where, when and how. Industrial relations' theories are very useful in explaining workplace situations. They help to provide more insight into phenomena which occur in and outside of the workplace

Chidi and Okpala (2012) contend that theories are abstractions of facts which are based on individual ideology and cognitive thinking. They are of the view that the relevance of theories in any field of study cannot be underestimated. Theories in general are used to explain, observe, predict and control phenomena. Industrial relations as a field of study has many theories because of its multidisciplinary nature. According to Seniwoliba (2013), theories such as unitarist, pluralist, Marxist, social action and systems approaches are important in explaining the nature of employment relations.

These theories are discussed below but the one that best supports this study is the Pluralist approach.

### **3.3.1 Unitary theory or approach**

The unitary approach is one of the theories that has made major contributions to the field of employment relations. The unitary theory is credited to the hard work of Alan Fox. Waiganjo and Nge (2012) describe the unitary theory as an approach where management and employees work together for the good of the company. According to them, the unitarists hold the view that the organisation is a coherent team where both management and employees have a common purpose. The unitary approach begins from a set of assumptions and values which sees organisational conflict as an inevitable feature of the relations that exist between employers and employees.

According to Seniwoliba (2013), unitarists are of the view that conflicts are inevitable in organisations which can occur between the employer and his employees or among employees themselves. Those who subscribe to this theory see organisational participants (employer and employees) as one team or as a happy family who share the same values, interests, goals and common destiny. There is no factionalism. This approach assumes that when conflict occurs it

is likely to render the organisation bankrupt or insolvent therefore it must be avoided. Seniwoliba (2013) holds that this theory places emphasis on values, interest and objectives.

Bendix (2015, p.41) suggests that the unitary approach has its origin in classic liberalism, “its concomitant is laissez-faire capitalism and the Smithian tenet of the ‘common good’”. According to Bendix (2015), this theory believes in individualism rather than in collectivism. The proponents of this theory view employees as individuals who have contracted their labour to the employer in exchange for a reward called income. The theory is based on certain principles or assumptions in the workplace. These are discussed below.

### **3.3.1.1 Unitary assumptions about workplace relations**

Unitarists hold a different view about the workplace relations from pluralists and Marxists. From this viewpoint, researchers (Ogundele, Alaka, Oginni & Ogunyomi, 2013; Seniwoliba, 2013) observe that employers and employees share common interests, values and destiny and that the only recognised source of legitimate authority or power comes from management. According to Venter and Levy (2014), those who ascribe to this theory maintain that the organisation is a cohesive, unified unit where parties (employee and employers) share a common set of values and goals. Bendix (2015) also expresses the view that according to the unitary approach, parties strive towards a common goal.

Ogundele *et al.* (2013) observe that the proponents of this theory assume that the organisation is regarded as comparable to a family where both the employer and employees share a common goal and a common interest. Further, they purport that, in terms of unitarianism, there is only one legitimate source of authority or power and that is management. Waiganjo and Nge (2012) concur that the unitary approach has a paternalistic orientation where employees are expected to be loyal to the management. In return, management is expected to protect the welfare of the employees.

### **3.3.1.2 Unitary assumptions about trade unions**

The proponents of the unitary approach hold a different view about the existence of trade unions in the workplace from the pluralists and Marxists. According to Seniwoliba (2013), the unitarists view trade unions as an illegitimate intrusion and encroachment of employers’ right to run the organisation. The trade unions are seen as an invasion into the workplace from

outside in that they compete with management for the protection of employees. They are perceived as a source of workplace conflict.

Bendix (2015) supports the view that in terms of unitarianism, trade unions are unnecessary and cause friction as they compete with the employer for the loyalty of employees. Ogundele *et al.* (2013) add that the proponents of this theory view trade unions as creating unnecessary division of interest in an organisation and they need to be avoided. According to Waiganjo and Nge (2012, p.57), trade unions are seen as “unwelcome intruders who upset the unified and cooperative structures within the organization”.

### **3.3.1.3 Unitary assumptions about workplace conflicts**

Unitarists view workplace conflict as disruptive and pathological (Ogundele *et al.*, 2013). According to Seniwoliba (2013), the unitarists hold the following assumptions about workplace conflicts: they are regarded as aberrations; they are also disruptive and must be avoided or prevented; and they are caused by poor management styles, poor communication and a lack of resources.

Odhong and Omolo (2014, p.149) claim that “unitary theory disputes the fact that there is a meaningful role for conflict management in the workplace”. Waiganjo and Nge (2012) further contend that the unitary approach holds the view that workplace conflicts are regarded as disruptive and pathological. They are characterised by factors such as interpersonal friction and communication breakdown. Bendix (2015) supports the view that under the unitary approach, there is no conflict of interest between workers and employers. In addition, Bendix (2015) suggests that the conflicts which do occur between the parties are as a result of interpersonal friction.

### **3.3.1.4 Unitary assumptions about collective bargaining**

Unitarists hold various views about collective bargaining. According to Seniwoliba (2013), the unitarists hold the following views or assumptions about collective bargaining: it creates and institutionalises divergent interests in the organisation and it is responsible for creating organisational conflicts. Waiganjo and Nge (2012) claim that for unitarists the emphasis on collective bargaining must be based on good relationships and sound terms and conditions of employment, as agreed upon by the parties. They argue that the unitarists assume that collective bargaining is an effective tool for determining the terms and conditions of employment. Bendix

(2015) supports the views expressed by the above authors. According to Bendix (2015), unitarists claim that collective bargaining should be discouraged in the workplace because it causes interpersonal friction between the parties.

### **3.3.1.5 Applicability of unitary approach in contemporary employment relations**

The unitary approach still remains one of the best approaches to industrial or employment relations in the current time. In contemporary employment relations, there are many firms whose management continues to adopt the unitary approach in maintaining sound employment relations. The overall goal or objective of any organisation is to set a strategic direction and vision and to ensure that all activities within the organisation are geared towards the attainment of the goal (Waiganjo & Nge, 2012). From the view point of the unitarists, the employees' goals also flow from the overall goal of the organisation, hence, it is important for organisations to ensure that their goals or objectives are aligned with those of the employees so as to ensure the achievement of the goals.

As stated, Waiganjo and Nge (2012), state that the unitary approach focuses on shared goals and common purposes. In the 21st century organisation, this is evident in practices such as performance management. Waiganjo and Nge (2012) hold that this practice is the concern of every member of the organisation and not just of the managers. The practice of performance management ensures that individual goals are aligned with the organisation's strategic goals. The authors suggest that the concept of shared purpose and common goal under the unitary approach can be seen in the modern organisations through common vision, mission, corporate values and corporate culture. Waiganjo and Nge (2012) are of the opinion that currently organisations are operating in a competitive environment. Each of these organisations wants to gain and retain a competitive edge over its competitors. Waiganjo and Nge (2012) suggest that the humans are the most valuable asset through which the competitive edge can be achieved or sustained.

Waiganjo and Nge (2012) postulate that the unitary approach plays a significant role in ensuring team performance. They are of the view that modern organisations focus their energies and attention on team performance. According to Waiganjo and Nge (2012, p.62), "a team is a small number of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, performance goals and approach for which they are mutually accountable".

This approach encourages teamwork and a team spirit in modern organisations. Furthermore, Waiganjo and Nge (2012) contend that the unitarist approach facilitates effective communication in an organisation. They are of the opinion that effective communication ensures mutual understanding and trust among parties to the employment relations.

Furthermore, Odhong and Omolo (2014) assert that an organisation is made up of people with divergent interests but who work together, in the same way as a football team, with one common purpose. According to Odhong and Omolo (2014), the unitary approach is used by many organisation to ensure that their goals are aligned with individual goals to ensure the successful achievement of the organisation's strategic goals. The human resource management paradigm has been viewed as an important field which aims at the integration of individual goals with corporate goals. This is the key pillar of the unitary perspective. Odhong and Omolo (2014) support the idea that the unitary approach has been instrumental in integrating individual goals with those of organization.

Other researchers (Adebisi, 2013; Martin, 2014) observe that the modern workplace is characterised by workforce diversity worldwide. This is evident with regard to ethnic backgrounds, gender, race, religion and levels of education and training. The unitary approach is used to lay emphasis on common goals which help to harness synergy. This approach is used by modern organisations to avoid discrimination, thereby ensuring equality. Adebisi (2013) is of the view that despite the workforce diversity most organisations are able to function and be productive due to the unity of purpose and common goals which principle underpins the unitary approach.

Several studies have declared that the unitary approach plays a crucial role in gaining employee loyalty and commitment to the organisation (Chidi & Okpala, 2012; Kipsang, Chepkuto & Kwonyike, 2015). According to Kipsang *et al.* (2015), human resources the only asset among other resources, such as finance, equipment and material, that positions an organisation ahead of its competitors. Therefore, by gaining employee loyalty and commitment with idiosyncratic skills, there can be a guarantee of continuous productivity in the organisation. The unitarist perspective aims at integrating employer and employee interests in order to enhance employee loyalty and commitment.

In addition to the above, other researchers (Francis *et al.*, 2012; Ogundele *et al.*, 2013; Seniwoliba, 2013) have also found that that unitary approach plays a key role in ensuring effective communication in an organisation. Communication is very important from the unitary perspective. Communication helps not only in informing employees about their performance but it also assists in informing them about the objectives and aims of the organisation. According to Francis *et al.* (2012), modern organisations have embraced the concept of the unitary approach because of the important role it plays in shaping the employment relationship.

### **3.3.1.6 Criticisms of the unitary approach**

Despite the major contributions of the unitary approach to employment relations, it has been heavily criticised. Several criticisms have been levelled at the unitary approach. According to Waiganjo and Nge (2012), the unitary theory has been questioned on the following assumptions: To begin with, unitarists' view that "management has a right to manage and that employees should be loyal to the management". This may not be applicable in the modern organisations" (Waiganjo & Nge, 2012, p.67). The assumption that management has the legitimate power makes this view autocratic which undermines workplace democracy and equality. Furthermore, critics suggest that as organisations expand, individuals become less inclined to identify with the organisation and, as result, their commitment may crumble. This means that this theory may not necessarily sustain employee loyalty and commitment to the organisation. Also, critics argue that modern organisations workers' knowledge is increasing and this may present serious challenges to the unitarist perspective because these types of employees are highly mobile and thus it becomes difficult to secure their commitment and organisational loyalty. In addition, the unitarist approach has been questioned on the grounds that it ignores the existence of organisational conflicts (Waiganjo & Nge, 2012).

In addition to the above criticism, Waiganjo and Nge (2012) argue that workplace conflict is inevitable, no organisation can do away with conflict. According to Waiganjo and Nge (2012), in this modern era, most shareholders hand over the day-to-day management of their organisations to professional managers. In addition, the aim of shareholders is to maximise their wealth whilst professional managers aim at getting enough and other emoluments or benefits. These divergent interests might create conflict among the two parties. The theory had been questioned based on this assertion. Finally, the unitary approach has been criticised on



the grounds that it focuses more on individuals rather than collective identities, behaviours and practices.

Venter and Levy (2014) further questioned the unitary approach. According to Venter and Levy (2014, p.9), the unitary approach is “considered archaic and out of touch with the reality”. They express the view that the dynamism of the current workplace make this approach irrelevant. The criticisms levelled against the unitary approach led to the development of a new approach to regulate employment relations. The discussions below focus on the pluralist approach.

### **3.3.2 Pluralist approach**

The pluralist approach developed after the unitary approach had been heavily criticised. The pluralist approach is one of the approaches to employment relations which plays a crucial role in sustaining harmonious relationships in the workplace. This approach is the opposite of the unitary approach. According to Seniwoliba (2013), the pluralist approach is also called ‘conflict theory’.

Francis *et al.* (2012) suggest that the proponents of this theory hold the belief that workplace conflict is inherent to the labour and management relationship and pluralism focuses on the reality that the two groups have divergent interests of a conflictual nature. Pluralists maintain that disputes or conflicts are an inevitable part of an organisation and that they are rational and normal. They also assume that workplace conflict can be addressed using the collective bargaining agreement (Francis *et al.*, 2012). In the pluralist view, employees join unions to protect their interests and to influence decision-making in the workplace. Hence, a strong union is not only desirable but necessary. According to Francis *et al.* (2012), the pluralist believe that in a capitalist society, the government often sides with employers by protecting their interests. Those who subscribe to this theory argue that the state is used as a vehicle to harass and suppress various trade unions.

Odhong, Were and Omolo (2014) support the view expressed by the above authors. According to Odhong *et al.* (2014), the pluralist approach can be referred to as a political theory as it attempts to resolve the shortcomings of the capitalist so as to avoid overthrow and to maintain the status quo. The quest to control the workplace usually brings confrontation between managers and employees, and the state is used as a medium to influence individuals or groups who intend to pursue their parochial interests under this kind of approach.

According to Bendix (2015, p.42), “the pluralist approach was considered as the best means of accommodating the interests of the working class within a capitalist economic system due to trade unionism and the liberal democratic ideology which existed in the past”. Bendix (2015, p.42) argues that the pluralist approach has its philosophical roots in the Hobbesian view of man as a selfish being who will employ any opportunity to dominate his fellows. Bendix (2015, p.42) posits that the pluralist approach “rest(s) on the conflict model of society, which hold(s) the view that, in order to prevent dominant groups from gaining total control and to contain conflict within manageable limits, power should be widely distributed. Pluralist approach proposes multiple sources of “power and the give and take bargaining between competing centres of power”. This theory has several underlying assumptions which are discussed below:

### **3.3.2.1 Pluralist assumptions about workplace relations**

Pluralists hold a different view about workplace relations from the unitarists. They assume that managers and employees have divergent interests or objectives. Thus both parties have different values, goals and interests and believe that there can be multiple sources of legitimate authority in an organisation. Unlike the unitary approach, from the pluralist perspective, there is a relatively widespread distribution of authority and power within the society (Ohundele *et al.*, 2013).

Other researchers (Francis *et al.*, 2012; Seniwoliba, 2013) express similar views to those expressed by Ohundele *et al.* (2013). According to Francis *et al.* (2012), trade unions have their own legitimate sources of authority as does management. Seniwoliba (2013) concurs with the view that, in terms of this theory, there are multiple sources of power and authority in the workplace.

According to Odhong and Omolo (2014, p.149), the pluralist holds that “social system is not a unitary organisation but rather it is a coalition of individuals and groups with different interests and distinct perception of the social structure.” Also, the pluralists assume that both parties (employer and employees) have opposing interests within the relationship of mutual dependence.

In addition to the views expressed by the above authors, Venter and Levy (2014, p.9) add that the pluralist approach “presupposes that organisations are multifaceted, complex groupings of

individuals who align themselves with other members of the organisation sharing common views, values and objectives”. According to Venter and Levy (2014), in pluralist view, power and authority are typically not centred in one person, but they are rather distributed among a variety of stakeholders.

### **3.3.2.2 Pluralistic assumptions underlying workplace conflicts**

Pluralist theorists hold assumptions about workplace conflict that are different from those held by unitarist theorists. Researchers suggest that in terms of this theory, the following views are held (Francis *et al.*, 2012; Ogundele *et al.*, 2013; Seniwoliba, 2013): In the first place, disputes or conflicts are inevitable and they occur as a result of different opinions, values, and beliefs within the workplace. Further, pluralists suggest that workplace conflicts can be avoided or minimised by involving the trade union representatives in decision-making processes. According to Ogundele *et al.* (2013), pluralists hold the assumption that workplace conflicts often emerge as a result of different behaviours and attitudes that express opposition and divergent orientation.

Venter and Levy (2014) state that, in pluralists’ views, workplace conflicts occur because of tensions that arise between the parties to the employment relations because of the different roles they play. However, they suggest that workplace conflicts can be better managed through a system of negotiated trade-offs and settlements.

### **3.3.2.3 Pluralist assumptions about the role of trade unions**

This approach holds a unique assumption about the role of trade unions. Unlike the unitarist approach, this theory recognises the important contributions of trade unions to an organisation. According to Francis *et al.* (2012), pluralists hold the following assumptions about the role of trade unions in the workplace. In the first place, trade unions are seen as a legitimate part of workplace relations; they are not seen as the source of conflict in an organisation. Further, they are seen as a means of expressing the different workplace interests that usually exist in any organisation. Seniwoliba (2013) supports the view that, under the pluralist approach, trade unions are accepted as a legitimate forum for coordinating- and expressing various interests.

#### **3.3.2.4 Pluralist assumptions about collective bargaining**

Pluralists have expressed different opinions about collective bargaining in the workplace from unitarists. According to Ogundele *et al.* (2013), the pluralist perspective recognises the importance of collective bargaining as a means of addressing employment issues that need urgent attention. Onyemaechi (2014) further expresses the view that collective bargaining plays a crucial role in employment relations by ensuring that both parties (employees and employer) come to terms with each other. Collective bargaining or agreement is a power document and once it has been concluded it supersedes any other law or policy in the organisation. Unlike the unitary approach, the pluralists disagree that collective bargaining s and institutionalises divergent interests in the workplace. As discussed in chapter two above, collective bargaining is an alternative to the strike action which often s as a result unresolved disputes. The proponents of pluralism further argue that collective bargaining is important in all employment relations because it encourages consensus building among the parties.

#### **3.3.2.5 Applicability of Pluralist approach in contemporary employment relations**

The pluralist approach can be applied in contemporary employment relations. It remains the framework of choice for many researchers who call themselves industrial relations experts. Seniwoliba (2013) suggests that this approach is more applicable in modern organisations as it recognises the importance of trade unions as legitimate representatives which enable employees to influence management decisions. Seniwoliba (2013) opines that the pluralist approach is more relevant than the unitarist approach because it is relevant in the analysis of industrial relations in many large unionised organisations. In addition, this theory is relevant in the 21<sup>st</sup> century because it is congruent with developments in modern society.

Ogundele and Olajide (2012) concur that the pluralist approach is more relevant in modern societies. According to them, this approach is more applicable in the 21<sup>st</sup> century as it is evident that there are divergent interests between capital and labour - employers seek to maximise or create wealth whilst employees seek to protect their well-being. The pluralist approach is a reflection of what is happening in modern organisations. Organisations are made up of individuals who organise themselves into groups, each with its own interests, objectives and leadership. In practice, this approach encourages the formation of trade unions for the protection and promotion of employees' socio-economic interests.

Nzioki and Gachunga (2013) agree with the above researchers that the pluralist theory is relevant in modern organisations. According Nzioki and Gachunga (2013), the assumption that trade unions are seen as a legitimate part of workplace relations is evident in modern society. This theory reflects what is happening worldwide. Pluralists have constantly argued that trade unions are not only desirable but necessary. Nzioki and Gachunga (2013) note that the pluralist approach is applicable in democratic societies where there is respect for individuals. Although this theory recognises divergent interests in an organisation, it also brings parties together to achieve common goal. The authors add that though conflict is seen as inevitable in terms of the pluralist approach, it is also seen as conducive to innovation and growth in an organisation.

### **3.3.2.6 Criticisms of the pluralist approach**

This theory plays an important role in employment relations, yet it was questioned by researchers (Ackers 2014; Guest, 2014; Samuel, 2014) on several grounds. According to Ackers (2014), one criticism of the pluralist approach is that critical writers constantly exaggerate workers interests. Critics have argued that critical writers consistently exaggerate the degree of exploitation to which employees are exposed in capitalist markets as are their interests in overturning the existing order. Ackers (2014) further argues that the pluralists have identified strong preference for workers in existing employment relationships and for organisations like moderate trade unionism and labour management partnership of which the writers or scholars have disagree with.

Another criticism levelled against this theory has to do with the concerned worker agency and the tendency for writers or scholars to identify employee rebellion against employers (capital) as the main factor driving the development of employment relationship (Ackers, 2014; Guest, 2014). According to Ackers (2014), during the classic period, pluralists expressed skepticism with regard to the radical potential of employee movements whilst, currently they are often sceptical about writers' prescriptions for mobilising resistance, such as violent campaigns and union-community coalitions, determining their limited scope and effect. Ackers (2014) contends that scholars have wrongly attribute meaning to employee resistance.

Another important criticism that was levelled at the pluralist approach is the question of the amenability of capitalist economies to reform (Ackers, 2014; Samuel, 2014). Samuel (2014) reacts to the 'new left' of the 1960s saying that pure and simple trade unionism has changed

society. According to Samuel (2014), a similar argument by reformist organisations is made by pluralists in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The pluralists consistently argue that institutions matter and can be created and reformed to civilise the economic order. The argument of the pluralists in relation to the claim that the dynamics of capitalism such as: globalisation; financialisation; and austerity, lead to relentless degradation of work is to argue that these forces are not ineluctable and cannot be moderated through effective regulation. The criticism faced by this approach led to the emergence of a new approach, the Marxist approach.

### **3.3.3 Marxist approach**

The Marxist approach is another important theory that has made important contributions to the field of employment relations. This approach developed out of the limitations of the Pluralist approach. Onyemaechi (2014) observes that the Marxist approach is also referred to as the “radical approach. It came into effect in the late 1960s and early 1970s when employee militancy was high in capitalist countries. According to Onyemaechi (2014), radicals or proponents of Marxism hold the view that conflict in an organisation can be managed and, under normal circumstances, mutual interest can develop among the parties of the organisation.

Francis *et al.* (2012) contend that Marxism originated from the field of sociology. It is the direct work of Karl Marx himself. The proponents of the Marxist theory hold the view that in a capitalist economy, productive systems and profit are the key indicators which influence company’ policies. According to this theory, industrial or employment relations is seen as a vehicle for resolving conflict between social groups. A permanent tenet of Marxism is that the conflict that arise between the employer (capital) and employees (labour) relates to the struggle for economic power. In a nutshell, conflict between social groups permeates the entire society and this is not merely an industrial phenomenon. Marxist theory focuses attention on exploitation and alienation.

According to Oludele (2014), the Marxist approach holds the view that in the workplace, there are different interests between the capitalist and labour. Marxists believe that there is unequal distribution of power and economic wealth in the capitalist economic system. There are several assumptions that underlie this theory.

### **3.3.3.1 Marxist assumptions about workplace relations**

Marxists have different assumptions from Unitarists and Pluralists, about workplace relations. Marxists argue that in terms of workplace relations there are divergent interests among the parties (employer and employees) where the government often supports the employer (Ogundele *et al.*, 2013). They suggest that in capitalist societies, the government often sides with employers in an effort to protect and promote their interests, often at the expense of the employees.

Adebisi (2013) concurs that in capitalist society, the state always sides with capitalists in order to protect the interests of the bourgeoisie. According to Adebisi (2013), such moves by the government leave workers' interests unprotected. Ogundele and Olajide (2012) also point out that in capitalist society there is always a division between capital and labour. Thus, labour seeks to maximise their well-being whilst capital attempts to increase or maximise their wealth. Venter and Levy (2014) contend that Marxists promote an order in which factors of production (land, labour and capital) and the fruits thereof are owned and shared among the people.

### **3.3.3.2 Marxist assumptions about workplace conflicts**

The Marxists hold a different view about workplace conflict from the unitarists and pluralists. According to Francis *et al.* (2012), Marxists hold the following views about workplace conflicts: they are inevitable because owners of businesses seek to reduce costs and workers also seek equitable or fair prices for their efforts; and conflicts in the capitalist society are mere reflections of the predominant power bases of the bourgeois and the difference in the ideologies of the classes.

Onyemaechi (2014) also holds that the Marxists believe that the basis of conflict in the employment relationship are a result of exploitation. Oginni and Faseyiku (2012) also suggest that, under the Marxist approach, conflict is a permanent feature of employment relations. According to Oginni and Faseyiku (2012), conflict arises between the employer (capital) and employees (labour) due to imbalance and inequalities in society. Oginni and Faseyiku (2012) further maintain that the nature of the conflict is that it is inherited from the economic and social systems.

According to Venter and Levy (2014), Marxists hold the view that workplace conflict is an expression, not only of organisational conflict, but of wider divisions within society as a whole.

Bendix (2015, p.42) states that the Marxists hold the view that because the “employee is continually exploited conflict is inherent to the socioeconomic system and not only to the employment relationship”.

### **3.3.3.3 Marxist assumptions about trade unions**

Marxists have expressed many views about trade unions which are different from the views expressed by unitarists and pluralists. According to Seniwoliba (2013), Marxists hold the following beliefs or assumptions about trade unions: union leaders who accommodate or who tolerate management betray their members or workers; and trade unions should not only limit their efforts towards the improvement of the material lot of workers but they must ensure the good of all employees in the organisation.

Ogundele *et al.* (2013) add that growth and expansion of trade unions across various countries is seen as the inevitable employees’ response to capitalism. According to Ogundele *et al.* (2013), Marxist hold that trade unions do not only improve collective employment power by minimising competition among individual employees but they also provide a mechanism for the expression and protection of the interests of the working classes. In addition, Venter and Levy (2014, p.9) express the view that Marxists view trade unions as “vehicles of fundamental societal changes”.

According to Bendix (2015, p.42), Marxists view trade unions “necessary to conscientise the working class, but cannot achieve equality while operating within the system”

### **3.3.3.4 Marxist assumptions about collective bargaining**

Marxists have different views about the concept of collective bargaining. Marxists disagree that collective bargaining levels the playing field between management and trade unions (Omoyibo, 2012). Those who ascribe to this approach accept the need for the formation of trade unions and they obviously support trade union struggles but they believe that trade unions often challenge the existing structures of society only at their own expense. Marxists do not recognise the importance of collective bargaining in employment relationships. They are of the view that management still commands, even when agreements are reached through collective bargaining. Ogundele *et al.* (2013) contend that Marxists hold the view that collective bargaining is not important in an organisation because employees only fight for their collective interests at the expense of the employer.



### **3.3.3.5 Relevance of the Marxist approach in contemporary employment relations**

Marxists have made significant contributions to the field of employment relations. Their approach still remains relevant in modern organisations. According to Kuehn (2012), this approach is still relevant as it serves as a critique of the development of capitalism. Kuehn (2012) holds that the Marxist approach helps to analyse the impact of capitalism on labour by ensuring fair and equitable distribution of factors of production (land, capital and interest) and suggesting class struggle as a central theme in the analysis of social change in Western societies.

According to Omoyibo (2012), the Marxist approach is important in the following ways: it provides a valuable contribution to the way in which various classes in the capitalist society can interrelate to create a whole and therefore perform society's functions as one entity; it helps individuals to determine the present in the long run perspective through Marx's historical sense, as well as assisting in providing a clear understanding of the inherent dynamics of society as a whole; also it helps in examining the relationship between ownership, power and social change; furthermore, it helps to provide a theory of society which is in accordance with a very high level of human ideals.

Fuchs and Mosco (2015) posit that though Marxist theory has been questioned on several grounds, it remains one of the most influential theory. According to Fuchs and Mosco (2015), the Marxist approach points out important concepts about the ideals of society as a functioning body comprised of several separate units. Fuchs and Mosco (2015) further suggest that this approach assists in providing an understanding of the dynamics of society in its entirety. The above authors further add that Marxism helps to examine different relationships in society from different points of view without any form of restriction.

Seniwoliba (2013) observes that the Marxist approach has offered immense contributions to the field of industrial relations. According to Seniwoliba (2013), Marxism emphasises exploitation and alienation. Therefore, its theory is important in capitalist society and its systems of production, distribution and exchange. Seniwoliba (2013) further suggests that the Marxist approach is critical because it emphasises the importance of collective action such as industrial action and any other action that falls short of strike action.

### 3.3.3.6 Criticisms of the Marxist approach

Marxism has received sharp criticisms from researchers despite its major contributions to the field of employment or industrial relations (Chidi & Okpala, 2012; Frege, Kelly & McGovern, 2012; Omoyibo, 2014; Rahat, Kifayatullah & Tammanna, 2012; Seniwoliba 2013). According to Frege *et al.* (2012), Hyman's theoretical work is not without fault. Frege *et al.* (2012, p.216), suggest that the first criticism that was levelled against this theory is the "privileged status given to class conflict as an explanatory mechanism". According to the authors, critics agree with Hyman that conflict is an important characteristic of any employment relationship but this conflict is not always the result of class struggle. Frege *et al.* (2012, p.216) observe that another criticism of this approach is the assumption that conflict is endemic to capitalism. Hyman's book on strikes suggests that "industrial conflict is not irrational, irresponsible or illegitimate, but rather the product of irreconcilable contradictions within capitalism". The book focuses mainly on 'powerful underlying causes' or 'mainsprings' of conflict (Frege *et al.*, p.87). However, critics have argued that if conflict is inevitable in an organisation, "given the structured antagonism built into the capitalist employment relationship, then how can the Marxist perspective account for the extraordinary decline in the number of strikes over the past 30 years" (Frege *et al.*, 2012, p.217).

Rahat *et al.* (2013) agree that Marxist theory faces severe criticism from scholars in the field of employment relations. According to Rahat *et al.* (2013), the Marxist approach was criticised on the grounds that capitalists have no respect for human beings but only for material entities. According to Rahat *et al.* (2013), in capitalist societies there is no respect for human rights and human dignity because the society is controlled by the rich. The authors state that another criticism of this theory is that capitalists use force to achieve their so-called interests. In capitalist society people are often oppressed because of their class status.

According to Seniwoliba (2013), critics suggest that the Marxist approach is a fine approach but that in practice it cannot be applicable. Seniwoliba (2013) states that other scholars (Ackers 2014; Guest, 2014; Samuel, 2014) have alleged that this approach is nothing more than a realignment of thought with reality.

Omoyibo (2014) demonstrates that the Marxist approach has been questioned on two grounds. Firstly the radical ideas and the social changes propounded by Marxists in the early days no

longer fit into the social order and reality of the time. This is due to conservative reactions to the disruptions of the enlightenment and French Revolution and its dislocations. Secondly, the approach has been criticised on the basis that “Marx’ propositions were too dangerous and stood in contrast to Western bourgeois ideology and the interest it represents that professes conservative reforms and orderly social change in the system, hence the urgency to tame the theory” (p.20). Criticisms against this approach have led to the emergence of other approaches. The following discussion is based on the social action theory.

### **3.3.4 Social action theory**

Social Action theory is another important approach which contributes to the field of employment relations. This theory sees employment relations from the viewpoint and motivation of the individual. Social action theory perceives the organisation as being comprised of individual members with divergent goals. The proponents of this theory view organisational conflict as normal and part of the organisational life. Social action theory is credited to Max Weber, a German sociologist. Social action theory is a major contribution of sociologists to the study of organisations. Seniwoliba (2013) is of the view that social action theory seeks to examine the way in which role players take certain actions. Seniwoliba (2013) holds that social action theory emanates from psychological contracts, beliefs, events, and goals of the employees who are part of the system. Seniwoliba (2013) asserts that social action theory is a ‘bottom-up approach’ where suggestions and decision making process begin from the lower levels in the organisation. One of the strengths of social action theory in industrial relations is that it weakens the fatalism of structural determinism. It also stresses that individuals should maintain some degree of freedom of action.

According to Francis *et al.* (2012), this theory emphasises the individual responses of the social actors in employment relations, namely employers, employees and union leaders, to a given situation. The proponents of this theory argue that action is “by virtue of the subjective meaning attached to it by the acting individual” (Francis *et al.*, 2012, p.152). This theory places emphasis on understanding particular actions in industrial relations situations rather than on just observing explicit industrial relations behaviour. Discussion of this approach is followed by discussion of societal corporatism.

### **3.3.5 Societal corporatism**

Societal corporatism is an approach that plays a crucial role in defining employment relations in the contemporary business environment. This approach is mostly used in South Africa because of its adversarial relationship. According to Finnemore (2013), the radical and pluralism approaches focus on constant competition between groups while societal corporatism enhances social dialogue and coordination among groups. Finnemore (2013) contends that with societal corporatism, the state is involved in the social dialogue which attempts to ensure that conflict within the group is reduced and better managed. According to Finnemore (2013), there are public policies that support societal corporatist institutions and procedures which emerge as a result of the social dialogue between government and other powerful interest groups. These groups are 'peak' associations which represent the employers and employees. Finnemore (2013) refers to peak association as a powerful or strong organisation which represents a majority of employers and employees on the national front.

Seniwoliba (2013) also observes that societal corporatism can also be referred to as tripartite corporatism. Tripartite corporatism involves social dialogue between three parties, namely the state, employers' associations and trade union federations. Seniwoliba (2013) is of the view that there are certain values that are fundamental to societal corporatism. The fundamental values are: firstly, that societal corporatism is viewed as producing a less strike prone society. Secondly, conflict can be perceived as neutral in the employment relationship and can be managed through centralised negotiations. In addition, the centralised negotiations are based on fundamental issues, namely wages and working conditions. Finally, there is a consensus building rather than an adversarial relationship. Corporatism is usually characterised by state-structured and regulated interest groups, but not by the total control of either as in Marxism-Leninism nor by the completely unregulated interest-group struggle of liberal-pluralism. Under this system, a strong but not totalitarian state controls organised interest groups that are not only limited in number and function, but also are part of the state in the name of social partnerships. The last approach to be discussed is the system approach

### **3.3.6 The System Theory**

The system approach is another important approach which has made significant contributions to the field of employment relations. Dunlop, who is one of the prominent theorists in the

system approach, viewed the industrial relations system as involving certain role players, certain contexts and assumptions which bind the labour relations system together into an organisation and form a body of regulations which are formulated and implemented to regulate the conduct of all the role players in the labour market and in the society as a whole (Francis *et al.*, 2012). Francis *et al.* (2012) continue to elucidate that the theorists suggest that the environment in which an organisation operates has some impact on the actors and they in turn have certain common features such as the technological characteristics of the organisation and the community and budgetary constraints.

According to Seniwoliba (2013), Dunlop focuses attention on the distribution of power in an organisation between labour and capital. System theory is also concerned with the bargaining power of all the role players in the labour and capital market. The proponents suggest that there are two main kinds of rules which operate in the labour markets. These rules are procedural and substantive rules. The theorists believe that good industrial relations systems must be holistic. Critics of this theory argued that the theory ignored important behavioural variables such as the role players (actors), context and the ideology of the system (Seniwoliba 2013). The rules (procedural and substantive) represent the independent variable in the industrial relations system. Having considered various approaches to employment relations, it follows that it is important to examine the industrial relations practice in Ghana.

### **3.4 Industrial relations practice in Ghana**

For the purposes of this study, it is important to consider and understand the industrial relations practices in Ghana. According to Adenuga (2015), the development of trade unions in Ghana is the result of the encouragement given by the state to the establishment of a few financially viable unions and a strong virile central labour organisation. The Industrial Relations Acts [IRA] of 1956 as amended in 1958 and 1972 gave full legal support to the Ghana Trade Union Congress (T.U.C) which is the only central labour organisation in Ghana. Under the IRA of 1956, the T.U.C was given the mandate to deduct union dues from employees. In Ghana, the organised labour Trade Union Congress (TUC) was formed in 1958. The IRA of 1958 confers power on the government to refuse to grant any trade union permission to be registered. Unlike in other countries such as Nigeria and South Africa, no trade union representatives have been detained in the past years nor have workers' rights to associate freely been otherwise circumscribed in Ghana (Adenuga, 2015).

As in other countries such as South Africa, Nigeria and USA, the IRA of 1958 provides a framework for collective bargaining and protection of employees against anti-union discrimination in Ghana (Adenuga 2015, p.4). The Act also provides the mechanism through which industrial disputes can be resolved by means of conciliation and arbitration before trade unions can embark on industrial action (strike). According to Adenuga, (2015), “wild cat” strikes do occur in Ghana occasionally and these sometimes result in shooting. Ghanaian law prohibits forced labour and this is not a known practice in the country. The ILO Convention No.105 of 1957 above prohibit forced labour. The ILO continues to urge its member states, one of which is Ghana, to “revise various legal provisions that permit imprisonment with an obligation to perform labour for offenses that are not countenanced under ILO Convention 105” (p.4).

Adenuga (2015) notes that Ghanaian labour legislation sets the minimum employment age at 16 and prohibits night work and types of hazardous labour for children below the age of 18 years. In Ghana, many parents and organisations continue to violate the child labour laws. Many young children of school going age are found doing menial work mostly in the agricultural and mining sectors or in the markets during school hours. In Ghana, inspectors from the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare are responsible for the enforcement of the child labour laws. Occasionally, those who violate child labour laws are punished by the state.

Ghanaian employment relations practice takes the form of tripartite consultation. This is made up of parties such as representatives of organised labour, employers and government. Each of these parties plays an important role as far as employment relationships are concerned (Nzioki & Gachunga, 2012). The role of these actors is discussed in the next section of this chapter.

### **3.5 The role of the various actors in employment relations**

There are different actors with different roles in employment relations. According to Adigun (2013), the main dynamics of employer and employee relations is the interaction among the actors or role players. Adigun (2013) is of the view that the actors in employment or industrial relations are employers and managers, employees and trade unions and the state representatives. He believes that the keys to good industrial relations are collective bargaining and agreements which enhance the participation and involvement of all the parties.

Vijayaratnam Rajasekhar and Naik (2015) share the view that each party to employment relations plays a crucial role in maintaining industrial peace. The industrial relations system in Ghana is a tripartite consultation which includes the representatives of organised labour, organised businesses or representatives of employers' associations and a government representative. Each of these actors plays a unique role in the employment relations.

### **3.5.1 The role of trade unions and employees**

Trade unions and employees are important actors in the employment relations or labour market. They play unique roles as far as employment relations concerned. According to Adenuga (2015), In Ghana, IRA of 1958 gave full legal recognition to trade unions as a party to employment relations and entitled them to take part in collective bargaining.

Furthermore, Tamilselvan and Bhavani (2010) contend that in order to enhance the quality of an industrial relations system and create an atmosphere for improvement in productivity and performance, the trade unions have an important role to play. Oyelekan and Mojirade (2013) support the views expressed above that trade unions are important in any employment relations. This is underscored by the pluralist approach which recognises the important contribution of trade unions in the workplace. Oyelekan and Mojirade (2013) suggest that trade unions play the following important roles: they protect and promote the interests of the employees and they represent the employees during the collective bargaining process.

Francis *et al.* (2012) further concur that trade unions have important roles to play in representing their members. Trade unions are responsible for educating their members about important national issues that concern them. They make their members aware of government policies that may affect their interests. Also, they represent their members during the collective bargaining process that takes place between them and the employer and the state. They also engage in training of their members regarding certain policies that are implemented by the government.

Moreover, Ayantunji and Ayantunji (2013) add that employees and their trade unions supply the skills which are necessary for the production of goods and services in an organisation or society. Nzioki and Gachunga (2012) found that trade unions play an important role by discouraging any breach of industrial peace by union members. In addition, they suggest that trade unions discourage union activities during working hours except when allowed by law.

Siddiqua, Chowdhury and Islam (2014) support the view that unions are important in every organisation because they exchange views with management and voice the grievances of the workers. They also protect and promote the well-being of their members.

### **3.5.2 The role of employers and employers' associations**

The employers and their associations are also important role players in employment relations. Oyelekan and Mojirade (2013) believe that employers and their associations play a crucial role as far as employment relations is concerned. According to Oyelekan and Mojirade (2013), some of the important roles that the employers and their associations play are to: provide necessary resources such as finance, raw material, and equipment for the production of goods and services; ensure conducive working environments for employees and to fulfil the role of employer in the industrial relation system.

Ayantunji and Ayantunji (2013) share the view expressed by Oyelekan and Mojirade (2013) that employers and their associations play a crucial role in any employment relations. According to Ayantunji and Ayantunji (2013), the role of the employer and their representatives includes providing job opportunities for employees, ensuring that employees work under a satisfactory health and safety environment and protecting the interests of their members.

### **3.5.3 The role of the government or state**

In addition, the state or government plays a crucial role as far as employment relationships are concerned. Francis *et al.*, (2012) suggest that the decision of most governments is to regulate or shape the industrial relations systems in their countries in order to bring them in line with the most acceptable standards recommended by the ILO. The government is seen as the third party in employment relations when disputes or conflicts emerge between the employer and employee. The government acts as a third party in order to arbitrate disputes between the employer and employees. In this case, the employment relations is said to be tripartite. Sometimes government also acts as an employer. The role of the government in industrial or employment relations is to regulate the whole system by providing useful perspectives which could help in analysing changes in the industrial relations system. According to Francis *et al.*, (2012), most people questioned the government's involvement in industrial relation systems. For example, it has been questioned why government should be involved in industrial



relations? What are the objectives of its involvement and what strategies are used to attain such objectives?

Despite the criticism of the state involvement in industrial relations, it continues to play crucial role in shaping the country's industrial relations systems. For example, government is responsible for the formulation of policies in regulating employment relationships and it is also is the largest employer of labour in any country. Ayantunji and Ayantunji (2013) also contend that the government and its agencies are responsible for the provision of an enabling atmosphere or environment to ensure the production of goods and services.

According to Bendix (2015), government roles are divided into four distinctive categories. In the first place, the state acts as legislator. In this role, "the state may legislate on individual rights and collective bargaining; may also establish collective bargaining machinery and may prescribe statutory procedures to be followed by parties to the employment relationship" (p.49). In addition, the state may act as conciliator. As conciliator, the state provides processes for conciliation, mediation and arbitration by its legislation. Bendix (2015) suggests that in maintaining industrial peace, a government may establish conciliation, mediation and arbitration services. Furthermore, the state acts as regulator. In this role, the state may regulate the conduct of the employment relationship by intervening "more directly in the employment relationship, particularly in the conduct of collective bargaining" (Bendix, 2015, p.49). Finally, the state may act as employer. Bendix (2015) posits that the state acts as an employer by creating more job opportunities in the country. The following discussion is based on factors that promote sound employment relations.

### **3.6 Factors that promote sound employment relations in the workplace**

There are several factors that contribute to ensuring sound employment relations in the workplace. According to Osad and Osas (2013), sound employment or industrial relations implies an environment where employees, trade unions and management accommodate each other as social partners, and where a corporative behaviour is mutually beneficial with regard to output, performance and reward. However Osad and Osas (2013) express the view that sound industrial relations do not imply that disputes or conflicts do not exist but rather there are effective and proactive measures in place to minimise their effects on the organisation.

According to Oludele (2014), industrial peace is important to ensure the growth of every organisation. Sound employment relations can be achieved when certain factors are present on the job namely: good working environment; good remuneration system; effective communication and government interventions. Oludele (2014) is of the view that the above factors contribute to strengthening the employment relations. The factors that contribute to promoting or building sound employment relations in the workplace are discussed below.

### **3.6.1 Comfortable working environment**

A good working environment has been identified as one of the major factors that contributes to building sound employment relations. Oludele (2014) is of the view that employee satisfaction plays a crucial role as far as the success of an organisation is concerned. It is against this background that the author suggests that the employer must ensure that the employees work under satisfactory health and safety environment. Oludele (2014) adds that a satisfied employee is happier about his or her job and this will contribute to the success of the organisation.

According to s118(1) of the Ghana Labour Act, the duty of the employer is to take every reasonable step to ensure that every employee under him/her works under satisfactory safety and health conditions (Seniwoliba, 2013). Section 118(2) also provides that the employer shall supply and install in the work environment, equipment and systems of work that are safe and free from health hazards. Odhong and Omolo (2014) further express the view that a good working environment is important for the promotion of peaceful employment relations. According to Odhong & Omolo (2014), the employer must take reasonable steps to ensure that health and safety of the employees are protected within the working environment.

### **3.6.2 Workers' associations**

Workers' associations are another important factor in the workplace for the promotion of sound employment relations. Oludele (2014) advocates that the existence of workers' associations in any organisation will go a long way to contribute to the building of sound industrial relations. Oludele (2014) contends that allowing workers to form and join unions or associations of their choice will contribute to building stronger industrial peace. According to Oludele (2014), when workers are allowed to form or join unions of their choice, they perceive the organisation as

considering their interests. This helps to deepen workplace democracy which goes a long way to promote sound employment relations.

Chapter Five of the Ghanaian Constitution Act 527 of 1992 guarantees workers the right and freedom to form or join unions of their choice. Odhong and Omolo (2014) also express the view that by allowing employees to join or form associations of their choice will help to deepen workplace democracy which will go a long way in promoting sound employment relations.

### **3.6.3 Remuneration or wages and salaries**

Employee compensation or remuneration is another factor which contribute to building sound employment relations in the workplace. According to Odhong and Omolo (2014), wages and salaries are key variables in the promotion of sound employment relations. They observe that remuneration involves compensating workers. Oludele (2014) defines compensation as wages and salaries that the employees receive on a daily, weekly or monthly basis. Oludele (2014) posits that compensation plays a crucial role in creating harmonious relationships within the workplace because it makes employee behaviour consistent with the organisation's aims and goals. Oludele (2014) observes that the main reason why people work is to earn a living. Therefore, when people are well paid it helps to avoid agitation that jeopardise the employment relations.

### **3.6.4 Incentives and benefits**

Incentives and benefits are important in building sound employment relations. Benefits include all monetary and non-monetary payment employers offer their employees in exchange for their efforts. Benefits are usually given to employees for being members of the organisation (Oludele, 2014). Oludele (2014) contends that the employer can build an enjoyable working environment by offering the employees incentives and benefits based on their performance. The author recommends that in order for an employer to ensure good working relations with employees he must ensure that incentives are part of the condition of work.

Seniwoliba (2013) further holds that incentives and benefits contribute to job satisfaction among employees and this helps to promote good employer-employee relationships. When employees are happy about their benefits system they in turn perceive that their organisation has their interests at heart. Therefore, in order to build sound employment relations, employees must be given adequate incentives or benefits to motivate them.

### **3.6.5 Proactive conduct in the workplace**

Proactive conduct in the workplace has been identified as another key variable which contributes to good employment relations. According to Oludele (2014), proactive conduct has the potential to contribute to sound employment relations. Oludele (2014) argues that conduct in the workplace can have negative or positive implications for employment relations. Sule (2013) concurs that employee conduct is important and affects industrial relations. Sule (2013) recommends that all parties to the employment relations must conduct themselves in a way that will promote industrial peace or harmony. The employer must ensure that there are policies in place which will serve as a guide to individuals' conduct in the organisation.

### **3.6.6 Ethical considerations**

Ethical considerations also have an impact on peaceful co-existence in the workplace. According to Osad and Osas (2013), ethical considerations are necessary in every organisation in determining what is good or bad. Osad and Osas (2013) are of the view that ethical considerations serve as guides to individuals' attitudes and behaviour. Osad and Osas (2013) posits that organisations that pay critical attention to ethical considerations will function in a state of harmony.

Oludele (2014) concurs that ethical considerations in an organisation can promote sound employment relations. According to Oludele (2014), ethical considerations can lead to a sound working environment which can help in building strong or sound employment relations. Oludele (2014) also agree with the above authors that ethical considerations serve as a guide to the conduct and behaviour of employees in an organisation.

### **3.6.7 Government intervention**

Government intervention is also considered another important in promoting sound employment relations. According to Siddiqua *et al.* (2014), government plays an active role in ensuring industrial harmony. Siddiqua *et al.* (2014), are of the opinion that in order to ensure good employment relations between the employer and employees, government must make laws for the compulsory recognition of trade unions in every organisation except those in the essential services. Siddiqua *et al.* (2014) add that government should intervene to settle industrial disputes between management and employees if the parties fail to reach amicable resolution. The authors argue that this move will help to restore industrial peace in an organisation.

Oludele (2014) also supports the view of the above researchers that government intervention plays a role in building sound employment relations. According to Oludele (2014), government interventions include, but are not limited to, policies, legislation, job creation, tax reduction, building strong institutions, and protection of the labour market. Oludele (2014) is of the view that government intervention has direct and indirect bearings on the employment relations system. He suggests that government interventions should be aimed at the parties involved in the employment relations in order to prevent conflict that might occur.

### **3.6.8 Open courts for protection**

Open courts for protection ensures sound employment relations in any democratic state. According to Oludele (2014), the constitution of every democratic state guarantees every individual maximum protection. Oludele (2014) suggests that open courts for protection of individual rights will help deepen a country's democracy which will contribute to building sound employment relations. Oludele (2014) argues that open courts must formulate appropriate legislation and disciplinary regulations for the protection of employers' and employees' rights. The courts should play a crucial role in facilitating the settlement of labour disputes which are likely to affect employment relations. Oludele (2014) opines that open courts for protection must be made available to all parties in order to build sound employment relations.

Sule (2013) supports the view expressed by the above author in terms of open courts for protection. According to Sule (2013), the government must ensure that there is a system in place that will protect everyone in the society, irrespective of their status. Sule (2013) notes that fair and equitable justice for all will help in building harmonious relationships in an organisation. Nikoloski, Dimitrova, Koleva and Miteva-Kacarski (2014) concur that open courts for protection of individual rights is precondition for sound industrial and employment relations. Nikoloski *et al.* (2014) recommend that in order to achieve this there must be an enabling legal and institutional framework.

### **3.6.9 Effective communication**

Effective communication also plays a crucial role in building healthier relationships in the workplace. To a large extent, the success or failure of an organisation, depends on its internal communication. Communication can be defined as the exchange of information, ideas,

opinions, etc. among people in an organisation. Communication can be verbal or nonverbal. Odhong and Omolo (2014) suggest that effective communication within an organisation can be used as a vehicle to promote sound employment relations. However, a lack of effective communication within an organisation can result in disputes which will have negative consequences on employment relations. Odhong and Omolo (2014) averred that there must be proper mechanisms in place within an organisation to ensure effectiveness of communication in order to achieve industrial peace. Poor communication is likely to jeopardise the success of an organisation, hence, managers or employers must pay crucial attention to effective communication.

Sule (2013) expresses the view that effective communication is key to sound employment relations. According to Sule (2013), there should be proper systems for prompt and effective communication among all the parties in employment relations. Sule (2013) adds that effective communication will help in minimising the occurrence of industrial disputes that might affect the employment relationship.

### **3.6.10 Collective bargaining**

Collective bargaining is an important factor in promoting industrial harmony. According to Odhong & Omolo (2014), collective bargaining is a negotiation process which takes place between the representatives of employees, employers and even the government, concerning the discussion of terms and conditions of employment. The collective bargaining process helps in resolving an impasse between the employer and employees and contributes to building sound employment relations. Siddiqua *et al.* (2014) agree with the above authors that collective agreement is a key variable that contributes to building good employment relations. Siddiqua *et al.* (2014) are of the view that when parties take collective decisions during the collective bargaining process it helps to avoid future grievances that might affect the employment relations.

Other researchers (Ahmad & Basheer, 2012; Gyamfi, 2011; Ige Akindede, 2014; Odeku, 2014) argue that collective bargaining is an important tool that helps to restore industrial peace. Ahmad and Basheer (2012) found that strike action is seen as part of collective bargaining process within an organisation. According Ahmad and Basheer (2012, p.423), “collective bargaining is directly linked to industrial action because it determines whether the party should

embark on strike or not". The collective bargaining process ensures cooperation and coordination among the parties. Ahmad and Basheer (2012) recommend that parties to the industrial dispute explore collective bargaining as a means of preventing strikes in the organisation.

Odeku (2014) concurs that collective bargaining is an important tool for preventing or minimising workplace disputes and strike actions. Odeku (2014) defines collective bargaining as a negotiation process between the representatives of labour and employers with the view to negotiating the scope of the employment relationship. Odeku (2014) further states that collective bargaining is a process that outlines how disputes are to be settled or addressed when the need arises. Collective agreement is an alternative to strike action in industrial disputes because it helps parties to reach voluntary agreement on the matter at hand (Odeku, 2014). Gyamfi (2011) also recommends collective bargaining as an important tool in dealing with industrial action. From above discussion, it can be observed that collective bargaining is an important tool in ensuring industrial peace.

### **3.6.11 Mutual trust**

In addition to the above, mutual trust is another factor which contributes to building sound employment relations. According to Siddiqua *et al.* (2014), trust is an important factor which promotes industrial harmony. The authors are of the view that both the employer and employees must help in creating an environment of mutual cooperation, confidence and respect. They recommend that the employer adopt a progressive outlook and respect the rights of workers. In addition, trade unions must convince their members to work for the common good of the organisation. Parties need to have faith in collective bargaining and peaceful ways of resolving organisational conflicts.

Chaudhuri (2012) supports the views expressed by the above authors that mutual trust is a key variable for building harmonious relationship in the workplace. Furthermore, in the same vein as the above authors, Chaudhuri (2012) recommends that the parties to employment relations develop an atmosphere of mutual cooperation, confidence and respect. He observes "when there is trust there is peace". Sule (2013) adds that sustained steps must be taken by management and workers to ensure some level of trust among the parties or stakeholders.

### **3.6.12 Mutual accommodation**

Mutual accommodation also contributes to sound employer-employee relationships. According to Chaudhuri (2012), employers must learn to accommodate the employees by recognising their right to collective bargaining. Chaudhuri (2012, p.66) emphasises that in serious organisations, “there must be great emphasis on mutual accommodation rather than conflict or uncompromising attitude”. Chaudhuri (2012), recommends that sustainable efforts should be made to introduce a communal way of living and working together within the organisation.

Sule (2013) also holds that mutual accommodation within the organisation helps promote healthy relationships among the parties. Furthermore, Siddiqua *et al.* (2014) concur with the above authors that mutual accommodation is one of the key constructs that contributes to building sound employment relations. The authors are of the view that a conflictual attitude does not promote industrial harmony. Siddiqua *et al.* (2014) further believe that management must be willing to cooperate with rather than blackmail employees.

### **3.6.13 Proactive handling of employee grievances**

Proactive handling of employee grievances is identified as another way of promoting sound employment relations. According to Sule (2013), as part of ensuring industrial peace, management must make sure that employees’ grievances are given immediate attention and settled amicably. Chaudhuri (2012) also claims that proactive and proper handling of employee grievances serves as a means of ensuring industrial peace. According to Chaudhuri (2012), management should develop mechanisms for resolving employee grievances at an early stage rather than wait for the issues to escalate. He recommends that proactive handling of industrial disputes will help to prevent potential conflict situations from escalating.

Kipsang *et al.* (2015) agree with the above authors that proactive handling of employee grievances helps promote industrial harmony. Kipsang *et al.* (2015) suggest that management should develop mechanisms to detect early warning signs in order to handle conflicts at an early stage. According to Kipsang *et al.* (2015) when conflicts are properly handled at an early stage it helps to avoid further action that might affect the employment relations negatively. Seniwoliba (2013) supports the views expressed by the above authors that proactive handling of employee grievances promotes sound employment relations. Seniwoliba (2013) reiterates



that proactive handling of employee grievances is one of the prerequisites for good employer-employee relations.

#### **3.6.14 Improvement in working conditions**

Working conditions have been identified as another factor which contributes to building sound employment relations in the workplace. Working conditions are different from the physical working environment. They include everything in the organisation namely: the working environment, allowances, health and safety, organisation of work, well-being of employees, working hours and work-life balance (Odhong & Omolo, 2014). According to Odhong and Omolo (2014), working conditions refers to the physical working environment as well as other non-pay aspects of the worker's terms and condition of employment. The author suggests improvement in the working conditions of an employee will go a long way to enhance the working relationship between the employer and the employee.

Oludele (2014) concurs that good working conditions promote good employer-employee relationships. Oludele (2014) expands to say that good employer-employee relationships do not only depend on worker associations, employer associations, government, courts and tribunals but, to a large extent they depend on the working conditions as well. The authors all suggest that improved working conditions will contribute to enhancing employment relationships because they will help to minimise agitations in the workplace.

#### **3.6.15 Opportunity for growth and promotion**

Opportunities for growth and promotion further contribute to building sound employment relations. According to Sule (2013), providing employees with the opportunity to grow and develop, both in skill and knowledge helps in enhancing the employment relations. Sule (2013) contends that the employer must provide training opportunities for the employees to acquire the knowledge, skills and capacities necessary to do their work well. The author further recommends that good employer-employee relationships can be developed through promotion. Sule (2013) suggests that qualified persons who deserve promotion within the workplace must be given such an opportunity as it will motivate others to put in their best of efforts towards the accomplishment of the organisation's goals.

Singh (2015) also posits that training is very crucial in improving the working relationship between the employer and employees. According to Singh (2015) employee growth can be

achieved through training and development. The author observes that training is important for the development of both employer and employees. As a result of training, the employee becomes more effective and efficient. Singh (2015) found that in order to maintain good and harmonious working relations, employees must be given the opportunity for growth and development.

### **3.6.16 Good negotiation skills**

Aside from collective bargaining, it has been found that good negotiation skills are important in promoting good employment relations. Odhong and Omolo (2014) are of the view that collective bargaining can only be effective if the parties possess the requisite skills for the negotiation process. The authors recommend that training and development must be provided for the parties to the employment relations to enable them acquire the necessary negotiation skills for effective collective bargaining. Odhong and Omolo (2014) hold that the success of every negotiation process depends on the ability of the parties to bargain with each other. Therefore, in order to ensure successful bargaining, the parties must have the necessary negotiation skills.

Osakede and Ijimakinwa (2014) also claim that negotiation skills are important in ensuring good employer-employee relationships. Osakede and Ijimakinwa (2014) averred that with good negotiation skills, the parties are able to reach amicable resolution of disputes that are likely to jeopardise employment relations. It is against this background that the authors suggest that every party to the negotiation process must acquire negotiation skills.

## **3.7 Importance of sound employment relations**

There are many benefits that can be derived from sound employment relations in the workplace (Kumari, 2013; Ogundele et al, 2013; Osad & Osas, 2013; Seniwoliba, 2013; Thyagaraju, 2015). The following are some of the important aspects of sound employment relations in an organisation.

### **3.7.1 Increased efficiency**

Increased efficiency is one important result of sound employment relations in the workplace. Kumari (2013) found that healthy employer-employee relationships contribute to increased efficiency which translates into higher productivity. According to Kumari (2013), when

employees are satisfied with an organisation they try to put in their best effort towards the success of the organisation. Kumari (2013) further suggests that sound employment relations do not only increase organisational productivity but they impact positively employee efficiency as well. When employees work in a favourable atmosphere they tend to work to the best of their abilities which leads to increased efficiency. The author recommends that harmonious relationships are a prerequisite for employee efficiency. Thyagaraju (2015) also observes that good industrial relations lead to increased employee efficiency.

### **3.7.2 Uninterrupted or increased productivity**

Another result of sound employment relations is increased productivity. Several studies have shown that there is a positive correlation between good industrial relations and productivity (Awe & Ayeni, 2010; Kumari, 2013; Thyagaraju, 2015). According to Awe and Ayeni (2010), industrial peace or harmony contributes to an increase in an organisation's productivity. Thyagaraju (2015) also maintain that there is positive correlation between industrial relations and organisational productivity. Thyagaraju (2015) contends that one important benefit of sound industrial relations is that it ensures continuity in production. He adds that industrial harmony ensures continuous employment for managers and employees. According to Thyagaraju (2015), industrial peace or harmony encourages full utilisation of resources, resulting in maximum production. Osad and Osas (2013) reaffirm that good employment relations ensure improvement in productivity.

### **3.7.3 Fewer industrial disputes or conflicts**

It has been identified that industrial peace or harmony contributes to a reduction in the number of workplace conflicts. Thyagaraju (2015) is of the opinion that good employer-employee relationships serve to reduce the necessity for industrial disputes in the organisation. According to Thyagaraju (2015, p.159) "strikes, lockouts, go-slow tactics and grievances are some of the reflections of industrial unrest which do not spring up in an atmosphere of industrial peace". Thyagaraju (2015) adds that good industrial relations help promote co-operation among all the parties in the organisation.

Ogundele *et al* (2013) concur that good employment relations helps to reduce conflicts in the workplace. Ogundele *et al* (2013), found that that industrial disputes are reducing in Nigeria due to the growing respect for industrial relations. Adewole and Adebola (2010) also observe

that good employment relations ensure a reduction in the number of industrial conflicts. This findings by Adewole and Adebola (2010) affirm the findings of the above authors. According to Adewole and Adebola (2010), frequent conflicts between management and workers can be managed through sound employment relations. All the above findings suggest that there is positive relationship between good employer-employee relations and organisational conflicts. Thus it can be concluded that good employer-employee relations help in reducing organisational conflicts.

#### **3.7.4 High morale**

Increased morale in employees is another benefit derived from sound employment relations. According to Thyagaraju (2015), sound employment relations do not only increase employee efficiency and productivity but it also increases employee morale. Thyagaraju (2015) found that there is a positive relationship between good industrial relations and employee morale. Thyagaraju (2015, p.159) further opines that “employees work with great zeal with the feeling in mind that the interest of employer and employees is one and the same”. Singh and Kumar (2011) strongly believe that sound employment relations contribute to employee motivation. The authors argue that a comfortable atmosphere in an organisation serves as motivation to employees.

#### **3.7.5 Reduced wastage**

Thyagaraju (2015) postulates that sound employment relations do not only reduce workplace conflict or increase employee morale, they also reduce wastage in the workplace. Thyagaraju (2015) believes that sound employer-employee relationships are maintained on the principles of cooperation and recognition of each other. Good industrial relations ensure that wastage of human resources, material and equipment are reduced to the minimal level. Singh and Kumar (2011) agree with Thyagaraju (2015) that sound employer-employee relations lead to reduction of wastage in production processes. According to Singh and Kumar (2011), industrial harmony contributes to an increase in production as a result of the reduction in wastage that occurs due to conflicts and industrial actions.

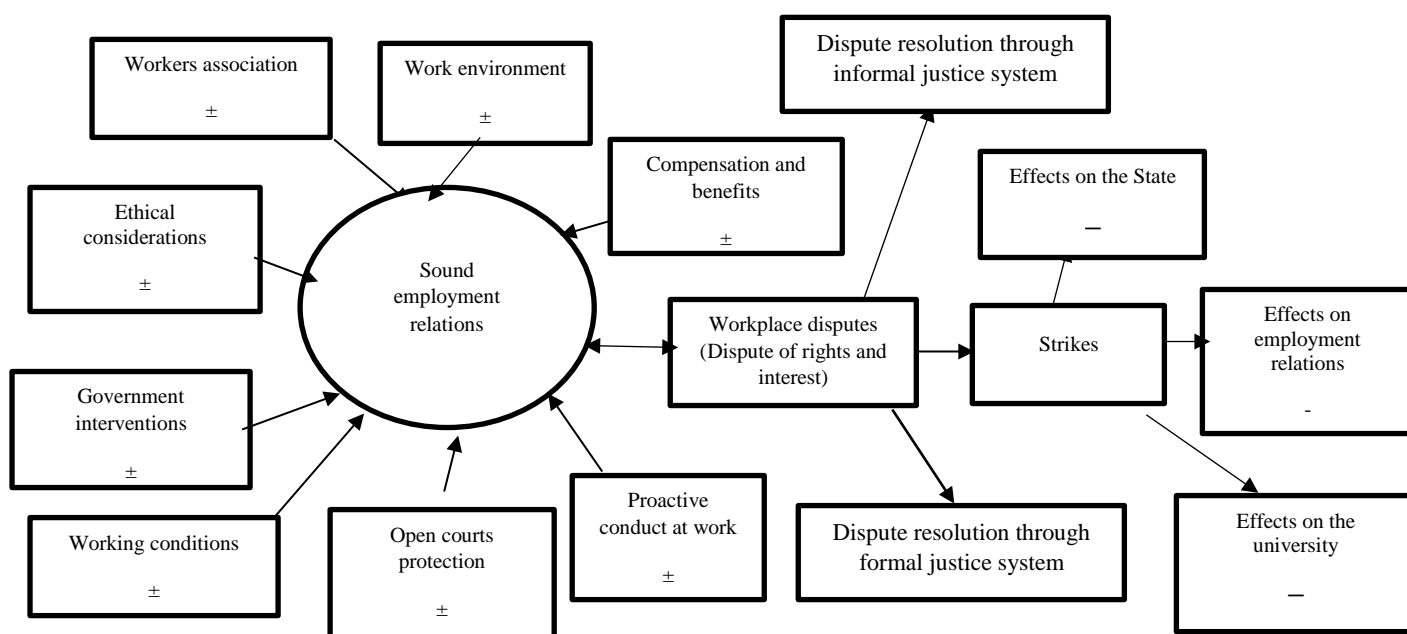
A thorough review of the literature regarding the importance of sound employment relations in organisations reveals that there is abundance of literature in Africa which addresses the

relevance of good industrial relations. However, in the Ghanaian context there is limited study that has addressed the importance of employer-employee relations.

### 3.8 Conceptual framework

This study is guided by the conceptual framework illustrated in Figure 3.1 below

**Figure 3.1: The conceptual framework for strike and employment relations**



**Source: The researcher**

Figure 3.1 above depicts the conceptual framework regarding strike action and employment relations. The idea behind this conceptual framework is to create a foundation for the establishment of sound employment relations which will help to prevent disputes and strikes in the workplace. The researcher is of the view that building or promoting sound employment relations in the workplace is the first step to preventing labour disputes which might lead to strikes. The above framework incorporates previous frameworks developed by previous research (Odhong & Omolo, 2014; Oludele, 2014) to guide the process of promoting sound employment relations. However, the limitation of these two frameworks are that they only focus on factors that promote sound employment relations without any reference to what would happen if sound employment relations are not achieved. They also ignore the importance of conflict or disputes which often arise when sound employment relations are not achieved. This framework extends the previous frameworks developed by the above authors.

As seen from the conceptual framework above, when sound employment relationships are achieved they help labour disputes and this further contributes to minimising strikes in the workplace. Disputes and strikes emerge from poor employment relations, therefore the researcher is of the view that when sound employment relations are achieved they assist in the prevention of labour disputes and strikes in organisations. With reference to the framework above, sound employment relations can be promoted or achieved through collective bargaining, remuneration and benefits, effective organisational communication, proper working conditions, allowing workers to form or join associations, government interventions, proactive conduct at work, a favourable working environment and open courts protection (Odhong & Omolo, 2014; Oludele, 2014).

However, the consequences of poor employment relations are the occurrences of disputes and strikes. The framework shows that there are two types of disputes namely: dispute of rights and disputes of interests. According to Bendix (2015, pp.575-576) “a right is that to which a party is entitled by law, by court, by agreement or by established practices whilst an interest is that to which a party is not yet entitled but to which he would like to become entitled”. Dispute of right is any matter that causes conflict between the employer and employee and is regulated by law or agreement. Dispute of interest, on the other hand, is any matter that gives rise to conflict between the parties and is not regulated by law, agreement or custom. According to Okene and Emejuru (2015), dispute of right refers to organisational rights which employees are legally entitled to and this includes the right to strike, the right to join or form trade unions and the right to participate in lawful activities. On the other hand, disputes of interest are those disputes which arise from perceived needs and to which employees are not legally entitled. They arise when there is no agreement on demands or grievances can be achieved (Bendix, 2015). The author suggests that any matter causing conflicts between the parties and not regulated by law, agreement or customs, can give rise to a dispute of interest.

As seen from the framework, labour disputes can be resolved through informal and formal justice systems. The informal justice system can be referred to as “Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)”. This is the process of resolving industrial disputes where parties are encouraged to resolve their grievances without recourse to the court or the formal justice system. The formal justice system is a process of resolving disputes where parties to the dispute refer their case to the courts (Midodzi & Jaha, 2011). However, failure to resolve the dispute

may lead to strike action. The framework depicts that strike action in public universities has an impact on the state, employment relations and on the universities as well. (Arputharaj & Gayatri, 2014; Awe & Ayeni, 2012; Selala, 2014). This is the total reflection of what is depicted in the framework, Figure 3.1. The framework was developed to address all the research objectives outlined in chapter one. It must also be noted that when strike action occurs it can be addressed using the factors that promote sound employment relations in the workplace identified in the framework above.

This framework is very important not only to public universities but also to governments and other organisations. When adopted by organisations and governments this framework will offer the following benefits. To begin with, it will help governments and other organisations promote sound employment relations thereby preventing disputes and strikes. It will assist them to identify factors that will contribute to the promotion of sound employment relations. Furthermore, it will also governments, universities and other organisations to the cause of strike actions. In addition, it will assist governments, universities and other organisations in investigating the impact of strike action on employment relations. Besides this, the framework will serve as a guide to governments, public universities and organisations as to how to resolve industrial disputes or conflicts. Additionally, the framework will enable governments to determine the effects strike actions have on the country as a whole. Not only this, but also it will help the public universities to identify the effects strike actions have on their activities.

Practical recommendations of this framework.

On the basis of the above discussion based on the framework, the researcher recommends that:

- (i) Organisations and governments should focus more attention or energy on building sound employment relations in order to help reduce disputes and strike actions.
- (ii) There is the need for parties (government representatives, trade union representatives and employers' associations) to the employment relations to focus more attention on resolving their disputes using the most appropriate mechanisms.
- (iii) Government, labour and management should try as far as possible to avoid disputes and strike actions because these are not healthy for employment relations.

- (iv) There should be formal procedures for people to express their grievances and to seek redress. There should be a framework by which the business environment could be measured or gauged in terms of tension and conflict.
- (v) Government should intervene when necessary by supporting the employees and their management to reach amicable resolution of industrial disputes.

### **3.9 Consequences of poor employment relations**

There are several ways in which poor employment relations could impact on organisations. Several studies have found that there are negative effects that are associated with poor employment relations (Awe & Ayeni, 2010; Chaudhuri, 2012; Kumari, 2013; Osad & Osas, 2013). Below are some of the consequences of poor employment relations in an organisation.

#### **3.9.1 Poor employee and organisational performance**

Poor employee and organisational performance has been identified as one consequence of poor employment relations in the workplace. According to Kumari (2013), poor employment relations have adverse effects on both employee and organisation performance. Kumari (2013) proposes that in an environment where there is poor employer-employee relations the individual's ability to perform is impaired with negative implications for the performance of the employees as well as for the organisation.

Chaudhuri (2012) advocates that poor employment relations have multiple effects both on employee and organisation performance. According to Chaudhuri (2012), when people are not well treated it affects their level of performance. This is because the employees may have a sense of insecurity and they might not be willing to give their best towards the accomplishment of the organisational goals.

Osad and Osas (2013) agree with the above authors that poor employment relations lead to low productivity in the organisation. They found that a lack of sound employment relations can have dire consequences on both employee and organisation productivity. Awe and Ayeni (2010) also found that there is an inverse relationship between poor employment relations and an organisation's productivity. According to Awe and Ayeni (2010), a lack of good industrial relations contributes to a decline in both employee and organisation productivity.



### **3.9.3 High absenteeism and labour turnover**

High employee absenteeism and labour turnover are major consequences of poor employment relations. Kumari (2013) contends that in organisations where employment relations are strained, they face the problem of high employee absenteeism and labour turnover. Kumari (2013) postulates that where there is poor employer-employee relations most employees may not be willing to report to work on time and in addition, many of them too may consider leaving the organisation.

Chaudhuri (2012) supports the view expressed by the above author that the consequences of poor employment relations are high employee absenteeism and labour turnover. Chaudhuri (2012) notes that when people are not satisfied with the organisation because of adversarial relationships it may affect absenteeism and employee retention. Chaudhuri (2012) adds that a satisfied employee is a happy employee. Therefore, when employees are not satisfied they may consider leaving the organisation.

### **3.9.4 Unhealthy working conditions**

Unhealthy working conditions is another consequence of poor employment relations in the workplace. Chaudhuri (2012) opines that lack of a sound working relationship between the employer and employees may affect the working conditions of the employees. Chaudhuri (2012) suggests that when there are poor industrial relations, the employer may not be interested in the well-being of the employees. When this happens, the employees' working conditions may deteriorate to a deplorable state. Osad and Osas (2013) also observe that there is a relationship between industrial relations and working conditions. According to Osad and Osas (2013), a lack of good industrial relations may affect the general working conditions of the organisation.

### **3.9.5 Loss of revenue**

According to Chaudhuri (2012), poor employment relations have multiple effects on the employer, employees and the state. This means that poor employment relations in an organisation do not only affect the employer and employees but they may have negative implications for the state as well. Chaudhuri (2012) found that poor industrial relations in the workplace have the potential to affect the organisation's revenue or profit margin. Chaudhuri (2012)

further suggests that when there are industrial actions due to poor employment relations they affect government revenue as well.

Researchers (Aidelunuoghene, 2014; Gyamfi, 2011; Murwirapachena & Sibanda, 2014; Olusegun Ajayi, 2014) have found that there is a positive correlation between employment relations and organisation revenue. In a study conducted by Gyamfi (2011) to assess the effects of industrial unrest on Ghana's health service, it was found that the poor employment relations in the health sector affected the country's revenue mobilisation. Gyamfi (2011) reported that 88% of the respondents (nurses) strongly agreed that their strike action due to poor working relations affected revenue mobilisation in the country. Similarly, Olusegun Ajayi (2014) found that poor employment relations in Nigeria affected many organisation's profit margin. According to the author, some companies in Nigeria recorded low profit margins over the years because of several factors of which poor employment relations is one.

### **3.9.6 Increased frustration**

In addition to the above, increase frustration among workers is one of the consequences of poor employment relations. Osad and Osas (2013) hold that one of the negative consequences associated with poor industrial relations is that it increases frustration among people, especially labour, in the organisation.. Further, Osad and Osas (2013) add that poor employment relations bring about bitterness in the organisation and this may contribute to frustration.

Kumari (2013) also supports the findings that poor employment relations increase frustration. According to Kumari (2013), people work in order to earn a living. Also, they want satisfy their physiological, social and egoistic needs. Therefore, when they find difficulty in satisfying these needs, they may feel very frustrated. Kumari (2013) asserts that unhealthy employer-employee relations exacts a heavy toll in terms of human frustration.

### **3.10 Conclusion**

The chapter presented a review of literature regarding employment relations. It begun with the conceptualisation of the term employment relations. It proceeded to discuss the various theories that underlie employment relations namely: unitary, pluralist, Marxist, social action, system, and societal Corporatism. The chapter also discussed the role of the actors in employment relations. This includes employees and their trade unions, employers and employers' associations and the state. It continued to give an account of industrial relations practice in

Ghana. It further discussed the various factors that promote sound employment relations in the workplace including a good working environment, worker associations, compensation and benefits, proactive conduct in the workplace, government interventions, mutual trust, collective bargaining, effective communication, mutual accommodation and proactive handling of employee grievances. In addition, the chapter gives an account of the importance of sound employment relations namely: increased efficiency, uninterrupted or increased productivity, fewer industrial disputes or conflicts, high employee morale and decreased wastage. Also, it presents the conceptual framework that guides the entire study. Lastly, the chapter presented discussions of the consequences of poor employment relations. The next chapter focused on the research methodology.

## **CHAPTER FOUR RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Chapter three fully discussed the concept of employment relations. This current chapter discussed the research methodology that guides this study. The purpose of this chapter was to provide appropriate discussion on how the study will be conducted in terms of the research design and the methodology. In this study, a number of research questions were posed and objectives formulated as outlined in chapter one. Chapter four commenced by reiterating the research questions and objectives. It continued to provide justification for the research design and the research approach used. Further, it gave an account of the research paradigm employed in the study. It continued to provide a description of the study site (location) and the target population of the study. The chapter also stated the total sample size used in the study. The justification for the sampling methods or techniques is also provided. Furthermore, it provided justification for data collection instruments used to collect both quantitative and qualitative data from the participants. There was also discussion on how data quality control was ensured. The chapter described the way in which both the qualitative and quantitative data are analysed. There is also an outline of the measurement scale used in the study and the way in which ethical principles have been addressed. Finally, the researcher focused on limitations encountered during the course of the study.

### **4.2 Research questions**

The following research questions were posed to guide the study:

- 4.2.1 How does strike action impact on employment relations in Accra, Ghana, public universities?
- 4.2.2 How does the employee strike action affect Accra, Ghana, universities and the country as a whole?
- 4.2.3 What factors are responsible for strike actions in Accra, Ghana, public universities?
- 4.2.4 What factors promote sound employment relations in Accra, Ghana, public universities?
- 4.2.5 What measures can be put in place to address strike actions in the Accra, Ghana, public universities?

### **4.3 Research objectives**

The following research objectives were formulated to answer the above research questions:

- 4.3.1 To investigate the impact strike action has on employment relations in Accra, Ghana, public universities.
- 4.3.2 To identify the extent to which the employees' strike affects the public universities in Accra, Ghana, and the country as a whole.
- 4.3.3 To determine the causes of strikes in Accra, Ghana, public universities.
- 4.3.4 To examine factors that promote sound employment relations in Accra, Ghana, public universities.
- 4.3.5 To establish measures that can be put in place to minimise the occurrence of strike action in the Accra, Ghana, public universities.

### **4.4 Research design**

A research design is the entire plan showing how the researcher intends to go about the research work. It is the foundation for the research work as it outlines the various approaches to be employed in solving the research problem, information regarding the research problem, the duration for the study and budget (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). Bhattacharjee (2012) holds that the research design is a detailed plan of how data is to be collected in an empirical research project. It is a "blueprint" for answering the research questions and hypotheses testing. Research design allows the researcher to perform selected tasks easily and systematically (Bhattacharjee, 2012). There are many approaches to research design namely: exploratory; explanatory; causal; descriptive; evaluation; intervention and participatory action research. Each of these designs is used in a specific study depending on the nature of the study. The current study adopted both exploratory and descriptive research designs. The rationale for this choice were provided below.

#### **4.4.1 Exploratory research**

Exploratory research is one of the main types of research design often used by qualitative researchers. According to Engel and Schutt (2013), exploratory research is a type of research design which attempts to generate more insights into the nature of a particular phenomenon and develop focused research questions to be investigated by extensive studies. Exploratory research design is often used in mixed method research. However, it focuses more attention on qualitative research rather than quantitative research (Engel & Schutt, 2013). An exploratory research design allows researchers to test the feasibility of undertaking an extensive study and generating focused research questions which need to be investigated (Babbie, 2013; Babbie & Mouton, 2010; Royse, 2011). Exploratory research is more deductive and quantitative in nature (Babbie, 2010).

Exploration is undertaken when very little is known about the topic, situation or variables under investigation (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). This kind of study can be also undertaken when some facts are known, but more information is required for developing a viable theoretical framework. Therefore, in this case an extensive primary research is needed to provide detailed understanding of the phenomenon and to assess its magnitude. With regard to this study, the review of literature regarding strike action in the Ghanaian context reveals that very few studies, (Gyamfi, 2011; Seniwoliba, 2013) have been conducted to examine the impact of strike action on Ghana. Unfortunately, all these studies were carried out in the health sector despite the frequent occurrence of strikes in the education sector. Again, the review of literature on strikes in Ghana revealed that limited research has been carried out in the education sector or in the public universities. Also, none of these studies have looked at strikes and employment relations in the Ghanaian context. Therefore, little is known about the impact of strike action on employment relations in Ghana.

Exploratory research was more appropriate for this study as it allowed the researcher to conduct an in-depth investigation to establish the impact of employee strike action on employment relations in the public universities (Babbie, 2013; Engel & Schutt, 2010). This design enabled the researcher to elicit the views of the participants regarding the subject matter under investigation through face-to-face interviews. It allowed the researcher to gather rich information from the participants since it involves in-depth interviews. Furthermore, this

design assisted the researcher to adopt a theoretical framework to explain the phenomenon of strike action and employment.

#### **4.4.2 Descriptive research**

Descriptive research is a type of research design which is usually used in quantitative studies. The main reason for conducting descriptive research is to describe the phenomenon under investigation (Dane, 2011; Pierson & Thomas, 2010; Royse, 2011). According to Monette, Sullivan and Dejong (2011), descriptive research seeks to discover facts or describe an event or phenomenon accurately as it exists or occurs in its natural setting, with a view to gain an idea about the present status of the phenomenon or situation.

Other quantitative researchers (Engel & Shutt, 2010, p.9; Engel & Sutt, 2013, p.18) explain that “descriptive research is usually overarching and involves collecting facts”. The authors further add that descriptive research seeks to discover facts or describe reality accurately as it exists in order to gain a clear picture of the current situation. Monette, Sullivan & DeJong (2011) also support the views expressed by the above authors that the main aim of descriptive research is to discover facts and to describe a particular phenomenon.

According to Mitchell and Jolley (2010, pp.205-209), “in descriptive studies, one might find a relationship between two variables, but still not be able to say why this relationship exists because no explanation has yet been given”. Babbie (2010, p.93) also adds that in “descriptive studies, there is thus no indication of determining cause-and-effect relationships, but the aim rather is to describe situations and events and to determine accurately what the real situation is about”.

Furthermore, Sekaran and Bougie (2013) suggest that descriptive research allows a researcher to gain an in-depth profile that describes the characteristics of areas of interest in employees and the business. According to the authors, the purpose of a descriptive study is to allow the researcher to describe the phenomenon being studied. It is often undertaken when the researcher intends to describe the characteristics of persons, events or situations. The use of this design has assisted the researcher to describe the variables (strike action and employment relations) in the current study. In addition, this type of research design allowed the researcher to accurately describe the characteristics of the participants in the study in terms of their age, sex, educational background and years of experience in the organisation.

Having discussed the research design, one would ask, then what is the research paradigm?

The next section of this study focused the discussion of the research paradigms.

#### **4.4 Research paradigm**

Paradigm is an important aspect of research. In the arena of social sciences, paradigms are usually perceived and understood through their core ontological and epistemological assumptions emanating from distinct worldviews (Tang 2011). According to Sefotho (2015), “paradigms of inquiry are historically based” and, therefore, change with time and context.

Devetak, Glazar and Vogrin (2010, p.78) defined research paradigm as a “series of reciprocally connected assumptions regarding social phenomena which provides philosophical and notional frame for studying the social phenomena”. There are different kinds of paradigms and each paradigm is used in unique study.

Interestingly, Mkansi and Acheampong (2012) suggest that there is a paradigm war among researchers (Alise & Teddlie 2010; Denzin 2010) because there appears to be no consensus about the categorisation and classification of paradigms. Agerfalk (2013, p.253) contends that “when mixing quantitative (typically positivist) and qualitative (often interpretive) approaches, paradigm incommensurability may become a concern”. Wahyuni (2012) posits that there are four classifications of paradigms namely: positivism, post positivism, interpretivism and pragmatism. Scotland (2012) however, argues that there are three types of research paradigms, namely, positivism, post-positivism and interpretivism. However, the current study adopted the pragmatic paradigm. The justifications for adopting this paradigm were provided below.

##### **4.4.1 Pragmatic paradigm**

Pragmatic paradigm is a research paradigm that is often used in mixed method research. This paradigm lies between the positivist and interpretivist paradigms. This paradigm emerged due the paradigm war among researchers (Alise & Teddlie 2010; Aliyu, Bello, Kasim & Martin; 2014; Denzin 2010; Wahyuni, 2012). According to Agerfalk (2013), the so called “incompatibility thesis” recommends that qualitative and quantitative paradigms should not be mixed for one single reason. Venkatesh, Brown and Bala (2013) postulate that one way of addressing the incompatibility thesis is to adopt a paradigm that is inconclusive enough to accommodate the inherent tension. In this regard, pragmatism was the appropriate paradigm for mixed method research. According to Venkatesh *et al.* (2013), the pragmatic paradigm



offers an “immediate and useful middle position philosophically and methodologically” which lays emphasis on finding useful a method for researching a specific question.

According to Sekaran and Bougie (2013), those who subscribe to this pragmatic paradigm do not take a particular position on what constitutes good research. Pragmatists believe that research on both objective, observable phenomena and subjective meaning can offer useful knowledge depending on the research questions in the study. Sekaran and Bougie (2013, p.30) suggest that a pragmatic paradigm focuses mainly on “practical, applied research where different views about the research and the subject under study are helpful in solving a research problem”. Sekaran and Bougie (2013) further add that pragmatism defines research as the art where concepts and theories are generalisations of the past actions and experiences, and interactions with the environment. With regard to this paradigm, the different assumptions, ideas, and theories helped researchers to obtain an understanding of the world. One feature of this paradigm is that it views the present truth as tentative and changing over time.

Sefotho (2015) suggests that pragmatism, as a research paradigm, accepts both singular and multiple realities in the world. Feilzer (2010) further argues that this approach to research aims at solving practical problems in the real world. According to Feilzer (2010), pragmatism appears to be both a pacifier between paradigms as well as a breaking away from the grips of dominant paradigms. It focuses on the ‘what’ and ‘how’ of the research problem. It places emphasis on the research problem and applies different approaches in understanding the problem (Feilzer, 2010).

This paradigm enabled the researcher to collect both qualitative and quantitative data and to integrate them to different stages during the investigation. This approach was also used to explore in detail the views and experiences of the participants on how strike action impacts on the employment relations. It further employed the principle of objectivity to do a thorough analysis of the views of the participants in the public universities regarding the phenomenon under investigation.

#### **4.5 Research approach**

There are three approaches to research namely: qualitative, quantitative and mixed method research. One of these approaches is generally used in a particular study. However, the nature of this study requires the researcher to use a mixed method research or a multiple approach in

other words, a combination of qualitative and quantitative research. The reasons for using these methods were provided below.

#### **4.5.1 Qualitative research**

Qualitative research is one of the main types of research methods. Looi (2014) postulates that qualitative researchers first begin with a self-evaluation and reflection of themselves in a social historical–context. Devetak *et al.* (2010) suggest that qualitative research is a kind of exploratory approach to research which aims at emphasising words rather than quantification in terms of data gathering and analysing. Castellan (2010) describes qualitative research as the situation or circumstance relating to how individuals perceive their own world and the extent to which the researcher interacts with them regarding what is being researched.

Other qualitative researchers (Creswell, 2012; Lyons, Johnson, Bike, Flores, Ojeda Rosales, 2013; Yuan, Nembhard & Bradley, 2015) have defined qualitative research as a research process which is based on a clear methodological tradition of research where the researcher builds up a complex framework in analysing narratives and observations in order to conduct the study in the habitat. There are several advantages to the use of this research method. According to Creswell (2012), qualitative method enables researchers to explore the opinions of homogenous as well as heterogeneous groups of people in order to unpack the different perspectives within a community. Looi (2014) also suggests that another strength of a qualitative approach is that the investigation is broad and open-ended thereby allowing the respondents to raise the issues that concern them most.

Ponterotto, Mathew and Raughley (2013) also express the view that qualitative research has a number of advantages namely: it helps to improve the relationship and dialogue between researchers and subjects in the communities and it helps to reduce the imposition of researcher assumption on diverse others; it empowers the subjects by enabling them to add their voice and thereby honouring their strengths, needs and values.

However, some researchers (Jeanty & Hibel, 2011; Looi, 2014) have observed limitations to this method of research and these cannot be overlooked. One limitation of qualitative research is that it is time-consuming and as a result, important issues could be ignored. Despite the limitations, this method is relevant in this study. The application of qualitative research in the current study allowed the research to elicit the views of the respondents through face-to-face

interviews regarding the phenomenon under investigation. It also allowed the researcher to tap into the participants' feelings and perceptions about the topic under investigation. This approach allowed the participants to express their opinions on how strike action often affects employment relations. In addition, it enabled the researcher to probe the participants about specific factors that might be responsible for strikes in the universities and ways in which they can be addressed.

#### **4.5.2 Quantitative research**

Quantitative research is another type of research method that is used by quantitative researchers. According to Tuli (2011), unlike qualitative research, quantitative methodology seeks to quantify or measure social phenomena by gathering and analysing numeric data and focusing attention on the relationships among a smaller number of attributes or characteristics across many cases. Looi (2014) expresses the view that quantitative research brings forth a general area of the study or matters of professional or personal interest. Looi (2014) further adds that quantitative research demands a thorough review of the research literature and development of appropriate hypotheses which emerge from social theory.

Castellan (2010) asserts that quantitative research is associated with positivism which explains the fact that physical and social realities are independent of those who observe them. According to Castellan (2010), quantitative researchers are more concerned with an objective reality which is out there to be discovered and the researcher is not identified with the research in the way he is in qualitative research.

According to Looi (2014), there are several advantages that can be derived from using quantitative research. The quantitative approach can be easily administered and evaluated. Thus, it allows the researcher not to spend too much time on the participants before administering the survey, and the feedback can be tabulated within a shorter time than in qualitative research. Another strength of quantitative research is that numeric data collected from the respondents helps to facilitate comparison between groups and thereby establish the extent to which the respondents agree or disagree (Looi, 2014). Fassinger and Morrow (2013) also add that the quantitative or survey research method helps to ensure that there are large representative samples are able to participate in the study.

In this study, quantitative research assisted the research to collective quantitative data regarding the number of strike actions recorded in Ghana over the years. This allowed for critical analysis about the trends of strike actions in the country. In addition, this method allowed the research to involve a larger number of participants in the study than would be possible with a qualitative study. A large pool of information was gathered through the use of questionnaires.

With regards to this study, the researcher combined both the qualitative and quantitative aspects of the research to complement the findings of each other. The integration of both the qualitative and quantitative aspects of the study further assisted in the elaboration, enhancement and clarification of the main findings of the study. Also, both the qualitative and quantitative aspects of the study were integrated to cross check the validity of the findings. Furthermore, the integration was carried out to ensure the confirmation and completeness in order to increase the validity and reliability of the results

#### **4.5.3 Mixed method research**

Mixed method research is the third research method that has recently gained popularity. According to Caruth (2013), mixed method research evolved out of the limitations observed in both qualitative and quantitative research methodology. A mixed method design is an approach to research which involves the art of collecting and analysing both qualitative and quantitative data in a single study (Bishop & Holmes, 2013; Ponterotto, Jaya & Brigid, 2013). Mixed method researchers (Creswell, 2012; Frels & Onwuegbuzie, 2013; Hong & Espelage, 2011) are of the opinion that this approach offers researchers the opportunity to carry out an in-depth investigation into a particular problem and to gain more insight(s) into the research problem and questions, and to make informed decisions about whether to use these method independently.

According to Frels and Onwuegbuzie (2013), mixed method research provides more insight and a fuller understanding of the research than when relying on only one approach. Cronholm and Hjalmarsson (2011) are of the view that the mixed method research is used to handle more complex and wider research questions because the researcher is not restricted to using only one research design. For this reason, the present study uses a mixed method approach.

Other mixed method researchers (Barnes, 2012; Bartholomew & Brown, 2012; Farquhar, Ewing & Booth, 2011; Gambrel & Butler, 2013; Hayes, Bonner & Douglas, 2013; Hong &

Espelage, 2011; Lopez-Fernandez & Molina-Azorin, 2011; Ngulube, 2012; Octlund, Kidd, Wengstrom & Rowa-Dewar, 2011; Truscott, Swars, Smith, Thornton-Reid, XZhao, Dooley, Williams, Hart & Matthews, 2010; Zhou & Creswell, 2012) also believe that the combination of both the qualitative and quantitative approaches in a single study will have the potential to provide more robust research. With regard to this study, the participants were first interviewed and based on the various responses, questionnaires were constructed and administered to the other participants. With this method, the research began the data collection by interviewing heads of departments, registrars and deans from the above two universities selected for the study. The quantitative study followed with the distribution of structured questionnaires to the lecturers and administrative staff.

The use of the mixed method approach allowed the researcher to gather much needed information from the participants regarding the topic under investigation which otherwise cannot be provided using either a qualitative or quantitative approach on its own. The combination of both qualitative and quantitative (mixed method) approaches in this study enabled the researcher to address a broad range of research questions, as outlined in chapter one. The combination of questionnaires and interviews in this study allowed the researcher to tap into the perceptions of the participants regarding strike action and employment relations. The qualitative research focused on “how” questions whilst the quantitative part paid more attention to “what” questions.

#### **4.5.4 Triangulation**

The nature of the study requires the use of triangulation. Triangulation refers to the use of multi-method research. Triangulation is a technique that is used for assessing and enhancing the validity of research findings (Ghrayeb, Damodaran & Vohra, 2011). According to Wilson (2014), triangulation can be defined as the process of using multiple approaches in doing research with a view to getting richer, fuller data and/or to reaffirming the findings of the study. Wilson (2014), suggests that triangulation can be used to improve the validity of the research results.

According to Yeasmin and Rahman (2012), triangulation is a technique used for verification and it enhances the validity of the results by increasing several viewpoints and methods. The main reason for the use of triangulation in this specific study is to obtain confirmation of the

main findings through convergence of different perspectives (Hayes *et al.*, 2013). In this study, the researcher is interested in expanding the breadth and range of the investigation into employee strike action and employment relations in Ghana, through the use of different methods for each component. The researcher sought to complement the findings of the quantitative study by seeking elaboration, enhancement and clarification of the results. The use of triangulation in this study allowed the researcher to cross check the validity of the findings. It also helped him to ensure confirmation and completeness by increasing the validity and reliability of the results.

#### **4.6 Study site**

The study was conducted among selected public universities in Accra, Ghana. Ghana has ten regions and Accra is its capital city. There are thirteen public universities in Ghana, each region has at least one public university but Accra alone has three public universities namely: the University of Ghana, Legon (UG); the University of Professional Studies, Accra (UPSA) and the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA). However, this study was conducted only among the employees of the University of Professional Studies, Accra (UPSA) and the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA). These are the only two institutions that granted the researcher full access and permission to conduct the study.

UPSA was founded in 1965 as a private professional business education facility. It was then called Institute of Professional Studies (IPS). The University of Professional Studies has a complement of about 600 academic and non-academic staff.

GIMPA was established around 1961. It was formerly called Institute of Public Administration. The main purpose of establishing GIMPA was to train public servants in administrative and professional competencies to plan and administer national, regional and local services. It has a staff complement of approximately 900 academic and non-academic staff.

#### **4.7 Target population and description of the participants**

Salaria (2012) defines population as a group of people that the researcher is interested in because of similar characteristics. . The author adds that population can be all the individuals in a particular group or in a restricted aspect of the group. Sekaran and Bougie (2013) further

defines population as the entire group of persons, events or things that the researcher intends to study or investigate.

Participants in this study comprised lecturers, administrative staff, some selected heads of departments, deans and registrars from the above two institutions namely: GIMPA and UPSA. The total number of the population in the two institutions was approximately 1500. As indicated above, GIMPA has a population of approximately 900, comprised of academic and non-academic staff members. UPSA, on the other hand, has about 600 academic and non-academic staff members. Therefore, the total population of the two institutions was 1500. The population was represented by  $N$ , hence  $N= 1500$ .

#### **4.8 Sampling methods or strategies**

According to Manjunath, Ravindra and Archana (2012), sampling is the art of choosing a few individuals or a group of people from a larger defined population so that the data gathered from the chosen population will allow for valid judgment to be made. Salaria (2012) further asserts that sampling involves the process of selecting a relatively small group of people from a larger population to participate in a study in order to find out something about the entire population from which the sample was chosen. Since this study employed mixed method design, both probability and nonprobability sampling techniques were used in the selection of the respondents.

##### **4.8.1 Probability sampling technique**

Probability sampling is one of the sampling methods which is often used in quantitative studies to select a large number of participants for a particular study (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). Battaglia (2011) suggests that with probability sampling every individual or element in the population has an equal chance of being randomly selected to take part in the study. Probability sampling uses many techniques such as cluster, stratified, systematic random, area and double sampling. From the various probability sampling techniques, stratified sampling technique was chosen to select the participants for the study. The nature of the study and the target population required the research to choose this sampling technique.

According to Manjunath *et al.* (2012), stratified sampling is more appropriate when the population being sampled or studied is widely spread or distributed. Manjunath *et al.* (2012)

contend that the stratified sampling technique involves two or more different groups or strata, whereas random samples are taken from every stratum in order to ensure that the strata are equally represented in the final sample.

In addition, Odoh (2015) defines stratified sampling as the process whereby the samples are constrained to include units or elements from each of the segments in the population. Odoh (2015) further suggests that with stratified sampling, the population can be divided into various mutually exclusive strata or subgroups. According to Suri (2011), stratified samples are samples within other samples where each of the stratum is fairly homogenous. Suri (2011) is of the view that the rationale behind the use of stratified sampling is to capture the main variation in the study, rather than the common core. Contrary to the views expressed by the above authors, Singh and Masuku (2013) argue that stratified sampling is used when the population of the group is heterogeneous. With this sampling technique, the entire heterogeneous population was first segregated or divided into homogenous groups called strata and then the units were chosen randomly from these strata.

The target population from which the sample was drawn in this study does not constitute a homogenous group hence stratified sampling technique was the most suitable for the study (Kalpana, 2012). Stratified sampling can either be proportionate and disproportionate. Proportionate stratified sampling is the process of choosing a number of units or elements from the strata, based on the number of elements in the entire population whilst disproportionate stratified sampling is where the investigator has the chance to select as many elements as he chooses from the strata (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). The study utilised disproportionate stratified sampling because of the nature of the population in the various institutions selected. The fact was that there were large differences in sampling variances among the strata. According to Johnson and Christensen (2012), this sampling strategy yields rounded results.

In this study, the population was stratified into a number of non-overlapping strata and samples are selected from each of the stratum. The researcher first grouped the unit of the population in the various universities into schools and colleges and into subsequent departments from which the sample size was drawn. For example, the researcher grouped the population in the universities into various colleges such as Health Sciences, Basic and Applied Sciences, Humanities and Education. College of Humanities and Health Sciences. These colleges were further grouped into Faculties such as Business, Law, Arts, Social Sciences, Performing Arts,



Education and Regional Institute for Population Studies. The various faculties were then divided into departments from which the data is gathered. These departments comprised of Accounting, Finance, Economics, Psychology, Sociology, Marketing, Public Administration and Health, Communication Studies, Information Studies and Health Policy.

The researcher had lists and contact details of the staff in the above two institutions which assisted him to recruit the participants for the study. The following recruitment strategies were used in this study: In the first place, the researcher was introduced by the various registrars in the above institutions to the university community. This made the participants to be aware of the researcher's presence on the campuses. Secondly, having been provided with the list and contact details of all the staff, he was able to identify and contact the various respondents.

Thirdly, he booked appointments with the various participants at a time convenient to them. Finally, he met the participants in their respective offices and administered the questionnaires to them.

#### **4.8.2 Nonprobability sampling**

The nonprobability sampling technique is another sampling method which is used in qualitative studies. Battaglia (2011) defines nonprobability sampling as a sampling technique which does not seek to select a random sample from the population of the study. With this type of sampling, the elements of the population have unequal chances of being selected for the study. Nonprobability sampling is more convenient when the elements in the population are not known or cannot be individually identified. Nonprobability sampling includes convenience sampling, purposive sampling, judgement sampling and snowball sampling. From the range of nonprobability sampling techniques purposive sampling was used in this study to select appropriate participants. Purposive sampling is widely used in qualitative research to gather rich information regarding a particular phenomenon of interest (Palinkas, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom, Duan & Hoagwood, 2013). According to Odoh (2015), purposive sampling is a nonprobability sampling technique whereby the respondents or participants are chosen based on prior judgment about their relevance in the study.

According to Bett, Onyango and Bantu (2013, p.550) "purposive sampling is a sampling technique where the researcher consciously decides who to include in the sample". In this regard, purposive sampling technique was used to select some heads of departments, registrars

and deans from the above institutions to participate in the study because of their knowledge and experience of strike actions. The technique was employed to collect focused information from the above participants through interviews. Further, purposive sampling was chosen because it saves time and money.

There are two types of purposive sampling, namely: judgment and quota sampling (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). The study utilised judgment sampling because the researcher believes that these groups of people possess much experience and knowledge of the phenomenon under investigation. Therefore, allowing some heads of departments, deans and registrars to participate in this study has helped the researcher to gather much information regarding the topic under investigation. For example, the participants were able to provide the researcher with much information on how the strike action impacts on employment relations.

Furthermore, this approach enabled the researcher to probe the respondents more deeply about the implications of the employee strike action for the public universities and as well as the country as a whole. The following strategies were used to recruit the participants: In the first place, the researcher was provided with the list and contact details of the various participants. This made it easier for him to identify who is a registrar, dean or head of department. Secondly, he proceeded to book appointments with them in order to finalise how the interviews will be conducted. Thirdly, during the various appointments the researcher sought to know from the participants whether they have experienced strike action since they joined the university in order to enable him to make an informed decision about who qualifies to participate in the study. The various responses enabled him to draw final conclusions about who to select for the study since he was interested in selecting those with experience or knowledge regarding the phenomenon under investigation. Lastly, having decided on the various participants to be interviewed, he proceeded to meet them in the various offices to conduct the study.

#### **4.9 Sample size**

According to Kalpana (2012, p.183), “sampling design is an important tool as well as a flexible method of data collection in a research”. Kalpana (2012) notes that sampling plays a crucial role in large research involving huge numbers of participants. The author suggests that sampling design is more crucial when the researcher is having difficulties studying the entire universe or entire population that he or she proposes to study. Kalan (2012) further adds that

with sampling, the researcher has the option to select a particular portion or sample unit from the entire population.

A sample can be referred to as a unit, element or subgroup of a larger population which is chosen to participate in a specific study with the aim of providing useful information about the phenomenon being studied (Salaria, 2012). It can also be defined as a portion of the entire population which is selected for a specific study. Sekaran and Bougie (2013) define a sample as a segment of the population which is chosen to participate in a particular study.

However, DiGaetano (2013) contends that samples are drawn from the sample frame but not the entire population. The author defines sample frame as the process of listing all the elements in the target population from which a sample is selected to take part in the study. In the current Adenuga (2015), study, the sample frame constituted lecturers, administrative staff, heads of departments, deans and registrars at the two public universities in Accra, Ghana.

Based on the total population, a sample size of 306 participants is selected to participate in the study. The sample size was determined using Sekaran and Bougie's (2013) population and sample size table. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2013), for a population of 1500 people, the required or appropriate sample size to be used is 306. It was upon this assumption or recommendation that the sample size of 306 participants were selected to participate in this current study.

The sample size was represented as  $S$ , therefore,  $S= 306$ . In such a study, the sample size of 306 was sufficient to allow the researcher to gather enough information from the respondents about the phenomenon being studied (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). The Table 4.1 below illustrated the various category of the staff in the two institutions who constituted the sample size.

**Table 4.1 Sample size determination based on the population**

Name of the institutions	Population	Heads of department	Deans	Registrars	Administrators	Lecturers
GIMPA	900	2	2	2	77	100
UPSA	600	4	-	-	52	67
<b>Total</b>	<b>1500</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>167</b>

Source: The researcher

From the Table 4.1 above, 306 participants were selected from the two institutions to take part in the study. With regard to the qualitative study, 10 participants (heads of departments, deans and registrars) were selected from the two institutions to take part in the interviews. The sample size of 10 participants were chosen for the qualitative study due to the fact in the two institutions the total number of the employees (heads of departments, deans and registrars) was 15. From the Table, 6 participants were chosen from GIMPA while the remaining 4 were selected from UPSA. Sekaran and Bougie (2013) recommend that the sample size for qualitative study should be between seven and twenty participants (7-20). It was based on this recommendation that the researcher chose the sample size of 10 for the qualitative study. Another motivation why the sample size of 10 participants were selected for the study was that the data collection was done while most universities in Ghana were on vacation, hence it was difficult to contact all the heads of departments, deans and registrars for their participation in the study. However, only 8 of them finally participated in the study. This constituted 80% response rate.

In the case of the quantitative study, 296 participants comprised of only lecturers and administrative staff were chosen from the two institutions. As seen in the Table above, 177 respondents which comprised of administrators (77) and lecturers (100) were selected from GIMPA for the participation in the study. From UPSA, a total of 119 respondents were chosen to participate in the study. Out of the total of 199, 52 were administrators while the remaining 67 were lecturers. The sample size of 296 for the quantitative study was sufficient to allow the researcher to gather enough information from the respondents about the phenomenon being studied (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). In view of this, 296 questionnaires were designed and administered to the 296 participants. Unfortunately, only 200 of them responded to the questionnaires which accounted for approximately 68% response rate.

There were several justifications for the researcher having limited the scope of the study to include only this category of staff. In Ghana, lecturers and administrative staff are people who often embark on strikes in the public universities, unlike in South Africa where students are those who usually embark on strike action (Seniwoliba, 2013). Therefore, involving lecturers and administrators in this study has allowed the researcher to gather useful information from them regarding the topic under investigation. For example, the researcher was able to elicit vital information from the participants regarding how the strike affects the employment relationship and what the contributing factors to strikes in the universities are. Also, the

researcher involved heads of departments, registrars and deans because these functionaries have much information regarding the effects of employee strike action on the universities and how it affects employment relations. These functionaries were able to provide the researcher with adequate and rich information regarding the phenomenon of strikes in the public universities. They were also able to provide the researcher with information regarding the way in which employee strikes affect the universities and the country as a whole.

#### **4.9.1 Demographic characteristics of the sample of the qualitative study**

Table 4.2 below summarised the demographic characteristics (gender, age, educational qualifications, current position, years of experience, employment status, schools and departments) of the sample who participated in the qualitative study (interviews). Table 4.1 below indicated that: the majority (87.5%) of the sample comprised of males and 12.5% were female. With regard to age, 12.5% were between the ages of 31-35 years, 25% between the ages of 41-45 and the remaining 62.5%, which constituted the majority, are 46 years and above. Approximately 37.5% obtained Masters Degrees in various fields whilst the remaining 62.5% obtained PhD's in diverse fields. In terms of position, 25% were registrars, 50% are heads of departments and the remaining 25% are deans. Regarding years of experience, 37.5% have worked for between 6-10 years and 62.5% have worked for between 11-15 years. With regard to the employment status, all (100%) the participants were permanent workers. Furthermore, 12.5% are attached to Law School and the remaining 87.5% worked in the Department of Business. Lastly, 12.5% of the respondents were from the Department of Accounting, 25% from the Department of Marketing, 25% from Public Administration and the remaining 37.5% worked in other departments in the universities.

**Table 4.2 Composition of the sample for the qualitative study**

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Males	7	87.5
Females	1	12.5
<b>Age groups</b>		
20-25 years	--	--
26-30 years	--	--
31-35 years	1	12.5
36-40 years	--	--
41-45 years	2	25
46 years and above	5	62.5
<b>Educational qualification</b>		
Diploma	--	--
First Degree	--	--
Master	3	37.5
PhD	5	62.5
Other	--	--
<b>Current position</b>		
Registrar	2	25
Head of Department	4	50
Dean	2	25
Other	--	--
<b>Years of experience</b>		
2-5 years	--	--
6-10 years	3	37.5
11-15 years	5	62.5
16 years and above	--	--
<b>Employment status</b>		
Permanent	8	100
Temporary	--	--
<b>Schools</b>		
Law	1	12.5
Business	7	87.5
Other	--	--
<b>Departments</b>		
Accounting	1	12.5
Marketing	2	25
Public Administration	2	25
Other	3	37.5

#### **4.10 Data collection methods or instruments**

Before data can be collected, researchers or social scientists first consider the number of methods to be used. The nature of the study determined the kind of data collection methods that were used. According to Creswell (2012), survey researchers can select from a variety of data collection methods, depending on the nature and purpose of the study. The most commonly used data collection methods in qualitative research are interviews, observations and focus group discussions, whilst for quantitative studies, the only data collection method is questionnaires. In the current study, self-administered questionnaires and personal interviews were the main data collection instruments used. The reasons for choosing only these data collection instruments are discussed below.

##### **4.10.1 Pilot study**

Before a full study commences, it is important to conduct a pilot study. According to Arain, Campbell, Cooper and Lancaster (2010), a pilot study is a small research which is designed to investigate the suitability of the research procedures or instruments prior to the larger study. A pilot study is important as it helps to determine or examine the situations on the ground before the final study is conducted. Also, a pilot study is used to determine the success of good research. Gumbo (2014) adds that a pilot study is used to test the feasibility of the research procedures, methods and instruments, as well as to collect specific information before the commencement of the large study. One important aspect of conducting a pilot study is that it helps to enhance the quality and efficiency of the actual study. Another reason to conduct a pilot study before the main study is that it helps to examine the feasibility of the proposed research approach(s) that the researcher will employ in the main study (Leon, Davis, Kraemer, 2011).

Several scholars (Thabane, Ma, Chu, Cheng, Ismaila, Rios, Robson, Thabane, Giangregorio & Goldsmith, 2010; Nunes, Martins, Zhou, Alajamy & Al-Mamari, 2010) contend that the pilot study is given little attention by researchers despite its contributions in research.

In the current study, a pilot study was first conducted to test the validity and reliability of the research instruments. It was carried out to pre-test the research instruments such as the interview guides and questionnaires. The pilot study allowed the researcher to determine whether the study is worth pursuing. For the pilot study, 9 participants were selected from each

university. This means that 18 participants took part in the pilot study. The pilot study lasted for about one week. After the pilot study was conducted, the researcher then reworded ambiguous questions and incorporated the views of the respondents into the final draft of the questionnaires and the interview schedules. This exercise was completed in July 2016, a few days before the full study.

#### **4.10.2 Self-administered questionnaires**

Questionnaires are the main research instruments used for collecting data in quantitative studies. A questionnaire is a sequence of research questions designed and administered to participants with the view of eliciting information from them (Berger, Martin, Husereau, Worley, Allen, Yang & Crown, 2014 & Feilzer, 2010). According to Sekaran and Bougie (2013), a questionnaire is a written document which is used to collect quantitative data or information from respondents with regard to their attitudes, feelings, knowledge and beliefs. There are different types of questionnaires that can be designed to collect data from the participants but for the purpose of this study, structured questionnaires (close-ended) are administered.

A structured questionnaire allows respondents to make choices from a set of alternatives given by the researcher. Using this type of questionnaire, the respondents were given a 5 point Likert scale to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with each question in the questionnaires. The structured questionnaires were administered to 296 respondents (lecturers and administrative staff) in the above-mentioned institutions.

The questions posed in the questionnaires were constructed in clear and simple terms and the educational background of the respondents was taken into account. The researcher also consulted other experts during the design of the questionnaires. This helped in eliminating misinterpretation which might have resulted in invalid findings. With regard to language, English is the most commonly spoken language in the universities, hence, the questionnaires were constructed only in English. Furthermore, during the construction of the questionnaires, the researcher ensured that the length of the questions is also formulated as recommended by Sekaran and Bougie (2013). According to Sekaran and Bougie (2013), a good research question should not exceed more than twenty (20) words. Furthermore, the researcher ensured that the questions are simple and short.



The questionnaires were organised into six (6) sections as follows: Section A contained questions regarding the biographical information of the respondents in terms of gender, age, educational background, nature of employment status, department of work and working experience. Section B contained questions about the impact that strike action has on employment relations. Section C covered questions about the impact of strike action on the public universities as well as on the country as a whole. Section D contained questions about the causes of strike action in Ghanaian public universities. Section E covered questions regarding the factors that promote sound employment relations in the public universities. Section F contained questions regarding the measures that could help address strike actions in the public universities.

Before the questionnaires were administered, the researcher wrote letters to the registrars in the above institutions informing them of his intention to conduct the study. Once permission has been granted to do so, he went ahead to recruit two research assistants who assisted in the distribution and the collection of the questionnaires. The researcher and his two assistants were introduced to the university communities about their mission in the universities. The researcher was provided with the list and contact details of all employees (lecturers, administrative staff, deans, heads of departments and registrars) to enable him to contact them about their participation in the study. Meetings were scheduled with all the participants to discuss how the study will be conducted and thereafter the questionnaires were administered. As indicated above, 296 questionnaires were distributed to the participants but only 200 of them were retrieved. This constituted 68% response rate.

#### **4.10.3 Face-to-face interviews**

Interviews are the most popular methods of collecting qualitative data in qualitative studies. Englander (2012) notes that interviews have become the most reliable data collection method in qualitative research. According to Turner (2010), an interview is a method of data collection whereby the interviewer probes the respondents or interviewees about certain questions in relation to the topics under investigation. The researcher decided to use interviews among the various qualitative data collection instruments because they enabled face-to-face discussion with the respondents. They also allowed the researcher to clarify issues that need explanation, unlike other instruments such as observations. Furthermore, the use of interviews in qualitative study helped the researcher to ensure good cooperation from the respondents.

There are three types of interviews namely: structured, semi-structured and unstructured interviews. The interviews in this study followed the structured interview format. With this kind of interview, the researcher was allowed to probe the respondents using the same questions with the same wording and in the same sequence (Turner, 2010). The advantage of using this type of interview is that it enabled the researcher to have control of the topic and the format of the interview simply because of the detailed interview schedule that was prepared ahead of time. This form of interview allowed for easy analysis, coding and comparison of data. As indicated above, 10 participants (heads of departments, deans and registrars) were selected from the two universities to take part in the study. The interview guide was constructed by the researcher and his supervisor. Furthermore, experts were consulted during the construction of the interview schedule.

#### **4.11 Data quality control**

Data quality control has been ensured by considering validity, reliability, trustworthiness and credibility of the research instruments (questionnaires and interviews). Reliability and validity applied to quantitative research while trustworthiness and credibility applied to qualitative research. Trustworthiness and credibility were used to verify the data collected in qualitative research (Elo, Kaariainen, Kanste, Polkki, Utriainen & Kyngas, 2014).

##### **4.11.1 Validity**

Validity refers to the extent to which a test measures what it is supposed to measure (Lameck, 2013). In other words, it is how valid the results of the findings are. There are several approaches or methods of testing the validity of the research instruments and the data but in the current study content validity was used in investigating the extent to which employee strike action affects employment relations. Through content validity different characteristics, skills and behaviours are adequately and effectively measured (Zohrabi, 2013). The researcher has ensured the validity of the findings by reviewing the research instruments and data with experts in the field, as well as with the researcher's supervisor. The experts conducted various checks on the items for readability, clarity and comprehensiveness and then recommended which items should be contained in the final instrument. Based on the reviewers' (experts) and the supervisor's comments and recommendations, ambiguous and obscure questions were revised.

In addition, items or questions that were unclear are reworded. Furthermore, ineffective and irrelevant questions were also discarded.

The researcher has engaged the services of two research assistants to assist in the coding process. The research assistants identified and summarised codes which were then compared to those of the researcher's codes. After the comparison of the codes, a final decision was made regarding the appropriate codes to be used. The coding of themes were discussed with the supervisor and agreed upon before the analysis. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2013), the practice of discussing the coding is to improve the quality of the findings, build confidence and to prevent bias associated with the interpretation of the data.

The researcher assessed the results obtained in the current study as well as other test results that measured the same constructs. The researcher found that there were significant relationships between the current results and the results of previous literature. This study found several aspects of employment relations which can be influenced by strike action. These findings were consistent with previous studies.

#### **4.11.2 Reliability**

According to Lameck (2013), reliability is about the consistency of the research instrument. This pertains to the fact that the research instrument should produce the same scores or results over repeated measures. The reliability of the questionnaire was demonstrated to ensure that operations of the study which include data collection procedures were replicable. Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha was used to measure or test the reliability of the research instrument (questionnaire). For the purposes of the current study, the reliability was computed by taking several measurements of the same subjects. A reliability coefficient of 0.70 or higher is regarded as statistically acceptable. The closer the coefficient alpha is to 1.0, the better the reliability of the measure. The findings indicated that this study was statistically acceptable and reliable. Table 4.3 Adenuga (2015), below represented the Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha score for all the items contained in the questionnaire.

**Table 4.3 Reliability: Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient scores**

Section	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha
B	6	.634
C	13	.699
D	11	.721
E	10	.826
F	9	.793
<b>Overall</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>.867</b>

From the Table 4.3 above, the reliability score of 0.867 approximates the recommended value of 0.70. This means that there is an overall degree of consistent scoring for the construct. In the current study, the 6 items measuring the impact of strike on employment relations have a Cronbach's alpha of 0.634. In addition, the 13 items measuring impact of strike action in the universities and the country have a Cronbach's alpha of 0.699. Furthermore, 11 items measuring causes of strike action in the public universities have a Cronbach's alpha of 0.721. In addition, 10 items measuring factors that promote sound employment relations have a Cronbach's alpha of 0.826. Finally, the 9 items measuring how to address strike action in the public universities have a Cronbach's alpha of 0.793.

From these data, shown in Table 4.3 above, it can be seen that the reliability scores of sections D (0.721), E (0.826) and F (0.793) were higher than the recommended value of 0.70. This means that the variables in these sections load perfectly along one factor each. It also implies that the statements constituting these components perfectly measure the component. This also suggests that there is a high degree of acceptable consistent scoring for the research instrument. The remaining sections have values that were below the recommended value of 0.70 and thus they were acceptable. There were several factors that account for this. One factor was that the questionnaire was a newly developed one. Another factor was that some of the statements have negative co-variants due to interpretative issues with the statements.

### **4.11.3 Trustworthiness**

The aim of trustworthiness in a qualitative inquiry is to support the argument that the inquiry's findings are worth paying attention to (Anney, 2014). The researcher in the current study has ensured that the findings presented have been e authenticated in order to ensure trustworthiness. The researcher has engaged the services of two research assistants who helped in the identification of the various quotes and themes. This has helped to ensure that the findings presented are genuine. The findings of this study came solely from the participants and the investigation is not influenced by bias, motivation or the interest of the researcher. Also, in ensuring trustworthiness, the findings were repeated consistently with all the participants in the same context.

### **4.11.4 Credibility**

Credibility is a trustworthiness concept that roughly corresponds to internal validity. It is defined as the confidence that can be placed in the truth of the research findings (Anney, 2014). It establishes whether or not the research findings represent plausible information drawn from the participants' original data and whether the findings are a correct interpretation of the participants' original views (Lietz & Zayas, 2010). To achieve credibility in qualitative research, the researcher managed the risk of research reactivity and bias. To manage research reactivity, the researcher tried to make the data gathering efforts less conspicuous and intrusive, without deception. In managing bias, the researcher engaged in reflexivity and seeks to build self-awareness regarding his own influence on the research project.

### **4.12 Measurement scale**

The appropriate measurement scale for the research instrument is the Likert scale. The Likert scale is composed of a series of four or more Likert-type items that are combined into a single composite score/variable during the data analysis process (Ary, Jacobs & Sorensen, 2010). A 5 point Likert scale was utilised with regard to all the questions that were closed-ended in the questionnaires. The weight-scoring response choices were: strongly agree = 5 points, agree = 4 points, neither agree nor disagree = 3 points, disagree = 2 points and strongly disagree = 1 point. As mentioned above, the questionnaires were organised into six section which measured various themes.

### **4.13 Data analysis**

According to Brown and Harris (2010), it is important to analyse qualitative and quantitative data separately. During the initial stages of the research, the data gathered from the respondents were processed and analysed. The data analysis was done in two phases: phase one dealt with the qualitative data analysis and phase two focused on the quantitative data analysis.

#### **4.13.1 Quantitative data analysis**

According to Jeanty and Hibel (2011), quantitative data analysis involves processes such as data reduction, data display and data integration. In this study, quantitative data gathered was analysed through the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) versions 21.0 with the help of Excel, version 2013. Green and Salkind (2011) define SPSS as a set of data manipulation and statistical analysis programs used by researchers to understand the meaning of their data. The questionnaires were first captured in Excel and later exported into the SPSS. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were employed to interpret the information and the data.

A descriptive statistic is a simple ‘arithmetical mean’ which has a standard deviation or standard error (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). In terms of descriptive statistics, frequency and percentages were used to describe the demographic characteristics of the sample in terms of gender, age, educational qualification, position, years of experience, employment status, schools and department of the respondents. In addition, descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviations were used as seen in *Appendix D*.

Inferential statistics, on the other hand, seeks to make references pertaining to a given population based on the data gathered from a specific sample, based on the theory of probability (Rogerson, 2014). It goes beyond just describing the data and it assists in revealing whether a particular hypothesis is false. In terms of inferential statistics, one sample t-test was used which tests whether a mean score is significantly different from a scalar value and one-sample t-test was used in which the average agreement score was tested against a neutral score of ‘3’. An average score that is significantly different from “3” (mean) is interpreted as significant agreement or disagreement. Cronbach’s Alpha Coefficient and Factor Analysis were also used to test the reliability and validity of these analytical tests. Panayides (2013) holds that

reliabilities of 0.70 or better are reliable. The reliability Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient score was presented in Table 4.3 above.

The quantitative analysis was limited to the use of above statistics due to the nature of the questionnaires and the recommendations from the statistician. The nature of the questionnaires does not allow the researcher to use a lot of statistics in this current study. Also, it was recommended by the statistician that the nature of the study does not require the use of complex statistics such as structural equation modelling and correlation. For example, structural equation modelling may not be appropriate in this study since the researcher is not testing hypothesis. Despite the lack of statistical rigour, the few ones that were used fully addressed the various research questions and objectives.

#### **4.13.2 Qualitative data analysis**

Qualitative data analysis has to do with a highly personal process which does not really involve many rigid rules or processes. In the current study, all the audiotaped interviews were transcribed manually by the researcher. There are two ways of doing qualitative analysis namely: content and thematic analysis. In this study, thematic analysis was employed to analyse the data. According to Oppong Asante, Osafo and Nyamekye (2015, p.20), thematic analysis "involves sorting or coding the data into themes and categories by identifying and analysing the same patterns that exist in the data". They assert that themes are very important patterns in qualitative data that are related to the research objectives which assist in answering appropriate research questions.

In this study, the thematic analysis was carried out following six important steps: The first step was the translation and transcription of the data by the researcher. This was very simple because the interviews are conducted in English. The second step was that the researcher reads and rereads the transcribed data over and over again to get a deeper understanding of the data. The third and fourth steps involved the identification of themes and codes relevant to the present research aims and objectives. The fifth step was that the themes identified by the researcher are restructured and revisited to ensure that the analysed data are sufficiently focused and detailed. The last step was that the coded statements are further grouped under different broad themes and subthemes. The thematic analysis assisted the researcher to classify and present the themes that emerge from the data (Alhojailan, 2012). In addition, helped to illustrate the data in detail and it deals with different topics via interpretation. The use of this approach enabled the

researcher to link the various concepts and views of the scholars and compare them with the information solicited from other respondents in different situations at different times when conducting the study. This made it possible to interpret of the findings.

#### **4.13.3 Relationship between qualitative and quantitative data sets**

There exist some relationship between both the qualitative and quantitative data sets. According to Castellan (2010), data from quantitative studies are quantitative, quantifiable coding with counts and measures and operationalised variables. On the other hand, “qualitative data collected using the designs such as concurrent and sequential design can be quantified to create a single comprehensive dataset” (Driscoll, Appiah-Yeboah, Salib & Rupert, 2007, p.22).

Another relationship that exist between the two data sets is that quantitative data analysis has to do with deductive process which involves which involves statistical procedures while the qualitative data on the other hand is more of inductive process which comprises of codes, themes and patterns to theory.

In addition, both data sets can be expressed in numbers. Castellan (2010) posits that quantitative data can be expressed as numbers or quantified. For instance, quantitative data can be scored on achievement tests, number of study hours or weight of a subject. These data can be represented by ordinal, interval and ration scales and lend themselves to most statistical manipulation. On the other hand, qualitative data can also be expressed in number. For example, data that represent nominal scales including gender, socio-economic status and religious preference are often regarded as qualitative data. Furthermore, another relationship is that both data sets are valid types of measurement and they can be used in educational journals. However, quantitative data can be analysed statistically. Thus, more rigorous assessments or evaluations of the data are possible (Castellan, 2010).

#### **4.14 Ethical considerations**

Streubert, Speziale and Carpenter (2012) contend that a researcher has the moral obligation to adhere strictly to ethical standards. In this study, ethical approval was obtained from the Social Science Research Ethics Committee of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. The researcher fully complied with ethical principles such as informed consent, privacy and confidentiality and anonymity.



#### **4.14.1 Informed consent**

The informed permission for this study was obtained from the registrars at the various public universities in Accra, Ghana namely: the University of Professional Studies, Accra and the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration. The researcher first collected an introductory letter from the administrator in the Discipline of HRM/IR at the University of KwaZulu-Natal to allow him to approach GIMPA AND UPSA for the gate-keepers' letters. The researcher after collecting the introductory letter from his institution, went ahead to schedule meetings with university authorities to explain the purpose of the study and to assured them that the study is purely for academic purposes. Furthermore, the researcher assured the registrars of the confidentiality, privacy and anonymity of all the respondents or the participants. Approval letters were then given to the researcher and these were subsequently submitted to the University of KwaZulu-Natal for the ethics approval.

After the ethics approval was granted by the researcher's institution, the researcher and his assistants approached the participants and asked for their voluntary participation in the study. With the consent of the registrars, written informed consent forms were distributed to each of the participants selected for the study to seek for his/her voluntary participation in the study. The participants were given the opportunity to ask questions and voluntarily withdraw from the study at any point in time. The participants were required to sign the written informed consent forms to indicate their willingness to participate in the study. The researcher ensured that information regarding the study, procedures for investigation, risks connected to the study and the researcher's credibility were fully disclosed to the participants. The researcher was only aware of the identities of potential participants once the informed consent letters were returned.

#### **4.14.2 Privacy and confidentiality**

The information or data gathered from the respondents was kept secret from other interested parties or institutions. Privacy and confidentiality are important ethical issues, hence the researcher has fully adhered to these principles. Under no circumstance does the researcher reveal the information solicited from the respondents to any individual or institution. The information gathered from the respondents was kept in a safe place in order to prevent access to it. The questionnaires and all the recordings and transcribed materials resulting from the interviews were stored on CDs and kept safely in a safe locked compartment which has been

provided by the researcher's supervisor in the Discipline of Human Resource Management and Industrial Relations at University of KwaZulu-Natal. The information will be kept for a period of 5 years after which it will be destroyed.

#### **4.14.3 Anonymity**

To guarantee anonymity, the researcher ensures that the identities of the respondents are withheld. On no account does the researcher disclose the identities of the respondents to any interested parties or institutions. The researcher ensured that there is no section in the questionnaires or the interview schedule which requires the participants to provide their names or other personal details. At the conclusion of the data collection, participants were debriefed about the purpose of the research and the reporting of findings. Every effort was made to ensure the anonymity of the data by substituting participant names with pseudonyms and limiting identifying information within dissertations, oral presentations, and subsequent publications.

#### **4.15 Limitations of the study**

The following are the limitations were encountered during the study. In the first place, the major limitation of this study is cost. The study was conducted in Accra, Ghana, hence, the researcher incurred additional costs in terms of travelling from South Africa to Ghana in order to collect data. Apart from this, the researcher incurred other costs such as fuel expenses, printing expenses and salaries for the research assistants. Secondly, the ideal population size was a constraint on the study. Under normal circumstance, the ideal population size would be the entire population of the public universities' staff in Ghana. However, due to a number of constraints, the population size was limited to only the staff at GIMPA and UPSA. Accra, Ghana was chosen because it is the capital of Ghana and has more of the public universities than the other regions in the country. Another limitation of the study was low response rate. Some of the respondents did not returned their questionnaires and others have misplaced theirs. Most of the participants were unwilling to take part in the study for fear that the information will be released to their management or other interested parties and that this may affect their employment in the institution. Another limiting factor was time. This study supposed to be completed within one year which required much energy and expenditure of time.

#### **4.16 Conclusion**

This chapter presented an account of the research design and methodology. The research design was both exploratory and descriptive. In addition, the chapter presented discussion on the research paradigm. The research approach used in this study was mixed method. The chapter also gave a full description about GIMPA and UPSA. The total population for the study was 1500 from which 306 participants were selected as the sample size to take part in the study. Both stratified and purposive sampling techniques were used to select the participants for the study. A pilot study was first conducted among a few of the selected respondents in the two universities. The main data collection instruments used in the study were self-administered questionnaires and face-to-face interviews. Data quality control was ensured by considering validity, reliability, trustworthiness and credibility of the research instruments. A 5 point Likert scale was used as the measurement scale. Both quantitative and qualitative data were analysed using SPSS and thematic analysis respectively. Ethical principles adhered to in the study were informed consent, privacy and confidentiality and anonymity.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **PRESENTATION OF QUANTITATIVE RESULTS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter presented the research methodology underpinning the study. This chapter presented the results of the quantitative study. The socio-demographics of the participants were presented followed by the results of the impact that employee strike action has on employment relations. The chapter proceeded with the presentation of the results of the impact of strike action on public universities and the country as a whole. It further presented the results on the causes of strike action in the public universities. In addition, the chapter presented the results of the factors that promote sound employment relations. This chapter is concluded by presenting the results of measures that will help address strike action in public universities. As mentioned in chapter four, 292 questionnaires were administered to the participants but only 200 were returned. The data was first captured on an Excel sheet and later exported into the SPSS version 21.0. The tables and charts were generated with the help of the SPSS.

#### **5.2 Demographic characteristics of the sample**

This part of the questionnaire contained biographical information about the respondents with regards to their gender, age groups, educational qualification, current position, years of experience, employment status, schools and departments. The demographic characteristics of the sample were presented in Table 5.1 below.

**Table 5.1: Demographic characteristics of the participants for the quantitative study**

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b><i>N</i></b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Males	112	56
Females	88	44.0
<b>Age groups</b>		
20-25 years	6	3.0
26-30 years	23	11.5
31-35 years	55	27.5
36-40 years	57	28.5
41-45 years	38	19.0
46 years and above	21	10.5
<b>Educational qualification</b>		
Diploma	13	6.5
First degree	45	22.5
Master	79	39.5
PhD	62	31.0
Other	1	.5
<b>Current position</b>		
Administrative staff	54	27.0
Lecturer	90	45.0
Senior lecturer	22	11.0
Associate professor	9	4.5
Professor	8	4.0
Other	17	8.5
<b>Years of experience</b>		
2-5 years	71	35.5
6-10 years	101	50.5
11-15 years	22	11.0
16 years and above	6	3.0

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<b>Employment status</b>		
Permanent	145	72.5
Temporary	51	25.5
Other	4	2.0
<b>Schools</b>		
Law	18	9.0
Performing Arts	4	2.0
Education	3	1.5
Business	136	68
Regional Institute for Population Studies	2	1.0
Social Science	18	9.0
Other	19	9.5
<b>Departments</b>		
Accounting	17	8.5
Finance	20	10.0
Economics	15	7.5
Psychology	8	4.0
Sociology	10	5.0
Communication Studies	10	5.0
Human Resource Management	25	12.5
Marketing	20	10.0
Public Administration	27	13.5
Health Policy	5	2.5
Other	43	21.5

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From the Table 5.1 above, males comprised 56% of the sample with the remaining 44% being females. Three percent of the respondents were between the ages of 20-25, about 11.5% and 27.5% were between ages 26-30 years and 31-35 years respectively, 28.5% and 19% were also between the ages 36-40 years and 41-45 years respectively, and the remaining 10.5% were 56 years and above. With regards to educational qualifications, only 6.5% had a Diploma, approximately 22.5% had a First degree, 39.5% had a Masters, 31% had a PhD and the remaining 0.5% had other qualifications apart from the above. About 27% of the respondents

were administrative staff, 45% and 10% were lecturers and senior lecturers respectively, 4.5% were associate professors, 4% were full professors and the remaining 8.5% held other positions. Approximately 35.5% of the respondents worked between 2-5 years, 50.5% worked between 6-10 years, 11% of them worked between 11-15 years, and the remaining 3% worked above 16 years. About 72.5% of the respondents were permanent workers, 25.5% were temporary workers and the rest of the 2% of the respondents were neither permanent nor temporary workers.

Furthermore, about 9% and 2% of the participants belong to the school of Law and Performing Arts respectively, approximately 1.5% and 68% belong to the school of Education and Business respectively, 1% belonged to the Regional Institute for Population Studies, 9% belong to Social Science and the remaining 9.5% belonged to neither of the schools mentioned above. Finally, approximately 9.5% of the respondents were from the Department of Accounting, 10% and 7.5% were from the Department of Finance and Economic respectively, 4% and 5% were from Psychology and Sociology respectively, 5% were from Communication Studies, 12.5% were from Human Resource Management, another 10% were from Marketing, 13.5% and 2.5% were from Public Administration and Health Policy Departments respectively, and the remaining 21.5% were from other departments apart from the above mentioned.

#### **5.4 Section B: Impact of employee strike action on employment relations**

The first objective of this study was to elicit the responses from the participants on how strike action impacts on employment relations. The respondents were asked to indicate with (X) the extent to which they agree or disagree with the statements using a 5 point Likert scale: SD = Strongly disagree, 5; D= Disagree, 4; N= Neutral, 3; A = Agree, 2; SA = Strongly agree, 1.

The results of this study were presented in the Figure 5.1 below.

**Figure 5.1 Section B: Impact of employee strike action on employment relations**

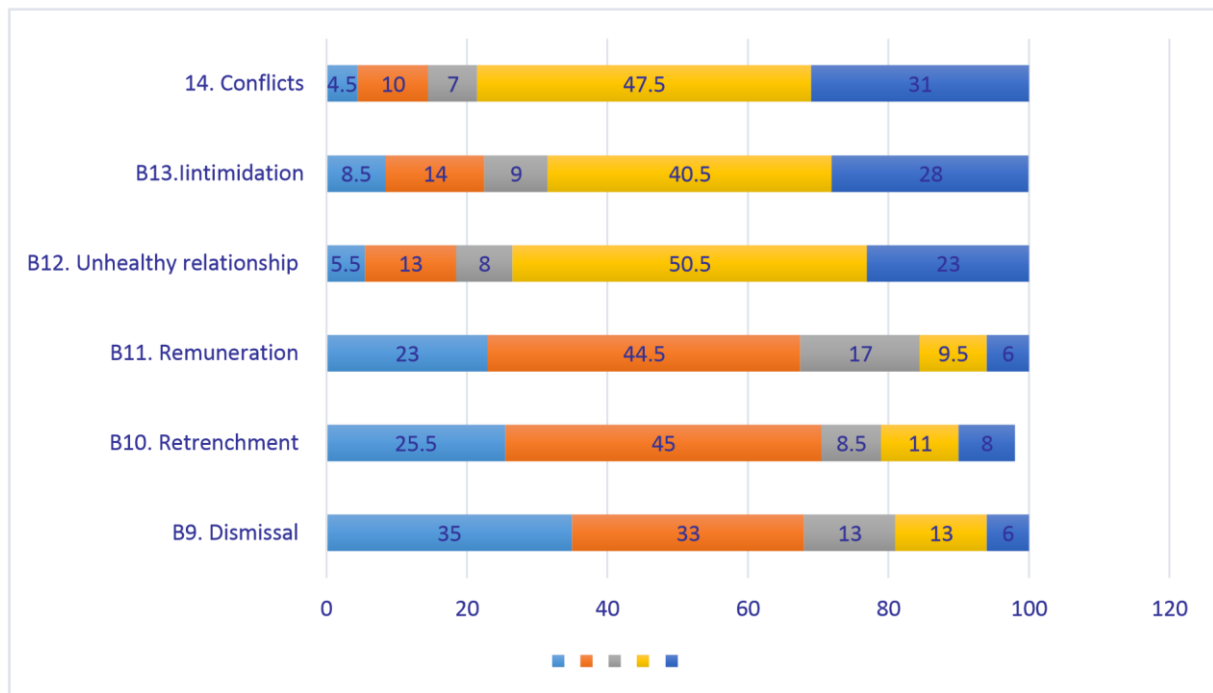


Figure 5.1 above depicted the participants’ experience of the impact of strike action on employment relations on six main criteria: dismissal, retrenchment, remuneration, unhealthy relationship, intimidation and conflicts. The majority of the participants responded negatively to questions B9, B10 and B11 respectively while the majority also responded positively to questions B12, B13 and B14 respectively. The summarised scoring patterns are shown in Figure 5.1 above. The majority (68%) of the respondents disagreed that strike action leads to dismissal of strikers, 13% neither agreed nor disagreed that strike action leads to dismissal of strikers while a few (19%) agreed that strike action leads to dismissal of employees.

With regards to retrenchment, the majority (70.5%) of the respondents disagreed that strike action leads to retrenchment of employees, 8.5% neither agreed nor disagreed to the fact that strike action leads to retrenchment of employees while the minority (19%) agreed that strike action leads to retrenchment of employees. Moreover, the majority (67.5%) of the participants disagreed with the statement that strike action contributes to loss of remuneration, another 17% neither agreed nor disagreed that strike action leads to loss of remuneration of the strikers and the remaining few (16.5%) agreed that strike action leads to loss of remuneration of the strikers. In terms of unhealthy relationship, few (18.5%) of the respondents disagreed that strike action



contributes to unhealthy relationship between the employees and management, approximately 8% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed that strike action leads to unhealthy relationship between employees and management in the workplace while the majority (73.5%) agreed that strike action contributes to unhealthy relationship between the parties (employees and management) in the workplace.

Furthermore, with regards to intimidation, the minority (22.5%) of the respondents disagreed that strike action is characterised by intimidation of the strikers, 9% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed that strike action is characterised by intimidation of strikers and the remaining 68.5% which constituted the majority agreed that strike action contributes to the intimidation of strikers.

Finally, with regards to conflicts, less than one-third (14.5%) of the participants disagreed that strike action leads to conflicts in the workplace, another 7% neither agreed nor disagreed that strike action leads to workplace conflicts while the overwhelming majority (78.5%) agreed that strike action has the potential to create conflicts within the workplace.

Also, using one sample t-test, all the six items indicated that there was a significant difference in the average score from neutral '3'. The results can be seen in Table 1 in the *Appendix D below*. Clearly, items B9-B11 show that there was significant disagreement while items B12 B14 also revealed significant agreement with the average score.

From the Table 1 in *Appendix D*, there was significant disagreement that employees were dismissed due to strikes ( $M = 2.21$ ,  $SD = 1.211$ ),  $t(198) = -9.246$ ,  $p > .0005$ ); strike action contributed to retrenchment of employees ( $M = 2.27$ ,  $SD = 1.206$ ),  $t(199) = -8.561$ ,  $p > .0005$ ); and strike action led to the loss of remuneration of the employees ( $M = 2.31$ ,  $SD = 1.109$ ),  $t(199) = -8.798$ ,  $p > .0005$ ).

There was also significant agreement that strikes have created unhealthy relationships between employees and management ( $M = 3.73$ ,  $SD = 1.121$ ),  $t(199) = 9.150$ ,  $p < .0005$ ); most strikers were intimidated by management because of their involvement in the strike action ( $M = 3.66$ ,  $SD = 1.259$ ),  $t(199) = 7.360$ ,  $p < .0005$ ); and strike action further contributed to conflict within the organisation ( $M = 3.91$ ,  $SD = 1.087$ ),  $t(199) = 11.773$ ,  $p < .0005$ ).

#### **5.4 Section C: Impact of strike action on public universities and country**

The second objective was to identify the extent to which the employees' strike action affects public universities and the country as a whole. Table 5.2 below presented the results of the study in relation to the objective. There were 13 items or questions under this objective starting from C15 to C27. However, C15 to C20 contained questions on how employee strike action impacts on public universities while C21 to C27 covered questions that relate to how strike action at public universities affects the country. The employees responded to these questions by indicating the extent to which they agree or disagree. The summarised scoring patterns are shown in the Table 5.2 below.

**Table 5.2 Impact of strike action on public universities and the country**

<i>Statements</i>	<i>Response categories</i>				
	<i>SD</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>SA</i>
	<i>N (%)</i>	<i>N (%)</i>	<i>N (%)</i>	<i>N (%)</i>	<i>N (%)</i>
C15. University strike action affects research and publications	3(1.5)	6(3)	11(5.5)	113(56.5)	67(33.5)
C16. University strike action affects students' performance	6(3)	12(6)	13(6.5)	98(49)	71(35.5)
C17. University strike action affects effective learning	1(.5)	6(3)	10(5)	91(45.5)	92(46)
C18. University strike action affects employment relationship	1(.5)	16(8)	20(10)	88(44)	75(37.5)
C19. University strike action affects teaching	3(1.5)	8(4)	15(7.5)	97(48.5)	77(38.5)
C20. University strike action delays student graduation	2(1)	11(5.5)	15(7.5)	95(47.5)	77(38.5)
C21. University strike action contributes to loss of investment	29(14.5)	44(22)	28(14)	63(31.5)	36(18)
C22. University strike action contributes to loss of jobs in the country	21(10.5)	71(35.5)	28(14)	50(25)	30(15)
C23. University strike action contributes to loss of revenue in the country	8(4)	29(14.5)	17(8.5)	97(48.5)	47(24.5)
C24. University strike action results in injuries and loss of life	25(12.5)	57(28.5)	24(12)	57(28.5)	37(18.5)
C25. University strike action affects the country's image	6(3)	15(7.5)	20(10)	101(55.5)	58(29)
C26. University strike action affects the country's productive hours	1(.5)	9(4.5)	18(9)	104(52)	68(34)
C27. University strike action contributes to falling standard of education	14(7)	18(9)	17(8.5)	86(43)	65(32.5)

From the Table 5.2 above, approximately 4.5% of the respondents which constituted the minority disagreed that strike action in public universities affects academic activities such as research and publications, another 5.5% neither agreed nor disagreed that strike action in public universities affects research and publications and the remaining majority (90%) agreed that strike action in public universities affects research and publications.

With regards to students' performance, a few (9%) of the respondents disagreed that strike action affects students' performance, 6.5% neither agreed nor disagreed that strike action in public universities has an impact on students' performance, while more than two-thirds (84.5%) agreed that strike action in universities affects student performance.

Furthermore, with respect to students' learning, a few (3.5%) of the respondents disagreed that strike action in public universities affects effective learning, 5% neither agreed nor disagreed that strike action in public universities affects effective learning and the remaining majority (91.5%) agreed with the statement that strike action in public universities affects student learning.

With regards to the employment relationship, the minority (8.5%) of the respondents disagreed that strike action in public universities impacts on the employment relationship, 10% neither agreed nor disagreed to the fact that strike action in public universities impacts on employment relationship, while more than two-thirds (81.5%) agreed that employee strike action in public universities affects the employment relationship within the workplace.

Approximately, 5.5% of the respondents which represented the minority disagreed that strike action in public universities affects teaching, 7.5% neither agreed nor disagreed that strike action in public universities affects teaching, while the remaining 87% which represented the majority agreed with the statement that strike action in public universities affects teaching.

With reference to students' graduation, a few (6.5%) of the respondents disagreed that strike action in public universities affects students' graduation, another 7.5% neither agreed nor disagreed that strike action in public universities affects students' graduation and the remaining majority (86%) agreed with the statement that strike action in public universities leads to delay in students' graduation.

In addition to the above, about one-third (36.5%) of the respondents disagreed that strike action in public universities contributes to loss of investment in the country, 14% neither

agreed nor disagreed that strike action in public universities has an impact on investment in the country while the remaining 49.5% agreed that strike action affects the country's investment.

With regards to job loss, 46% of the respondents disagreed that strike action contributes to loss of jobs in the country, another 14% neither agreed nor disagreed that strike action leads to loss of jobs in the country and the rest (45%) agreed that strike action leads to loss of jobs in the country. With these findings, there was no agreement or disagreement that strike action contributes to loss of jobs.

In terms of loss of revenue, a few (18.5%) of the respondents disagreed that strike action affects the country's revenue, however, another 8.5% which represented the minority, neither agreed nor disagreed that strike action contributes to loss of revenue in the country, and the rest of the majority (63%) agreed that strike action contributes to loss of revenue in the country.

Approximately 41% of the respondents agreed that strike action contributes to injuries and loss of life in the country, another 12% neither agreed nor disagreed that strike action leads to injuries and loss of life in the country while the remaining (47%) of the respondents agreed to the statement that strike action contributes to injuries and loss of life in the country. The results of this study indicated there was no agreement nor disagreement that strike action leads to injuries and loss of life.

With regards to reputation, only a few (10.5%) of the respondents disagreed that strike action affects the country's image or reputation, another 10% neither agreed nor disagreed that strike action affects the reputation of the country and the remaining majority (79.5%) agreed that strike action affects the country's image.

With reference to productive hours, a few (4.5%) of the respondents disagreed that strike action has an impact on productive hours in the country, another 9% of the participants neither agreed nor disagreed that strike action contributes to loss of productive hours in the country, while the rest of the participants (86%) which represented the majority agreed that strike action affects productive hours in the country. Finally, 16% of the respondents, which represented the minority, disagreed that strike action leads to the falling standard of education in the country, 8.5% of the participants neither agreed nor disagreed that strike action affects the standard of

education in the country and the remaining majority (75.5%) agreed that strike action contributes to falling standard of education in the country.

One sample t-test was also employed in the results of this study. Table 2 in *Appendix D* below reveals that all the 13 items show that there is significant difference in average score from neutral '3'. The table contained the results of both the impact of strike action on public universities and the country. Items C15-C20 relate to the impact of strike action on universities. On the other hand, items C21-C27 relate to the impact of strike action on the country.

In Table 2 in the *Appendix D*, there was significant agreement that the impact of strike action on the public universities include: disruption of research and publications ( $M = 4.17$ ,  $SD = .786$ ),  $t(198) = 21.025$ ,  $p < .0005$ ); low student performance ( $M = 4.08$ ,  $SD = .963$ ),  $t(199) = 15.853$ ,  $p < .0005$ ); disruption of student learning ( $M = 4.34$ ,  $SD = .752$ ),  $t(199) = 25.104$ ,  $p < .0005$ ); poor employment relations in universities ( $M = 4.10$ ,  $SD = .913$ ),  $t(199) = 17.033$ ,  $p < .0005$ ); disruption of teaching ( $M = 4.19$ ,  $SD = .851$ ),  $t(199) = 19.690$ ,  $p < .0005$ ); and delay in students' graduation ( $M = 4.17$ ,  $SD = .863$ ),  $t(199) = 19.172$ ,  $p < .0005$ ).

Table 2 in *Appendix D* further shows that there was significant agreement that the impact of employee strike action on the country include: loss of government revenue ( $M = 3.75$ ,  $SD = 1.102$ ),  $t(199) = 9.628$ ,  $p < .0005$ ); bad reputation of the country ( $M = 3.95$ ,  $SD = .981$ ),  $t(199) = 13.696$ ,  $p < .0005$ ); loss of productive hours ( $M = 4.15$ ,  $SD = .798$ ),  $t(199) = 20.286$ ,  $p < .0005$ ); and falling standard of education ( $M = 3.85$ ,  $SD = 1.177$ ),  $t(199) = 10.216$ ,  $p < .0005$ ). However, items C21, C22 and C24 show that there was neither significant agreement nor significant disagreement in the average score.

## **5.5 Section D: Causes of strike action in the public universities in Ghana**

The third objective was to elicit the views of the respondents regarding the causes of strike action in public universities in Ghana. There were 11 questions or items under this section starting from D28-D39. The section was organised into two main parts or subsections, namely financial and non-financial factors. D28 to D33 comprised of economic factors responsible for strike action in the public universities while D34 to D39 contained questions on the non-economic factors responsible for strike action in the public universities. The respondents were asked to respond to the questions by indicating the level of their agreement and disagreement

using the 5 point Likert scale. The results suggested that participants responded positively to all the questions.

**Table 5.3 Causes of strike action in public universities in Ghana**

<i>Statements</i>	<i>Response categories</i>				
	<i>SD</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>SA</i>
	<i>N (%)</i>	<i>N (%)</i>	<i>N (%)</i>	<i>N (%)</i>	<i>N (%)</i>
D28. Wages and salaries are responsible for strike action	5(2.5)	7(3.5)	13(6.5)	88(44)	87(43.5)
D29. Implementation of a pay policy contribute to strike action	8(4)	13(6.5)	17(8.5)	74(37)	88(44)
D30. Conditions of service causes strike action in universities	4(2)	6(3)	15(7.5)	86(43)	89(44.5)
D31. Inadequate funding causes strike action in universities	2(1)	19(9.5)	21(10.5)	75(37.5)	83(41.5)
D32. Replacement of old books and research allowances	2(1)	13(6.5)	21(10.5)	93(46.5)	71(35.5)
D33. Delay in payment of wages and salaries is responsible for strikes	2(1)	10(5)	16(8)	103(51.5)	69(34.5)
D34. Poor handling of employment issues and employee grievances	5(2.5)	8(4)	13(6.5)	109(54.5)	65(32.5)
D35. Government failure to honour collective agreements leads to strikes	3(1.5)	13(6.5)	12(6)	100(50)	72(36)
D36. Mismanagement of the economy contributes to strike action	11(5.5)	26(13)	23(11.5)	82(41)	58(29)
D37. Poor negotiation skills among the parties leads to strike action	8(4)	9(4.5)	15(7.5)	115(57.5)	56(23.5)
D38. Unnecessary interference in universities' affairs leads to strikes	22(11)	23(11.5)	19(9.5)	71(35.5)	65(32.5)



Table 5.3 above shows the results of the causes of strike action in public universities. Approximately 6% of the participants representing the minority disagreed that strike action is caused by poor wages and salaries paid to employees in public universities, another 6.5% neither agreed nor disagreed that strike action in public universities is caused by poor wages and the remaining 87.5% which represents the majority agreed that poor wages and salaries is responsible for strike action in public universities.

With regards to the implementation of the new pay policy (single spine salary structure), the minority (10.5%) of the participants agreed that poor implementation of the new pay policy contributes to strike action in public universities, another 8.5% which also represented the minority neither agreed nor disagreed that strike action in public universities is caused by the poor implementation of the new pay policy, while the overwhelming majority (77%) agreed that strike action in public universities is caused by the poor implementation of the new pay policy.

Regarding conditions of service, the minority (5%) of the participants disagreed that poor conditions of service is a factor responsible for strike action in public universities; 7.5% of the participants neither agreed nor disagreed that strike action in public universities is caused by poor conditions of service, and the remaining 87.5% which constituted the majority agreed to the statement that strike action in public universities is caused by poor conditions of service.

Furthermore, less than one-third (10.5%) of the respondents disagreed that strike action in public universities is caused by inadequate funding, another small proportion (10.5%) of the participants neither agreed nor disagreed that inadequate funding is a cause of strike action in public universities, while most (79%) of the participants agreed that inadequate funding contributes to strike action in public universities.

Also, 7.5% of the respondents representing the minority disagreed that the replacement of old books and research allowances with the new research fund is a cause of strike action in public universities, 10.5% of the participants neither agreed nor disagreed that the replacement of old books and research allowances with the new research fund is a cause of strike action in public universities, and the remaining 82% which represented the greatest majority agreed that strike action in public universities is caused by the replacement of old books and research allowances with the new research fund.

In addition, with regards to delay in payments of wages and salaries, only a few (6%) of the participants disagreed that delay in payment of wages and salaries is a cause of strike action in public universities; 8% neither agreed nor disagreed that strike action in public universities is caused by delay in payment of wages and salaries, while the majority (86%) agreed that delay in payment of wages and salaries is a cause of strike action in public universities.

Moreover, 6.5% of the participants, which constituted the minority, disagreed that poor handling of employment issues and employee grievances is a cause of strike action in public universities, 6.5% of them neither agreed nor disagreed that poor handling of employment issues and employee grievances causes strike action in public universities and the remaining majority (87%) agreed that poor handling of employment issues and employee grievances is a cause of strike action in public universities.

Approximately 8% of the respondents, which represented the smallest proportion, disagreed that government failure to honour collective agreements or promises is a cause of strike action in public universities, 6% of them neither agreed nor disagreed that strike action in public universities is caused by government failure to honour collective agreements or promises and the remaining 86% which represented more than two-thirds of the participants agreed that strike action in public universities is caused by government failure to honour collective agreements or promises.

Beside the above, 18.5% of the participants disagreed that strike action in public universities is caused by mismanagement of the economy, another minority (11.5%) neither agreed nor disagreed that strike action in public universities is caused by mismanagement of the economy, while the majority (70%) agreed that mismanagement of the economy is a cause of strike action in public universities.

With regards to negotiation skills, 8.5% of the respondents, which represented the minority, disagreed that poor negotiation skills among the parties is a cause of strike action in public universities, 7.5%, representing another minority, neither agreed nor disagreed that poor negotiation skills among the parties is a cause of strike action in public universities, however, the overwhelming majority (81%) agreed that strike action in public universities is caused by poor negotiation skills among the parties.

Lastly, a few (22.5%) of the participants disagreed that government interference in the affairs of the public universities is a cause of strike action in the universities; another small proportion (9.5%) of the participants neither agreed nor disagreed that strike action in public universities is caused by unnecessary interference in the affairs of the institutions by the government, while the remaining 68% which constituted the greatest number, agreed that unnecessary interference in the affairs of the universities by the government is a cause of strike action.

The one sample t-test reveals that all the 11 items show that there was significant difference in average score from neutral '3'. Table 3 in the *Appendix D* depicts the causes of strike action in Ghanaian public universities. Items D28-D33 relate to economic factors while items D34-D38 also pertain to non-economic factors. The table shows there was significant agreement that the following economic factors are responsible for strike action in Ghanaian public universities: inadequate wages and salaries ( $M = 4.23, SD = .905, t(199), = 19.149, p < .0005$ ); the challenges associated with the implementation of new pay policy ( $M = 4.11, SD = 1.068, t(199), = 14.638, p < .0005$ ); poor conditions of service ( $M = 4.25, SD = .873, t(199), = 20.260, p < .0005$ ); inadequate funding ( $M = 4.09, SD = .993, t(199), = 15.517, p < .0005$ ); the replacement of old books and research allowances with the new research fund ( $M = 4.09, SD = .898, t(199), = 17.171, p < .0005$ ); and delay in payment of wages and other emoluments ( $M = 4.14, SD = .837, t(199), = 19.181, p < .0005$ ).

In the same table in *Appendix D* below, there was significant agreement that non-economic factors that contribute to strike action are: improper handling of employee grievances ( $M = 4.11, SD = .876, t(199), = 17.834, p < .0005$ ); government failure to honour agreements or promises ( $M = 4.13, SD = .896, t(199), = 17.750, p < .0005$ ); mismanagement of the economy ( $M = 3.75, SD = 1.168, t(199), = 9.081, p < .0005$ ); poor negotiation or inability of the parties to negotiate during the collective bargaining ( $M = 3.98, SD = .940, t(199), = 14.740, p < .0005$ ); and unnecessary interference in the affairs of the institutions ( $M = 3.67, SD = 1.330, t(199), = 7.122, p < .0005$ ).

## **5.6 Section E: Factors that promote sound employment relations**

This objective of the study elicited the responses of the participants regarding factors that promote sound employment relations. Under this section there were 10 questions or items in all which started from E39 to E48. However, questions E39 to E41 covered economic factors

that promote sound employment relations while the remaining questions (E42 to E48) focused on non-economic factors that promote sound employment relations. The results of the study shown that the participants responded positively to all the questions. They indicated the extent to which they agree or disagree with each question using the 5 point Likert scale.

**Figure 5.2 Factors that promote sound employment relations**

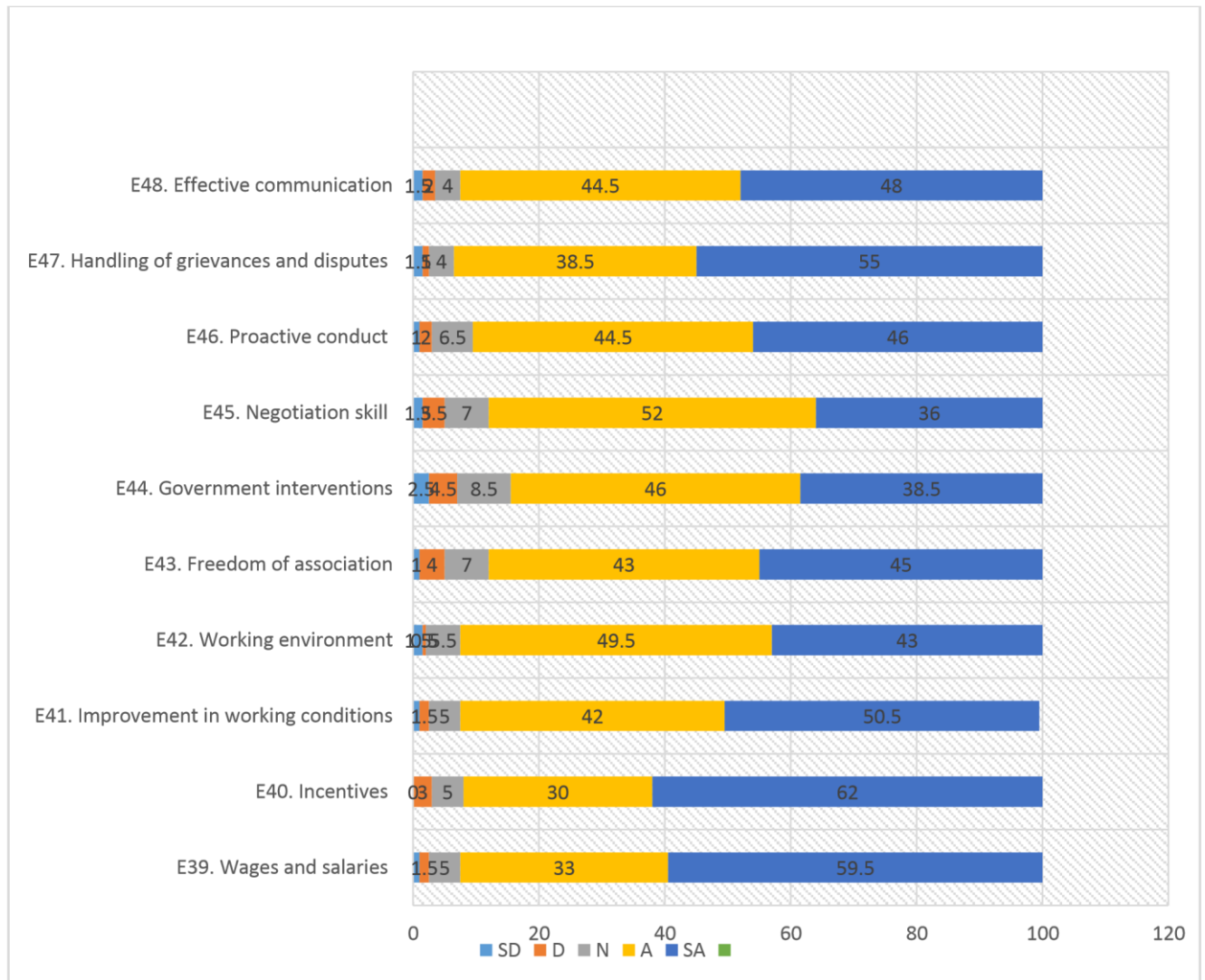


Figure 5.2 above shows the factors that promote sound employment relations in public universities in Ghana. Approximately 2.5% of the respondents, which represented the lowest proportion, disagreed that better payment of wages and salaries promotes sound employment relations, another 5%, which constituted a few of the participants, neither agreed nor disagreed that adequate wages and salaries promotes sound employment relations while the rest of the participants (92.5%) which constituted the majority, agreed that adequate wages and salaries promotes sound employment relations.

With regards to incentives, only a few (3%) of the respondents disagreed that offering employees with incentives promotes sound employment relations, another small proportion

(5%) of the participants neither agreed nor disagreed that employee incentives help to promote sound employment relations, and the remaining 92%, which represented the greatest proportion of the participants, agreed that incentives promote sound employment relations in the workplace.

Also, 2.5% of the respondents, which constituted the lowest proportion, disagreed that improvement in working conditions promotes sound employment relations in the workplace, 5% of them neither agreed nor disagreed that improvement in working conditions promotes sound employment relations, however, the overwhelming majority (92.5%) agreed that improvement in working conditions creates good employer-employee relationship in the workplace.

Furthermore, a few (2%) of the respondents disagreed that a conducive working environment promotes sound employment relations within the workplace, 5.5%, which also constituted the minority, neither agreed nor disagreed that a conducive working environment promotes sound employment relations in the workplace, and the remaining 92.5% representing the majority agreed that a conducive working environment leads to good employer-employee relationship within the workplace.

In addition, 5% of the participants, which represented the minority, disagreed that freedom of association in the workplace promotes sound employment relations, 7% of the participants neither agreed nor disagreed that freedom of association creates sound employment relations, while most (88%) of the participants agreed that freedom of association promotes sound employment relations within the workplace.

With regards to government interventions, only a few (7%) of the participants were in disagreement that government interventions promote sound employment relations in the workplace, 8.5%, representing another minority, neither agreed nor disagreed that government interventions promote sound employment relations and the rest of the participants (84.5%), which constituted the greatest proportion, agreed that government interventions promote sound employment relations in the workplace.

Moreover, regarding negotiation skills, 8.5% of the participants, which represented the lowest proportion, disagreed that good negotiation skills among the parties (employer and employees) to employment relations promotes sound employment relations, 7% of the participants neither

agreed nor disagreed that good negotiation skills promotes sound employment relations, however, the remaining 88% representing the majority agreed that good negotiation skills among the parties promotes sound employment relations.

With reference to proactive conduct of the stakeholders, a few (3%) of the respondents disagreed, another 6.5% neither agreed nor disagreed that proactive conduct of all the stakeholders promotes sound employment relations, while the remaining majority (90.5%) agreed that proactive conduct of all the stakeholders helps to create sound employment relations in the workplace.

About 2.5% of the participants, which constituted the minority, disagreed that proper handling of employee grievances and disputes promotes sound employment relations, 4% of the participants neither agreed nor disagreed that proper handling of employee grievances and disputes enhances good employer-employee relationship, and the rest of the participants (93.5%), which represented the majority, agreed that proper handling of employee grievances and disputes helps promote sound employment relations.

Lastly, with regards to effective communication, only a small proportion (5.5%) of the participants disagreed that effective communication promotes sound employment relations in the workplace, 4% neither agreed nor disagreed that effective communication promotes sound employment relations, while the remaining 92.5%, which represented the majority, agreed that effective communication creates good employer-employee relationship within the workplace.

Again, one sample t-test was utilised to test the significant difference in average score pertaining to the factors that promote sound employment relations in the workplace as seen in Table 4 in *Appendix D* below. Items E39-E41 related to financial factors while items E42-E48 contained non-financial factors. From the table, there was significant agreement that the financial factors that promote sound employment relations comprise of: remuneration or wages and salaries ( $M = 4.50$ ,  $SD = .710$ ),  $t(198) = 29.862$ ,  $p < .0005$ ); incentives ( $M = 4.51$ ,  $SD = .730$ )  $t(199) = 29.262$ ,  $p < .0005$ ); and improvement in working conditions ( $M = 4.40$ ,  $SD = .743$ ),  $t(199) = 26.560$ ,  $p < .0005$ ).

From Table 4 in the same Appendix, there was significant agreement that the non-financial factors that promote sound employment relations include: a conducive working environment ( $M = 4.32$ ,  $SD = .735$ ),  $t(199) = 25.396$ ,  $p < .0005$ ); freedom of association ( $M = 4.27$ ,  $SD =$

.837),  $t(199)$ , = 21.458,  $p < .0005$ ); government interventions ( $M = 4.14$ ,  $SD = .928$ ),  $t(199)$ , = 17.298,  $p < .0005$ ); effective negotiation ( $M = 4.14$ ,  $SD = .823$ ),  $t(199)$ , = 20.184,  $p < .0005$ ); proactive conducts of the stakeholders ( $M = 4.33$ ,  $SD = .770$ ),  $t(199)$ , = 24.347,  $p < .0005$ ); proactive management of grievances and disputes ( $M = 4.45$ ,  $SD = .755$ ),  $t(199)$ , = 27.072,  $p < .0005$ ); and effective communication ( $M = 4.36$ ,  $SD = .782$ ),  $t(199)$ , = 24.494,  $p < .0005$ ).

## **5.7 Section F: Addressing strike action in public universities in Ghana**

The last objective of this study was to identify measures that will help in addressing strike action in public universities in Ghana. There were nine items under this part of the questionnaire which start from F49 to F57. However, F49 to F53 covered questions on economic measures that will help address strike action in public universities while questions F54 to F57 related to non-economic factors that will help in addressing strike action in universities. The respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with regards to each of the questions using the 5 point Likert scale. The results shown that the participants responded positively to all the questions. The summarised scoring patterns are shown in Table 5.4 below.



**Table 5.4 Measures of addressing strike action in public universities**

<i>Statements</i>	<i>Response categories</i>				
	<i>SD</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>SA</i>
<b><i>Reliability</i></b>	<i>N (%)</i>	<i>N (%)</i>	<i>N (%)</i>	<i>N (%)</i>	<i>N (%)</i>
F49. Adequate wages and salaries	2(1)	6(3)	9(4.5)	101(50.5)	82(41)
F50. Proper implementation of the new pay policy	2(1)	9(4.5)	14(7)	98(49)	77(38.5)
F51. Restoring old books and research allowance for lecturers	1(.5)	9(4.5)	13(6.5)	73(36.5)	104(52)
F52. Adequate funding of universities	2(1)	7(3.5)	12(6)	102(51)	77(38.5)
F53. Improvement in working conditions	4(2)	4(2)	9(4.5)	117(58.5)	66(33)
F54. Proper handling of employees' grievances	2(1)	8(4)	6(3)	113(56.5)	71(35.5)
F55. Fulfillment of promises or agreement by the government	3(1.5)	9(4.5)	21(10.5)	74(37)	93(46.5)
F56. Proper handling of the economy by the government	3(1.5)	4(2)	14(7)	82(41)	97(48.5)
F57. Good negotiation skills of all the stakeholders	3(1.5)	4(2)	9(4.5)	81(40.5)	103(51.5)

Table 5.4 above shows the measures in addressing strike action in public universities in Ghana. The minority (4%) of the respondents disagreed that adequate wages and salaries help in addressing strike action in public universities, another 4.5%, which constituted a few of the participants, indicated that they neither agreed nor disagreed that adequate wages and salaries serve as a means of addressing strike action in public universities, while the remaining 91.5%, representing the majority, agreed that adequate wages and salaries helps in addressing strike action in public universities in Ghana.

With regards to the implementation of the new pay policy, only a few (5.5%) participants disagreed that proper implementation of the new pay policy will serve as a means of addressing strike action in the public universities, another 7%, which represented the lowest proportion, neither agreed nor disagreed that proper implementation of the new pay policy assists in addressing strike action in public universities in Ghana, and the remaining majority (87.5%) agreed that proper implementation of the new pay policy helps in addressing strike action in public universities in Ghana.

The minority (5%) of the participants disagreed that restoring old books and research allowances for lecturers will help in addressing the strike action in public universities in the country, 6.5%, which also represented the minority, neither agreed nor disagreed that strike action in public universities can be minimised by restoring the old books and research allowance for lecturers, and the majority (88.5%) agreed that restoring the old books and research allowances for lecturers will help in addressing strike action in Ghanaian public universities.

Furthermore, with reference to funding, a few (4.5%) of the respondents disagreed that adequate funding helps in addressing strike action in Ghanaian public universities, 6%, which also represented the minority, indicated that they neither agreed nor disagreed that adequate funding helps in addressing strike action in public universities in Ghana, while the majority (89.5%) agreed that adequate funding of Ghanaian public universities helps in addressing the strike action in the universities.

In addition, 4%, representing the lowest proportion of the participants, disagreed that improvement in working conditions helps in addressing strike action in Ghanaian public universities, another minority (4.5%) indicated that they neither agreed nor disagreed that improvement in working

conditions of employees contributes to addressing strike action in Ghanaian public universities, and the remaining 91.5%, which constituted the overwhelming majority, agreed that improvement in working conditions serves as a measure of reducing strike action in public universities.

With reference to employee grievances, only a few (5%) of the respondents disagreed that proper handling of employee grievances helps in addressing strike action in Ghanaian public universities, 3%, which also represented minority, neither agreed nor disagreed that proper handling of employee grievances contributes to addressing strike action in public universities in Ghana, however, the majority (92%) agreed that strike action in Ghanaian public universities can be addressed through proper handling of employee grievances.

In terms of collective agreements, 6% of the respondents, which constituted the minority, disagreed that strike action in Ghanaian public universities could be addressed when government fulfils its promises or agreements, 10.5% neither agreed nor disagreed that strike action in public universities in Ghana can be minimised when government fulfils its agreements or promises and the majority (83.5%) agreed that strike action in public universities can be addressed when government honours its promises or agreements.

Moreover, 2.5% of the participants disagreed that proper management of the economy by the government contributes to addressing strike action in Ghanaian universities, another minority (7%) neither agreed nor disagreed that proper management of the country's economy contributes to addressing strike action in public universities, while the remaining 89.5%, which represented the majority, agreed that strike action in Ghanaian universities can be addressed by proper management of the country's economy by the government.

Finally, with regards to negotiation skills, 3.5% of the respondents, representing the minority, disagreed that good negotiation skills of all the stakeholders or parties contributes to addressing strike action in Ghanaian public universities, 4.5%, which also represented the minority, neither agreed nor disagreed that good negotiation skills of all the stakeholders contributes to addressing strike action in public universities, and the remaining 92%, which constituted the greatest majority, agreed that good negotiation skills of the parties helps in minimising or addressing strike action in Ghanaian public universities.

One sample t-test was further used to test the significant difference in average score as seen in Table 5 in *Appendix D* below. There was significant agreement that the following financial measures help in addressing strike action in Ghanaian public universities: adequate wages and salaries ( $M = 4.28$ ,  $SD = .770$ ),  $t(199) = 23.428$ ,  $p < .0005$ ); proper implementation of the new pay policy ( $M = 4.20$ ,  $SD = 4.20$ ),  $t(199) = 20.339$ ,  $p < .0005$ ); restoring books and research allowances ( $M = 4.37$ ,  $SD = .798$ ),  $t(198) = 24.150$ ,  $p < .0005$ ); adequate funding ( $M = 4.23$ ,  $SD = .792$ ),  $t(199) = 21.870$ ,  $p < .0005$ ); and improvement in working conditions ( $M = 4.18$ ,  $SD = .777$ ),  $t(198) = 21.444$ ,  $p < .0005$ ).

Also, there is a significant agreement that the following non-financial measures contribute to addressing strike action in Ghanaian public universities: proactive management of employee grievances ( $M = 4.22$ ,  $SD = .769$ ),  $t(199) = 22.337$ ,  $p < .0005$ ); honouring agreements or promises ( $M = 4.23$ ,  $SD = .916$ ),  $t(199) = 18.918$ ,  $p < .0005$ ); proper management of the economy ( $M = 4.33$ ,  $SD = .815$ ),  $t(199) = 23.075$ ,  $p < .0005$ ); and good negotiation skills ( $M = 4.39$ ,  $SD = .794$ ),  $t(199) = 24.679$ ,  $p < .0005$ ).

## **5.8 Validity- factor analysis**

Factor analysis was employed in this study to investigate the extent to which employee strike action affects employment relations, public universities and the country of Ghana. Section B and C were treated as single measures. However, it may not be appropriate to join other items into one measure since they are measuring different things.

**Table 5.5 Section B: Impact of strike action on employment relations**

**Rotated Factor Matrix**

	Factor	
	1	2
SecB_9	.774	
SecB_10	.779	
SecB_11	.621	
SecB_12		.685
SecB_13		.617
SecB_14		.727

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

Applying the factor analysis shows that the six items (SecB\_9-SecB\_14) from this section were clearly separated into two groups. Factor 1 includes those items (SecB-9, SecB\_10 and SecB\_11) that have to do with employees losing jobs/money. The researcher will call these items “personal impacts.” Factor 2 also includes those items (SecB\_12, SecB\_13 and SecB\_14) that relate to relationship conflicts. The researcher will call these items “relational impacts.” To see if a single combined measure is reliable, Cronbach’s alpha was applied. A value for alpha  $>.7$  indicates a reliable single measure. In that case, a single measure can be formed and used in analysis.

**Table 5.6 Relational impacts of strike (B9-11)**

**Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.767	3

**Item Statistics**

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
SecB_9	2.21	1.211	199
SecB_10	2.27	1.209	199
SecB_11	2.31	1.112	199

The three items measuring relational impacts of strike action had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.767. This exceeded the recommended value for  $\alpha > .7$  therefore the study is statistically acceptable and hence reliable.

**Table 5.7 Personal impacts of strike action (Q12-14)**

**Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.701	3

**Item Statistics**

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
SecB_12	3.73	1.121	200
SecB_13	3.66	1.259	200
SecB_14	3.91	1.087	200

The three items also measuring personal impact of strike action had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.71 which exceeded the recommended value. Therefore, the study is acceptable and reliable.

**Table 5.8 Impact of strike action on the universities and the country**

**Rotated Factor Matrix<sup>a</sup>**

	Factor			
	1	2	3	4
SecC_15	.460			
SecC_16			.440	
SecC_17			.534	
SecC_18				.641
SecC_19	.603		.452	
SecC_20			.424	
SecC_21		.605		
SecC_22		.766		
SecC_23				
SecC_24		.536		
SecC_25	.630			
SecC_26	.513			
SecC_27	.415			

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser

Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 7 iterations.

The rotated factor matrix was applied to determine the impact of strike action on the public universities and the country. The effects of strike action on the universities and the country were combined which gave out three (3) factors as seen in the Table above. Factor 1 refers to “intangible effects”, factor 2 is called “tangible effects” and factor 3 is called “effects on students”. Factor 2 and 3 determined the effects of strike action on the country while factor 3 measured the effects of strike action on the public universities. From the Table above, SecC16 and SecC17 were combined to form a single measure; SecC21 and SecC22 were also combined to form a single measure and SecC25, SecC26 and SecC27 were also combined to form a single measure. Cronbach’s alpha was then calculated to determine the reliability of these groupings.

**Table 5.9 Intangible effects of strike action on public universities and the country (C15, 19, 25, 26 and 27)**

**Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.693	5

**Item-Total Statistics**

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
SecC_15	16.13	7.262	.438	.650
SecC_19	16.11	6.462	.587	.588
SecC_25	16.35	6.603	.431	.651
SecC_26	16.15	7.098	.468	.639
SecC_27	16.45	6.117	.382	.691

From the Table 5.9 above, five items measuring intangible effects of strike action on the universities and the country had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.693. These items are statistically acceptable and reliable.

**Table 5.10 Tangible effects of strike action on the country (C21 22 and 24)**

**Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.670	3



**Item-Total Statistics**

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
SecC_21	6.10	5.250	.393	.691
SecC_22	6.29	4.506	.618	.393
SecC_24	6.15	4.992	.449	.618

From Table 5.10 above, three items measuring the effects of strike action on the country had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.670. These items are statistically acceptable and reliable.

**Table 5.11 Effects of strike action on students (C16 17 and 20)**

**Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.515	3

**Item-Total Statistics**

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
SecC_16	8.50	1.709	.307	.466
SecC_17	8.25	2.038	.376	.358
SecC_20	8.42	1.902	.320	.429

Applying the factor analysis, three items measuring the effects of strike action on students had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.515. Statistically, these items are not acceptable and reliable.

## **5.9 Conclusion**

This chapter presented the results of the quantitative study. The results of the demographic characteristics (gender, age, educational qualification, current position, years of experience,

employment status, school and department) of the sample were first presented followed by the results on the impact of strike action on employment relations which include employee dismissal, retrenchment of strikers, loss of remuneration, unhealthy relationship, intimidation of strikers and organisational conflicts. The chapter further presented the results regarding the impact of strike action on Ghanaian public universities (disruption of research and publications, low student performance, disruption of learning, unhealthy employment relationship, delay of students' graduation and disruption of teaching) and the country (loss of investment, loss of jobs, loss of revenue, injuries and loss of life, poor reputation of the country, loss of productive hours and falling standard of education). In addition, the chapter presented information pertaining to the causes of strike action in Ghanaian universities, namely: inadequate wages and salaries; the introduction of the new pay policy; poor conditions of work; inadequate funding; replacement of old books and research allowances with the new research fund; delay in payment of wages and salaries and allowances; improper handling of employee grievances; government's failure to honour agreements; mismanagement of the economy; lack of negotiation skills and unnecessary interference in universities' affairs by the government. It also presented the results regarding the factors that promote sound employment which comprised of adequate wages and salaries, incentives, improvement in working conditions, an improved conducive environment, freedom of association, government interventions, good negotiation skills, proactive conduct of the parties, proper handling of employee grievances and disputes and effective communication. Finally, the chapter gave an account of the measures of addressing strike action in Ghanaian public universities, namely: adequate wages and salaries; proper implementation of the new pay policy; restoring old books and research allowances for lecturers; adequate funding of universities; improvement in working conditions; proper handling of employees' grievances; fulfillment of promises or agreement by the government; proper management of the economy by the government and good negotiation skills of all the stakeholders.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **PRESENTATION OF QUALITATIVE RESULTS**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter presented the results of the quantitative study. This chapter proceeded with the presentation of the qualitative results. The purpose of the qualitative study was to complement the results of the quantitative findings in relation to the above objectives. As mentioned in chapter four, ten (10) participants agreed to take part in the interviews but unfortunately only eight (8) of them finally took part in the study which accounted for an 80% response rate. All the participants agreed for the interviews to be audio-taped. The interviews were conducted at the convenience of the participants. Also, the interviews were conducted in the English language only and each of them lasted between 40 and 50 minutes. Using the thematic analysis, broad and sub-themes were identified under each of the interview questions.

The following were the results of the qualitative study starting with the first objective.

#### **6.2. Section B: Impact of strike action on employment relations**

As mentioned in chapter one, the overreaching aim of this study was to investigate the extent to which employee strike action impacts on employment relations. Using the thematic analysis, five themes were identified as the effects of strikes on the employment relations, namely: unhealthy relationship; employee dismissal; loss of remuneration (“no work no pay”); mistrust and organisational conflicts.

##### **6.2.1 Unhealthy relationship**

The majority ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants expressed the opinion that strike action affects employment relations by creating unhealthy relationship in the workplace among the parties. The participants held the view that although striking is a constitutional right in Ghana, it has the potential to create unhealthy relationship in the workplace which may impact negatively on employment relations. The following were some of the quotes which supported this finding.

You will agree with me that when employees go on strike there is always some kind of confrontation and high tension in the workplace which may affect the relationship in the workplace. It may jeopardise the working relations (Participant 4, Male).

Strike action may sometimes have some kind of unspoken effect on employee management relationship. But at the same time it can also have good effects with the sense that at least management now becomes aware that employees are not just going to accept anything so they will be more careful in responding to their needs (Participant 3, Male).

We all know that when there is strikes it creates some form of animosity which may not provide an atmosphere of peace in the organisation. To me, though people may disagree that the strikers are just exercising their democratic right it does not call for division in the workplace but I can tell you that it sometimes creates some form of disunity which may affect the kind of relationship that previously existed (Participant 6, Male).

I will rather say that when there is strike the parties no longer relate to one another well as it used to be because of the betrayal especially on the part of the employees. Therefore, when this happens it affects the existing relationship that occurs between the parties (Participant 5, Female).

However, other participants ( $n = 3$ ) expressed a different view contrary to those expressed by the majority. They rather indicated that striking is a legitimate right hence it does not necessarily create unhealthy relationship among the parties. Some illustrative voices were as follows:

I can't see why striking could affect employer-employees relations in the organisation. It is a legitimate right of every worker in the country. What I will rather say is that it puts the employer on his toes to do the right time (Participant 1, Male).

We cannot just say that when people engage in strike activity it means that the employment relations is destroyed. No, I don't agree with such assertions. I think striking rather strengthens our democracy as a country and as an organisation. We should not be made to believe that striking is a bad thing. (Participant 7, Male).

From the above discussions, the results were in line with the quantitative results, as most of the respondents indicated that strike action in public universities has the tendency to create unhealthy relationship between the employees and management in universities.

### **6.2.2 Dismissal of employees**

With regards to employee dismissal, most ( $n = 6$ ) of the participants indicated that strike action could lead to employee dismissal. They have cited various reasons under which employees may be dismissed in relations to striking. The following were some of the illustrative voices of the participants in this regard.

Well I feel that if the people did not go through the normal procedures before declaring the strike then it can call for dismissal but however if the people went through the normal procedures before the strike was declared then the dismissal will take no effect because the people are exercising their democratic right. Most at times, some strikers are targeted for dismissal (Participant 6, Male).

The nature of the strike will determine whether the employees can be dismissed or not. Dismissal will depend on the fact that the strike does not have any foundation or it is realised that most of the things are agendas that are not in the public interest especially when the leaders do not support it. When the strike does not have real backing. Like I said earlier, most people become targets and when they do something wrong it becomes the basis for the dismissal. Even though people do it and they get off scott free but you do it and it is blown out of proportion (Participant 3, Male).

I think that when the strike is unprotected there is a likelihood that employees who embarked on such action could be dismissed. However, government has not been bold in enforcing this provision even though we had a number of such cases in the previous years. I can remember that it was only 2005 when teachers were dismissed nationwide for embarking on an illegal strike. I can also say that yes, employees could be dismissed for participating in strike action when there is an act of criminality during the strike let's say for attacking or beating other workers who are not taking part in the strike. Also, I think when employees vandalise some facilities in the company while striking it can be the reason for the dismissal (Participant 7, Male).

However, a few ( $n = 2$ ) of the participants indicated that strike action may not necessarily lead to dismissal of employees. The following were some illustrative voices to this effect.

Personally, I have not heard of any circumstance where employees are dismissed in the universities just for participating in strike action. It is their right to engage in strike action. Some dismissals in the universities has nothing to do with a person's involvement in a strike (Participant 4, Male).

It can be deduced from the proceeding quotes that most of the participants expressed the view that employee strike action could be used as the basis for dismissal. The participants have cited various reasons to support their opinions regarding strikes and dismissal of employees. The researcher's personal observation regarding these findings was that the participants did not look at strike action in totality but rather they focused much attention on protected and unprotected strike action. Critical examination of the various quotes suggest that unprotected strike action was cited by the participants as the basis for the dismissal of employees. The findings of this study contradict the quantitative findings, as the majority disagreed that strike action contributes to employee dismissal.

### **6.2.3 Loss of remuneration (“no work no pay”)**

In relation to remuneration or the “no work no pay” policy, most ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants expressed the view that strike action contributes to loss of remuneration. The participants have cited various reasons why employee remuneration could be frozen for his or her participation in strikes. The following were examples of some quotes in this regard.

The government has the right not to pay workers for embarking on strikes. However, the government has not been bold in invoking this right or provision. If I can remember, just last year the government refused to pay the nurses and medical doctors who went on strike action and we all saw what happened in the country. I am not too sure about the date but in the past some lecturers and teachers in the country have forfeited their salaries when they went on strike. During those periods, the government has pleaded on several occasions for the teachers to return to the classrooms but they refused. Subsequently, the government decided not to pay them for the whole three months they went on the strike (Participant 2, Male).

Yes, the government has the locus not to pay the strikers. I remember that some years ago teachers went on strike action and the government refused to pay them their salaries. We all know that our Labour Act gives employers the right to decide whether to pay or not to pay striking workers. The point I am trying to put across is that when employees go on strike the government has the right not to remunerate them even if the strike is legitimised (Participant 5, Female).

To my understanding, the law allows the government not to remunerate the employees while on strike. However, these days we have a very strong trade union that protect the interest of every employee so it is sometimes difficult for the employer to refuse to pay the workers while on strike. I am not saying that the employer cannot refuse payment to the employees but my recommendation will rather be that he must stand strong on his feet to implement the policy of “no work no pay” otherwise there will be more trouble (Participant 8, Male).

It can be concluded based on the quotes that the majority of the participants supported the “no work no pay” policy which implies that the employer has the right not to remunerate strikers during the period in which they embarked on strike action irrespective of whether the strike in itself is protected or unprotected. The results of this study disagreed with the quantitative results. With regards to the quantitative results, the greater proportion of the participants disagreed to the statement that strike action leads to loss of remuneration. In the researcher’s personal view, the differences in the results could be the power struggles among the participants (employees and management) or lack of knowledge regarding the provision of the “no work no pay policy”.

#### **6.2.4 Mistrust or broken trust**

Based on the qualitative study, it was found that mistrust is another impact that strike action has on employment relations. Half ( $n = 4$ ) of the participants expressed their opinion that strike action may contribute to mistrust in the workplace. Here were some of the illustrative voices of the participants regarding mistrust.

Usually just like any normal relationship once there is conflict it becomes a big responsibility for the parties to make sure that the relationship from then on works because of the broken trust. It takes maturity from the organisation to ensure that

there is harmony. The point I am driving at is that when there is strike action that trust is broken which affects the relationship. What normally happens is that the employer loses the confidence in the employees because he or she could no longer trust them (Participant 3, Male).

From my personal experience, I will say that once there is strike action it may lead to the situation where the parties will no longer trust each other. Here, it is not only the employer who may lose the trust in the employees but the employees may sometimes also not trust the employer for failing to address their concerns.

In any normal relationship, trust is reciprocal therefore if you don't trust your partner he or she may also not trust you (Participant 2, Male).

I hope you will agree with me that for any relationship to be sustained there must be some element of trust among the parties. However, such trust can be broken if there is a problem that cannot be addressed amicably. In the working environment I can tell you that once there is a strike, management may have a certain mentality that the employees betrayed their trust. Workers may also feel that their employer cannot be trusted because of his inability to address their grievances. In light of this, the parties may no longer trust each other. I was once a victim of this so I know what I am driving at (Participant 1, Male).

From the quotes above, it becomes clear that employee strike action could lead to mistrust which has the potential of affecting the employment relations in the workplace. This finding is not in any way related to the quantitative results. However, the various quotes presented by the participants enabled the researcher to come up with this finding.

### **6.2.5 Organisational conflict**

Organisational conflict was found to be another impact of strike action on employment relations. With regards to the interviews, most ( $n = 4$ ) of the participants have indicated that strike action has the possibility of creating more conflict in the organisation if not handled well. The following were some of the illustrative voices which supported this finding.



Conflict is a big problem in any organisation once there are different interest groups. Sometimes when people engage in industrial action they think that they are exercising their right but if the problem for which they are striking about is not resolved it tends to create more conflict than ever. I remember sometimes ago when staff went on strike concerning increment in their salaries the government refused to listen to their demands and they stayed at home for more than two months because no party was willing to come forward to start the negotiation process. The situation looks as if government and lecturers are at war with each other (Participant 7, Male).

One will certainly agree with me that once there is strike action it threaten industrial peace. Strike action might affect peaceful co-existence among the parties in the organisation which has the tendency to create more conflict and division in the organisation (Participant 1, Male).

We all know that strike action can deepen existing conflict within the organisation especially when the parties failed to reach an agreement. One will expect that strike action is a necessary tool in addressing employee grievances but from my personal experience it is not a healthy tool. If care is not taken the situation may rather get worse especially when there is no redress to the grievances in contention (Participant 2, Male).

The above quotes helped in drawing a general conclusion that strike action has the potential to create conflict within the workplace if not handled well. This finding further supported the quantitative results, as most of the respondents agree to the statement that strike action leads to conflict in the workplace.

### **6.3 Section C: Impact of strike action on public universities and the country**

As outlined in chapter one above, the second objective of this study was to identify the extent to which employee strike action affects the universities as well as the country. This section commences with the impact of strike action on the universities which is then followed by the impact of employee strike action on the country.

### **6.3.1 Impact of employee strike action on the public universities**

Using the thematic analysis, five main themes were identified as the consequences of strike action on public universities in Ghana. The following were the results of the study.

#### **6.3.1.1 Disruption of academic calendar**

The majority ( $n = 7$ ) of the participants recommended that strike action in public universities may cause the disruption of the academic calendar most importantly when school is still in progress. The following were the illustrative voices which support this finding.

Strike action certainly affects the academic calendar especially when school is still in progress. Once there is a dysfunction of the university's key activities it means that the university has to make extra time for the completion of those activities (Participant 5, Female).

When there is a strike it leads to loss of days or weeks that should have been used in teaching and learning. Once days are lost due to the strike action then the university has no option than to extend the period of teaching and final exams. This may create the situation where the students have to stay in school for long periods (Participant 2, Male).

One will certainly agree with me that when a strike occurs many days are lost so the university needs to readjust the academic calendar. For instance when the staff of the universities of Ghana went on two months of strike action in 2015 the academic calendar was extended to cover the periods or days that were lost (Participant 1, Male).

Yes or no, it may or may not affect the academic calendar. In my opinion, strike action can only disrupt the calendar when students are still in school and the academic activities are not progressing. My next view on the disruption of the academic calendar will be when the strike creates room for the closure of the universities. However, in the case where the strike occurs outside the normal school day then there can't be a disruption in the calendar. For example, when students are in their various homes where the strike occurred one cannot say that there will be a disruption in the academic calendar (Participant 1, Male).

These opinions underscored the effect of strike action on the academic calendar in the universities. It appears that most of the participants indicated that the disruption of the academic calendar can

only occur while school is in progress. The results of this study reaffirmed the results of the quantitative study, since the overwhelming majority agreed that strike action may cause the disruption of the academic calendar.

### **6.3.1.2 Disruption of effective teaching**

It was found that strike action in public universities affects teaching. Based on the interviews, all the participants ( $n = 8$ ) cited various reasons why strike action may contribute to disruption of teaching in the universities. The following were some of the quotes in this regard:

I think in the university, the biggest impact will be a disruption of the university's key functions such as teaching and learning. When there is a strike we are not teaching, we are not setting questions and we are not marking student scripts. The major challenge will be when the semester is still ongoing (Participant 4, Male).

Personally, I think if the semester is still ongoing then the strike may affect teaching especially if it is a sit-down strike. Certainly, when there is a disruption in the university programme it has an implication on teaching as well (Participant 5, Female).

The next impact is a disruption in teaching. But I will be quick to say that this depends on the nature and the timing of the strike action. For instance if the strike occurs while school is in session then it will definitely affect teaching. Is a known fact that during strike action nobody goes to the classroom and this may affect teaching (Participant 6, Male).

Certainly, in the university where there is a teaching environment strike action may affect this activity. My brother, you must not forget teaching is the core activity of every university, hence once there is an industrial action by way of work stoppage it will definitely affect teaching (Participant 7, Male).

From the above illustrative voices, it can be concluded that strike action affects teaching. The results of this study reaffirmed the results of the quantitative study as indicated above. However, the researcher's observation from the proceeding voices was that most of the participants indicated that teaching can only be disrupted when school is still in session during the strike action. Therefore, one will draw a general conclusion that strike action may only cause a disruption in teaching when the academic programme is still in session.

### 6.3.1.3 Disruption of student learning

It was discovered that strike action affects student learning in the public universities. The majority ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants expressed the view that strike action has the potential to affect student learning. Below were some of the illustrative voices of the participants who indicated that strike action affects student learning:

In university where there is a learning environment strike action may affect this activity. The aim of every university is to provide a comfortable environment to enhance teaching, learning and research. So once there is a discontinuity of the academic activities it will also mean that effective learning cannot take place (Participant 7, Male).

I think in the university, the biggest impact will be a disruption of the university key functions such as teaching and learning. When there is a strike we are not teaching, we are not setting questions and we are not marking (Participant 4, Male).

Sincerely, university strikes causes more harm to students than any other stakeholders. We end up causing disservice to innocent students who have paid fees to be here. To me, though the university is a place for mature people, I think there must be a congenial atmosphere to promote learning. The point I was trying to put across is that once there is strike action it may affect the entire activities in the university including learning. For example, imagine the university has been shut down and students have been asked to vacate from the various facilities on campus and go home until the strike is over, what will happen to student learning? (Participant 3, Male).

From the illustrative voice above, one will conclude that strike action has an effect on student learning. The researcher's thoughts on this finding was that learning is one of the core activities of every institution either small or large so once there is a disruption in the academic calendar or programme due to industrial or protest action it will certainly affect learning. The aim of every institution is to provide a peaceful learning environment for learners therefore a disruption in the institution's calendar as a result of strike action will mean that effective learning cannot take place. The results of this study reaffirmed the results of the quantitative study, as the majority of the participants indicated that strike action affects student learning in the universities.

#### **6.3.1.4 Research and publication**

This study also found that strike action in the public universities affects research and publication. Based on the interviews, most ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants have cited various reasons why strike action may affect research and publications. Below were some of the illustrative voices of the participants in this regard:

The biggest impact will be a disruption of the university key functions including research and publication. When there is a strike and there are any research obligations it will not be done (Participant 4, Male).

People will not be able to do research and publication because these activities are to be done under the atmosphere of peace; so when there is no peace due to strikes the research centres may be closed down which may have general implications on research and publications (Participant 6, Male).

I think once there is a strike, most of the staff may not even be willing to do further research and publication until their demands are met. Even though the research and publications contribute to the individual's performance and growth in the university, but the strike action may have an effect on this. I also think that if all the facilities were closed down due to strikes it will certainly also mean that research and publications cannot progress (Participant 2, Male).

Even though the majority of the participants indicated that strike action in public universities affects research and publication, a few ( $n = 3$ ) have however expressed different views. Some of the participants have expressed the opinion that strike action might not necessarily affect research and publications. The following were the illustrative voices of some of the participants:

It depends on the nature of the research. If it is a normal individual research I will say no because if there is a strike that individual is at home or comes here privately to do his or her research, then it may not necessarily affect research (Participant 5, Female).

From the illustrative voices, it can generally be concluded that strike action affects research and publication. The results of this study also supported the results of the quantitative study since most of the respondents indicated that strike action affects research and publications.

### 6.3.1.5 Student performance

The study also discovered that universities' strike action affects student performance in those universities. The majority ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants expressed their opinions that strike action affects student performance. The following were some of the quotes in this regard:

Well it does. I think with my experience here and at least a report from colleagues at Legon, when this strike happens then after the issue has been resolved then attempts are made to capture the time being lost which might affect the student performance (Participant 4, Male).

I think there is a great disservice to the students because they pay money to be here in the universities. They also have the right to education therefore by embarking on such strikes the students are being denied of such a right. If the students could not have a peaceful learning environment, of course one should expect poor performance (Participant 7, Male).

Yes, partially it may affect. For example, if the duration of the strike in the universities is long it can affect student performance and the reason being that when the universities are shut down most students stay home idle, thinking that they will start learning once the universities resume. Most students do not learn at all until the university resumes and this may partially affect their performance (Participant 1, Male).

Although the majority of the participants have indicated that strike action does have an effect on student performance, a few ( $n = 3$ ) however disagreed that strike action may affect student performance. The following were a few illustrative voices to support this argument:

I will say no because being in a tertiary institution is different from the lower level with the sense that the lecturer is only there to guide because we have prescribed books and a course outline. In this regard the students are expected to learn on their own so I think this will not affect their performance (Participant 5, Female).

The university is a place for mature people so even if there is a strike they ought to learn. One cannot say that because of the strike he or she did not learn. A good student will always perform even if there is strike action. Performance depends on the students' ability and not the lecturers (Participant 3, Male).

From the above illustrative voices, it can be deduced that strike action does have some negative consequences on student performance even though a few of the participants disagreed with this assertion. The two schools of thoughts have presented convincing arguments but the majority were in agreement that strike action affects student performance. The results of this study were in line with the quantitative results, where the majority of the participants indicated that strike action does have an effect on student performance.

#### **6.3.1.6 Students' graduation**

The results of this study revealed that strike action in public universities affects students' graduation. Based on the interviews, most ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants said that strike action may cause a delay in students' graduation. Below were some few illustrative voices which supported this finding:

Once there is extension of the academic calendar it means that the graduation date will also be extended if I may be right. You see, a university operates based on its own calendar therefore once there is a disruption of the academic calendar it means that all the activities will be delayed including graduation because the students need to write the exams before graduating. No graduation will take place in an academic environment when students have not written their exams (Participant 8, Male).

The duration of the strike in the university has the potential to affect the graduation date. I will also say that when the universities are shut down because of the effect of the strike it means that students will not be able to graduate that year. If I can remember vividly, in the past some universities were closed down because of strike action and it affected students who were supposed to graduate in those years. For example University of Ghana was closed down for two years before which meant many students could not graduate (Participant 6, Male).

There is a saying that "when two elephants are fighting it is the grass that suffers." This is exactly what often happens in the universities. When there is disruption in the academic calendar most importantly at the time that the students are supposed to write their final exams it means that there will be a delay. I remember that in 2005 the universities in the

country were closed down because of the nationwide strike and most students could not graduate that year (Participant 2, Male).

It can be deduced that strike action in the public universities does have an impact on students' graduation. The researcher's observation from the illustrative voices was that once there is a disruption of the academic calendar due to strike action it may affect the universities' activities during that period including but not limited to students' graduation.

### **6.3.2 Impact of universities' strike action on the country**

The study also explored the extent to which strike action at public universities impacts on the country. Using the thematic analysis, several consequences for the country were identified as a result of strike action at public universities. The following were some of the findings which relate to the impact of strike action on the country.

#### **6.3.2.1 Loss of productive hours**

The study found that strike action in public universities affects productive hours in the country. Based on the interviews, most ( $n = 6$ ) of the participants expressed their views that strike action in the public universities may contribute to loss of productive hours. The following were some of the opinions of the participants to support the findings:

If the strike is nationwide then I think it may affect productivity because everybody will sit at home idle. If the strike affects everybody in the country then it can affect productivity because nobody goes to work, nobody sells anything. I think this has happened here before or in other country (Participant 5, Female).

Yes, a sit-down strike may affect productive hours. During a strike there is nothing being produced. More so, unnecessary time is wasted on trying to meet for the negotiation process to address the issues raised by the workers (Participant 7, Male).

Strike action in public universities may have an effect on nationwide productivity because students who are supposed to graduate and contribute to the increase in productivity may not have such an opportunity. Also, if the strike is prolonged and the universities are closed down it has implications on students' age which will go a long way to affect the nation's productivity (Participant 6, Male).



Hours that could have been put to good use were wasted due to work stoppage. People are not working until their concerns are addressed so definitely it has national implications like loss of productivity (Participant 2, Male).

From the above illustrative voices, it can be concluded that strike action in the public universities affects productive hours in the country. The results of this study also conformed to the quantitative results, as the majority of the participants agreed that strike action does affect productive hours.

### **6.3.2.2 Cost implications**

The findings of this study also suggested that strike action in public universities may have cost implications on the country. Nearly all the participants ( $n = 7$ ) have expressed the view that strike action has cost implications on the country. The following were some of the illustrative voices of the participants in this regard:

When there is a strike people will be paid for work not done. Also, when there is loss of productivity it may also have cost implications on the organisation (Participant 3, Male).

What I can say is that when strike action occurs it may affect government budget because people receive salaries while at home doing nothing. Also, when there is no peace in the country with regards to the nationwide strike it may certainly affect government revenue (Participant 5, Female).

There is also an economic impact because when there is a strike and nothing is being produced it is a cost to the nation. Strikes also come with some form of violence which can create both a direct and indirect cost for the nation (Participant 7, Male).

Imagine government has to pay all lecturers or workers and they have to go on strike for a week, a month or a year. It has a great impact on the nation's coffers (Participant 8, Male).

It can be concluded based on the above quotes or illustrative voices that strike action does have some cost implications on the country. From these quotes it appears that the participants were more concerned about the situation where people are paid while on strike. This result reaffirmed the results of the quantitative study in relation to cost in the country.

### 6.3.2.3 Loss of government revenue

It was found that strike action affects government revenue. The results of the study revealed that strike action may contribute to loss of government revenue. With reference to the interviews, the majority ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants expressed the opinion that strike action contributes to loss of government revenue. Here were some few illustrative voices of the participants in relation to this finding:

In my view, if the strike is nationwide then it will affect government revenue. Let's not forget that government gains revenue from university workers as a form of tax. So let's ask ourselves that if nothing is going on in the universities across the country how will government raise money. Also, if other foreign nationals who are students stop coming to the country it may also affect government revenue generation (Participant 2, Male).

Yes, nationwide strike action among the public universities may affect government revenue because if the international students come to the country government benefits. However, if the strike action is intensified and international students did not show up in the various universities it will certainly affect government revenue (Participant 6, Male).

Of course it may affect government revenue. When the strike action concerns all the public universities in the country it may not only affect government revenue but it will have a direct consequence on the universities' revenue generation as well. When universities are closed down due to strike action it means students will not be paying fees and this affects government's efforts to generate revenue in the country. Like it is said, the universities will also suffer for this because if students are not paying fees how will they be able to pay for the workers' salaries and other expenses? (Participant 7, male).

From the illustrative voices, it can be argued that strike action affects government revenue. The results of this study agreed with the quantitative results since most of the participants indicated that strike action in public universities may affect the country's revenue.

#### **6.3.2.4 Bad reputation**

The study found that strike action in public universities affects the image or reputation of the country. The majority ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants were of the view that strike action has the potential of affecting the country's image. The proceeding illustrative voices supported this finding:

Image wise it shows the kind of instability for prospective students because they know that they are coming to school and they are supposed to graduate in a certain time (Participant 6, Male).

Much as we may not think they are a force to reckon with I think all the strikes we had in the public universities have caught national attention. What I meant was that it will certainly affect the country's image. However, positively it brings about discussion about remunerations in the country (Participant 4, Male).

I will say that striking is a constitutional right which every worker may exercise but at the same time it can have a long term effect on the reputation of the county especially when the agitations in the country are too much. We as workers may think that we are exercising our right but in the long term the county suffers. Imagine students are not willing to come to Ghana because they think that we always embark on strikes, will that be good for the country? (Participant 3, Male).

Yes, you will realise that in the universities others are nationals here so when there is a strike it does not stay in our country alone because of the media and what not, so it may affect the image of the country. It is not even safe to be here. Also, people will not be speaking well about the country and this may question the very existence of our democracy (Participant 5, Female).

The above illustrative voices revealed that strike action in public universities affects the image of the country. This finding also supported the findings of the quantitative study, as the majority of the participant agreed that strike action in public universities may have the potential to affect the reputation of the country.

### **6.3.2.5 Loss of investment**

It was found that strikes in public universities affect investor confidence in the country. From the interviews, most ( $n = 4$ ) of the participants have expressed the view that nationwide strikes at public universities will have an effect on investment in the country. The participants were of the opinion that universities are a microcosm of the country hence, once there is a strike it affects investment not only in the education sector but the country at large. Below were some of the illustrative voices which supported this finding.

In my view, I think that nationwide strike action will affect not only those institutions but to a large extent it may affect investment as well. There are investors who are willing to invest in every sector of any economy. Therefore, if that sector is not stable the investors will not want to invest in that area and this may affect the country as well (Participant 1, Male).

We must not take foreign investors for granted because they are sensitive when it comes to investing their capital. Constant agitations in the country will rather push away investors who are willing to come into our country (Participant 2, Male).

Yes of course it will affect investment. Remember that investors are always looking at areas that are conducive to invest in so if there is constant strike action in the country it will affect their confidence. For instance, if an investor decided to come and invest in our education sector but unfortunately many schools are not operating due to nationwide strikes, that investor may not be willing to come at all (Participant 6, Male).

From the illustrative voices above, it can be generally concluded that nationwide strikes in a country may affect the investor confidence which will have a long term effect on investment.

The results of this study also reaffirmed the quantitative results.

### **6.3.2.6 National security threat**

The study also found that nationwide strike action at public universities may pose a national security threat. From the illustrative voices, the majority ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants indicated that nationwide strikes may have security implications in the country. Below were some of the illustrative voices in this regard.

The university is the microcosm of the larger nation because we all work to feed into the national coffers. Certainly if lecturers go on strike and nothing is happening, let's say the strike is simultaneous and not limited to only University of Professional Studies, Accra (UPSA), it may have a national security threat. The students become idle and they don't do anything so imagine what will happen if there is no control within that period (Participant 8, Male).

At most times we hear issue of threats and intimidation when people are on strike. If what we hear is true then there could be serious national security implications in the country because people will not sit down to be killed for nothing. They will also try to have their own security which may result in the confrontation between them and the security agencies (Participant 3, Male).

Yes, because there is an element of force when people are on strike and if care is not taken that might lead to a clash between them and the police and this can cause a national security threat. I remember that there was a similar situation during the revolutionary era where people were beaten and killed for going on strike. Following that event, the labour union reorganised their members into the street leading to a violent clash between them and the police. Few people were killed and others too were injured (Participant 4, Male).

From the above quotes, it was found that a nationwide strike has the potential to pose a national security threat in the country as indicated by the majority of the participants. It was a new finding that emerged from the qualitative study.

#### **6.4 Section D: Causes of strike action in the public universities in Ghana**

As mentioned above, the third objective of this present study was to identify the causes of strike action in Ghanaian public universities. Using the thematic analysis, two broad themes were identified as factors that are responsible for strike action in public universities in Ghana namely: financial and non-financial factors. There were sub-themes which fell under these broad themes. The financial factors were first discussed which was then followed by the non-financial factors.

### **6.4.1 Financial factors responsible for strike action in Ghanaian public universities**

Under the financial factors, various causes of strike action were identified in Ghanaian public universities. The financial factors are wages and salaries, working conditions, the new pay policy, funding constraints, delay in payment of wages and salaries, mismanagement of the economy and allowances. The following were the results of each of these causes.

#### **6.4.1.1 Wages and salaries**

The study found that inadequate wages and salaries is the major cause of all strike action in public universities in Ghana. The majority ( $n = 7$ ) of the participants suggested that the agitation or demand for increment in wages and salaries of the universities' staff is the chief factor contributing to strikes in the universities in Ghana. The following were some quotes which supported this finding:

Salaries are the main issues in the universities. When you see people going on strike action in the public universities there is no other issue than the salary structure (Participant 3, Male).

I think number one is wages. Wages turn to be a bigger issue of strike (Participant 4, Male).

Hardly we hear university lecturers going on strike but once in a while they embark on a strike and one contributing factor is the demand for a pay increase (Participant 5, Female).

Basically, I think salaries are the major causes of strike action in the universities over the years. At most times, lecturers complained that their salaries are not adequate to enable them to meet their increasing demands. I think the major problem is salaries (Participant 6, Male).

At most times when you compare the salary structure of lecturers and others in the industries you will notice that what we are being paid is comparatively low as compared to others. When people compare what they receive and what others receive and they perceived that what they are receiving is comparatively lower than others they may decide to use a strike as a means of drawing the government's attention (Participant 7, Male).

It can be concluded from the proceeding quotes that wages and salaries are the major causes of strike action in Ghana. It appears that the wages and salaries of the universities' staff is comparatively low as opposed to their counterparts in other countries. This finding reaffirmed the findings of the quantitative study.

#### **6.4.1.2 Working conditions**

It was found that poor working conditions in the public universities in Ghana is another factor responsible for strike action in the country. From the interviews, most ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants expressed the view that deplorable conditions of work in Ghanaian public universities is a cause of strike action in the country. Here were some illustrative voices of the participant which supported this finding:

Usually, it is just about conditions of service. Most of the strikes that were reported over the years were about the conditions of service which include salaries, working environment (Participant 8, Male).

Secondly, working conditions not just salaries but the whole package because this time people are looking at benefits and allowances (Participant 4, Male).

I am not sure whether people will be willing to be lecturers when they have better opportunities to work in other sectors apart from the education sector. We are living in a deplorable state where our working conditions are poor to the extent that our friends from other industries laugh at us (Participant 2, Male).

However, one of the participants expressed different views regarding the working conditions in public universities in Ghana. She disagreed with the majority that working conditions are responsible for strike action in public universities. Here was the illustrative voice which supported the argument:

Our working condition is not too bad but there is still room for improvement. Sometimes we must also look at the economy and what the government can afford. We are in the developing world and we can't afford what the developed world are offering their employees (Participant 5, Female).

From the above opinions, it can be concluded that poor working conditions is a factor that contributes to strike action in public universities in Ghana. The results of this study also reaffirmed the quantitative results, as the majority indicated that poor working conditions is a cause of strike in the universities.

#### **6.4.1.3 Books and research allowances**

Books and research allowances were also found to be a contributing factor to strikes in Ghanaian public universities. The majority ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants argued that their books and research allowances are the cause of strikes in the universities. The following were some quotes to support this finding:

I think research and book allowances is a contributing factor to strikes in the public universities. For example, I'm going to Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration next year, I want to start a research project but can I get a fund? Am I entitled to that? Do I have assurance that I will get it especially that I am going to do a research that is time bound. For example, if you take the natural sciences from South Africa you will get the National Research Fund (NRF) system. If you are not assured of getting the money to do some research for example when you want to research into Ebola. It's time bound, you need to do the research at the time when the disease is peaking and you need samples. I know that people expressed sentiment about not getting the money for the research and how the universities contribute to research and publications in the country (Participant 4, Male).

I believe that although government argument is justifiable in scraping the research and book allowance but I think it is a contributing factor to strikes in the country (Participant 7, Male).

Government has proposed to implement the book and research allowances in my university but it is yet to bring the proposal on board. However in other universities like Legon and University of Cape I will say yes, it is a cause of strikes (Participant 6, Male).



I remember quite recently that our money that was given to us for research, the government wanted to put a stop to it and use it for another purpose. This is creating the confrontations between us and the government (Participant 5, Female).

It can therefore be concluded based on the above quotes that books and research allowances are a contributing factor to strike action in Ghanaian public universities. The results of this study reaffirmed the results of the quantitative study, as the majority agreed that books and research allowances are also a factor contributing to strike action in public universities in Ghana.

#### **6.4.1.4 The introduction of the new pay policy (single spine salary structure)**

It was found that the challenges associated with the implementation of the new pay policy in Ghana is a contributing factor to strike action in public universities in the country. With reference to the interviews, most ( $n = 4$ ) of the participants recommended that the poor implementation of the new pay policy is a factor causing strike action in public universities. Below were some few quotes which supported this finding:

Though the new pay policy improves the lot of lecturers, the challenges associated with its implementation is a factor that has been contributing to strikes. For instance most of our colleagues were not migrated into the new policy on time (Participant 7, Male).

To me, the poor implementation of the new pay policy has contributed to more than 50% of the strikes in the universities. Government should have studied the recommendations very well before implementing the policy (Participant 2, Male).

It is a nice move by the government to bring the new pay policy on board all the same but it has its own challenges with regards to its implementation. This is what we have to be looking at because as I speak now as some people have not been migrated into the new scheme. Some people too have not received their previous pay before they were moved into the new scheme (Participant 1, Male).

However, a few ( $n = 2$ ) of the participants expressed the view that the introduction of the new pay policy is not a contributing factor to strikes in the public universities. They argued that the new pay policy rather improved the lives of workers in the country. Here was an illustrative voice which supported this argument:

When you look at the strike generally in Ghana, it is only a few people that have engaged in it. I think the new pay policy has come to harmonise the working environment (Participant 8, Male).

Despite the disagreement, the majority of the respondents were in agreement that the introduction of the new pay policy is a cause of strike action in public universities. The results of this study also conformed to the quantitative results, as most of the participants agreed that the introduction of the new pay policy contributes to strike action in public universities.

#### **6.4.1.5 Funding constraints**

Inadequate funding was found to be another cause of strike action in public universities in Ghana. From the interviews, the majority ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants cited lack of funding as one of the causes of strike action in public universities. The following were some quotes to this effect:

I think we are joking in this country when it comes to running of the universities. Once the universities are public there is the need for the government to support them in terms of funding. The bigger problem in this country is that the government does not care about providing funding for the universities. The question is how we can develop with this attitude of the government (Participant 5, Female).

Our universities are underfunded and this creates more avenues for strikes to occur because nothing can work properly if there are no funds. I can tell you back in my school in the USA there is enough funding for most students. We have no reason to complain that the country has no more to fund the universities (Participant 2, Male).

How can the government keep on telling us that there is no money to provide funding for the universities? How many public universities at all are in the country that the government can't provide funds for them? This is a serious issue in our universities. We are not only fighting for our pockets but we are also concerned about the future of our children (Participant 4, Male).

It can therefore be concluded that inadequate funding is one of the causes of strike action in the public universities in Ghana. The results of this study reaffirmed the quantitative results as mentioned above.

#### **6.4.1.6 Mismanagement of the economy**

Mismanagement of the economy was found to be one of the causes of strike action not only in Ghanaian public universities but in the country as a whole. The majority ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants expressed the view that the frequent strike action in the country over the years was as a result of the mismanagement of the country's resources by politicians. Below were some illustrative voices or quotes which supported this finding:

Sometimes people think that anytime we embark on a strike it is because of salaries but one important national issue is that when the economy is not performing well it affects everybody not only lecturers. At times our people embark on strikes or protest action in order to draw government attention to the fact that the economy is not doing well (Participant 4, Male).

Everything in this country depends on how the economy is doing. Like any other institution in the country, we have the right to strike. Therefore, if we realised that the government is not managing the economy well we do protest in the form of strike action (Participant 5, Female).

I think once in a while our strike action in the country has something to do with how the economy is being managed. Last year for instance, UTAG went on strike to send a strong signal to the government about the mismanagement of the country's resources. People are suffering due to mismanagement of the economy so government needs to sit up (Participant 1, Male).

Based on the above illustrative voices, one will draw the general conclusion that the mismanagement of the country's resources is a factor contributing to strike action in public universities in Ghana. The researcher's opinion here is that the growth of every nation to some extent depends on how well the country's resources are managed. For instance when the resources are misused or mismanaged it affects the country's economy. Therefore, the citizens have the right to strike as a form of putting the government on its toes. The comparison of the results of both studies (qualitative and quantitative research) suggested that the qualitative results reaffirmed the results of the quantitative study.

#### **6.4.1.7 Delay in payment of wages and salaries**

It was also found that delay in payment of wages and salaries of lecturers is also a cause of strike action in public universities. Based on the interviews, most ( $n = 4$ ) of the participants recommended that delay in payment of wages and salaries is among the numerous causes of strike actions in Ghanaian public universities. Here were some quotes in this regard:

I think there is no timely payment of back pay and this is a factor that sometimes contributes to strikes (Participant 6, Male).

There is always a delay in payment of our wages and salaries. As I speak with you now I have not yet received my salary from last month and this month is almost ending yet there is no show. Most of our colleagues too, their salaries were in arrears (Participant 4, Male).

Though it is not a major problem but at times our pay is delayed from the Accountant General Department. Well, the problem has improved in the last few years unlike the 90s where people have to wait for the whole year to be paid. The delay in payment is not only in the universities but rather I will say that it is a nationwide problem (Participant 1, Male).

It can be deduced that delay in payment of wages and salaries for universities' staff is a cause of strike action in the country. This finding also supported the findings of the quantitative study as the majority of the participants agreed with the researcher that delay in payment of wages and salaries is among the factors responsible for strike action in Ghanaian public universities.

#### **6.4.2 Non-economic factors responsible for strike action in the public universities**

As part of the interviews, non-financial factors such as improper handling of employee grievances, mistrust, unfulfilled promises by the government, bad policies and poor employee relations were identified as non-financial factors that contribute to strike action in Ghanaian public universities. These findings were discussed below.

##### **6.4.2.1 Improper handling of employee grievances**

The study found that improper handling of employee grievances is one of the causes of strike action in Ghanaian public universities. From the interviews, the majority ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants

recommended how improper handling of grievances has contributed to strike action in the public universities over the years. Here were some quotes in this regard:

I think that the problem of not handling employee grievances well does not occur only at UPSA but across all the public universities in the country. At times, it is difficult for both the union leaders and government to reach consensus on certain issues. Generally, I will say that when issues are given serious attention it ends there but when they are not treated with seriousness they continue to exist. What I wanted to say is that most grievances are not handled by the parties (Participant 7, Male).

In fact, it is very true that most of the strike action that took place were as a result of unresolved grievances. Government does ignore issues raised by the trade union and this sometimes contributes to general strike action in the universities (Participant 2, Male).

I am sure that if employee grievances were to be handled well they will not have gone on strike. Sometimes the government is unable to adequately deal with employee grievances. The mechanisms through which the employee grievances are resolved to me is not working. We have weak institutions that address workers' concerns (Participant 4, Male).

It can be deduced from the proceeding illustrative voices that improper handling of employee grievances is a factor contributing to strike action in public universities in Ghana. The results of the study also agreed with the quantitative results as indicated in chapter five.

#### **6.4.2.2 Mistrust**

Mistrust was found to be another factor responsible for strike action in Ghanaian public universities. The majority ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants expressed the view that mistrust among the parties is a common factor contributing to strike action in public universities in Ghana. Below were some illustrative voices to this effect:

Usually, just like any normal relationship once there is conflict it becomes a big responsibility for the parties to make sure that the relationship from then on works because of the broken trust. It takes maturity from the organisation to ensure that there is harmony. I think one of the biggest problems is that strikes do occur because of mistrust (Participant 3, Male).

Trust is a big thing and once such trust is broken it creates problems. Most of the strike action that took place before also has something to do with lack of trust among the parties. It is very difficult to trust the government these days because it is not living up to our expectations (Participant 8, Male).

The issue of deception among the parties is something that is creating tension in the universities because the parties themselves do not trust each other. Trust is a big question (Participant 1, Male).

With reference to the above quotes, it can be concluded that strike action in the universities in Ghana is caused by mistrust. This finding also supported the quantitative results as mentioned above.

#### **6.4.2.3 Unfulfilled promises by the government**

Unfulfilled promises by the government was found to be another cause of strike action in Ghanaian public universities. The majority ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants indicated that the inability of the government to fulfil or honour its agreements is a major factor which contributes to strike action in the public universities. Below were few quotes in this regard:

I can identify the third one which is related to the top two. Sometimes, agreements are reached on previous negotiations then the government does not honour the agreements so you could say yes, non-fulfilment is a bigger problem in Ghana. Most of the strikes that took place by TAWU and UTAG were centered on non-fulfilment of agreements (Participant 4, Male).

Government inability sometimes to fulfil its agreements with the unions often contributes to most of the strike action that the employees embark on. Sometimes, the promises are not realistic so government is not able to fulfil such promises. Government should be honest enough to come up with realistic agreements that will be feasible (Participant 1, Male).

I personally think that most times government is not able to fulfil all its promises (Participant 5, Female).

From the above quotes, it became clear that failure by government to honour promises or agreements is a cause of strike action in public universities. The results of this study also conformed to the quantitative results as presented above.

#### **6.4.2.4 Bad policies**

It was discovered that bad policies in the country is another factor responsible for strike action in the Ghanaian public universities. Most ( $n = 4$ ) of the participants have expressed the view that bad policies by the government is a contributing factor to strike action. Below were some quotes in this regard:

Bad government policies imposed on the universities usually creates tension and misunderstanding. We are not autonomous so government does interfere with policies that are not in good direction (Participant 3, Male).

I can identify another non-economic factor which is bad policies. The fact is that we are part of the bigger society so we can protest if certain policies that are implemented are not in the best interest of the country. For instance, when you take a look at the policy on the new research fund you will notice that it is not in favour of most lecturers. We can no longer buy books from the new research fund if implemented. You see this is the problem (Participant 4, Male).

Yes, I will agree with you that bad policies can be a factor. Institutions are run based on sound policies. I will not say that all the policies in this university are bad but a few of them need serious scrutiny. In the past our staff went on strike before because of some bad policies that the government tried to impose on universities in the country. Even recently, the government wanted all universities in the country to pay an electricity tariff (Participant 8, Male).

It can be concluded that bad policies in Ghana is another cause of strike action in public universities in the country. The results of this study also agreed with the quantitative results.

#### **6.4.2.5 Poor employment relationship**

The study identified poor employment relationship among the parties in Ghanaian public universities as another factor which is responsible for strike action. Most ( $n = 4$ ) of the participants

have suggested that poor employment relationship has contributed to several strike actions in the universities in the last decades. The following were some illustrative voices which supported this finding:

Usually, when there is problem with regards to relationship it tends to create more problems which can lead to strike action. Universities just like any normal organisation will have some sort of problem regarding how people are mismanaged. Some parties may be treated well while others may not. The problem is not between us and government but with some other colleagues in the universities (Participant 3, Male).

Yes, it does. Relationship is very important in every organisation like you rightly said. We belong to different groups in this university. In this university, there are a number of issues that usually crop up between management and we the staff. Relationship problem is one issue that sometimes brings conflict between us. I can say that some of the strikes were as a result of relationship problem (Participants 7, Male).

From the quotes above, it can be deduced that poor employment relations is a factor contributing to strike action in public universities in Ghana. The results of the study reaffirmed the results of the quantitative study.

## **6.5 Section E: Factors that contribute to sound employment relations**

The fourth objective of this study was to identify factors that promote sound employment relations in the public universities in Ghana. Using the thematic analysis, two main broad themes (financial and non-financial factors) were identified as factors that promote sound employment relations. The financial factors were first presented followed by the non-financial factors.

### **6.5.1 Financial factors that promote sound employment relations**

The study identified two main financial factors that promote sound employment relations in public universities. These factors include remuneration and working conditions.



### **6.5.1.1 Remuneration**

The study found that remuneration is a major financial factor that contributes to promoting sound employment relations in the workplace. With reference to the interviews, the majority ( $n = 6$ ) of the participants expressed the view that remuneration is an important factor in promoting sound employment relations. The following were some quotes which supported this finding:

I think remuneration helps in building good relations but I will give remuneration 40% and give the rest of the 60% to how grievances and complaints are handled. If I feel that there is an opportunity to approach the immediate supervisor I can approach the Dean. If I am concerned about something that has to do with the academic board I can approach the Dean and the Dean can carry that out on my behalf (Participant 4, Male).

Remuneration is key to ensure that people are happy within the organisation. When people are paid well they become happy. You know that money is not everything but personally I think that when people are well paid they may feel that they belong to the organisation (Participant 1, Male).

I will say yes adequate remuneration promotes good employment relations. I think aside from the remuneration there are other factors that equally contribute to promoting sound employment relations. Yes, I think allowances need to be improved (Participant 5, Female).

From the above opinions, it can be deduced that remuneration is one of the financial factors that promotes sound employment relations in the workplace. This finding was also in line with the quantitative study, as the majority agreed that adequate remuneration promotes sound employment relations.

### **6.5.1.2 Better working conditions**

Under the financial factors, the issue of better working conditions was identified as another factor which contributes to good employer-employee relations in the workplace. Most ( $n = 6$ ) of the participants indicated that improvement in working conditions contributes to the promotion of sound employment relations. The following were some few illustrative voices in this regard:

I am of the strong conviction that aside from the remuneration, government ought to improve the working conditions of lecturers. When the working condition is good people

will be happy and this can create some kind of healthy relationship in the institutions (Participant 5, Female).

At times some of the strike actions were not directly linked to the salaries alone but they also have something to do with conditions of work. If we really want to promote sound employment relations then we must take a critical look at the working conditions of lecturers. Working condition is a whole package on its own. For example we have allowances, pension fund, benefits, and emoluments as part of the working condition. Therefore, improvement of these packages will enhance good relations in the workplace (Participant 7, Male).

I think government must take a look at the working conditions of the category of people working in the universities, not only lecturers. Improvement in working conditions will promote satisfaction among our colleagues and I am sure that this will go a long way to promote good relations. The working conditions should include pension, allowance and other benefits (Participant 6, Male).

The illustrative voices above suggested that improved working conditions promotes sound employment relations in public universities in Ghana. This finding also reaffirmed the results of the quantitative study.

## **6.5.2 Non-financial factors that promote sound employment relations**

Using the thematic analysis, several factors were identified under the non-financial factors as responsible for the promotion of sound employment relations. These factors include trust, conflict resolution mechanisms, mutual accommodation, collective bargaining, communication and opportunity for growth. The findings are presented below.

### **6.5.2.1 Trust**

It was found that trust is one of the main non-financial factors that promote sound employment relations in the organisation. The majority ( $n = 6$ ) of the participants expressed the view that trust is very important in promoting sound employment relations. Here were some quotes which supported this finding:

I think trust is critical. There is often a lot of mistrust between government on one hand, management on another hand and lecturers on another hand. So often you may find that lecturers are not satisfied about their conditions they may decide to go on strike. Being a public university, government is strongly represented by management if you look at our governing council. GIMPA for instance, the rector is appointed by the President. The rector for instance is a member of the governing council as well as a member of staff so you will find out that if staff put up a case against the rector the rector is torn between the council, government and staff and he must take a stand. Then they may feel that either the rector is not representing their views correctly or he is siding with the council because his turn of office is there. If the staff want the rector out, the political appointee being the presidency, can overrule that decision. We need people that can be trusted (Participant 4, Male).

You have to trust people to do what they are supposed to do and they have to also trust you in your objective assessment and expectations (Participant 7, Male).

Government must create space for trust in the system. When there is trust there will be industrial harmony (Participant 3, Male).

Trust is a key issue in every relationship. People must learn to trust one another and there must be transparency in the system as well (Participant 2, Male).

It can therefore be concluded that trust is one of the key factors that promotes good employer-employee relationship in public universities in Ghana. The results of this study also conformed to the quantitative study.

#### **6.5.2.2 Proactive management of disputes**

It was discovered that proactive management of disputes is one of the key factors that promotes harmonious relationship in the workplace. Based on the interviews, most ( $n = 4$ ) of the participants have recommended that proactive management of disputes is necessary in order to promote sound employment relations. The following were some quotes to this effect:

Early problems can be better managed rather than allowing them to reach a level where they cannot be handled. There must be systems in place to resolve conflicts in the universities as early as possible (Participant 3, Male).

I am of the opinion that a strong dispute resolution process in the organisation will contribute to promoting good relationship (Participant 7, Male).

Have early warning systems that will detect disputes or conflicts that are likely to affect the relationship in the organisation. Also, have good mechanisms in place to effectively address the disputes that were identified (Participant 6, Male).

From the illustrative voices, proactive management of disputes was found as an important factor which helps in building sound employment relations in the workplace. This finding also reaffirmed the results of the quantitative findings since the majority agreed that proactive management of conflict promotes sound employment relations.

### **6.5.2.3 Mutual accommodation**

Furthermore, the study found that mutual accommodation is a key factor that ensures good employment relations in the workplace. With reference to the interviews, most ( $n = 4$ ) of the participants expressed the opinion that mutual accommodation is important in promoting good employer-employee relationship. The following were some quotes in this regard:

The ability of the parties to accommodate each other will also serve as a tool that will contribute to promoting sound employment relations. We need to accommodate each other. People must learn to work with one another (Participant 7, Male).

When you make people feel comfortable in the organisation it tends to promote good employer-employee relationship. Reasonable accommodation will be important in doing this. Employers need to create a system that will accommodate everyone working under them (Participant 4, Male.).

We need to accommodate each other from diverse backgrounds. The organisation is a microcosm of people from different backgrounds therefore mutual accommodation will help create harmonious working relations (Participant 1, Male).

Based on the above quotes, it can be deduced that mutual accommodation of people in the workplace promotes sound employment relations. This finding also complemented the results of the quantitative, as the majority were recommended that mutual accommodation is important in promoting sound employment relations in the workplace.

#### **6.5.2.4 Collective bargaining or agreements**

The study revealed that collective bargaining or agreement is another important factor which promotes harmonious relationship in the workplace. Most ( $n = 4$ ) of the participants cited various reasons why collective bargaining is important in promoting sound employment relations in the workplace. The following were some quotes which supported this finding:

I will say again that transparency in dialogue and negotiation will also ensure good employment relations. People must learn to bargain in good faith and with a clear conscience. We must bargain for what is just and equitable (Participant 6, Male).

Collective bargaining is very important in ensuring a harmonious workplace. I will score collective bargaining higher among all the factors of ensuring industrial harmony. If you look at most of the issues in every organisation they are centered on a collective bargaining agreement. Therefore, having a good collective agreement will help to promote good employment relationship in the workplace (Participant 8, Male).

People should be able to dialogue to reach mutual agreement. We must bargain very well with honesty. There must also be a mechanism that will guide people when bargaining (Participant 1, Male).

From the above quotes, it can be deduced that collective bargaining or agreement is key in promoting sound employment relations in the workplace. The results of this study were also in line with the results of the quantitative study, as the majority agreed that collective bargaining promotes sound employment relations.

#### **6.5.2.5 Communication**

In addition to the above, communication was found to be another important factor which promotes sound employment relations in the workplace. Based on the interviews, the majority ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants expressed the view that communication is vital in promoting good industrial harmony. The following were some illustrative voices or quotes in this regard:

Yes, communication is important in ensuring good relationship. Good communication which emanates from both sides is very important in promoting good employer-employee relationship in the workplace (Participant 6, Male).

The key is communication. Having regular interaction with stakeholders to explain what the situation is like, the challenges being faced by management and employees' expectations and to see if there is any misunderstanding; they are able to talk to them concretely and frankly (Participant 3, Male).

Yes, anywhere that there are human beings communication is very vital. We need communication to express our views and opinions. How can we work in this institution when there are no communication mechanisms? Our everyday activities here in this university are characterised by communication. We need communication to move forward as an institution (Participant 5, Female).

The above quotes suggested that communication is key in promoting sound employment relations in the workplace. This finding also supported the results of the quantitative study, as most of the participants acknowledged the fact that communication is important in ensuring sound employment relations.

#### **6.5.2.6 Opportunity for growth and promotion**

The study also found that the opportunity for growth and promotion are other factors that create sound employment relations in the workplace. With reference to the interviews, most (n = 4) of the respondents expressed the view that the opportunity for growth and promotion are important factors that create good employer-employee relations. Here were some few illustrative voices which supported this finding:

The last one is related to capacity building and opportunity for further study. I am studying in a South African university. Legon insists that you must have a PhD before you can teach but Legon does not offer you a scholarship to study for your PhD at Legon. If they did that, when I was working at University of Western Cape, I started my PhD because I was a staff member and in UWC the university gains. So if you have the feeling that the university is interested in you and it wants to invest in you it will help a lot (Participant 4, Male).

I have heard from our other colleagues that you are asked to teach a subject that you are not well versed in. You don't get any support from the university. I think if we get that support from our employer it will help (Participant 7, Male).

I will recommend that there should be clear guidelines for promotion and growth in the universities. Necessary supports must be provided to people who are willing to advance their careers (Participant 8, Male).

From the illustrative voices, it can be deduced that opportunity for growth and promotion are key factors that promote sound employment relations. This finding was not related to the quantitative study. It's a new finding that emerged from the qualitative study.

## **6.6 Section F: Addressing strike action in the public universities in Ghana**

The last objective of this study was to identify the measures that will help address strike action in Ghanaian public universities. Using the thematic analysis, financial and non-financial factors were identified in addressing the phenomenon of strike action in Ghanaian public universities. The section began with the financial factors, which was then followed by the non-financial factors.

### **6.6.1 Financial factors that help to address strike action in the Ghanaian public universities**

Under this theme, several sub-themes were identified as measures that will help in addressing strike action in public universities. These financial factors include adequate wages and salaries, working conditions and books and research allowances. These factors were presented below.

#### **6.6.1.1 Adequate wages and salaries**

The study identifies that adequate wages and salaries is an important measure which will help in addressing strike action in Ghanaian public universities. With reference to the interviews, the overwhelming majority ( $n = 7$ ) of the participants recommended that adequate and better wages and salaries is key in addressing strike action in the universities. The following were some quotes which supported this finding:

Inadequate wages and salaries are causal factors that contribute to strike action in our public universities. I will personally recommend that the government or the rector will announce that something is added to the salaries of the employees (Participant 4, Male).

Salaries and wages are non-negotiable. Government should address the concern of lecturers by taking a look at what the lecturers are receiving and what their demands are (Participant 6, Male).

When you compare our system to other advanced countries like USA, Canada, and UK you will notice that most strike actions are not centered on wages and salaries. But in our country inadequate salaries and wages is the main problem. Money is the main priority, therefore government must ensure that the staff are well paid (Participant 7, Male).

It is the expectation of every worker to be paid well so I think government should ensure that people are given adequate wages and salaries in relation to the work they perform. Lecturers deserve better than this (Participant 3, Male).

From the quotes above, it can be concluded that adequate wages and salaries is an important measure of addressing strike action in public universities in Ghana. This finding reaffirmed the results of the quantitative study which revealed that the majority of the participants agreed that wages and salaries is important in addressing strike action in the universities.

#### **6.6.1.2 Improvement in working conditions**

It was found that improvement in working conditions is another measure that will help to minimise the frequent occurrence of strike action in public universities in Ghana. Based on the interviews, the majority ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants suggested that improvement in working conditions in the university is key to addressing strike action. Below were some quotes in this regard:

Everybody is aware that working conditions are very important in any establishment so as it is in the public universities. My recommendation will be that if the working conditions of the staff are improved it will help in addressing agitations among staff (Participant 8, Male).

Yes, I strongly agree that the working conditions of the lecturers must be improved. The whole issue of strike action in the county has to do with the condition of work. So until this is addressed the workers will continue to press home their demand by engaging in strike action (Participant 5, Female).



I think government must look at the overall working conditions of the category of people working in the universities, not only lecturers. Working condition is part of the contract so it must be revisited (Participant 6, Male).

Based on the above quotes, it can be deduced that improvement in working conditions is an important mechanism of addressing strike action in the public universities in Ghana. The results were supported by the quantitative results which revealed that the majority of the participants agreed that working conditions help in addressing strike action in the universities.

### **6.6.1.3 Restoring books and research allowances**

The results of the study revealed that books and research allowances are also important in addressing strike action in public universities. With regards to the interviews, the majority ( $n = 7$ ) of the participants recommended that their books and research allowances must be restored to avoid further strike action in the universities. The following were some illustrative voices which supported this finding:

Aside wages and salaries, allowances are also important in order to avoid future strikes in the country. Government needs to restore the books and research allowances for our lecturers (Participant 7, Male).

I think apart from wages and salaries, government must be in a better position to pay allowances of lecturers. These are part of the conditions of work so they are also important (Participant 5, Female).

My greatest joy will be if the research and book allowances are restored. Government ought to bring back the books and research allowances which are part of the condition of service for lecturers. How can they buy books and do research when there is no such allowances? (Participants 4, Male).

I will suggest that government must reverse the old books and research allowances because it is very key in ensuring that lecturers have money to buy books and pay for their publications. You can't expect any lecturer to publish when there are no funds to support him or her (Participant 1, Male).

From above quotes, it can therefore be concluded that books and research allowances for the lecturers in the public universities in Ghana must be restored in order to minimise strike action. This findings also reaffirmed the results of the quantitative study where the majority have agreed to the fact that the books and research allowances that were scraped must be restored.

### **6.6.2 Non-financial factors that help address strike action**

Under this theme, different sub-themes were identified as measures that will help to address the phenomenon of strike action in Ghanaian public universities. These non-financial measures include conducive working environment, collective bargaining (good negotiation skills), fulfilment of promises by the government, proactive management of disputes and mutual respect.

#### **6.6.2.1 Conducive working environment**

It was found that a conducive working environment is one of the measures that contributes to addressing strike action in public universities in Ghana. The majority ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants strongly recommended that a conducive working environment in the public universities is necessary to avert future strike action. Here were some of the quotes which supported this finding:

Government can create a very conducive working environment for workers where every worker is very comfortable by way of the tools and facilities that he/she works under. We heard recently that National Association of Registered Teachers were issuing a threat that they were going to embark on strikes because the feeding allowances that have been in arrears for some time now have not been paid. Government is trying as much as possible to ensure that salaries are paid every month so what is left now is the other tools and facilities. It is not only about salaries but the working environment must be conducive. I wouldn't sit here and feel comfortable if I don't have a basic computer to work on; that means that I will sit down here without doing anything and take my salary at the end of the month. Tools, facilities which facilitate the work, must be provided and once these are provided workers will feel comfortable at work and there will be no issue of we don't have this or that. Mostly, the strikes people embark on are not what they receive at the end of the month, it is about either wanting enhancement or they think that their colleagues somewhere who have the same qualification take home more than him or her or therefore they want parity or equity (Participant 8, Male).

Yes, one cannot ignore the contribution of a good working environment in addressing strike action. Aside from remuneration and condition of work, I think that a conducive working environment is also important. Money alone cannot give you total satisfaction. You need some comfort as well when you are working. Imagine that in this office there is no air-conditioner and computer, how can I work? One needs all these facilities to enable him to work. So I will agree with you that a conducive working environment is a key factor in addressing strikes in the universities (Participant 4, Male).

Creating an enabling working environment is important in every country because it promotes peaceful working relations. In this regard, when there is a peaceful atmosphere in the universities it will help in addressing what we called industrial actions. We need facilities and tools that will enable us to work (Participant 6, Male).

It can therefore be deduced that a conducive working environment is one of the measures that can be used to address strike action in public universities. The results of this study also supported the results of the quantitative study as mentioned above.

#### **6.6.2.2 Collective bargaining or agreements**

Based on the interviews, it was found that collective bargaining is one of the key measures that helps in addressing strike action not only in the public universities but in every organisation. The majority ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants recommended that collective bargaining or agreements is an important tool which will help address the phenomenon of strike action in public universities. The following were some of the quotes which supported this finding:

Sometimes when there is problem, the employer and employees have to choose a negotiation team. Sometimes these people do not go there to negotiate on their own. They need to have people with good negotiation skills who can negotiate on their behalf (Participant 8, Male).

My sincere recommendation is that parties must negotiate in good faith in order to forestall any industrial action. Our leaders must be in a better position to negotiate on behalf of all members of the teachers' association (Participant 5, Female).

I am of the view that an effective collective agreement is an important tool that can be used to address employee issues that are likely to result in strike action. All that is needed is that parties should come to the negotiation table with and negotiate for what is just or equitable. We should avoid asking too much that cannot be afforded. Make your demands very simple for the other parties (Participant 7, Male).

Government must try as much as possible to ensure that there is good negotiation. The parties must utilise the collective bargaining process to resolve whatever difficulties they have. Have some sort of good collect agreement that addresses the key issues raised by the staff. (Participant 1, Male).

From the preceding quotes, it can be argued that collective bargaining or agreements is an important tool which helps in addressing strike action in public universities. The results of this study also conformed to the results of the quantitative study.

### **6.6.2.3 Fulfilment of promises**

The study also found that government's ability to honour its promises or agreements is a measure which contributes to addressing strike action in public universities. With regards to the interviews, most ( $n = 4$ ) of the participants recommended that government must fulfil its promises or agreements that were made in order to avoid or reduce strike action in universities. The following were some of the quotes which supported this evidence:

Yes, it is important for one to make sure that he or she fulfils the promises that were made. If you take a critical look at the issues surrounding strikes in the universities, government's inability to fulfil its promises is one of them. Therefore, in trying to avoid these strikes, I think government must make realistic promises that can be fulfilled. You don't make promises that you think cannot be fulfilled (Participant 3, Male).

Agreements are very important in all employment relations. The whole employment relations is based on agreement. Most of these strike actions you often hear were about the non-fulfilment of the agreement between government and lecturers. So if we want to avoid future strikes in the universities then government must learn to fulfil its part of the previous agreements that were made (Participant 6, Male).

Government must also try to make promises that can be fulfilled. Promises are meant to be fulfilled therefore it should make it a point to fulfil its promises. Government should learn to be truthful to the people. It must keep its promises (Participant 1, Male).

It can be concluded based on the above quotes that honouring promises or agreement by the government is one measure that can help in addressing strike action in Ghanaian public universities. The results of this study also reaffirmed the results of the quantitative study, as the majority were in agreement that government must honour its promises made to the staff of public universities in the country so as to avoid strike action.

#### **6.6.2.4 Proactive management of disputes**

In addition to the above, the study found that proactive management of disputes is another measure that will help in addressing strike action in the universities. With reference to the interviews, the majority ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants indicated that proactive management of disputes or conflicts will help in addressing strike action in public universities. Below were some of the illustrative voices which supported this finding:

My strongest recommendation will be to have a sort of early warning system to detect employee grievances. When the problems are detected at an early stage it is easier to deal with them. Therefore, I will personally say that there must be effective dispute resolution mechanisms in place to address the concerns of lecturers in order to avoid strikes in the universities (Participant 4, Male).

There must be conflict resolution systems in place to address challenges when expectations are not met. A strong conflict resolution mechanism will do because this will help to address issues that are likely to result in a strike. We all know that their grievances or expectations are not addressed properly. So what I will recommend is that they have some sort of early warning approach that will assist in identifying employees' grievances that need urgent attention (Participant 3, Male).

Yes, I agree that there must be proactive mechanisms in place to address employee grievances. The greatest concern here is that early problems are easier to be resolved than leaving them to escalate. Immediate steps must be taken in resolving workers' concerns if

only we want to avoid industrial action in universities. There is no problem without a solution. Normally, the employees are forced to declare a strike when their concerns have not been addressed. Therefore, what I will rather suggest is that there must be systems in place that will deal with the effective resolution of disputes across all the universities in the country (Participant 1, Male).

From the above quotes, it can be deduced that proactive management of disputes is one of the measures that will help to address strike action in public universities in Ghana. The results of this study reaffirmed the results of the quantitative study where the majority of the respondents were in agreement that proactive management of disputes is an important tool that will help in addressing strike action in public universities.

#### **6.6.2.5 Mutual respect**

The study found that mutual respect among parties is an important measure of addressing strike action in public universities in Ghana. Based on the interviews, the majority ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants recommended that mutual respect is one of the measures that help to address strike action in the universities. The following were some illustrative voices in this regard:

There must be mutual respect for one another in the universities. The parties must learn to treat each other with maximum respect. Where there is respect, there is total peace. Therefore, once the parties learn to respect each other's' views there will be low possibility of strike action (Participant 6, Male).

Like it has been said, respect is reciprocal. You must learn to respect you subordinate and he or she must also learn to respect you. I mean the government must learn to respect the view of the staff and the staff must also do the same. You see when they learn to respect each other's' views I don't think there will be dispute that will lead to strike action. You should note that usually these people go on strike if their views have not be respected or addressed by the government (Participant 5, Female).

I will add the third measure to the above which is respect for one another. Have the respect for those working under you and they will also respect you back. My sincere recommendation will be that both management and staff must always respect one another

with respect to issues that relate to the employment contract. Therefore, once there is mutual respect there will be low possibility of strike action (Participants 4, Male).

Based on the illustrative voices above, it can be concluded that mutual respect among the parties to the employment relations or stakeholders is an important measure which will assist in addressing strike action in public universities in Ghana.

## **6.7 Conclusion**

This chapter presented the results of the qualitative study in relation to all the objectives as outlined in chapter one. The results of the effects of strike action on employment relations were first presented, thereafter followed by the results of the impact of strike action on the public universities and the country as a whole. In addition, the chapter gave an account of the results pertaining to the causes of strike action in Ghanaian public universities. Furthermore, it presented the results on the factors that promote sound employment relations in the workplace. Finally, it gave a full account of the results regarding how strike action can be addressed in public universities in Ghana.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### DISCUSSION OF THE QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

#### 7.1 Introduction

The chapter five and six presented the results of both the quantitative and qualitative study. This chapter discussed the findings that were obtained from both studies in line with the objectives. The purpose of discussing the findings is to find out whether they agree or disagree with previous studies or findings. The chapter commenced with the discussion of the findings relating to the impact of strike action on employment relations. The next section discussed the findings of the impact of strike action on the public universities and the country as a whole. It further proceeded to provide full discussion on the causes of strike action in Ghanaian public universities. In addition, it presented the discussion of the factors that promote sound employment relations in the workplace. Lastly, the chapter gave an account of the discussion of the findings regarding the measures to address strike action in Ghanaian public universities.

#### 7.2 Objective one: Impact of strike action on employment relations

The overarching aim of this study was to investigate the extent to which employee strike action in Ghanaian public universities affects the employment relations. The results of both studies revealed that there are several ways in which strike action impacts on the employment relations.

The following are the discussion of the results of the study.

##### 7.2.1 Dismissal of employees

The quantitative results found that strike action does not lead to the dismissal of employees while the qualitative results also found that strike action may constitute the dismissal of employees. Based on the quantitative results, the majority (68%) of the participants disagreed that strike action contributes to the dismissal of employees. The sample t-test also confirmed that there was significant disagreement that employees were dismissed due to strikes ( $M = 2.21$ ,  $SD = 1.211$ ),  $t(198) = -9.246$ ,  $p > .0005$ ). However, in the case of the qualitative results, the majority ( $n = 6$ ) of the participants expressed the view that the employer has the right to dismiss the employees for their participation in strike action. With regards to both findings, it appears that the employees who



participated in the quantitative study were looking at protected strikes while management who took part in the qualitative study also focused their attention on unprotected strikes in relation to employee dismissal. One will also argue that the differences in both results could be as a result of a power struggle between the employees and management in the universities. One will also argue that the contradiction of the results could be as a result of lack of knowledge on the law that guide strike action.

The quantitative results of this current study agreed with the findings of previous studies (Bendix, 2015; Venter & Levy, 2014). Bendix (2015) argues that participation in a lawful strike does not constitute dismissal of the strikers. According to Bendix (2015), participation in a lawful strike does not amount to breach of contract and as such employees cannot be dismissed. However, the author recommends that the employee can be dismissed for being guilty of offences namely: intimidation, assault, damage to the employer's property while taking part in the strike action. Venter and Levy (2014) also support the view that the striking employees are granted the immunity by the LRA against dismissal when they take part in a protected strike.

The qualitative results also agree with the findings of previous studies or research (Arshad & Nadeem, 2012; Ige Akindele, 2014; Majokweni, 2013) as discussed in chapter three. Majokweni (2013) discovered that although the ILO Conventions and other laws permit industrial action or strikes, the employer can dismiss the strikers when the strike is unprotected. A study conducted by Arshad and Nadeem (2012) revealed that in 2005, more than 31,000 employees were dismissed for union activities in United States of America. According to Ige Akindele (2014), in 1985, management of the University of Benin dismissed a former president of ASUU due to his active role in the strike at the university. Also, forty nine (49) academic staff of University of Ilorin, Nigeria, were dismissed in 2001 for their involvement in a nationwide strike.

### **7.2.2 Retrenchment of employees**

With reference to retrenchment, the results of both studies revealed that the employer cannot retrench employees due to their participation in strike action. Based on the quantitative study, the majority (70.5%) of the participants disagreed to the fact that striking employees could be retrenched for their participation in strike action. The sample t-test revealed that there was significant disagreement that employees strike action contributed to retrenchment of employees

( $M = 2.27$ ,  $SD = 1.206$ ),  $t(199) = -8.561$ ,  $p > .0005$ ). The qualitative results on the other hand revealed that the majority ( $n = 7$ ) of the participants expressed the view that strike action may not constitute a valid reason for the retrenchment of employees. The results of this present study contradict the findings of previous studies that were conducted by researchers (Maunganidze *et al.*, 2013; Seniwoliba, 2013).

Seniwoliba (2013) discovered that a group of teachers were trenched in Ghana for reasons related to an unprotected strike in 1998. Seniwoliba (2013) posits that a group of teachers went on an indefinite strike in demand for better conditions of work. Although the strike was illegal or unprotected, the government was willing to negotiate with them if only they could return to the classrooms. Seniwoliba (2013) argues that the teachers refused to return to the classrooms for the negotiation to take place. Subsequently, the government has to close down many of the schools because the teachers' demands were outrageous and government could not meet them. During that year, the government embarked on a redundancy exercise which led to approximately 5000 teachers being loaded off across the ten regions of Ghana.

Similarly, Maunganidze *et al.* (2013) found that when strike action affects business operation the employer may decide to cut down cost and one way of doing that is through retrenchment.

Maunganidze *et al.* (2013, p.293) discovered that the “Ugandan retrenchment exercise was as a result of frequent strikes and this has contributed to loss of skills, energy, morale, commitment, physical and mental health degradation that resulted from employees withdrawing physically and emotionally.”

### **7.2.3 Loss of remuneration**

In relation to the results of both studies, the quantitative results show that employee strike action may not contribute to loss of remuneration, while the qualitative results revealed that employee strikes may lead to loss of remuneration. The study found that the majority (67.5%) of the participants disagreed that strike action may contribute to loss of remuneration of the strikers. With regards to the results of the sample t-test, there was significant disagreement that employee strike action led to the loss of remuneration of the employees ( $M = 2.31$ ,  $SD = 1.109$ ),  $t(199) = -8.798$ ,  $p > .0005$ ). However, in the case of the qualitative study, the majority ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants expressed the view that strike action may contribute to loss of remuneration. The differences in

the results could be attributed to lack of knowledge on the part of the participants regarding the provision of the law that regulates strikes and a power struggle within the universities. The quantitative results in this present study disagreed with the findings of previous researchers, while the qualitative results agreed with these researchers (Bendix, 2015; Odeku, 2014; Murwirapachena & Sibanda, 2014; Venter and Levy, 2014).

In his study, Odeku (2014) argues that strikers may lose their salaries or remuneration for the duration in which they were on strike whether the strike is protected or unprotected. According to Odeku (2014), a report by the Department of Labour (DoL) revealed that about R6.6 billion worth of wages were lost due to strike action in 2012. This confirms the provision of the LRA (s67(3)) which states that striking employees may not be entitled to remuneration even if the strike is protected.

Bendix (2015) also recommends that striking employees may forfeit their salaries for the period in which they were on strike. According to Bendix (2015), the employer has the locus or the prerogative right not to remunerate any employee taking part in strike action irrespective of whether the strike is legal or unprotected. The principle of “no work no pay” applies in this situation. However, the author suggests that the employer may not deny the striking employees any payment in kind such as accommodation or other basic amenities.

Venter and Levy (2014) express the view that despite the protection of strikers against civil liability, they are not entitled to salaries or remuneration for services not performed during a protected strike or lockout in terms of s67(3) of the LRA. However, the authors recommend that the loss of remuneration may not include payment in kind, namely accommodation; provision of food and other social or basic amenities. Despite the payment in kind, the employer may initiate civil proceedings against the strikers to recover the monetary value of such basic amenities after the strike.

Murwirapachena and Sibanda (2014) argue that the consequence of strike action is that workers may forfeit their remuneration during the period they participated in the strike whether it is protected or unprotected. In Ghana, s16(4) of the Labour Act, 2003 (No. 651) states that anybody or a worker who participates in an unlawful or unprotected strike may be dismissed for the breach of contract of employment or may forfeit his or her salary during the period of the strike. For

example, in 2006, when members of the Ghana National Association of Graduate Teachers (NAGRAT) went on strike, the government refused to pay them for the period they were on strike (van der Velden, 2012).

#### **7.2.4 Unhealthy relationship**

The results of both studies found that strike action contributes to unhealthy relationship in Ghanaian public universities. The results of the quantitative study revealed that the majority (73.5%) of the participants agreed that strike action contributes to unhealthy relationship. The results of the sample t-test also shown that there was significant agreement that strikes have created unhealthy relationships between employees and management ( $M = 3.73$ ,  $SD = 1.121$ ),  $t(199) = 9.150$ ,  $p < .0005$ ). The qualitative results on the other hand shown that the majority ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants expressed the view that strike action creates unhealthy relationship in the workplace among the parties. The results reaffirmed the findings of previous studies (Arputharaj & Gayatri, 2014; Awe & Ayeni, 2012; Selala, 2014) as discussed in chapter two.

Arputharaj and Gayatri (2014) found that each time employees embark on strike action the trust in the organisation is said to be broken which eventually affects the employment relationship. A similar study conducted by Awe and Ayeni (2012) on the effect of conflicts on employment relations in Nigeria has discovered that strike action has negative implications on employment relations in an organisation. Awe and Ayeni (2012) contend that due to strike action parties could view each other as enemies and this may have a major implication on the employment relationship that exists within the working environment.

Selala (2014) also found that strike action impacts negatively on the employment relationship within the workplace. According to Selala (2014), during strike action there is hostility between employees and the employer because the employer may perceive the employees as opposing his authority. Therefore, this may have the potential of creating unhealthy relationship in the workplace among the parties.

#### **7.2.5 Intimidation and violence**

The results of the quantitative study revealed that strike action contributes to intimidation and violence while in the case of the qualitative study, there is no finding to this effect. With reference

to the results of the quantitative study, the majority (68.5%) of the respondents were in agreement that they experienced some form of intimidation and violence during strike action. Also, the sample t-test indicated that there was also significant agreement that most strikers were intimidated by management because of their involvement in the strike action ( $M = 3.66$ ,  $SD = 1.259$ ),  $t(199) = 7.360$ ,  $p < .0005$ ). However, in the case of the qualitative study, there was no finding to that effect. The results of the quantitative study reaffirmed the findings of previous researchers (Murwirapachena & Sibanda, 2014; Odeku, 2014; Seniwoliba, 2013) as described in chapter two.

Odeku (2014) found that in South Africa, intimidation and violence are common features that often accompany strike action. According to Odeku (2014, p.695), in South Africa, “strike breakers are often intimidated, beaten and sometimes murdered by striking workers.” Labour experts often attribute this phenomenon to the way in which trade unions organised and engaged in collective bargaining especially during the apartheid era.

Murwirapachena and Sibanda (2014) also discovered that intimidation of strike breakers is a common phenomenon in South Africa. The authors found that in the past, strike breakers were severely beaten by their colleagues due to their refusal to take part in ongoing strike action. In addition to this, most strikers have lost their lives and some were also injured due to violence that has characterised many strike actions in South Africa. For example, South African Statistics revealed that about 181 strikers were killed, 313 injured, and over 3,058 arrested during the period of 1999 to 2012 as a result of violent strikes (SAIRR, 2013). The recent example was the Marikana strike which led to the death of approximately 34 people including strikers and the police (Rapatsa & Matloga, 2014).

Seniwoliba (2013) found that most strikers in Ghana were threatened with dismissal, retrenchment and loss of remuneration each time they embarked on strike action irrespective of whether the strike was protected or unprotected. Some strikers were also beaten in the past for their participation in strike action. This situation is common in the public sector. The recent one that took place was in March 2015 where a group of opposition parties went on strike in demand for new voters registering for the upcoming 2016 elections. Consequently, violence broke out between the police personnel and the strikers which led to the injuries of some of the strikers. It was reported that one of the strikers lost one of his eyes.

### **7.2.6 Organisational conflict**

Both studies found that strike action in public universities may further worsen the existing conflict in the workplace. The quantitative results show that the majority (78.5%) of the participants agreed that strike action may worsen existing conflict within the workplace. In the case of the sample t-test, there was also significant agreement that strike action further contributed to conflict within the organisation ( $M = 3.91$ ,  $SD = 1.087$ ),  $t(199) = 11.773$ ,  $p < .0005$ ). Also, with reference to the qualitative study, most ( $n = 4$ ) of the participants expressed the view that strike action may result in further conflict in the workplace. The results of both studies were in support of the findings of previous research (Olaniyi & Aina 2014; Olusegun Ajayi, 2014; Osakede & Ijimakinwa, 2014) as discussed in chapter two.

In his study, Olusegun Ajayi (2014) found that strike action by the Academic Staff Union of Universities in Nigeria tended to create more conflict between the management of the universities and trade unions. Ige Akindele (2014) notes that conflict is inevitable in every organisation but this can be worsened when the employees disobey the employer and embark on unprotected strikes. Ige Akindele (2014) further suggests that conflict may arise between the employees and union leaders due to mistrust regarding the decision to embark on strike action.

Ayeni and Kolawole (2014) also explored incessant conflicts and strikes among some selected organisations in Ekiti State in Nigeria. The study found that there is a direct link between strikes and conflict. Ayeni and Kolawole (2014) discovered that strike action can further increase the possibility of conflict in the organisation since there is no proper dialogue between the trade union members and the employer.

### **7.2.7 Mistrust**

In addition to the above, the qualitative study further found that strike action may lead to mistrust which has the potential of affecting the employment relations. Based on the interviews, most ( $n = 4$ ) of the participants recommended that strike action may affect the trust which exists between the parties which may impact on the employment relations. However, in the case of the quantitative study there was no finding that strike action contribute to mistrust among the parties in the workplace. The findings of this study further supported the findings of previous studies (Chaudhuri, 2012; Siddiqua *et al.*, 2014).

Chaudhuri (2012) found that mutual trust is a key variable for building harmonious relationships in the workplace. Chaudhuri (2012) recommends that the parties involved in employment relations must develop the atmosphere of mutual cooperation, confidence and respect. Chaudhuri (2012) argues that when there is trust, there is peace. However, when there is a strike it may lead to broken trust among the parties. The strike will create an opportunity for the parties not to have the trust in each other. Therefore, mistrust affects the kind of relationship that exists between the parties. Relationships are based on mutual trust and respect, hence, once there is mistrust it will certainly affect the continuity of the relationship.

Siddiqua *et al.* (2014) discovered that there is a relationship between industrial action, conflict and trust. According to Siddiqua *et al.* (2014), once there is industrial action it gives more room for the parties to lose trust for each other. The authors recommend that trust is an important factor which promotes industrial harmony, therefore both the employer and employees must help in creating an environment of mutual cooperation, confidence and respect. Siddiqua *et al.* (2014) further suggest that the employer must adopt a progressive outlook and must respect the rights of workers. On the other hand, trade unions must convince their members to work for the common goal of the organisation.

### **7.3 Objective 2: Impact of strike action on the public universities and the country**

The second objective of this current study was to identify the extent to which employee strike action affects the public universities and the country as a whole. The results of both studies revealed that strike action by the employees at the public universities has several implications on the universities and the country. The findings on the impact of strike action in the public universities were first discussed then followed by the impact on the country.

#### **7.3.1 Impact of employee strike action on the public universities**

With reference to both studies, it was found that employee strike action has several impacts or effects on Ghanaian public universities. Below was the discussion on the effects of strike action in public universities.

### **7.3.1.1 Disruption of research and publications**

Both studies found that employee strike action in public universities affects the activities in the universities including research and publications. The results of the quantitative study revealed that the overwhelming majority (90%) of the participants agreed that strike action affects research and publications in the universities. The sample t-test further confirmed that there was significant agreement that employee strike action led to disruption of research and publications in the universities ( $M = 4.17$ ,  $SD = .786$ ),  $t(198) = 21.025$ ,  $p < .0005$ ). The results of the qualitative study also revealed that the majority ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants expressed the view that strike action in the universities affects research and publications. The findings of this current study agreed with previous studies (Kazeem & Ige, 2010; Olakunle, 2011; Usoro & Ogbuanya, 2012).

According to Kazeem and Ige (2010), research and publications are the core activities of every institution of higher learning. Therefore, a disruption in the academic calendar will have major implications on these activities. Kazeem and Ige (2010) found that once an institution of higher learning is shut down it affects not only teaching and learning but it also affects research and publications.

Usoro and Ogbuanya (2012) also discovered that incessant strike action in higher institutions of learning affect activities including research and publications. Usoro and Ogbuanya (2012) recommend that once there is strike action in the higher institution of learning it affects every activity, with research and publications as no exception. Usoro and Ogbuanya (2012) further add that once there is strike action it will give room for calendar adjustment which will inevitably affect the smooth running of the institution.

In his study, Olakunle (2011) also found that strike action affects not only teaching and learning but it also has major implications on research and publications. Olakunle (2011) contends that strike action has major implications on academic research in technical education. The author argues that academic research is an integral part of education due to the fact that it plays a crucial role in revamping and enhancing the quality of teaching and learning in technical education. According to Olakunle (2011), once there is strike action, students and researchers may not be willing to go into academic research.



### 7.3.1.2 Poor student performance

It was found that employee strike action contributes to low or poor student performance. The results of the quantitative study discovered that the majority (84.5%) of the participants agreed that strike action affects student performance. The results of the sample t-test shown that that there was significant agreement that employee strike led to low student performance in the public universities ( $M = 4.08$ ,  $SD = .963$ ),  $t(199) = 15.853$ ,  $p < .0005$ ). The results of the qualitative study on the other hand show that most ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants expressed their opinions that strike action affects student performance. The results of this study supported the findings of previous studies that were conducted by researchers (Ayeni & Kolawole, 2014; Edinyang & Ubi, 2013; Ige Akindele, 2014; Michael, 2013; Osuorji & David, 2014; Wills, 2014). However, the findings of Maliki and Ekpekin-Ekanem (2011) disagreed with this finding.

Osuorji and David (2014) investigated the effect of incessant strikes on academic performance of business education students in Abu, Zaria. This study was intended to determine the extent to which the strike action affects academic performance of business education students in Abu, Zaria. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. It was discovered that incessant strikes by lecturers have serious impact on the academic performance of the students of the business education programme in Abu, Zaria.

Similarly, Ayeni and Kolawole (2014) explored the incessant conflicts and strikes and their effect on the achievement of goals of business education in a tertiary institution in Ekiti State. The finding revealed that incessant strikes accounted for the massive failure on the part of the students in the tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Olusegun (2014) also found that teachers' strike action has an impact on student performance.

However, the findings of Maliki and Ekpekin-Ekanem (2011) disagreed with the results of this current study and the above researchers that strike action affects student performance. Maliki and Ekpekin-Ekanem (2011) are of the opinion that 'quality and quantity of students' performance is determined by individual study habit,' According to the authors, when teachers are on strike it has been found that the students are more organised in their studies, they interact effectively with their fellow students, consult regularly with teachers, read with understanding, and study with full attention and concentration to have improved academic performance.

### **7.3.1.3 Student learning**

The results of both studies revealed that strike action by employees of public universities affects student learning. The results of the quantitative study revealed that most (91.5%) of the participants were in agreement that strike action affects student learning. The sample t-test further confirmed that there was significant agreement that employee strike action in the public universities caused a disruption of student learning ( $M = 4.34$ ,  $SD = .752$ ),  $t(199) = 25.104$ ,  $p < .0005$ ). In the case of the qualitative study, the majority ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants also expressed the view that strike action has the tendency of affecting student learning. The results of this present study further reaffirmed the results of previous studies (Asaolu, 2010; Isangedighi, 2011; Odubela, 2012; Olukunle, 2011; Maliki & Ekpekin-Ekanem, 2011; Wills, 2015).

Asaolu (2010) found that effective learning in schools occurs when the stakeholders adequately perform their roles. Effective learning is achieved when students are emotionally and psychologically stable. Contrary to this, when there is strike action, effective learning among students is disrupted. According to Asaolu (2010), disruption arises when academic activities are substantially impeded due to strike action by university employees. In his study, Olukunle (2011) also discovered that effective learning in schools is disrupted when there is strike or industrial action. Olukunle (2011) agrees with Asaolu (2010) that effective learning occurs when learners are emotionally and psychologically stable.

### **7.3.1.4 Disruption of the employment relationship**

With reference to the quantitative study, the results of the study show that strike action in the public universities affects the employment relationship in the various universities. The majority (81.5%) of the participants agreed that strike action may cause a disruption of the employment relationship. The sample t-test also shown that there was significant agreement that employee strike action has resulted in poor employment relations in universities ( $M = 4.10$ ,  $SD = .913$ ),  $t(199) = 17.033$ ,  $p < .0005$ ). However, in the case of the qualitative study, there was no finding to that effect. However, in the case of the qualitative study, there was no finding to this effect.

The results of the quantitative study conformed to the results of previous researchers (Arputharaj & Gayatri, 2014; Gyamfi, 2011). According to Arputharaj and Gayatri (2014), strike action could bring about conflict which may affect the employment relations in the workplace. Arputharaj and

Gayatri (2014) suggest that a strike is not a healthy tool in an organisation because it has the potential of affecting the employment relations between the parties (employees and employer). The authors are of the view that each time employees embark on a strike, whether protected or unprotected, it shows some kind of betrayal. The consequence of this industrial action is that it damages the working relationship between the former and the latter.

Gyamfi (2011) also agrees with the above authors that strike action has a negative impact on the employment relations. Gyamfi (2011) found that any form of industrial action has a potential effect on the employment relationship in the organisation.

### **7.3.1.5 Disruption of effective teaching**

The results of both quantitative and qualitative studies have shown that strike action in educational institutions affects teaching. With regards to the quantitative results, it was found that the majority (87%) of the participants agreed that strike action disrupts effective teaching in public universities. The results of the sample t-test shown that there was significant agreement that employee strike action contributed to disruption of teaching ( $M= 4.19$ ,  $SD = .851$ ),  $t(199)$ , = 19.690,  $p<.0005$ ). On the other hand, the results of the qualitative study revealed that the majority ( $n = 8$ ) of the participants cited various reasons why strike action may contribute to disruption in teaching in the universities. Both findings reaffirmed the results of the previous studies that were conducted by researchers (Wills, 2014; Clotfelter *et al.*, 2010).

According to Wills (2014), the adverse effects of strike action in South African schools are obvious in terms of disruptions to teaching programmes. Wills (2014) found that in recent times effective teaching has been disrupted in most South African schools due to frequent strikes embarked upon by learners and staff. The author asserts that in the past few years the government considered declaring teaching an essential service due to massive strike action in almost all the universities in the country. The main reason behind this proposed policy was in fact to prevent disruption of teaching in most schools.

Clotfelter *et al.* (2010) also found strike action in schools affects academic activities including teaching. According to Clotfelter *et al.* (2010), evidence suggests that teaching has been disrupted in some schools worldwide over the past few years due to strike action.

### **7.3.1.6 Delay in students' graduation**

Both studies found that strike action by the employees of public universities affects students' graduation. The quantitative results of the study show that most (86%) of the respondents agreed that employee strike action in the public universities in Ghana affects students' graduation. Also, with regards to the one sample t-test, there was significant agreement that employee strike action caused delay in students' graduation ( $M = 4.17$ ,  $SD = .863$ ),  $t(199) = 19.172$ ,  $p < .0005$ ) The results of the qualitative study also indicated that most ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants expressed the view that strike action may cause a delay in students' graduation. The results of this current study supported the findings of existing studies as discussed in chapter two (Aidelunuoghene, 2014; Edinyang & Ubi, 2013; Ige Akindele, 2014).

Ige Akindele (2014) found that the prolonged strikes in Nigerian public universities have led to delay in students' graduation over the years. The author suggests that the delay in students' graduation occurred due to a disruption in the academic calendar as a result of strike action.

Aidelunuoghene (2014) also discovered that prolonged strikes have the tendency to disrupt the graduation date. Aidelunuoghene (2014) found that prolonged industrial action in Nigeria have created serious implications for students' graduation. The author further asserts that over the years most graduations have been rescheduled due to the prolonged strikes that have characterised Nigerian public institutions. For example, in 2009 final year students in Nigerian tertiary institutions held their graduations late due to the prolonged strike action in that year.

### **7.3.1.7 Disruption of academic calendar**

In addition to the above, the results of the qualitative study revealed that strike action in the public universities causes a disruption to the academic calendar. The majority ( $n = 7$ ) of the participants have expressed the view that strike action in the public universities may cause a disruption of the academic calendar especially when school is still in progress. However, in the case of the quantitative study there was no finding that strike action contribute to a disruption of academic calendar in the public universities The results of this study reaffirmed the findings of some previous researchers (Kazeem & Ige 2010; Olukunle, 2011).

In his study, Olukunle (2011) discovered that disruption in academic programmes occurs due to strike action by university staff. The author suggests that the disruption of the academic programme due to strikes may have emotionally and psychologically effects on the students. According to Olukunle (2011), when disruption in academic programmes occurs, students become emotionally and psychologically affected most importantly when they hold the perception that the strike may cause them to stay at school longer than expected.

In their study, Kazeem and Ige (2010) also found that strike action often brings about disruption in the institution's academic calendar. For example, in 2015 and 2016, the University of KwaZulu-Natal has extended its academic calendar on several occasions due to strike action by students on the various campuses. Similarly, in the early part of 2015 and 2016, universities in South Africa were closed down for almost a month due to strike action by students which subsequently led to disruption of the academic calendar. In Ghana, the year 2013 saw massive strikes among the public universities which had serious implications on the academic programme or calendar.

### **7.3.2 Impact of public universities' strike action on the country**

As part of the second objective, the study also explored the extent to which strike action at public universities affects the country as a whole. The results of both studies revealed that strike action at public universities has several implications on the country. The following was the discussion of these findings.

#### **7.3.2.1 Loss of investment**

With regards to investment, the results of both studies indicated that strike action in public universities may contribute to loss of investment in the country. The quantitative findings revealed that 46% disagreed that strike action leads to loss of investment, while another 45% disagree that strike action contributes to loss of investment. However, in the case of the qualitative results, most ( $n = 4$ ) of the participants expressed the view that strike action affects the country's investment. The findings of this current study conformed to the previous studies conducted by researchers (Murwirapachena & Sibanda, 2014; Majokweni, 2013).

In their study, Murwirapachena and Sibanda (2014) found that loss of investment is one of the negative consequences that is associated with strike action in a country. Murwirapachena and

Sibanda (2014) are of the view that a country's loss of investment is a long term effect of strike action because the strike has the potential of affecting the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). According to Murwirapachena and Sibanda (2014, p.557), 'investment is stimulated through boosting investor confidence, which is normally perceived through a country's economic stability.' Murwirapachena and Sibanda (2014) suggest that some strikes are politically motivated in an attempt to improve working conditions. Therefore, politically motivated strike action may affect both domestic and foreign investment.

According to Majokweni (2013), strike action has the tendency to destroy the reputation of a country and the ability to attract foreign investment. Majokweni (2013) contends that even though international and local laws recognise the right to strike, it negatively affects investor confidence and economic growth.

### **7.3.2.2 Loss of employment or jobs**

In terms of employment, the results of the quantitative study revealed that employee strike action in public universities may neither affect nor lead to loss of employment in the country. About 46% disagreed while on the other hand 45% agreed that strike action in public universities affects employment in the country. However, the qualitative study has no findings to this effect. The results of the quantitative research neither support nor disagree with the findings of previous studies (Chamber of Mines of South Africa, 2012; DoL, 2014; Ige Akindele, 2014; Murwirapachena & Sibanda, 2014; Rapatsa & Matloga, 2014).

According to Ige Akindele (2014), in the last decades, strike action in Nigeria has contributed to loss of many jobs in the country. Ige Akindele (2014) further contends that the prolonged strikes in Nigeria have forced the government and many employers to cut jobs due to severe consequences the strikes have on the Nigerian economy.

Murwirapachena and Sibanda (2014) also found that many strikes in South Africa have substantial impact on jobs (employment). The employers in South Africa have recorded huge losses in production due to frequent strikes in the past few years. According to Murwirapachena and Sibanda (2014), the most affected employees are those that work under the piece rate system. Rapatsa and Matloga (2014) argue that in October 2012, Amplats-Platinum Mining

Company terminated employment for 12,000 striking miners due to prolonged strikes. Statistics by the DoL (2014) revealed that R6.6 billion worth of wages were lost due to the massive strikes that took place in 2012. According to DoL (2014), the prolonged strike in 2012 has led to loss of many jobs after the strike action. DoL (2014) notes that many firms were closed/shut down due to the prolonged strike which led to employees losing their jobs.

### **7.3.2.3 Loss of government revenue**

The quantitative and qualitative results indicated that strike action by the public universities in Ghana affects government revenue. With regards to the quantitative study, it was found that the majority (73%) of the participants agreed that strike action affects government revenue. The results of the sample t-test also confirmed that there was significant agreement that employee strike action contributed loss of government revenue ( $M = 3.75$ ,  $SD = 1.102$ ),  $t(199) = 9.628$ ,  $p < .0005$ ). The qualitative study on the other hand revealed that most ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants expressed the opinion that strike action by the employees of public universities contributes to loss of government revenue. The results of this study reaffirmed the findings of previous studies (Aidelunuoghene, 2014; Gyamfi, 2011; Murwirapachena & Sibanda, 2014; Olusegun Ajayi, 2014).

Olusegun Ajayi (2014) discovered that strike action in Nigerian tertiary institutions over the years has affected revenue mobilisation in the country. According to Olusegun Ajayi (2014), the Nigerian government has lost a huge amount of money in the education sector over the years due to incessant strikes. Olusegun Ajayi (2014) contends that many students in Nigeria prefer universities in neighbouring African countries such as Ghana and South Africa not because of the superiority of the academic programmes that are offered in these countries but due to the disruption of the academic calendar as a result of many strike actions in the public tertiary institutions. Olusegun Ajayi (2014) further suggests that the Nigerian government lost so many billions of Naira per month due to strikes in the public universities.

In his study, Aidelunuoghene (2014) argues that strike action has the potential to lead to loss of revenue since the students will no longer pay their fees and other charges during the period of strike. The author further suggests that any university or government which depends on student fees to grease the system will not meet such targets due to the strike action.

#### **7.3.2.4 Injuries and loss of life**

The results of the quantitative study revealed that strike action may or not contribute to injuries and loss of life on the part of strikers and strike breakers. Approximately 47% of the participants agreed to the statement that strike action contributes to injuries and loss of life. On the other hand, 41% of the participants disagreed that strike action leads to injuries and loss of life. In the case of the qualitative study, there are no findings to this effect. The results of the quantitative study neither agree nor disagree with the findings of previous researchers (Ige Akindele, 2014; Jacobs, 2013; Odeku, 2014; Rapatsa & Matloga, 2014).

According to Odeku (2014), in South Africa, violent strikes have produced a lot of ugly incidences which have led to the death of many strikers. Odeku (2014) asserts that strikes in South Africa were frequently accompanied by violence, and strikers were regularly beaten, arrested and shot by the police. Strike breakers were intimidated, beaten and sometimes murdered by striking workers.

In South Africa, intimidation, assaults and murders of strike breakers have been a persistent feature of many large-scale strikes (Rapatsa & Matloga, 2014). Rapatsa and Matloga (2014) also allude to the fact that South Africa has lost prominent people through violent strikes over the years. A classic example is the Marikana Massacre which took place in 2012. According to Rapatsa and Matloga (2014, p.119), “on the 10th August 2012, workers at Lonmin Platinum Mine Marikana in North West Province went on an unprotected (wild cat) strike demanding amongst others a monthly salary increment from ZAR4,000 (US\$ 500) to ZAR12,500 (US\$ 1,500) and expulsion of National Union of Mine Workers leaders or rather non-recognition of those leaders.” The Marikana strike turned violent which led to the death of 43, including strikers and some police officers.

SAIRR (2013) also discovered that more than 181 people were killed, at least more than 313 injured and 3,058 arrested as a result of violent strikes in South Africa between 1999 and 2012. This phenomenon is not different from Nigeria. In Nigeria, most strikers or employees have lost their lives due to violent strikes over the years. Ige Akindele (2014) argues that strikes have contributed to the death of many Nigerians. For example, in 2009, Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) went on a three-month nationwide strike which was generally peaceful but resulted in the death of 27 people.



### **7.3.2.5 Bad reputation**

The results of both studies have shown that strike action affects the reputation of the country. The results of the quantitative study revealed that the majority (79.5%) of the participants agreed that strike action contributes to the bad reputation of the country. In terms of the result of the sample t-test, it was found that there was significant agreement that employee strike action caused bad reputation of the country ( $M = 3.95$ ,  $SD = .981$ ),  $t(199) = 13.696$ ,  $p < .0005$ ). The findings of the qualitative study also show that most ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants were of the view that strike action has the potential to affect the country's image. These findings agreed with the findings of previous studies (Aidelunuoghene, 2014; Gyamfi, 2011; Odeku, 2014).

Aidelunuoghene (2014) found that strike action by the employees of higher institutions of learning affects the image of the country. According to Aidelunuoghene (2014), frequent strike action in public universities will give a very poor image of the country. Gyamfi (2011) also discovered that strike action has the potential to affect the image of the country. In a study conducted by Gyamfi (2011) to assess the effects of industrial unrest on Ghana's health service, it was found that when people embark on a strike it tarnishes the reputation or image of the country abroad. Odeku (2014) also averred that strike action has a long-term effect on a country.

According to Odeku (2014), strike action affects the reputation of a country in a long-run. The author argues that internationally, South Africa is recognised as a strike nation due to the prevalence of strikes in almost all the sectors. Odeku (2014) contends that the worst part is that most of these strikes were characterised by violence which portrayed South Africa as a strike nation. As mentioned above, the reputation of South Africa has been brought into question due to the number of people who were killed or injured during violent strikes in the country. The situation has affected the image of the country internationally.

### **7.3.2.6 Loss of productive hours**

Both studies found that strike action by the employees of public universities contributes to loss of productive hours. The quantitative results revealed that the majority (86%) of the participants agreed that strike action affects productive hours. The sample t-test further confirmed that there was significant agreement that employee strike action has resulted in loss of productive hours in the country ( $M = 4.15$ ,  $SD = .798$ ),  $t(199) = 20.286$ ,  $p < .0005$ ). The results of the qualitative study

on the other hand indicated that the majority ( $n = 6$ ) of the participants expressed the view that strike action in public universities contributes to loss of productive hours. The results of the study reaffirmed the findings of previous researchers (Coetzee, 2011; DoL, 2014; Gyamfi, 2011; Murwirapachena & Sibanda, 2014; Research Division, 2010).

Statistics by DoL (2014) have shown that in the year 2012, approximately 3.3 million (3,309,884) productive working days involving 241,391 employees were lost as a result of strike action, as opposed to 2.8 million (2,806,656) lost in 2011 involving 203,138 employees. The analysis of these figures suggest that there is an upward increase in the incidence of strikes in South Africa which has affected the profit margin of many firms.

The situation in South Africa is not far from Ghana. Ghana has recorded a huge loss in production due to strike action over the last decades. A study conducted by Gyamfi (2011) revealed that the massive strikes that took place in Ghana over the years have led to loss of productive hours. However, there is no empirical research in Ghana which quantifies the amount of money the country has lost in terms of loss of productive hours unlike in the case of South Africa.

### **7.3.2.7 Falling standard of education in the country**

Furthermore, the quantitative results revealed that strike action in the public universities contributes to the falling standard of education in the country. The results of the sample t-test shown that there was significant agreement that employee strike action in the public universities contributed to the falling standard of education in the country ( $M = 3.85$ ,  $SD = 1.177$ ),  $t(199) = 10.216$ ,  $p < .0005$ ). The results of the descriptive statistics also shown that the majority (75.5%) of the participants agreed that strike action affects the standard of education in the country. However, with regards to the qualitative study, there were no finding to this effect. The results of the quantitative study further supported the previous findings as discussed in chapter two (Ige Akindele, 2014; Olusegun Ajayi, 2014).

In recent times, there have been growing concerns among stakeholders about the falling standard of education in Ghana and Nigeria (Ige Akindele, 2014). The author argues that the falling standard of education in these countries is as a result of frequent strike action in the tertiary institutions. Ige Akindele (2014) believes that although there are other factors that contribute to the falling standard of education in these countries, strike action is one such factor. For instance, education

performance in Nigeria has declined significantly between the year 2006 and 2011. The score has declined from 51% to 47.6%. Nigeria has also lost its place in the universities' ranking in Africa. Ige Akindele (2014) found that Nigeria's rank declined from 21st to 30th.

Olusegun Ajayi (2014) also found that the falling standard of education can be partially attributed to rampant strike action in the education sector. Olusegun Ajayi (2014) further argues that when teachers embark on a strike it affects teaching and learning which further has a long-term effect on the standard of education.

#### **7.3.2.8 Cost implications**

The results of the qualitative study further found that strike action by the employees of the public universities has cost implications on the country. Nearly all the participants ( $n = 7$ ) have expressed the view that strike action has cost implications on the country. In the case of the quantitative study, there were no findings to this effect. The findings of the qualitative study further supported the findings of previous studies (Aidelunuoghene, 2014; Gyamfi, 2011).

Aidelunuoghene (2014) posits that strike action has cost implications on a country. According to Aidelunuoghene (2014), in Nigeria, the socio-economic costs in relation to strike action in the country cannot be quantified. The author argues that the Nigerian government continues to incur costs every year due to massive strike action in the country. Aidelunuoghene (2014) asserts that sometimes the government has to incur extra cost by providing security for the strikers because of the violent nature of strikes in the country. Also, there are cost implications on the country due to the loss of productive hours as a result of the work stoppages.

In his study, Gyamfi (2011) also discovered that strike action has cost implications on a country. According to Gyamfi (2011), a nationwide strike has the potential of increasing government expenditure due to the fact that the government has to ensure maximum protection of all the citizens. The author contends that during strike action, the government needs to provide maximum security for the strikers as well as for the employers. The additional responsibility of providing security in the country due to strike action will have serious consequences on government budget.

### **7.3.2.9 National security threat**

Beside the above, the results of the qualitative study revealed that strike action by the employees of public universities may pose a national security threat in the country. From the interviews, the majority ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants indicated that a nationwide strike may have security implications in the country. However, with regards to the quantitative study, there were no findings to this effect. The findings of the qualitative study reaffirm the findings of researchers (Ige Akindele, 2014; Odeku, 2014; Olusegun Ajayi, 2014).

Ige Akindele (2014) suggests nationwide strike action among tertiary institutions may pose a security threat in the country. According to Ige Akindele (2014), during political sessions, most politicians often recruit students from higher institutions of learning and use them as thugs to execute their evil agenda by killing their rivals and destroying their properties. Ige Akindele (2014) asserts once there is strike action and the universities are shut down, most students usually used the opportunity created by idleness to engage themselves in social vices such as armed robbery, prostitution, kidnapping and internet fraud.

Olusegun Ajayi (2014) also discovered that strike action in the public universities poses a security threat to the country. The author postulates that when there is strike action in the universities, students often use the opportunity created by the idleness to engage in deviant behaviours like armed robbery, arson, rape and touting. The author argues that the crime rating is increasing in Nigeria due to the massive strikes that have characterised Nigerian tertiary institutions due to the fact that most students are using the idleness to engage themselves in social vices. Odeku (2014) also found that strike action may have security implications in a country due to the fact that in South Africa, strikes were frequently accompanied by violence and strikers were often beaten, arrested and shot by the police. Also, in the past some strike breakers were intimidated, beaten and sometimes murdered by strikers.

## **7.4 Objective 3: Causes of strike action in the public universities in Ghana**

The third objective of this study was to identify the causes of strike action in the Ghanaian public universities. The results of both studies revealed that there are several causes of strike action in the public universities in Ghana. The findings were classified into financial and non-financial factors

causing strike action in the universities. The results of the financial causes are discussed first, followed by the non-financial causes.

#### **7.4.1 Financial factors responsible for strike action in Ghanaian public universities**

The results of both studies revealed that there are several financial factors that are responsible for strike action in Ghanaian public universities. The financial causes include wages and salaries, the introduction of the new pay policy, conditions of service, inadequate funding, books and research allowances and delay in payment of wages and salaries. These findings are discussed below.

##### **7.4.1.1 Demand for increment in wages and salaries**

The results of both studies have shown that the agitation for increment in wages and salaries is the main cause of strike action in Ghanaian public universities. With regards to the quantitative study, the majority (87.5%) of the participants agreed that the issue of wages and salaries is the main cause of strike action in the universities. The sample t-test confirmed that there was significant agreement that employee strike action is caused by inadequate wages and salaries ( $M = 4.23$ ,  $SD = .905$ ),  $t(199) = 19.149$ ,  $p < .0005$ ). The results of the qualitative study also revealed that most ( $n = 7$ ) of the participants suggested that the agitation or demand for increment in wages and salaries is a contributing factor to strike action in public universities in Ghana. The results of this current study agreed with the previous studies (Gyamfi, 2011; Ibrahim & Alhaji, 2015; Ige Akindele, 2014; Jamasmie, 2013; Murwirapachena & Sibanda, 2014; Osakede & Ijimakinwa, 2014; Seniwoliba, 2013; Seniwoliba, 2014; Surujlal, 2014).

According to Murwirapachena and Sibanda (2014), a large number of strikes in South Africa were as a result of the petition by employers to increase their wages and salaries. Murwirapachena and Sibanda (2014, p.554) further argue that “the 2013 edition of the Industrial Action Report indicated that wages, bonus and compensation are the main reasons for strikes in South Africa.” Statistics from DoL (2012) have shown that a total of 99 strikes were recorded in South Africa and most of these strikes were related to wages.

Jamasmie (2013) found that in July 2013, Chamber of Mines of South Africa (CMSA) which represented gold producers, made a proposal of a 5% increase in wages. However during the negotiation, the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) considered the offer as an insult to

employees and went ahead to declare a deadlock in the negotiations. NUM on the other hand demanded a 60% increase from the entry-level salary for gold miners. Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union (AMCU) also demanded an increase in salaries as high as 150%. According to Jamasmie (2013), the employers viewed various demands as not only absurd but ludicrous. Similarly, in August 2013, South African Transport and Allied Workers Union (SATAWU) working at the South Africa Airways embarked on a strike due to the failure of the airline to add a 0.4% once off payment to its offer of 6.5%.

In his study, Gyamfi (2011) found that the issue of poor wages and salaries is the major cause of strikes in Ghana. In 2010, health and education workers embarked on numerous strikes due to the inability of the government to meet their demands for an increase in wages. In that same year, the education workers also went on strike due to low wages and salaries. Seniwoliba (2013) also argues that remuneration is the major cause of strikes not only in Ghana but in other parts of the world including Nigeria, South Africa, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Canada, Australia and United States of America. According to Seniwoliba (2013), the causes of strikes can be categorised into two main components namely economic and non-economic factors. The author is of the view that the economic causes relate to issues of compensation like wages, bonuses, allowances and conditions of work. In 2012, Ghanaian education workers demanded a 15% increment in their wages and salaries. However, government said that such a demand is outrageous and it could only pay an 8% increment due to the economic crisis worldwide (Seniwoliba, 2013). These workers refused the government proposal to pay an 8% increment in wages and they subsequently went on a nationwide strike to press home their demands.

Ige Akindele (2014) suggests that low wages is a major issue in Nigeria which has triggered many strikes especially in the education sector. According to Ige Akindele (2014), in Nigeria, the salaries of the university lecturers were relatively low as opposed to their counterparts in other African countries such as South Africa, Kenya, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe and Ghana. The author in his study found that in 2009 a full time professor in Ghana received \$4,800 per annum. In Zimbabwe, a full time professor earned between \$48,000. In the case of South Africa, a full professor earned between \$55,000. However, in Nigeria, a full time professor earned \$439.2 as at 2009. Also, with regards to lecturers, a full time lecturer in South Africa earned \$15,000 in 2009. A full time lecturer in Zimbabwe earned \$12,000. In Ethiopia and Kenya, full time lecturers earned \$3,600 respectively

in 2009. However, in Ghana and Nigeria, full time lecturers earned \$1,800 and \$222 respectively in 2009. The analysis of these figures revealed that there is a great disparity in salary structure among these countries. Critical examination of these figures suggest that Ghanaian and Nigerian lecturers and professors earned far less than their counterparts.

#### **7.4.1.2 The introduction of the new pay policy**

The results of both studies found that the introduction of the new pay policy (single spine salary structure) is one of the causes of strike action in the Ghanaian public universities. The sample t-test revealed that there was significant agreement that the challenges associated with the implementation of new pay policy was the cause of employee strike action in the Ghanaian public university ( $M = 4.11, 1.068$ ),  $t(199) = 14.638, p < .0005$ ). The results of the descriptive statistics also revealed that the majority (81%) of the participants agreed that the introduction of the new pay policy is a factor contributing that has contributed to strike action in the public universities. The results of the qualitative study on the other hand indicated that most ( $n = 4$ ) of the participants expressed the view that the poor implementation of the new pay policy is a factor causing strike action in public universities. The results of this current study support the findings of studies conducted by researchers (Aliu & Fuseini, 2014; Edward & Nyame, 2014; Seniwoliba, 2014).

According to Edward and Nyame (2014), the single spine pay policy (SSPP) is also known as single spine salary structure (SSSS). This policy has been used by several nations as a means of determining the salaries of public servants. For example, Norway and Denmark operate a uniform pay scale which covers all public workers. In 2005, the government of Ghana appointed a consulting group called Co-En to advise on a sustainable pay policy. At the end of the assignment, the consulting group proposed the SSPP or SSSS. The motivation behind the new pay policy was to address the disparity (gap) in the government administrative pay system. The recommendations by Co-En were accepted by the government. According to Edward and Nyame (2014), in January 2010, the government of Ghana implemented the new pay policy having had many salary structures based on the Ghana Public Service Article 190 of the 1992 Constitution for more than one hundred years.

Aliu and Fuseini (2014) believe that despite the beauty of this policy, it encountered some challenges in its implementation. Owing to the poor implementation of the pay policy, the country

witnessed several labour unrests in the last few years not only in the education sector but in almost all the sectors. For instance, public universities' lecturers across the country went on a nationwide strike from August to September 2013 for issues relating to non-payment of allowances, which were part of benefits derived from the implementation of the new pay policy. Similarly, in February 2013, the Ghana Medical Association (GMA) embarked on a nationwide strike as a result of unresolved migration to the new pay policy.

According to Seniwoliba (2014), the current industrial actions in Ghana is not because the public workers do not appreciate the government's effort to bridge the salary gap but because the Fair Wages and Salaries Commission has failed to provide proper education to the workers on the implementation of the policy.

#### **7.4.1.3 Poor condition of service**

The results of both studies revealed that poor condition of service is a cause of strike action in the Ghanaian public universities. With reference to the quantitative study, the results revealed that the majority (87.5%) of the participants agreed that poor conditions of work or service is a contributing factor to strike action in the Ghana public universities. The sample t-test further confirmed that there was significant agreement that poor condition of service in the public universities contributed to strike action ( $M = 4.25$ ,  $SD = .873$ ),  $t(199) = 20.260$ ,  $p < .0005$ ). The results of the qualitative study also show that most ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants recommended that poor working conditions in the Ghanaian public universities is one of the causes of strike action. The findings of this present study also corresponded with other studies (Gyamfi, 2011; Ige Akindele, 2014; Momodu, Matudi & Momodu, 2014; Nweke, 2015; Seniwoliba, 2013).

Gyamfi (2011) found that the deplorable working conditions among Ghanaian workers is one of the causes that has led to many successful strikes in the last decades. There is no doubt that Ghanaian teachers or lecturers work under deplorable conditions which sometimes affect their health. For example, health and education workers in 2011 went of a nationwide strike due to deplorable conditions of work (Gyamfi, 2011). Seniwoliba (2013) also expresses the view that in Ghana, poor conditions of work has been identified as a major factor which has led to many strikes. In his study, Seniwoliba (2013) found that poor conditions of work is one of the economic factors



that has contributed to a number of strikes in Ghana. Similarly, in 2012, education workers embarked on strike action in demand for better conditions of work (Seniwoliba, 2013).

Momodu *et al.* (2014) also found that in Nigeria, the issue of poor conditions of work is a major contributing factor to strikes in the country. In their study, Momodu *et al.* (2014) found that the poor conditions of work among academic staff unions of universities in Nigeria has led to a number of successive strikes in the public tertiary institutions.

#### **7.4.1.4 Inadequate funding**

The results of the quantitative study revealed that the majority (79%) of the participants agreed that inadequate funding in the public universities is one of the causes of strike action. The results of the sample t-test on the other hand shown that there was significant agreement that inadequate funding contributed to strike action in the public universities ( $M = 4.09$ ,  $SD = .993$ ),  $t(199) = 15.517$ ,  $p < .0005$ ). While the results of the qualitative study also indicated that the majority ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants cited lack of funding as one of the causes of strike action in public universities. The findings of this present study reaffirmed the findings of previous studies (Awuzie; 2010; Momodu, Matudi & Momodu, 2014; Olanipekun, 2011).

According to Awuzie (2010), studies have shown that in spite of the government funding to the public tertiary institutions, the funds are still not enough to run these institutions. Awuzie (2010) asserts that funding in public institutions in Nigeria have worsened to the extent that the university management could not even afford to pay salaries and other emoluments to staff.

According to Momodu *et al.* (2014), the Nigerian government and the federal state are the major financiers of the public tertiary institutions. The authors argue that these financiers provide approximately 80% of the funds for the running of the public universities. Momodu *et al.* (2014, p.8107) found that “since the advent of democracy in 1999, the budget allocation to the education sector continues to fall.” Momodu *et al.* (2014, p.8108) assert that ‘Nigeria’s gross domestic product (GDP) for the year 2012 was USD262.2 billion, out of which allocation to the education sector for 2012 was USD1.96 billion.’ In the 2013 budget, the government allocation to all the public tertiary institutions \$2.69 billion. The budget allocation is far less than the 2013 budget of two universities in United States of America namely Penn State University which is \$4.42b billion and University of Texas which is \$2.48 billion.

According to Ghana and Peprah (2015), Ghana operates on a cost-sharing system in funding for higher education but government provides a higher percentage of the funds as opposed to other institutions. The cost-sharing system was established in 1979 of which the government provides 70% of the funding and the remaining 30% from internally generated funds such as grants, school fees, public-private partnership, donation and so forth. In spite of the government funding to the public tertiary institutions in Ghana, the funds are still not enough to run these institutions. For example, the 2015 budget that was presented to parliament has shown that only GH¢6,740,437,383.00 was allocated to the education sector (Ghana & Peprah, 2015).

#### **7.4.1.5 Books and research allowances**

The study found that the controversies surrounding the old and the new research fund is a contributing factor to strikes in the Ghanaian public universities. The results of the qualitative study revealed that the majority (82%) of the participants agreed that books and research allowances is one of the causes of strike action in public universities. With regards to the sample t-test, there was significant agreement that employee strike action occurred due to the replacement of old books and research allowances with the new research fund ( $M = 4.09$ ,  $SD = .898$ ),  $t(199) = 17.171$ ,  $p < .0005$ ). The results of the qualitative research on the other hand revealed that most ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants expressed the view that their books and research allowances is the cause of strikes in the universities. The results of the study conformed to the previous study conducted by Seniwoliba (2014).

According to Seniwoliba (2014), the decision by the government to replace the old books and research allowances with the new research fund is a major cause of strikes in public universities in Ghana. The tertiary education system in Ghana has witnessed frequent strikes in the last few years following the decision by the government (President John Dramani Mahama) to scrap the lecturers' books and research allowances. In 2013, the government of Ghana announced the replacement of books and research allowances with the new research fund (Seniwoliba, 2014). The universities' lecturers expressed the view that they could not understand why the government had scrapped their books and research allowances. They argued that the old books and research allowances were tied to their conditions of service as it was part of the collective decision taken by both government and University Teachers Association of Ghana (UTAG). UTAG further argued that the intended

removal of the books and research allowances cannot be a unilateral decision taken by the government alone. The UTAG, s9(13) of the Unified Conditions of Service for Public University in Ghana states that, “the existing books and research allowances guarantee minimum and immediate support across the board for all lecturers and research fellows.” Despite several attempts by UTAG to stop government from scrapping the old research and books allowances it proved futile. The unilateral decision taken by the government has led to a number of successful strikes in the public universities across the country, especially in 2013.

#### **7.4.1.6 Delay in payment of wages and salaries**

Both studies found that delay in payment of wages and salaries is one of the causes of strike action in Ghana. With regards to the quantitative study, the results indicated that the majority (86%) of the participants agreed that delay in payment of wages and salaries is one of the factors that has contributed to strike action over the years. The sample t-test further revealed that there was significant agreement that employee strike action in the public universities was caused by delay in payment of wages and other emoluments ( $M = 4.14$ ,  $SD = .837$ )  $t(199) = 19.181$ ,  $p < .0005$ ). The qualitative study also found that most ( $n = 4$ ) of the participants recommended that delay in payment of wages and salaries is among the numerous causes of strike action in Ghanaian public universities. The results of this present study reaffirmed the findings of past studies conducted by researchers (Ezeagba, 2014; Gyamfi, 2011; Seniwoliba, 2013).

In his study, Ezeagba (2014) argues that in Nigeria, most organisations have failed to pay their workers on a timely basis. The author opines that most organisations often delay in the payment or refuse to pay their workers’ salaries and other emoluments even if they have the ability to do so. According to Ezeagba (2014), in recent years most schools in Nigeria went on strike due to non-payment of salaries and other benefits. The issue of delay in payments of salaries and other emoluments is a common phenomenon in Ghana especially in the education and health sector.

According to Gyamfi (2011), over the past years, Ghanaian workers have embarked upon several industrial actions due to delay in payments of their wages and salaries. For example, in the early part of 2012, teachers in Ghana went on a nationwide strike due to non-payment of salaries and other entitlements. The similar situation occurred in the health sector where the health workers went on a nationwide strike in 2013 (Seniwoliba, 2013). Seniwoliba (2013) states that delay in

payment of salaries is a serious matter in Ghana because it puts unnecessary stress on workers and their dependents.

#### **7.4.1.7 Mismanagement of the economy**

Both studies have found that mismanagement of the economy is another factor responsible for strike action not only in the public universities but among all the public sector employees. The results of the quantitative study revealed that most (70%) of the participants agreed that mismanagement of the economy is a cause of strike action in the public universities. The sample t-test revealed that there was significant agreement that mismanagement of the economy has resulted in strike action ( $M = 3.75$ ,  $SD = 1.168$ ),  $t(199) = 9.081$ ,  $p < .0005$ ). The results of the qualitative study also show that the majority ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants expressed the view that the frequent strike action in the country over the years was as a result of the mismanagement of the country's resources by politicians. The findings of this study agreed with the previous studies (Olusegun Ajayi, 2014; Seniwoliba, 2013).

According to Seniwoliba (2013), the success of every nation largely depends on how well the economic resources are managed. However, in Ghana, the situation is different because of the government inability. Seniwoliba (2013) contends that one aim of the perennial strikes in Ghana is to force the government to address economic challenges facing the country due to poor management of the economy. The mismanagement of the economy has brought about high levels of corruption, unemployment and lowered the standard of living in the country.

Olusegun Ajayi (2014) also found that mismanagement of the economic is one of the contributing factors to strike action in Nigeria. According to Olusegun Ajaria (2014), in 2009, the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) went on a one-week strike due to the nature of national economic mismanagement in the country. Olusegun Ajayi (2014) posits that for some years now the Nigerian economy has been performing poorly due to mismanagement by the politicians. The situation does not only lead to strike action in the tertiary institutions but the rest of the public institutions in the country.

## **7.4.2 Non-financial factors responsible for strike action in the Ghanaian public universities**

The quantitative and qualitative study identified some non-financial factors that are responsible for strike action in the Ghanaian public universities. These factors include poor handling of issues or employee grievances, failure by the government to honour its promises, poor or lack of negotiation skills, mistrust, poor employment relations and unnecessary interference in universities' affairs.

### **7.4.2.1 Poor handling of employee grievances**

The results of both studies found that poor handling of employee grievances is a factor contributing to strike action in the Ghanaian public universities. Using the sample t-test, the results of the quantitative study shown that there was significant agreement that employee strike action in the Ghanaian public universities was caused by improper handling of employee grievances ( $M = 4.11$ ,  $SD = .876$ ),  $t(199) = 17.834$ ,  $p < .0005$ ). The results of the descriptive statistics further revealed that the majority (87%) of the participants agreed that poor handling of employee grievances is one of the causes of strike action in the universities. The qualitative results on the other hand revealed that the majority ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants expressed the view that improper handling of grievances has contributed to strike action in the public universities over the years. The results of this current study agreed with the findings of previous researchers (Gyamfi, 2011; Olugbenga, 2011).

Gyamfi (2011) argues that poor handling of employee grievances is one of the non-economic factors that often results in strike action in Ghana. According to Gyamfi (2011), employee grievances are critical matters that need urgent attention and if not handled well can lead to strike action. The author adds that most of the strike action that took place in the past was as a result of the inability of the management to address the grievances of the employees. Gyamfi (2011) postulates that most grievances that have resulted in strike action over the years could have been resolved using the Labour Act 2003. In addition to this, most labour practitioners and leaders have failed to apply the Act in an effort to provide solutions to employee grievances. In Ghana, it is a known fact that the Fair Wages and Salaries Commission has failed on several occasions to address employee grievances. Fair Wages and Salaries Commission is one of the weak institutions in Ghana because of its inability to resolve issues or disputes between the employees and their employers.

Similarly, in Nigeria it was found that poor handling of employee grievances is one of the numerous causes of strike action in the country. Olugbenga (2011) found that unresolved grievances is a major cause of strike action in Nigeria. According to Olugbenga (2011), the lack of an institutionalised mechanism for dealing with related labour disputes in Nigeria is worrisome. In Nigeria, the ASUU has constantly embarked on strike action over the last decades due to government's shabby handling of employee grievances. On 4th December 2011, ASUU resolved and painfully directed all its members nationwide to proceed in an indefinite strike because the government had failed to address their grievances.

#### **7.4.2.2 Failure by the government to honour its promises or agreements**

Both studies found that government's failure to honour its promises or agreements is another cause of strike action in the public universities in Ghana. With regards to the results of the quantitative study, the sample t-test shown that there was significant agreement that government failure to honour agreements or promises accounted for strike action in the public universities ( $M = 4.13$ ,  $SD = .896$ ),  $t(199) = 17.750$ ,  $p < .0005$ ). The results of the descriptive statistics further reaffirmed that the majority (86%) of the participants agreed that failure by government to honour promises or agreements is a factor that contributes to strike action in public universities in Ghana. The results of the qualitative study also indicated that the majority ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants indicated that the inability of the government to fulfil or honour agreements is a major factor which contributes to strikes in the public universities. The results of this present study reaffirm the findings of previous studies (Ige Akindele, 2014; Seniwoliba, 2014; Ezeagba, 2014).

According to Seniwoliba (2013), over the years Ghanaian workers embarked on several strike actions because of the failure on the part of the government to fulfill its part of promises or agreements that were reached. Government failure is a common phenomenon in every country but the situation in Ghana is very alarming because government has failed on several occasions to address the concerns of workers. In every election, successive government always promises the Ghanaian workers that it will address their challenges if given the mandate. After the election, such promises will never be fulfilled by government. This is the situation that has been contributing to strike action especially among public sector workers.

This phenomenon in Ghana is similar to the situation in Nigeria. Ezeagba (2014) also found that universities' lecturers and students in Nigeria have embarked on several strikes in the past years due to the government's failure to honour its agreements. For instance, the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) riot which took place in 1988 and petroleum price hike of 2001 which were a few of the incidences that occurred in Nigeria due to failure by the government to honour its agreements. Ezeagba (2014) suggests that government's failure emanates from poor leadership, lip service and lack of accountability.

#### **7.4.2.3 Poor or lack of negotiation skill**

It was found that poor or lack of negotiation skill among the parties is another cause of strike action in the public universities in Ghana. The results of the quantitative study indicated that most (81%) of the participants agreed that poor negotiation skills is a cause of strike action in the universities. Furthermore, the sample t-test revealed that there was significant agreement that poor negotiation or inability of the parties to negotiate during the collective bargaining contributed to employee strike action ( $M = 3.98$ ,  $SD = .940$ ),  $t(199) = 14.740$ ,  $p < .0005$ ). In the case of the qualitative study, there were no findings to this effect. The findings of the quantitative study agreed with the previous studies (Ogunbanjo, 2014; Seniwoliba, 2013).

In his study, Seniwoliba (2013) argues that most of the strike action that took place in Ghana were as a result of the inability of the parties to negotiate due to the fact that they did not have the kind of skill that is needed for effective negotiation. Seniwoliba (2013) contends that normally strike action occurs when the parties are unable to reach an agreement during the negotiation process. According to Seniwoliba (2013), workers' strikes in Ghana are as a result of lack of professionals in negotiating with one another.

Ogunbanjo (2014) averred that poor negotiation skills among the parties to the collective bargaining table is a major cause of strike action in Nigeria. A study conducted by Ogunbanjo (2014) on doctors' strikes in Nigeria revealed that most of the leaders who were often sent to the bargaining table to negotiate with government do not have the necessary skills.

#### **7.4.2.4 Mistrust**

The qualitative study found that mistrust is another factor contributing to strike action in the public universities in Ghana. Based on the interviews, the majority ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants expressed the view that mistrust is a common factor contributing to strike action in the public universities in Ghana. However, with regards to the quantitative study, there were no findings to this effect. The results of the qualitative study agreed with the findings of previous studies (Ezeagba, 2012; Gyamfi, 2011; Olusegun Ajayi, 2014).

According to Gyamfi (2011), most workers have lost their trust in the government because it has constantly demonstrated that it cannot keep its promises. In a study conducted by Gyamfi (2011), it was found that lack of trust is one of the causes of strike action in Ghana.

Olusegun Ajayi (2014) also discovered that lack of trust is among the leading causes of strike action in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Olusegun Ajayi (2014) contends that sometimes workers are forced to declare strike action due to the fact that they have lost the trust and confidence in their leaders. According to Olusegun Ajayi (2014), most successive governments in Nigeria could not be trusted because of their failure to honour their promises made to organised labour, and this has resulted in many strikes in the past. For instance in 2002, ASUU went on an unofficial strike because they had lost confidence and trust in the leaders.

#### **7.4.2.5 Poor employment relations**

Again, the qualitative results indicated that the issue of poor employment relations is a contributing factor to strike action in the public universities. Most ( $n = 4$ ) of the participants have expressed the view about how poor employment relationship has contributed to strike action in the universities. In the case of the quantitative study, there were no findings to this effect. The results of the qualitative study reaffirm the results of previous studies (Gyamfi, 2011; Seniwoliba, 2013).

According to Seniwoliba (2013), industrial or employment relations are seen as the panacea to labour disputes. However, in Ghana, poor employment relations between the labour unions and employers or even the government is a major factor which contributed to numerous strikes over the years and to which the education sector is no exception.

Gyamfi (2011) also argues that there exists the perception of master servant relations in Ghana.



Thus the government sees its role as exercising ‘managerial prerogatives’ while the unions also see their role as opposing this exercise of power. There is no harmonious working relationship between government and public universities’ employees hence the employees believe that the only way they can enforce their demands is through strikes.

#### **7.4.2.6 Unnecessary interference in the affairs of the universities by government**

Both studies found that unnecessary interference in the affairs of the universities by government is a contributing factor to strike action. Using the sample t-test, the results of the quantitative study revealed that there was significant agreement that unnecessary interference in the affairs of the institutions contributed to strike action in the universities ( $M = 3.67$ ,  $SD = 1.330$ ),  $t(199) = 7.122$ ,  $p < .0005$ ). The quantitative results of the descriptive statistics further revealed that the majority (68%) of the participants agreed that unnecessary interference in the affairs of the institutions through government policies is also a factor which contributes to strike action in public universities. The results of the qualitative study also show that most ( $n = 4$ ) of the participants have expressed the view that government interference through policies is a contributing factor to strike action in public universities in Ghana (Ige Akindele, 2014; van der Velden, 2012).

In Ghana and Nigeria, every ruling government tries to interfere in the affairs of the public tertiary institutions (Ige Akindele, 2014). According to Ige Akindele (2014), the Nigerian government has been paying the piper and thus dictating the tune. The government has been exercising the control over the activities of the public tertiary institutions because of its commitment to the funding of these institutions. Ige Akindele (2014) posits that the government often interferes in the affairs of the institutions by imposing candidates on the tertiary institutions against the will of the staff and students when it is time to appoint leaders into higher positions. In Ghana, it is a known fact that the government plays a crucial role in the appointment of Vice Chancellors into the higher institutions of learning (van der Velden, 2012). This situation often brings about conflict which often leads to strike action and at times protest action by students.

## **7.5 Factors that promote sound employment relations in the universities**

The fourth objective of this study was to identify factors that contribute to the promoting or building of sound employment relations in the Ghanaian public universities or within the workplace. The results of the study identified both financial and non-financial factors that promote sound employment relations in the workplace or in the public universities. The financial factors are first discussed, followed by the non-financial factors.

### **7.5.1. Financial factors that promote sound employment relations in the universities**

Both studies identified some financial factors that contribute to promoting or building sound employment relations in the public universities in Ghana. These factors include wages and salaries, incentives and improvement in working conditions.

#### **7.5.1.1 Adequate wages and salaries**

The results of both studies indicated that adequate wages and salaries is one of the financial factors that promotes sound employment relations within the workplace. Using the results of the sample t-test, the quantitative study shown that there was significant agreement that remuneration or wages and salaries promotes sound employment relations ( $M = 4.50$ ,  $SD = .710$ ),  $t(198) = 29.862$ ,  $p < .0005$ ). The descriptive statistics also shown that the majority (92.5%) of the participants agreed that wages and salaries are key variables that promote sound employment relations. The qualitative study on the other hand revealed that the majority ( $n = 6$ ) of the participants expressed the view that remuneration is important in promoting sound employment relations within the workplace. The results of this current study support the findings of previous research conducted by researchers as discussed in chapter two (Odhong & Omolo, 2014; Oludele, 2014).

According to Odhong and Omolo (2014), wages and salaries are key variables that contribute to the promotion of sound employment relations. Odhong and Omolo (2014) suggest that remuneration involves compensating workers. Oludele (2014) defines compensation as wages and salaries that the employees receive on a daily, weekly or monthly basis. Oludele (2014) argues that compensation plays a crucial role in creating harmonious relationship within the workplace because it makes employee behaviour consistent with the organisation's aims and goals. Oludele

(2014) found that the main reason why people work is to earn a living. Therefore, when people are well paid it will help in avoiding agitations that will jeopardise the employment relations.

### **7.5.1.2 Incentives**

The results of the quantitative study found that incentives is another factor which promotes sound employment relations in the workplace. The majority (92.5%) of the participants agreed that incentives are key factors that promote sound employment relations in the public universities. However, with regards to the qualitative study, there were no findings to this effect. The results of the sample t-test further confirmed that there was significant agreement that incentives help promoted sound employment relations ( $M = 4.51$ ,  $SD = .730$ )  $t(199)$ , = 29.262,  $p < .0005$ ). However, with regards to the qualitative study, there were no findings to this effect. The results of the quantitative study agreed with previous studies (Oludele, 2014; Seniwoliba, 2013).

Benefits are usually given to employees for being members of the organisation (Oludele, 2014). Oludele (2014) contends that the employer can build an enjoyable working environment by offering the employees incentives and benefits based on their performance. Seniwoliba (2013) also argues that incentives and benefits contribute to job satisfaction among employees which helps to promote a good employer-employee relationship in an organisation. When employees are happy about their benefits system they in turn perceive that their organisation has their best interests at heart. Therefore, in order to build sound employment relations, employees must be given various adequate incentives or benefits that will motivate them.

### **7.5.1.3 Improvement in working conditions**

The results of both studies suggested that improvement in working conditions of staff is a key factor that promotes sound employment relations within the workplace. With regards to the results of the quantitative study, the sample t-test there was significant agreement that improvement in working conditions help to promote sound employment relations in the workplace ( $M = 4.40$ ,  $SD = .743$ ),  $t(199)$ , = 26.560,  $p < .0005$ ). Also, the results of the descriptive statistics shown that the majority (92%) of the participants agreed that improvement in working conditions contributes to promoting good employer-employee relations, while in the case of the qualitative study, most ( $n = 6$ ) of the participants indicated that improvement in working conditions will contribute to the

promotion of sound employment relations. The findings of this current study confirmed the results of previous studies (Oludele, 2014; Odhong & Omolo, 2014).

According to Odhong and Omolo (2014), working conditions refers to physical working environment and other non-pay aspects of the workers' terms and conditions of employment. The author recommends that an improvement in the working conditions of an employee will go a long way to enhance the working relationship between the employer and the employee within the work setting.

Oludele (2014) also found that good working conditions promotes good employer-employee relationship within the workplace. Oludele (2014) argues that good employer-employee relationship does not only depend on worker associations, employer associations, government, courts and tribunals but to a large extent it depends on the working conditions as well. The author suggests that improvement in working conditions of the employee will contribute to enhancing the employment relationship because it will help to minimise the necessary agitations in the workplace.

### **7.5.2 Non-financial factors that promote sound employment in the workplace**

The study identified some non-financial factors that promote sound employment relations in the public universities. These factors include working environment, freedom of association, government interventions, negotiation skills, proactive conduct of the stakeholders, proper handling of employee grievances and disputes, trust, mutual accommodation, opportunity for future growth and effective communications. Below is the discussion of the results.

#### **7.5.2.1 Conducive working environment**

The quantitative study found that a conducive working environment is one of the factors that contributes to promoting sound employment relations in the workplace. The results of the study revealed that the majority (92.5%) of the participants agreed that a conducive working environment contributes to promoting sound employment relations in the workplace. Also, the t-test revealed that there was significant agreement that a conducive working environment promotes sound employment relations in the workplace ( $M = 4.32$ ,  $SD = .735$ ),  $t(199) = 25.396$ ,  $p < .0005$ ). However, in the case of the qualitative study, there were no findings to this effect. The results of

the quantitative study agreed with the findings of past studies (Odhong & Omolo, 2014; Oludele, 2014).

Odhong and Omolo (2014) express the view that a good working environment is key to promoting peaceful employment relations. According to Odhong and Omolo (2014), the employer must take reasonable steps to ensure that health and safety of the employees are protected within the working environment.

Oludele (2014) is of the view that employees play a crucial role as far as the success of any organisation is concerned. It is against this background that the author suggests that the employer must ensure that the employees work under a satisfactory health and safety environment. Oludele (2014) adds that a satisfied employee is happier about his or her job and this will contribute to the success of the organisation. Section 118(1) of the Ghana Labour Act provides that the employer shall take every reasonable step to ensure that every employee working under him or her works under satisfactory health and safety conditions. Section 118(2) also provides that the employer shall supply and install in the work environment, equipment and systems of work that are safe and free from health hazards.

#### **7.5.2.2 Freedom of association**

In addition to the above, the quantitative study found that freedom of association is another key factor which contributes to promoting sound employment relations in the work place. Using the sample t-test, it was found that there was significant agreement that freedom of association ensures good employer-employee relations in the workplace ( $M = 4.27$ ,  $SD = .837$ ),  $t(199) = 21.458$ ,  $p < .0005$ ). The results of the descriptive statistics further revealed that the majority (88%) of the participants agreed that freedom of association promotes sound employment relations. However, with regards to the qualitative study, there were no findings to this effect. The findings of the quantitative study reaffirmed the findings of previous researchers (Odhong & Omolo, 2014; Oludele, 2014).

Oludele (2014) argues that by allowing workers to form and join unions or associations of their choice it will contribute to build stronger industrial peace. According to Oludele (2014), when workers are allowed to form or join unions of their choice, they perceive the organisation as

considering their best interests and this might create harmonious working relations in the workplace.

Chapter Five of the Ghanaian Constitution Act 527 of 1992 guarantees workers the right and freedom to form or join unions of their choice. Odhong and Omolo (2014) also found that when workers are allowed to join or form associations of their choice it will help to deepen workplace democracy which will go a long way in promoting sound employment relations.

### **7.5.2.3 Government interventions**

Government interventions was found to be another factor which contributes to promoting good employment relations within the workplace. The results of the quantitative study revealed that the majority (84.5%) of the participants agreed that government interventions contribute to promoting sound employment relations. Regarding the results of the sample t-test, there was significant agreement that government interventions promote sound employment sound employment relations in the workplace ( $M = 4.14$ ,  $SD = .928$ ),  $t(199) = 17.298$ ,  $p < .0005$ ). On the contrary, the qualitative study has no finding to this effect. Moreover, in the case of the qualitative study there were no findings in relation to this. The findings of the quantitative research reaffirm the findings of previous studies (Oludele, 2014; Siddiqua *et al.*, 2014).

Siddiqua *et al.* (2014) are of the opinion that in order to ensure good employment relations between the employer and employees, the government must make law for the compulsory recognition of trade unions in every organisation. Siddiqua *et al.* (2014) add that government should intervene to settle industrial disputes between management and employees if the parties fail to reach amicable resolution.

Oludele (2014) also found that government interventions to a large extent play a crucial role in sustaining the employment relations. According to Oludele (2014), government interventions include, but are not limited to, policies, legislation, job creation, tax reduction, building strong institutions, and protection of the labour market. Oludele (2014) is of the view that government interventions can have a direct and indirect bearing on the employment relations system in a country. Oludele (2014) recommends that government interventions must be aimed at the parties involved in the employment relations in order to prevent all forms of conflict that might occur.

#### **7.5.2.4 Good negotiation skills**

The quantitative study further found that good negotiation skills among the parties is another important factor which contributes to sound employment relations. With regards to the quantitative study, the majority (88%) of the participants agreed that good negotiation skills are important in promoting sound employment relations within the workplace. Again, the sample t-test confirmed that there was significant agreement that effective negotiation skills contribute to sound employment relations in the workplace ( $M = 4.14$ ,  $SD.823$ ),  $t(199)$ , = 20.184,  $p < .0005$ ). However, in the case of the qualitative research, there were no findings to this effect. The results of the quantitative study reaffirmed the findings of previous studies (Odhong & Omolo, 2014; Siddiqua *et al.*, 2014).

Odhong and Omolo (2014) are of the view that collective bargaining can only be effective if the parties possess the requisite skills for the negotiation process. The authors recommend that training and development must be provided for the parties regarding employment relations to enable them to acquire the necessary skills for effective collective bargaining. Odhong and Omolo (2014) recommend that the success of every negotiation process depends on the ability of the parties to bargain with each other. Therefore, in order to ensure successful bargaining, the parties must have the negotiation skills required for negotiation.

Osakede and Ijimakinwa (2014) also found that negotiation skills are important in ensuring good employer-employee relationship. Osakede and Ijimakinwa (2014) averred that with good negotiation skills, the parties are able to reach amicable resolution of disputes that are likely to jeopardise the employment relations.

#### **7.5.2.5 Proactive conduct of the stakeholders**

The results of the quantitative research found that proactive conduct of the stakeholders to employment relations is another key variable that enhances sound employment relations within the workplace. Using the sample t-test, the results revealed that there was significant agreement proactive conducts of the stakeholders enhance good employer-employee relations in the workplace ( $M = 4.33$ ,  $SD = .770$ ),  $t(199)$ , = 24.347,  $p < .0005$ ). The descriptive statistics also shown that the majority (92.5%) of the participants agreed that proactive conduct of the stakeholders promotes sound employment relations. However, in the case of the qualitative study, there were

no findings to this effect. The findings of the quantitative study further supported the findings of the previous studies (Oludele, 2014; Sule, 2013).

According to Oludele (2014), proactive conduct in the workplace has the potential to contribute to sound employment relations. However, he argues that the conduct of the stakeholders in the workplace can have negative or positive implications on the employment relations. Oludele (2014) posits that the extent to which people conduct themselves in the organisation determines the nature of the employment relations.

Sule (2013) also found that the conduct of the parties is an important factor that can affect industrial relations. Sule (2013) recommends that the parties involved in employment relations must conduct themselves in a way that will promote industrial peace or harmony. The employer must ensure that there are policies in place which will serve as a guide to individuals' conduct in the organisation.

#### **7.5.2.6 Proactive management of employee grievances and disputes**

Both studies found that proactive management of employee grievances and disputes is another factor which promotes sound employment relations in the workplace. The results of the quantitative study revealed that most (93.5%) of the participants agreed that proper handling of employee grievances and disputes promotes sound employment relations. The sample t-test also confirmed that there was significant agreement that proactive management of grievances and disputes in the workplace promotes sound employment relations in the workplace ( $M = 4.45$ ,  $SD = .755$ ),  $t(199) = 27.072$ ,  $p < .0005$ ). Moreover, in the case of the qualitative study, most ( $n = 4$ ) of the participants expressed the view that proactive management of employee grievances and disputes promotes sound employment relations in the workplace. The findings of this study reaffirmed the findings of previous studies (Chaudhuri, 2012; Seniwoliba, 2013; Sule, 2013).

In this study, Chaudhuri (2012) found that proactive management of employee grievances serves as a means of ensuring industrial peace. According to Chaudhuri (2012), management should develop mechanisms for resolving employee grievances at an early stage rather than wait for the issues to escalate.

Sule (2013) also recommends that as part of ensuring industrial peace, management must make sure that employees' grievances are given immediate attention and are settled amicably.



Seniwoliba (2013) discovered that proactive handling of employee grievances is one of the prerequisites for good employer-employee relations.

#### **7.5.2.7 Mutual trust**

The results of the qualitative study revealed that trust is another important factor which promotes sound employment relations in the workplace. According to the study, the majority ( $n = 6$ ) of the participants expressed the view that trust is very important in promoting sound employment relations. However, in the case of the quantitative study, there were no findings to this effect. The findings of the qualitative study agreed with the findings of previous researchers (Chaudhuri, 2012, Siddiqua *et al.*, 2014).

According to Siddiqua *et al.* (2014), trust is an important factor which promotes industrial harmony. The authors are of the view that both the employer and employees must help in creating an environment of mutual cooperation, confidence and respect. Siddiqua *et al.* (2014) recommends that the employer must adopt a progressive outlook and must respect the rights of workers. On the other hand, trade unions must convince their members to work for the common goal of the organisation.

Chaudhuri (2012) supports the view expressed by the above authors that mutual trust is a key variable for building harmonious relationship in the workplace. Chaudhuri (2012) recommends that the parties involved in employment relations must develop the atmosphere of mutual cooperation, confidence and respect. Chaudhuri (2012) argues that “when there is trust there is peace.” Sule (2013) adds that sustained steps must be taken by the management and workers to ensure some level of trust among the parties or stakeholders.

#### **7.5.2.8 Mutual accommodation**

The results of the qualitative study found that mutual accommodation within the workplace is another factor which promotes sound employment relations. The results of the study indicated that most ( $n = 4$ ) of the participants expressed the opinion that mutual accommodation is important in promoting good employer-employee relationship. However, in the case of the quantitative study, there were no findings to this extent. The findings of the qualitative research further gave credence to the findings of previous studies (Chaudhuri, 2012; Siddiqua *et al.*, 2014; Sule, 2013).

According to Chaudhuri (2012), employers must learn to accommodate the employees by recognising the right of collective bargaining. Chaudhuri (2012, p.66) emphasises that in serious organisations, “there must be great emphasis on mutual accommodation rather than conflict or uncompromising attitude.” Chaudhuri (2012) recommends that sustainable efforts should be made to introduce a communal way of living and working together in the organisation.

Sule (2013) also found that mutual accommodation in the organisation will help promote healthy relationships among the parties. Siddiqua *et al.* (2014) also agrees with the above authors that mutual accommodation is one of the key constructs that contributes to building sound employment relations. Siddiqua *et al.* (2014, p.1243) postulate that in any organisation, there must be “great emphasis on mutual accommodation rather than conflict or uncompromising attitude.” The authors are of the view that a conflictual attitude does not promote industrial harmony.

#### **7.5.2.9 Opportunity for future growth and promotion**

The results of the qualitative research further revealed that opportunity for growth and promotion are other factors that promote sound employment relations. With reference to the interviews, most ( $n = 4$ ) of the respondents recommended that the opportunity for growth and promotion are important factors that create good employer-employee relations. However, in the case of the quantitative study, there were no findings to this effect. The results of the qualitative research supported the findings of previous studies (Singh, 2015; Sule, 2013).

Sule (2013) contends that the employer must provide training opportunities for the employees to acquire the knowledge, skills and capacities necessary to do their work well. The author further recommends that good employer-employee relationship can be enhanced through promotion. Sule (2013) suggests that the qualified persons who need promotion within the workplace must be given such an opportunity as it will motivate others to also put in their best effort towards the accomplishment of the organisation’s goals.

Singh (2015) posits that training is very crucial in improving the working relationship between the employer and employees. According to Singh (2015), employee growth can be achieved through training and development. The author recommends that training is important for the development of both employer and employees.

#### **7.5.2.10 Effective communication**

The results of both studies found that effective communication is another factor which promotes sound employment relations within the workplace. With regards to the quantitative study, the majority (92.5%) of the participants agreed that effective communication contributes to good employer-employee relationship. The sample t-test revealed that there was significant agreement that effective communication promotes good employer-employee relations in the workplace ( $M = 4.36$ ,  $SD = .782$ ),  $t(199) = 24.494$ ,  $p < .0005$ ). Based on the qualitative study, the majority ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants expressed the view that communication is vital in promoting good industrial harmony. The results of this current study agreed with the findings of previous studies (Odhong & Omolo, 2014; Sule, 2013).

Odhong and Omolo (2014) suggest that effective communication within an organisation can be used as a vehicle to promote sound employment relations. Odhong and Omolo (2014) recommend that there must be a proper mechanism in place within an organisation to ensure effectiveness of communication in order to achieve industrial peace. Sule (2013) expresses the view that effective communication is key to sound employment relations. According to Sule (2013), there should be systems in place to ensure prompt and effective communication among all the parties involved in employment relations.

#### **7.5.2.11 Collective bargaining or collective agreements**

Lastly, the results of the qualitative study revealed that collective bargaining or agreement is another key factor which promotes sound employment relations. With reference to the interviews, most ( $n = 4$ ) of the participants cited various reasons why collective bargaining is important in promoting sound employment relations in the workplace. However, in the case of the quantitative study, there were no findings to this effect. The results of the qualitative research reaffirm the findings of previous studies (Ahmad & Basheer, 2012; Gyamfi, 2011; Odhong & Omolo, 2014; Siddiqua *et al.*, 2014).

According to Odhong and Omolo (2014), collective bargaining is a negotiation process which takes place between the representatives of employees, employers and even the government, concerning the discussion of terms and conditions of employment. A collective bargaining process helps in

resolving an impasse between the employer and employees which contributes to building sound employment relations.

Siddiqua *et al.* (2014) also found that collective agreement is a key variable that contributes to building good employment relations. Siddiqua *et al.* (2014) are of the view that when parties take collective decision during the collective bargaining process it helps to avoid any future grievance that might affect the employment relations.

In their study, Ahmad and Basheer (2012) found that strike action is seen as part of a collective bargaining process within an organisation. According to Ahmad and Basheer (2012, p.423), “collective bargaining is directly linked to industrial action because it determines whether the party should embark on a strike or not.” A collective bargaining process ensures cooperation and coordination among the parties. Ahmad and Basheer (2012) recommends that parties to the industrial dispute must explore collective bargaining as a means of preventing strikes in the organisation.

## **7.6 Objective 5: Addressing strike action in the public universities in Ghana**

The last objective of this study was to identify measures that will help in addressing the phenomenon of strike action in public universities in Ghana. Under this objective, both financial and non-financial measures were identified by the researcher to address strike action in the public universities. The financial factors are first discussed, followed by the non-financial factors.

### **7.6.1 Financial measures of addressing strike action in the Ghanaian public universities**

Both studies identified a number of financial factors that will help in addressing strike action in the public universities. These factors include adequate wages and salaries, proper implementation of the new pay policy, books and research allowances, adequate funding of the universities, improvement in working conditions and management of the economy. The following were the results of the study.

#### **7.6.1.1 Adequate wage and salaries**

The results of the study revealed that payment of adequate wages and salaries to the employees is a major factor that will help in addressing strike action in the public universities. With reference to the results of the quantitative study, the majority (91.5%) of the participants agreed that adequate

wages and salaries is key to addressing strike action in public universities. In addition, the sample t-test shown that there was significant agreement that adequate wages and salaries contributed to addressing employee strike action the public universities ( $M = 4.28$ ,  $SD = .770$ ),  $t(199) = 23.428$ ,  $p < .0005$ ). In the case of the qualitative study, most ( $n = 7$ ) of the participants recommended that adequate and better wages and salaries is key in addressing strike action in the universities. The findings of this present study reaffirmed the findings of previous researchers as discussed in chapter two (Gyamfi, 2011; Ibrahim & Alhaji, 2015; Ige Akindele, 2014; Jamasmie, 2013; Murwirapachena & Sibanda, 2014; Osakede & Ijimakinwa, 2014; Seniwoliba, 2013; Seniwoliba, 2014; Surujlal, 2014).

In his study, Gyamfi (2011) also found that an adequate salary is a key factor that will help to reduce industrial action in Ghana. The author suggests that since wages and salaries are the main issues contributing to massive strikes in the country, the government must try as much as possible by ensuring that adequate salaries are given to the employees.

Ige Akindele (2014) also recommends that government must increase remuneration of workers. In Nigeria, the agitation for an increment in wages and salaries is a contributing factor to strikes as in the case of Ghana. It is against this background that Ige Akindele (2014) also proposes that there must be an increment in wages and salaries of universities' employees, especially the lecturers.

#### **7.6.1.2 Proper implementation of the new pay policy**

The quantitative study found that proper implementation of the new pay policy will help in addressing strike action in the public universities. With regards to the results of the quantitative study, the majority (87.5%) of the participants agreed that proper implementation of the new pay policy will help address the frequent strike action in public universities. Furthermore, the results of the sample t-test revealed that there was significant agreement proper implementation of the new pay policy helped address strike action in the public universities ( $M = 4.20$ ,  $SD = 4.20$ ),  $t(199) = 20.339$ ,  $p < .0005$ ). However, in the case of the qualitative study, there were no findings to this effect. The findings of the quantitative study agreed with the findings of previous researchers (Aliu & Fuseini, 2014; Seniwoliba, 2014).

Aliu and Fuseini (2014) recommend that if the challenges that are associated with the implementation of the new pay policy are adequately addressed it will help in minimising the

frequent strike action in the public sector. Aliu and Fuseini (2014) recommend that in order to address perennial strike action in the public sector, all workers must be paid the market premium. In addition, the authors suggest that there must be continuous education or public awareness regarding the implementation of the new pay policy.

Seniwoliba (2014) also discovered that despite the challenges with the new pay policy, it has been found to be a worthwhile intervention and if properly and fully managed it will play a significant role in harmonising the remuneration in the public sector and enhance the pay of the public sector workers in a way that is equitable and consistent with the country's quest to ensure improvement in efficiency and productivity of the entire public sector. Seniwoliba (2014) recommends that in order to address the challenges associated with the implementation of the new pay policy, the Fair Wages and Salary Commission must ensure that the public is educated on the pay policy. The author asserts that the current strike action in the country is not because the public sector workers do not appreciate the new policy but it was because the Fair Wages and Salary Commission failed to do proper education in terms of who is qualified for the market premium and the various categories of allowances for the workers. Seniwoliba (2014) further suggests that the new pay policy should not be seen as a tool by the politicians.

### **7.6.1.3 Books and research allowances**

Both studies found that restoring the books and research allowances for lecturers will help to address strike action in the universities. With regards to the quantitative study, the majority (88.5%) of the participants agreed that restoring the books and research allowances will serve as a measure to address strike action in the universities. The results of the sample t-test also confirmed that there was significant agreement that restoring books and research allowances contributed to addressing employee strike action in the public universities in Ghana ( $M = 4.37, SD = .798, t(198), = 24.150, p < .0005$ ). While in the case of the qualitative study, the majority ( $n = 7$ ) of the participants recommended that their books and research allowances must be restored to avoid further strike action in the universities. The findings of this current study also agreed with the previous research (Okoampa-Ahoofe, 2013; Sarfo & Ngula, 2014; Seniwoliba, 2014).

According to Sarfo and Ngula (2014), the government of Ghana must try to restore the old books and research allowances of universities' lecturers in order to limit the agitations in the education

sector. Seniwoliba (2014) also recommends that the government must restore the research and books allowances in order to avert strikes in the public universities. Okoampa-Ahoofe (2013) also supports the views of the above authors. Okoampa-Ahoofe (2013) opines that Ghanaian lecturers deserve their research and books allowances. He therefore recommends that the government must as a matter of urgency restore the research and books allowances of lecturers across the public universities in the country so that they will avoid embarking on strike action.

#### **7.6.1.4 Adequate funding of the universities**

The quantitative study found that adequate funding of the universities will help to address strike action in the Ghanaian public universities. The results of the sample t-test shown that there was significant agreement that adequate funding helped address employee strike action in the public universities ( $M = 4.23$ ,  $SD = .792$ ),  $t(199) = 21.870$ ,  $p < .0005$ ). The descriptive statistics also revealed that the majority (89.5%) of the participants agreed to the fact that adequate funding should be provided for all the public universities in the country so as to address the strike action. However, with reference to the qualitative study, there were no findings to this effect. The results of the quantitative study agree with the previous findings (Momodu *et al.*, 2014).

Adequate funding of the public universities has been identified as one of the measures of addressing strike action in the public universities. Momodu *et al.* (2014) found that adequate funding of the universities is a key factor which assists in addressing strike action in the universities in Nigeria. The authors recommend that the Nigerian government must progressively improve funding to the public universities so as to reduce the frequent strike action in the system. Ige Akindele (2014) also discovered that funding is an important tool which will help in minimising the frequent occurrence of strike action in the universities. According to Ige Akindele (2014), UNESCO recommended that every nation must allocate 26% of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to be spent on education. Ige Akindele (2014, p.24), further argues that there is the “need for increase in the financial allocation to the education sector, from where the tertiary institutions derive their funds.” When this is properly done, it will reduce the financial burdens of the universities which will go a long way in addressing the frequent strike action in the universities.

### **7.6.1.5 Improvement in working conditions**

It was found that improvement in working conditions of universities' staff is another key measure which will help in addressing strike action in the Ghanaian public universities. With regards to the results of the quantitative study, the majority (92%) of the participants agreed that improvement in working conditions contributes to addressing strike action in the public universities. The results of the sample t-test revealed that there was significant agreement that improvement in working conditions contributed to addressing strike action in the public universities ( $M = 4.18$ ,  $SD = .777$ ),  $t(198) = 21.444$ ,  $p < .0005$ ). On the other hand, the results of the qualitative study indicated that the majority ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants suggested that improvement in working conditions in the university is key to addressing strike action. The findings of this study conformed to the findings of previous researchers (Ahmad & Basheer, 2012; Gyamfi, 2011; Ige Akindele, 2014; Momodu, Matudi & Momodu, 2014; Nweke, 2015; Seniwoliba, 2013).

Nweke (2015) suggests that as part of a strategy of addressing strikes in the tertiary institutions, the government must provide a lot of interventions which include ensuring reasonable standards of working conditions. In their study, Ahmad and Basheer (2012) also found that improvement in working conditions is key to addressing strikes in Nigeria. According to Ahmad and Basheer (2012), the working environment and working conditions are directly linked to industrial actions. It is against this background that the authors recommend that working conditions of employees must be improved. Ige Akindele (2014) also supports the view of the above authors that improved working conditions serve as a means of minimising the frequency of strikes in an organisation.

### **7.6.1.6 Proper management of the economy by the government**

The quantitative study found that proper management of the economy by the government will also serve as a means of addressing strike action in the country. The results of the quantitative study show that the majority (89.5%) of the participants agree that proper management of the economy will help to address strike action in the country. In addition, the sample t-test revealed that there was significant agreement that proper management of the economy by government helped to minimise employee strike action in the public universities in Ghana ( $M = 4.33$ ,  $SD = .815$ ),  $t(199) = 23.075$ ,  $p < .0005$ ). However, with regards to the qualitative study, there were no findings to this



effect. The findings of the quantitative research agreed with previous studies (Olusegun Ajayi, 2014; Seniwoliba, 2014).

As discussed above, mismanagement of the Ghanaian economy by the ruling government is one of the causes of industrial action in the country. Therefore, it was found that in order to address strike action in the country there must be effective or proper management of the economy by the government (Seniwoliba, 2014). According to Seniwoliba (2014), the government must take proactive steps to address the economic challenges facing the country in order to address the numerous industrial actions in the country. The author contends that it is the responsibility of the government to ensure that the economy is doing better so as to address poverty and unemployment in the country.

Olusegun Ajayi (2014) also found that proper handling or management of the economy will help in addressing frequent strike action in Nigeria. According to Olusegun Ajayi (2014), the Nigerian government must implement better economic policies that will help in fixing the ailing economy. There is no doubt that Nigeria and Ghana are facing serious economic crisis due to poor management of the economy and high levels of corruption. The situation does not only affect the education sector in both countries but it has affected all the sectors. Olusegun Ajayi (2014) argues that this challenge has contributed to several strikes in both countries. Therefore, in order to address the issue of strike action, both countries must come out with new reforms that will save the economy from collapsing.

#### **7.6.2 Non-financial factors that help in addressing strike action in the public universities in Ghana**

Both studies have identified a number of non-financial factors that will assist in addressing strike action in the Ghanaian public universities. These factors include proper handling of employee grievances or proactive management of disputes, fulfilment of promises or agreements by the government, good negotiation skills by all the parties, collective agreements or bargaining, a conducive working environment and mutual respect.

### **6.6.2.1 Proactive management of employee grievances or disputes**

The results of the two studies found that proactive management of disputes in the public universities will help in addressing strike action. With reference to the quantitative study, the majority (92%) of the participants agreed that proactive management of disputes will assist in addressing strike action in the universities. Beside the descriptive statistics, the sample t-test shown that there was significant agreement that proactive management of employee grievances helped address employee strike action in the Ghanaian public universities ( $M = 4.22$ ,  $SD = .769$ ),  $t(199) = 22.337$ ,  $p < .0005$ ). The results of the qualitative study also indicated that the majority ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants recommended that proactive management of disputes or conflicts will help in addressing strike action in the public universities. The findings of this study corresponded with the findings of previous studies (Ige Akindele, 2014; Gyamfi, 2011; Oludele, 2014; Olugbenga, 2011; Seniwoliba, 2013).

As discussed above, most strike action in Ghana occurred due to the inability of the government to take proactive steps in addressing the concerns of workers (Olugbenga, 2011). Aidelunuoghene (2014) recommends that in order to address strike action in Nigeria, the government and employers must design a system that will help in addressing conflicts or disputes that are likely to result in industrial action. According to Aidelunuoghene (2014), proactive management of disputes in the workplace will help in avoiding or minimising strike action.

Oludele (2014) also found that proper management of disputes is an important tool used in dealing with the occurrence of strike action within the workplace. Oludele (2014) posits that most often workers do embark on strike action when their concerns have not been properly addressed by management. Therefore, in order to avoid future strike action in the country, the employers and government must take proactive steps in dealing with disputes that are likely to result in strikes in the workplace. Seniwoliba (2013) also recommends that there must be effective systems to ensure that the parties resolve their disputes through a consensus-based process, namely conciliation and mediation, before reverting to arbitration and/or adjudication through a tribunal or labour court. Gyamfi (2011) also adds that a crisis intervention committee should be established at each of the various universities in order to address issues such as lecturers' strike action through dialogue. In

his study, Ige Akindele (2014) also suggests that government should always engage trade unions in dialogue so as to ascertain their grievances and find lasting solutions to them.

### **7.6.2.2 Fulfilment of promises or agreement by the government**

The results of the quantitative study discovered that the majority (83.5%) of the participants agreed that fulfilment of promises or agreements by the government will help to address strike action in the universities. Furthermore, the t-test revealed that there was significant agreement that honouring agreements or promises helped address strike action in the public universities ( $M = 4.23$ ,  $SD = .916$ ),  $t(199) = 18.918$ ,  $p < .0005$ ). In the case of the qualitative study, most ( $n = 4$ ) of the participants have recommended that government must fulfil its promises or agreements that were made in order to avoid or reduce strike action in the universities. The findings of this study reaffirmed the findings of previous research (Gyamfi, 2011; Ige Akindele, 2014; Ezeagba, 2014; Momodu *et al.*, 2014; Seniwoliba, 2014).

Ezeagba (2014) strongly recommends that if government is able to honour its part of agreements made to employees it will help in addressing strikes in the country. According to Ezeagba (2014), agreements are meant to be fulfilled and once such agreements are reached between the parties (employer and employees) it will help avoid disputes which often lead to strike action.

According to Momodu *et al.* (2014), the government must demonstrate a strong sense of commitment and sincerity by honouring the agreements entered into with labour unions in the country. Momodu *et al.* (2014) assert that when the governments honour their agreements it will help to maintain industrial peace or harmony which will contribute to minimising the occurrence of strikes. Gyamfi (2011) also recommends that the government must honour collective agreements with union leaders in order to avoid the possibility of strikes.

### **7.6.2.3 Good negotiation skills**

The results of the quantitative study revealed that most (92%) of the participants agreed that good negotiation skills among the parties contributes to addressing strike action in the public universities. Also, using the results of the sample t-test, it was found that there was significant agreement that good negotiation skills contributed to addressing employee strike action in the public universities in Ghana ( $M = 4.39$ ,  $SD = .794$ ),  $t(199) = 24.679$ ,  $p < .0005$ ). However, with

regards to the qualitative study, there were no findings to this effect. The results of the quantitative study reaffirm the findings of previous researchers (Gyamfi, 2011; Ogunbanjo, 2014; Seniwoliba, 2013).

Gyamfi (2011) found that negotiation and dialogue are important factors that contribute to addressing strike action within the workplace. According to Gyamfi (2011), the parties must try as much as possible to negotiate or dialogue with one another in order to reach consensus so as to avoid the possibility of strike action in the future.

Ogunbanjo (2014) recommends that good negotiation skills is a key strategy in addressing strike action in the workplace. Ogunbanjo (2014) argues that good negotiation skills will enable the parties to reach amicable resolution of disputes that are likely to result in industrial action. Ogunbanjo (2014) suggests that the parties involved at the bargaining table must be trained to enable them to acquire necessary skills to effectively negotiate during the bargaining process.

Seniwoliba (2013) suggests that everyone party to the negotiation table must have the requisite skill in terms of bargaining in order to prevent deadlock that might result in strike action. Seniwoliba (2013) asserts that strike action often takes place if the parties are not able to resolve their disputes or grievances. Therefore, in order to effectively deal with disputes, the parties must have the skill that will enable them to bargain or negotiate with one another.

#### **7.6.2.4 Collective bargaining or collective agreements**

The qualitative study also found that collective bargaining or agreements is another measure which helps in addressing strike action in the workplace. Based on the study, the majority ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants recommended that collective bargaining or agreement is an important tool which will help in addressing the phenomenon of strike action in the public universities. However, the quantitative study has no findings to this effect. The findings of the qualitative study agreed with the findings of previous studies (Ahmad & Basheer, 2012; Gyamfi, 2011; Ige Akindele, 2014; Odeku, 2014).

Ahmad and Basheer (2012, p.42) suggest that collective bargaining is directly linked to industrial action because it determines whether the party should embark on a strike or not. A collective bargaining process ensures cooperation and coordination among the parties. Ahmad and Basheer

(2012) add that in the collective bargaining process the level of strike action will be very low if there is cooperation and coordination among the parties.

Odeku (2014) also suggests that collective bargaining is a powerful tool which has the potential to minimise strike action in an organisation. According to Odeku (2014), collective bargaining is a legal document that outlines how disputes need to be settled or addressed when the need arises. Odeku (2014) opines that collective agreement is an alternative to strike action in industrial disputes because it helps both parties to reach voluntary agreement on the matter at hand. Gyamfi (2011) also recommends collective bargaining as an important tool in dealing with industrial action. In his study, Gyamfi (2011) found that strike action could be prevented through an effective collective bargaining process.

#### **7.6.2.5 Conducive working environment**

The results of the qualitative study found that a conducive working environment contributes to addressing strike action in the public universities. The study revealed that the majority ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants strongly recommended that a conducive working environment in the public universities is necessary to avert future strikes. However, in the case of the quantitative study, there were no findings to this effect because there was no question on this in the questionnaires. The results of the qualitative study agreed with the findings of previous studies (Gyamfi, 2011; Seniwoliba, 2013).

Seniwoliba (2013) suggests that a conducive working environment is necessary in addressing industrial disputes that may have the potential of resulting in strike action. In a study conducted by Seniwoliba (2013) on Ghana's numerous workers' strikes; a cause for concern, was that it was found that a poor working environment is a contributing factor to strike action in Ghana. It is against that background that the authors recommend that the government and employers must take reasonable steps to ensure that employees work under satisfactory health and safety environment. Gyamfi (2011) also made the recommendation to the government to provide a conducive working environment for nurses and teachers in order to address industrial action in the country.

### **7.6.2.6 Mutual respect**

The qualitative study further found mutual respect is another measure which helps in addressing strike action in the public universities. The results of the study indicated that the majority ( $n = 5$ ) of the participants recommended that proactive management of disputes or conflicts will help in addressing strike action in public universities. In the case of the quantitative study, there were no findings to this effect due to the fact that there was no question in the questionnaires which sought to find out from the participants whether mutual respect is an important tool which will help address strike action. Notwithstanding this, the findings of the qualitative study agreed with the findings of previous research (Kumari, 2013, Olusegun Ajayi, 2014; Venkatesh & Kala, 2010).

Kumari (2013) also recommends that mutual respect between the employer and employees is key in addressing workplace disputes and strike action. In a study conducted by Kumari (2013) on the problem and prospect of industrial relations in the coal industry with special reference to Central Coalfields Limited, Ranchi, it was found that mutual respect is a key variable which ensures harmonious relationship within the workplace.

Venkatesh and Kala (2013) argue that mutual respect is important in addressing strike action within the workplace. According to Venkatesh and Kala (2013), the parties should respect each other's views when dealing with disputes that might result in strike action. Venkatesh and Kala (2013) contend that mutual respect will assist the parties to reach amicable resolution of disputes that have the potential of causing strike action within the organisation.

A study conducted by Olusegun Ajayi (2014) on academic staff unions at universities and academic performance of students in Ekiti State University revealed that mutual respect among stakeholders plays a crucial role in addressing employee disputes and strike action. Olusegun Ajayi (2014) recommends that the government must respect the views expressed by the union leaders and the union must do the same if only they intend to deal with disputes and strike action that often occurs.

## **7.7 Conclusion**

This chapter provided full discussion on the findings in accordance with the objectives of the study as outlined in chapter one. The discussion of these findings were based on the findings of relevant

studies pertaining to strike action and employment relations. The first discussion was based on the impact of employee strike action regarding employment relations. The chapter proceeded to discuss the findings relating to the impact of strike action on the Ghanaian public universities as well as the country. It further discussed the findings pertaining to the causes of strike action in the Ghanaian public universities. Additionally, it gave a full account of the findings regarding the factors that promote sound employment relations in the workplace. Finally, the chapter presented the discussion of the findings that pertains to how strike action could be addressed in the Ghanaian public universities. The next chapter presents the summary of the findings, conclusion and recommendations.

## **CHAPTER EIGHT**

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **8.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter provided the discussion on the findings of the study in accordance with the research objectives. This chapter provides the conclusion and recommendations of the study based on the findings. The recommendations were directed to governments, employers, employees, their unions and other stakeholders in the educational sector in relation to strike action and employment relations. The recommendations for further research are also provided in this study.

#### **8.2 General conclusion based on the findings**

The study investigated the impact of employee strike action regarding employment relations in Ghanaian public universities. Before a conclusion and recommendations are made, it is very important to reiterate the main objectives of the study so as to ensure that they are aligned with the conclusion and recommendations.

#### **8.3 Reiterating the objectives of the study**

The purpose of reiterating the objectives of the study is to enable the researcher to stay focused on the phenomenon under investigation and also to allow him to provide an objective conclusion and recommendations in relation to the findings. The following were the research objectives that were addressed in this study:

8.3.1 To investigate the impact strike action has on employment relations in public universities in Accra, Ghana.

8.3.2 To identify the extent to which the employees' strike action affects the public universities in Accra, Ghana, and the country as a whole.

8.3.3 To determine the causes of strikes in public universities in Accra, Ghana.

8.3.4 To examine factors that promote sound employment relations in public universities in Accra, Ghana.



8.3.5 To establish measures that can be put in place to minimise the occurrence of strike action in public universities in Accra, Ghana.

### **8.3.1 Addressing the research objective one**

As discussed in chapter two, the main objective of this study is to investigate the extent to which employee strike action impacts on employment relations. The findings of the study revealed that employee strike action may impact on employment relations in terms of employee dismissal, loss of remuneration, unhealthy relationship, intimidation, organisational conflicts and mistrust. According to the findings, these are the effects of strike action on the employment relations. Although striking is a constitutional right in Ghana, most of the participants expressed the view that it has several implications on employment relations as confirmed by the findings of this study. These results reaffirmed previous studies as discussed in chapter two. However, most respondents also disagreed that strike action may constitute the basis for retrenchment within the workplace. Therefore, based on the findings of the study it can be concluded that employee strike action affects employment relations by contributing to employee dismissal, loss of remuneration, unhealthy relationship, intimidation of both strikers and non-strikers, organisational conflicts and mistrust.

### **8.3.2 Addressing the research objective two**

The second objective was to identify the impact of employee strike action on the Ghanaian public universities and the country. The findings of both studies revealed that there are several consequences of strike action on both the universities and the country. With regards to universities, the impact of strike action is disruption of research and publications, low student performance, disruption of student learning, unhealthy employment relationship among the parties, disruption of effective teaching, delay in students' graduation and disruption of the academic calendar. In Ghana as a whole, the impact of employee strike action includes loss of investment, loss of employment or jobs, loss of government revenue, injuries and loss of life due to violence, bad reputation or image, loss of productive hours, falling standard of education, cost implications and national security threat. From the above discussion, it can be seen that even though strike action is a right in Ghana, the consequences are great on both the institutions and the country. In addition to the institutions and the country, it also affects the employees themselves and employers. It can

therefore be concluded based on the findings that employee strike action does not only affect the institutions and the county but it also affects the employees (workers) and employers.

### **8.3.3 Addressing the research objective three**

As mentioned in chapter one, the third objective of the study was to identify the causes of strike action in Ghanaian public universities. Both studies revealed that there are numerous factors that are responsible for strike action in Ghanaian public universities. The causes were classified into two groups, namely financial and non-financial factors. According to the results, the main financial factors responsible for strike action in Ghanaian public universities include poor wages and salaries, introduction of the new pay policy (single spine salary structure), poor condition of service, inadequate funding, books and research allowances, delay in payment of wages and salaries and mismanagement of the economy. The non-financial factors include improper handling of employee grievances, failure by the government to honour promises or agreements, poor or lack of negotiation skills, mistrust or lack of trust, poor employment relations among the parties and unnecessary interference in the affairs of the universities by government. These findings reaffirmed the findings of several researchers as discussed in chapter two.

### **8.3.4 Addressing the research objective four**

The fourth objective was to examine factors that promote sound employment relations in Ghanaian public universities. The findings of both studies have shown that there are so many factors that promote sound or harmonious relationships not only in Ghanaian public universities but across every organisation. In this study, the findings of the factors that promote sound employment relations were classified into two groups, namely financial and non-financial factors. The financial factors that promote sound employment relations within the workplace comprise of adequate wages and salaries (remuneration), incentives and improvement in working conditions. The non-financial factors on the other hand include a conducive working environment, freedom of association, government interventions, good negotiation skills, proactive conduct of the stakeholders, proactive management of employee grievances and disputes, mutual trust, mutual accommodation, opportunity for future growth and promotion, effective communication and collective bargaining or agreement. The factors that promote sound employment relations in this

study were discussed in chapter three. These findings can further be seen in the conceptual framework presented in chapter three.

### **8.3.5 Addressing the research objective five**

The last objective of the study investigated the measures of addressing strike action in Ghanaian public universities. The study elicited the views of the participants regarding how strike action could be addressed in public universities in the country. With reference to both studies, the participants expressed the view that there are several measures that can be put into place to address the frequent strike action in Ghanaian public universities. These measures were categorised into financial and non-financial measures or factors. According to the findings of both studies, the financial measures of addressing strike action in Ghanaian public universities include adequate wage and salaries, proper implementation of the new pay policy, restoring the old books and research allowances, adequate funding of the universities, improvement in working conditions and proper management of the economy by the government. The nonfinancial measures on the other hand include proactive management of employee grievances and disputes, fulfilment of promises or agreements by the government, good negotiation skills, collective bargaining or agreement, a conducive working environment and mutual respect.

## **8.4 Recommendations**

The following were the recommendations of the study based on the findings.

### **8.4.1 Payment of adequate wages and salaries**

The study found that poor wages and salaries is a contributing factor to employee strike action in Ghana. Therefore, the study recommends that in order to address the phenomenon of strike action in the country the government and employers must ensure that adequate wages and salaries are paid to the employees. This recommendation further supported the recommendations made by various researchers (Gyamfi, 2011; Ibrahim & Alhaji, 2015; Ige Akindele, 2014; Jamasmie, 2013; Murwirapachena & Sibanda, 2014; Osakede & Ijimakinwa, 2014; Seniwoliba, 2013; Seniwoliba, 2014; Surujlal, 2014). In his study, Gyamfi (2011) also found that adequate wages and salaries is a key factor that will help to reduce industrial action in Ghana. Ige Akindele (2014) also recommends that government must increase remuneration of workers.

#### **8.4.2 Addressing the challenges associated with the new pay policy**

Both studies revealed that poor implementation of the new pay policy or the single spine salary structure are other factors responsible for strike action not only in Ghanaian public universities but across all the public sectors. Therefore, it is recommended that the government must take active steps to ensure that the challenges associated with the new pay policy are addressed so as to minimise strike action in the country. This recommendation reaffirmed the similar recommendations that were made by previous researchers (Aliu & Fuseini, 2014; Seniwoliba, 2014). Aliu and Fuseini (2014) recommend that in order to address perennial strike action in the public sector, all workers must be paid the market premium. In addition, the authors suggest that there must be continuous education or public awareness regarding the implementation of the new pay policy. Seniwoliba (2014) also recommends that in order to address the challenges associated with the implementation of the new pay policy, the Fair Wages and Salary Commission must ensure that the public is educated on the pay policy so as to avoid disputes that might lead to strike action.

#### **8.4.3 Restoring the old books and research allowances**

The results of the present study suggested that the introduction of the new research fund in place of the old books and research allowances is one of the causes of strike action in Ghanaian public universities. Most of the participants in this study expressed the view that the old books and research allowances must be restored by the government. Therefore, it is recommended that the government must listen to the lecturers by restoring the allowances on books and research. The recommendation also supported the similar recommendations made by previous researchers (Okoampa-Ahoofe, 2013; Sarfo & Ngula, 2014; Seniwoliba, 2014). Okoampa-Ahoofe (2013) opines that Ghanaian lecturers deserve their research and book allowances therefore the government must restore this.

#### **8.4.4 Adequate funding of the universities**

It was also found that funding constraints is a major cause of strike action in Ghanaian public universities. Therefore, the study recommends that the government must allocate a substantial

amount of money to the universities as funding. In addition to this, the researcher further recommends that the universities must also develop other mechanisms of generating funds namely: public private partnership, consultancy, running foreign programmes and other joint ventures. This recommendation agreed with similar recommendations offered by researchers (Ige Akindele, 2014; Momodu *et al.*, 2014).

Momodu *et al.* (2014) recommend that adequate funding of the universities is a key factor which assists in addressing strike action in universities in Nigeria, The authors recommend that the Nigerian government must progressively improve funding to the public universities so as to reduce the numerous strike actions in the system. Ige Akindele (2014) also discovered that funding is an important tool which will help in minimising the frequent occurrence of strike action in the universities. According to Ige Akindele (2014), UNESCO recommended that every nation must allocate 26% of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to be spent on education.

#### **8.4.5 Improvement in working conditions**

The findings show that poor working conditions is a factor responsible for strike action in Ghanaian public universities. This study recommends that the government must take active steps to ensure that the working conditions of the employees is improved in order to address strike action in the universities. This recommendation also reaffirmed the similar recommendations made by researchers (Ahmad & Basheer, 2012; Gyamfi, 2011; Ige Akindele, 2014; Momodu *et al.*, 2014; Nweke, 2015; Seniwoliba, 2013).

Nweke (2015) suggests that as part of addressing strikes in tertiary institutions the government must provide a lot of interventions which include ensuring reasonable standards of working conditions. In their study, Ahmad and Basheer (2012) also found that improvement in working conditions is key to addressing strikes in Nigeria which include benefits, incentives and leave.

#### **8.4.6 Management of the economy**

The study further revealed that mismanagement of the Ghanaian economy is a major cause of strike action not only in the education sector but across all sectors in the country. The study recommends that the government must engage experts in formulating policies that will help to address the

economic challenges confronting the country as a result of mismanagement. This recommendation further reaffirmed the findings of researchers (Olusegun Ajayi, 2014; Seniwoliba, 2014).

Olusegun Ajayi (2014) also found that proper handling or management of the economy will help in addressing frequent strike action in Nigeria. According to Olusegun Ajayi (2014), the Nigerian government must implement better economic policies that will help in fixing the ailing economy.

Seniwoliba (2014) asserts that the government must take proactive steps to address the economic challenges facing the country in order to address the numerous industrial actions in the country.

#### **8.4.7 Honouring promises or agreement**

In addition to the above, the study found that failure by government to honour promises or agreement is a contributing factor to strike action in Ghana. The study therefore recommends that the government must fulfil promises or agreements that were made in order to avoid or reduce strike action in universities. The majority of the participants expressed the view that it is important for the government to honour promises or agreements so as to reduce the occurrence of strike action in the country. This recommendation reaffirmed the findings of previous studies (Ezeagba, 2014; Momodu *et al.*, 2014).

Ezeagba (2014) strongly recommends that if government is able to honour part of agreements made to employees it will help in addressing strikes in the country. According to Ezeagba (2014), agreements are meant to be fulfilled and once agreements are reached between the parties (employer and employees) it will help avoid disputes which often lead to strike action.

According to Momodu *et al.* (2014), the government must demonstrate a strong sense of commitment and sincerity by honouring the agreements entered into with labour unions in the country. Momodu *et al.* (2014) assert that when the governments honour their agreements it will help to maintain industrial peace or harmony which will contribute to minimising the occurrence of strikes.

#### **8.4.7 Good negotiation skills**

The study also found that good negotiation skills are important in addressing disputes and strike action in Ghanaian public universities. The majority of the participants recommended that the parties involved in employment relations must possess negotiation skills in order to enable them

to bargain or dialogue effectively during the negotiation process in order to avoid strike action. It is against this that the study recommended that the parties involved in employment relations or the collective bargaining table must acquire negotiation skills. This recommendation conformed to the recommendations made by researchers (Ogunbanjo, 2014; Seniwoliba, 2013).

Ogunbanjo (2014) argues that good negotiation skills will enable the parties to reach amicable resolution of disputes that are likely to result in industrial action. Ogunbanjo (2014) suggests that the parties at the bargaining table must be trained to enable them to acquire necessary skills to effectively negotiate during the bargaining process.

Seniwoliba (2013) suggests that every party at the negotiation table must have the requisite skills in terms of bargaining in order to prevent deadlock that might result in strike action. Seniwoliba (2013) asserts that strike often takes place if the parties are not able to resolve their disputes or grievances.

#### **8.4.8 Collective bargaining or collective agreements**

The findings revealed that collective bargaining is an alternative to strike action. Thus, a good collective bargaining process helps prevent strike action in the workplace through consensus building. Therefore, the study recommends that the parties must explore collective bargaining as an alternative to strike action. This recommendation agreed with the recommendations of previous studies (Ahmad & Basheer, 2012; Gyamfi, 2011; Ige Akindele, 2014; Odeku, 2014).

According to Ahmad and Basheer (2012), strike action is seen as part of a collective bargaining process within an organisation. Collective bargaining is directly linked to industrial action because it determines whether the party should embark on a strike or not. A collective bargaining process ensures cooperation and coordination among the parties (Ahmad & Basheer, 2012, p.42).

Odeku (2014) also suggests that collective bargaining is a powerful tool which has the potential to minimise strike action in an organisation. Collective bargaining is a legal document that outlines how disputes are to be settled or addressed when the need arises. He further opines that a collective agreement is an alternative to strikes in industrial disputes because it helps both parties to reach voluntary agreement on the matter at hand.

#### **8.4.9 Mutual respect**

The findings of the study show that mutual respect among the parties is a key strategy of addressing strike action not only in public universities but all organisations in the country. Therefore, it can be recommended that the parties involved in employment relations must respect each other's views in order to avoid disputes that might lead to strike action. The recommendation further reaffirmed the similar recommendations made by researchers (Olusegun Ajayi, 2014; Kumari, 2013; Venkatesh & Kala, 2013).

Venkatesh and Kala (2013) contend that mutual respect will assist the parties to reach amicable resolution of disputes that have the potential of causing strike action within the organisation. Kumari (2013) also recommends that mutual respect between the employer and employees is key in addressing workplace disputes and strike action. In a study conducted by Kumari (2013) on the problem and prospect of industrial relation in the coal industry with special reference to Central Coalfields Limited, Ranchi, it was found that mutual respect is a key variable which ensures harmonious relationships within the workplace. A study conducted by Olusegun Ajayi (2014) on academic staff unions at universities and academic performance of students at Ekiti State University revealed that mutual respect among stakeholders plays a crucial role in addressing employee disputes and strike action. Olusegun Ajayi (2014) recommends that the government must respect the views expressed by the union leaders and the union must do the same if they intend to deal with disputes and strike action that often occurs.

#### **8.5 Recommendations for further research**

There is limited research on strike action in Ghana although evidence suggests that there is a growing number of strikes in the country. This suggests a very strong appetite for research in this area but this is not only limited to the public tertiary institutions in the country.

Further studies in Ghana must fully investigate the effect of the “no work no pay” policy on the employee pension scheme in public sector organisations in the country. In addition to this, further studies in Ghana must explore collective bargaining as an alternative to strike action in public sector organisations.



## **8.6 Conclusion**

The chapter presented the conclusion and recommendations based on the objectives of the study. The first part of the chapter concludes that employee strike action affects employment relations in terms of employee dismissal, loss of remuneration, unhealthy relationship, intimidation, organisational conflicts and mistrust. Furthermore, it was concluded that strike action in Ghanaian public universities affects both the universities and the country. The impact of strike action on the universities includes disruption of research and publications, low student performance, student learning, disruption of the employment relationship, disruption of effective teaching, delay in students' graduation and disruption of the academic calendar. On the other hand, the consequences of strike action on the country are loss of investment, loss of employment or jobs, loss of government revenue, injuries and loss of life, bad reputation or image, loss of productive hours, fallen standard of education in the country, cost implications and national security threat. Again, the chapter concluded that the main causes of strike action in Ghanaian public universities include inadequate wages and salaries, challenges associated with the introduction of the new pay policy, poor condition of service, inadequate funding, book and research allowances, delay in payment of wages and salaries, mismanagement of the economy, improper handling of employee grievances, government failure to honour agreements, poor or lack of negotiation skills, mistrust and unnecessary interference in the affairs of the universities by government. It was also concluded that the factors that promote sound employment relations in the workplace include adequate wages and salaries, incentives, improvement in working conditions, a conducive working environment, government interventions, good negotiation skills, proactive conduct of the stakeholders, mutual trust, proactive handling of employee grievances and disputes, mutual accommodation, effective communication and collective bargaining or agreement.

The study also recommended measures of addressing strike action in Ghanaian public universities. These recommendations include adequate wages and salaries, restoring old book and research allowances, proper implementation of the new pay policy, adequate funding of the universities, improvement in working conditions, proper management of the economy by the government, proactive management of disputes, honouring promises or agreements, good negotiation skills, collective bargaining or agreement, ensuring a conducive working environment and mutual respect.

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## **List of Legislation**

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- Freedom of Association and the Right to Organise Convention No. 87 of 1948.* Geneva.
- Ghana Labour Act 2003 (No.651).* Amendment 2011. Assembly Press, Accra, Ghana.
- Industrial Relations Acts [IRA] of 1956.* Accra.
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- Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention No. 98 of 1949.* Geneva.
- The Constitution of Republic of Ghana Act 527 of 1992.* Accra.
- The Constitution of Republic of South Africa, 1996.* Pretoria: Government Printer.
- Unemployment Convention, No.168 of 1988.* Geneva.
- Vocational Rehabilitation (Disabled) Recommendation, No.99 of 1955.* Geneva.

## APPENDIX A

### INTERVIEW QUESTIONS GUIDE

#### SECTION A: Biographical data

Please indicate your selection with an X.

##### A.1 Gender

1	Male	
2	Female	
3	Other	

##### A.2 Age

1	20-25 years	
2	26-30 years	
3	31-35 years	
4	36-40 years	
5	41-45 ears	
6	46 years and above	

##### A.3 Educational qualification/background

1	Diploma	
2	First degree	
3	Masters	
4	PhD	
5	Other	



**A.4 Position you presently hold in the university**

1	Registrar	
2	Head of department	
3	Dean	
4	Other	

**A.5 Number of years you have been working in the university**

1	2-5 years	
2	6-10 years	
3	11-15 ears	
4	1ears and above	

**A.6 The nature of your employment status**

1	Permanent	
2	Temporary/part-time	
3	Other	

**A.7 The school you belong to**

1	Law	
2	Performing Arts	
3	Education	
4	Business	
5	Regional Institute for Population Studies	
6	Arts	
7	Social science	
8	Other	

### **A.8 The department in which you belong to**

1	Accounting	
2	Finance	
3	Economics	
4	Psychology	
5	Sociology	
6	Communication Studies	
7	HRM	
8	Marketing	
9	Public Administration	
10	Health Policy	
11	Other	

### **Section B: Impact of strike action on employment relations**

#### **B.9 Impact of strike action on employment relations**

- How does strike action contribute to employee dismissal?
- How does strike action lead to loss of remuneration for strikers?
- Does employee strike lead to retrenchment?
- How does employee strike lead to organisational conflict?
- Does employee strike action lead to intimidation of strikers?

### **Section C: Impact of strike action on the universities and the country**

#### **C.10 (a) Effects of employee strike action on the public universities**

- How does strike action in the public universities affect student performance?
- How does strike action in the public universities affect student learning?
- How does strike action in the public universities cause a disruption in the academic calendar?
- To what extent does the strike action in the universities affect teaching?
- How does strike action in the universities cause a disruption in research and publications?

#### C.10 (b) Effects of public universities strike action on the country

- To what extent public universities strike affect the reputation of the country?
- How does public universities strike action affect government revenue?
- To what extent does public universities affect investment in the country?
- How does public universities strike action contribute to job loss in the country?
- To what extent does public universities strike contribute to the falling standard of education in the country?
- How does violence strike action lead to loss of life and injury of strikers?

#### **Section D: Causes of strike actions in the universities**

##### D.11 Causes of employee strike action in the public universities in Ghana

- What are the economic factors that are responsible for strike action in the universities?
- What are the non-economic factors responsible for strike action in the universities?

#### **Section E: Factors that promote sound employment relations in the universities**

##### E.12 Factors that promote sound employment relations in the universities

- What financial factors will help in promoting sound employment relations in the universities?
- What are the non-financial that are responsible for promoting sound employment relations in the universities?

#### **Section F: Measures to reduce strike action in the public universities in Accra Ghana**

##### F.13 Measures to address employee strike action in the public universities

- What are the economic factors that will help to address employee strike action in the public universities in Ghana?
- What are the non-economic factors that will serve as measures of addressing strike action in the public universities in Ghana?

**Thank you for your participation**

## APPENDIX B

### QUESTIONNAIRE

#### SECTION A: Biographical Data

This section of the questionnaire contain questions on the biographical data of the respondents in terms of gender, age, educational qualification, position currently occupied, number of years in the university, nature of the employment status, the school the respondent belong to and the department in which the respondent works.

Please indicate your selection with an X.

##### A.1 Gender

1	Male	
2	Female	
3	Other	

##### A.2 Age

1	20-25 years	
2	26-30 years	
3	31-35 years	
4	36-40 years	
5	41-45 years	
6	46 years and above	

##### A.3 Educational qualification/background

1	Diploma	
2	First degree	
3	Masters	
4	PhD	
5	Other	

**A.4 Position you presently hold in the university**

1	Administrative assistant	
2	Lecturer	
3	Senior Lecturer	
4	Associate professor	
5	Professor	
6	Other	

**A.5 Number of years you have been working in the university**

1	2-5 years	
2	6-10 years	
3	11-15 years	
4	16 years and above	

**A.6 The nature of your employment status**

1	Permanent	
2	Temporary/part-time	
3	Other	

**A.7 The school you belong to**

1	Law	
2	Performing Arts	
3	Education	
4	Business	
5	Regional Institute for Population Studies	
6	Arts	
7	Social science	
8	Other	

**A.8 The department in which you belong to**

1	Accounting	
2	Finance	
3	Economics	
4	Psychology	
5	Sociology	
6	Communication Studies	
7	HRM	
8	Marketing	
9	Public Administration	
10	Health Policy	
11	Other	

**Section B: Impact of strike actions on employment relations**

This section of the questionnaire focuses on how the strike actions in the universities impact on the employment relations. Please indicate with a cross (X) the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements using the 5 point Likert scale below:

1. Strongly Disagree (SD)
2. Disagree (D)
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree (NA/ND)
4. Agree (A)
5. Strongly Agree (SA)

No.	Statement	5 SA	4 A	3 NA/ND	2 D	1 SD
B9	Some strikers were dismissed because of their participation in the strike.					
B10	Many strikers were retrenched by the government due to the prolong strikes in the public universities.					

B11	Strikers or employees who went on strike have lost their remuneration in that period whilst on strike.					
B12	The employee strike has created unhealthy relationship between employees and management in the universities.					
B13	Most strikes were intimidated by management because of their involvement in the strike action.					
B14	Prolong strikes in the public universities have created conflict between management and employees					

### Section C: Impact of strike action on the public universities and the country

This part of the questionnaire contain questions on the effect of strike action on the public universities and the country. Please indicate with a cross (X) the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements using the 5 point Likert scale below:

1. Strongly Disagree (SD)
2. Disagree (D)
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree (NA/ND)
4. Agree (A)
5. Strongly Agree (SA)

No.	Statement	5 SA	4 A	3 NA/ND	2 D	1 SD
	<b>Effects of strikes on the universities</b>					
C15	The strike actions by the employees have affected academic activities such as research and publications.					
C16	The prolonged strike actions have affected student performance in public universities.					
C17	Effective learning in public universities has been disrupted due to the strike action by the employees.					
C18	The employment relations in the various public universities have been affected due to the strike action.					
C19	The prolonged strikes in the public universities have affected teaching.					
C20	Students' graduation was delayed due to prolonged strikes in the universities.					
	<b>The effects public universities strikes on the country</b>					

C21	The country has lost a huge investment in the education sector over the years due to the massive strikes by universities in the country.					
C22	Many jobs in the country were lost due to the strike actions by the employees of public universities.					
C23	Government has lost huge revenue as a result of the frequent strikes in public universities in the country.					
C24	Some strikers were injured and most lost their lives as a result of the strike actions in public universities.					
C25	Massive strikes in the public universities has affected the image of the country.					
C26	The nationwide strike actions by the public universities has affected the country's productivity.					
C27	The frequent strikes in the public universities have contributed to the falling standard of education in the country.					

#### **SECTION D: Causes of strike actions in the public universities in Accra Ghana.**

This section contain questions regarding the causes of strike actions in the public universities in Accra Ghana. Please indicate with a cross (X) the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements using the 5 point Likert scale below:

1. Strongly Disagree (SD)
2. Disagree (D)
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree (NA/ND)
4. Agree (A)
5. Strongly Agree (SA)

No.	Statement	5 SA	4 A	3 NA/ND	2 D	1 SD
	<b>Economic factors responsible for strikes</b>					
D28	Wages/salaries paid to the employees in public universities led to several strike actions.					
D29	The implementation of the new pay policy (single spine salary structure) has resulted in strikes across the public universities.					



D30	The conditions of service in public universities has contributed to several strikes.					
D31	Inadequate funding in public universities lead to frequent strike actions.					
D32	The replacement of research and book allowances with the new research fund has led to strikes in the public universities.					
D33	Delay in payments of wages and other emoluments have contributed to strikes in the public universities.					
	<b>Non-economic factors responsible for strikes</b>					
D34	The manner in which employment relations issues and workers grievance have been handled led to strikes in public universities					
D35	Government failure to honour its agreement led to strike actions in public universities					
D36	Mismanagement of the economy by the government has led to massive strikes in public universities.					
D37	The inability of the government, university management and trade union leaders to negotiate during the collective bargaining has resulted in strikes in public universities.					
D38	Unnecessary interference in the tertiary institutions' affairs by government has led to several strikes in the universities.					

**Section E: Factors that promote sound employment relations in the Accra Ghana public universities.**

Please indicate with a cross (X) the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements using the 5 point Likert scale below:

1. Strongly Disagree (SD)
2. Disagree (D)
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree (NA/ND)
4. Agree (A)
5. Strongly Agree (SA)

No.	Statement	5 SA	4 A	3 NA/ND	2 D	1 SD
	<b>Financial factors (economic) that contribute to sound employment relations</b>					
E39	Better payment of wages and salaries to employees in public universities contribute to sound employment relations.					
E40	Offering employees with incentives such as bonuses, allowances and benefits promote sound employment relations					
E41	Improvement in the working conditions of the employees in public universities promote sound employment relations.					
	<b>Non-finance incentives that contribute to promoting sound employment relations</b>					
E42	Conducive working environment contributes to sound employment relations in public universities					
E43	Allowing employees to form or join trade unions or associations of their choice contributes to sound employment relations.					
E44	Government interventions in public universities contribute to sound employment relations.					
E45	Effective negotiation during the collective bargaining process contributes to sound employment relations.					
E46	Proactive conduct of all stakeholders of public universities contributes to building sound employment relations.					
E47	Proper handling of grievances and disputes in public universities contribute to building sound employment relations.					
E48	Effective communication among all the stakeholders help in promoting sound employment relationships.					

### **Section F: Measures to reduce strike action in the public universities in Accra Ghana**

Please indicate with a cross (X) the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements using the 5 point Likert scale below:

1. Strongly Disagree (SD)
2. Disagree (D)
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree (NA/ND)
4. Agree (A)

5. Strongly Agree (SA)

No.	Statement	5 SA	4 A	3 NA/ND	2 D	1 SD
	<b>Economic factors that help in addressing strikes in public universities</b>					
F49	Adequate wages/salaries paid to employees of public universities has reduced strike actions in universities.					
E50	Proper implementation of the new pay policy (single spine salary structure) assists in minimising the massive strikes in public universities.					
E51	Restoring the research and book allowances for lecturers in public universities helps to reduce the massive strikes in universities.					
E52	Adequate funding for the public universities assists in minimising the massive strike actions in universities.					
E53	Improved working conditions of universities employee help to address/minimise strikes in the public universities.					
	<b>Non-economic factors that help to address strikes in the public universities</b>					
E54	Proper handling of employee grievances in public universities helps in addressing the frequent strikes in universities.					
E55	Massive strike actions in public universities is minimised because government has fulfilled all its promises made to the employees.					
E56	Proper handling of the Ghanaian economy by government helps in addressing massive strike actions in public universities.					
E57	Good negotiation skills of all the stakeholders of the public universities help in minimising strikes in the public universities.					

**Thank you for your participation**

19 July 2016

Mr Lawrence Abiwu 214576492  
School of Mangement, IT Governance  
Westville Campus

Dear Mr Abiwu

Protocol reference number: HSS/1045/016M

Project Title: Impact of employee strike action regarding employment relations in selected Accra Ghana public universities

**Full Approval – Expedited Application**

In response to your application received 12 July 2016, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

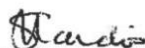
Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully



.....  
Dr Shamila Naidoo (Deputy Chair)  
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

/pm

Cc Supervisor: Mr DV Dlamini  
Cc Academic Leader Research: Professor Brian McArthur  
Cc School Administrator: Ms Angela Pearce

---

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee


Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000

Telephone: +27 (0) 31 260 3587/8350/4557 Facsimile: +27 (0) 31 260 4609 Email: [ximbap@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:ximbap@ukzn.ac.za) / [snymnm@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:snymnm@ukzn.ac.za) / [mohunp@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:mohunp@ukzn.ac.za)

Website: [www.ukzn.ac.za](http://www.ukzn.ac.za)



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**APPENDIX D**

**INFERENCEAL STATISTICS-ONE SAMPLE T-TEST**

**Table 1. Section B: Impact of strike action on employment relations**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
SecB_9 (Dismissal)	200	2.21	1.211	.086
SecB_10 (Retrenchment)	200	2.27	1.206	.085
SecB_11 (Loss of remuneration)	200	2.31	1.109	.078
SecB_12 (Unhealthy relationship)	200	3.73	1.121	.079
SecB_13 (Intimidation)	200	3.66	1.259	.089
SecB_14 (Organisational conflicts)	200	3.91	1.087	.077

**One-Sample Test**

	Test Value = 3				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Lower	Upper
SecB_9	-9.246	198	.000	-.794	-.96	-.62
SecB_10	-8.561	199	.000	-.730	-.90	-.56
SecB_11	-8.798	199	.000	-.690	-.84	-.54
SecB_12	9.150	199	.000	.725	.57	.88
SecB_13	7.360	199	.000	.655	.48	.83
SecB_14	11.773	199	.000	.905	.75	1.06

**Table 2. Section C: Impact of strike action on the public universities and the country****One-Sample Statistics**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
SecC_15 (Research and publications)	199	4.17	.786	.056
SecC_16 (Student performance )	200	4.08	.963	.068
SecC_17 (Student learning)	200	4.34	.752	.053
SecC_18 (Employment relations)	200	4.10	.913	.065
SecC_19 (Teaching)	200	4.19	.851	.060
SecC_20 (Students' graduation)	200	4.17	.863	.061
SecC_21 (Investment)	200	3.17	1.348	.095
SecC_22 (Employment)	200	2.99	1.278	.090
SecC_23 (Government revenue)	200	3.75	1.102	.078
SecC_24 (Injuries and loss of lives)	200	3.12	1.343	.095
SecC_25 (Reputation of the country)	200	3.95	.981	.069
SecC_26 (Productive hours)	200	4.15	.798	.056
SecC_27 (Standard of education)	200	3.85	1.177	.083

### One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Lower	Upper
SecC_15	21.025	198	.000	1.171	1.06	1.28
SecC_16	15.853	199	.000	1.080	.95	1.21
SecC_17	25.104	199	.000	1.335	1.23	1.44
SecC_18	17.033	199	.000	1.100	.97	1.23
SecC_19	19.690	199	.000	1.185	1.07	1.30
SecC_20	19.172	199	.000	1.170	1.05	1.29
SecC_21	1.731	199	.085	.165	-.02	.35
SecC_22	-.166	199	.868	-.015	-.19	.16
SecC_23	9.628	199	.000	.750	.60	.90
SecC_24	1.263	199	.208	.120	-.07	.31
SecC_25	13.696		.000	.950	.81	1.09
SecC_26	20.286		.000	1.145	1.03	1.26
SecC_27	10.216		.000	.850	.69	1.01

**Table 3. Section D: Causes of strike action in the public universities in Accra Ghana****One-Sample Statistics**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
SecD_28 (wages and salaries)	200	4.23	.905	.064
SecD_29 (the new pay policy)	200	4.11	1.068	.075
SecD_30 (Conditions of service)	200	4.25	.873	.062
SecD_31 (Funding)	200	4.09	.993	.070
SecD_32 (Books and research allowances)	200	4.09	.898	.063
SecD_33 (Delay in payment)	200	4.14	.837	.059
SecD_34 (Improper handling of workers grievances)	200	4.11	.876	.062
SecD_35 (Failure to honour collective agreements)	200	4.13	.896	.063
SecD_36 (Mismanagement of economy)	200	3.75	1.168	.083
SecD_37 (Inability to negotiate)	200	3.98	.940	.066
SecD_38 (Unnecessary interference)	200	3.67	1.330	.094



### One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Lower	Upper
SecD_28	19.149	199	.000	1.225	1.10	1.35
SecD_29	14.638	199	.000	1.105	.96	1.25
SecD_30	20.260	199	.000	1.250	1.13	1.37
SecD_31	15.517	199	.000	1.090	.95	1.23
SecD_32	17.171	199	.000	1.090	.96	1.22
SecD_33	19.181	199	.000	1.135	1.02	1.25
SecD_34	17.834	199	.000	1.105	.98	1.23
SecD_35	17.750	199	.000	1.125	1.00	1.25
SecD_36	9.081	199	.000	.750	.59	.91
SecD_37	14.740		.000	.980	.85	1.11
SecD_38	7.122		.000	.670	.48	.86

**Table 4. Section E: Factors that promote sound employment relations in the workplace****One-Sample Statistics**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
SecE_39 (Remuneration or wages and salaries)	199	4.50	.710	.050
SecE_40 (Incentives)	200	4.51	.730	.052
SecE_41(Working conditions)	200	4.40	.743	.053
SecE_42 (Working environment)	200	4.32	.735	.052
SecE_43 (Freedom of association)	200	4.27	.837	.059
SecE_44 (Government interventions)	200	4.14	.928	.066
SecE_45 (Effective negotiation)	200	4.18	.823	.058
SecE_46 (proactive conducts of the stakeholders)	200	4.33	.770	.054
SecE_47 (Proactive management of grievances &disputes)	200	4.45	.755	.053
SecE_48 (Effective communication)	200	4.36	.782	.055

### One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Lower	Upper
SecE_39	29.862	198	.000	1.503	1.40	1.60
SecE_40	29.262	199	.000	1.510	1.41	1.61
SecE_41	26.560	199	.000	1.395	1.29	1.50
SecE_42	25.396	199	.000	1.320	1.22	1.42
SecE_43	21.458	199	.000	1.270	1.15	1.39
SecE_44	17.298	199	.000	1.135	1.01	1.26
SecE_45	20.184	199	.000	1.175	1.06	1.29
SecE_46	24.347	199	.000	1.325	1.22	1.43
SecE_47	27.072	199	.000	1.445	1.34	1.55
SecE_48	24.494	199	.000	1.355	1.25	1.46

**Table 5. Section F: Measures to reduce strike action in the public universities in Accra Ghana**

**One-Sample Statistics**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
SecF_49 (wages and salaries)	200	4.28	.770	.054
SecF_50 (Proper implementation of the new pay policy)	200	4.20	.831	.059
SecF_51 (Restoring books and research allowances)	199	4.37	.798	.057
SecF_52 (Adequate funding)	200	4.23	.792	.056
SecF_53 (Improvement in working conditions)	199	4.18	.777	.055
SecF_54 (Proactive management of employee grievances)	200	4.22	.769	.054
SecF_55 (Honouring agreements or promises)	200	4.23	.916	.065
SecF_56 (Proper management of the economy)	200	4.33	.815	.058
SecF_57 (Good negotiation skill)	200	4.39	.794	.056

### One-Sample Test

Test Value = 3						
					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Lower	Upper
SecF_49	23.428	199	.000	1.275	1.17	1.38
SecF_50	20.339	199	.000	1.195	1.08	1.31
SecF_51	24.150	198	.000	1.367	1.26	1.48
SecF_52	21.870	199	.000	1.225	1.11	1.34
SecF_53	21.444	198	.000	1.181	1.07	1.29
SecF_54	22.337	199	.000	1.215	1.11	1.32
SecF_55	18.918	199	.000	1.225	1.10	1.35
SecF_56	23.075	199	.000	1.330	1.22	1.44
SecF_57	24.679	199	.000	1.385	1.27	1.50

June 14, 2016

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

**PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

Research students undertake projects that invariably involve the collection of empirical data from organisations. In this way students are given the opportunity to investigate and report on the practical issues facing organisations in real life settings. Typically, this project necessitate data gathering by paper-based questionnaires or interviews.

Lawrence Abiwu (Student No.: 214576492) has chosen to do a research project entitled: **Impact of employee strike action regarding employment relations in selected Accra Ghana public universities**

Supervisor name: Mr. DV Dlamini Supervisor telephone number: 031 260 7864

Supervisor e-mail address: [Dlaminidv@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:Dlaminidv@ukzn.ac.za)

The student has identified your organisation as an excellent site for the study.

Your assistance in permitting access to your organisation for the purposes of this research is most appreciated. Please be assured that all information gained from the research will be treated with the utmost circumspection. The student will strictly adhere to confidentiality and anonymity.

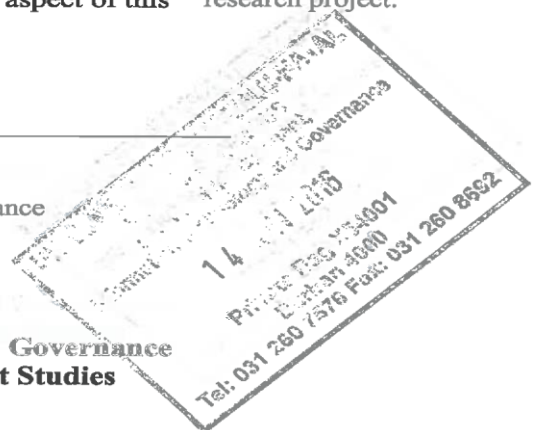
I am available at any stage to answer any queries and/or to discuss any aspect of this research project.

Thank you for your assistance in this regard.

  
Ms. AB Pearce

Research & Higher Degrees: School of Management, IT & Governance  
University of KwaZulu-Natal - Westville Campus

**The School of Management, IT and Governance  
College of Law and Management Studies**



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Our Ref:.....

Your Ref:.....

P. O. Box AH 50  
Achimota, Accra

June 21, 2016

School of Management, IT and Governance  
College of Law and Management Studies  
University of Kwazulu-Natal  
South Africa

Dear Ms. Pearce,

## **Re: Permission to Conduct Research**

Your letter of June 14, 2016 on the above subject refers.

This is to notify you that the Registrar has granted permission for Mr. Lawrence Abiwu to conduct his research on the topic: "*Impact of employee strike action regarding employment relations in selected Accra Ghana Public Universities*" at our Institute.

By a copy of this letter, Mr. Abiwu is requested to contact me to make the necessary arrangements to begin the research.

My contact details are: Email - [ecoffie@gimpa.edu.gh](mailto:ecoffie@gimpa.edu.gh), Mobile - 0505982148

Yours sincerely,

**Evelyn Asiedu Coffie**  
Assistant Registrar, Office of the Registrar

Cc: Consulting Registrar  
Mr. Lawrence Abiwu



# UNIVERSITY OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES, ACCRA

P. O. Box LG 149, Accra, Ghana. Tel: (+233) 0302 500171 / 500722 Fax: (+233) 0302 - 513503  
Website: [www.upsa.edu.gh](http://www.upsa.edu.gh) E-mail: [enquiry@upsa.edu.gh](mailto:enquiry@upsa.edu.gh) [admissions@upsa.edu.gh](mailto:admissions@upsa.edu.gh)

My Ref. No.: IM/ROB/RCC/005

30TH JUNE, 2016

Mr. Abiwu Lawrence  
5 Rodney Court; 15 Marigny Road  
Umbilo, Durban 401,  
South Africa

Dear Mr. Abiwu,

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

This is to inform you that your request to conduct research in the University of Professional Studies, Accra has been approved by the management of the University. You are therefore requested to contact the Director, Research and Consultancy to introduce you to the respective respondents for their support.

We wish you success in your endeavors.

Yours Sincerely,

Dr. Ibrahim Mohammed

(Director, Research and Consultancy)

For : Registrar

Cc:

File



**UKZN HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE  
(HSSREC)**

**APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL**

**For research with human participants**

**Information Sheet and Consent to Participate in Research**

Greetings,

My name is Lawrence Abiwu, MCom student at University of KwaZulu-Natal in the Discipline of HRM/IR. My contact number is +233 24 361 8419 and my email address is [abiwu.lawrence@yahoo.com](mailto:abiwu.lawrence@yahoo.com). My supervisor is Mr. DV Dlamini who is located at the School of Management, IT and Governance, Westville campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. His contact details: email: dalminidv@ukzn.ac.za Tel number: +27 31 2607864.

You are being invited to consider participating in a study that involves research into the impact of employee strike actions regarding employment relations in Accra Ghana public universities. The aim and purpose of this research is to analyse the extent to which the employee strike action impact on the employment relations in the public universities. The study is expected to include approximately 306 respondents from the public universities in Accra Ghana. There are three public universities in Accra Ghana but the study will be conducted among only two of these universities. In this study, 153 of the respondents will be selected from each of the two universities that will be selected for the study. The study will be conducted only among the staff (academic, non-academic, heads of departments and registrars) at University of Professional Studies, Accra and Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration. All these universities are located at Legon in Accra. It will involve the following procedures such as seeking approval from the various universities and UKZN Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee. After the permission has been granted, the researcher will approach the participants and solicit their voluntary participation in the study. The researcher will then distribute the informed consent form to all the participants and subsequently ask them to append their signature for their voluntary participation. After the informed consent form has been signed the

researcher will then proceed to conduct the study. The duration of your participation if you choose to participate and remain in the study is expected to be two months.

The study is not funded by any individual or organisation.

There is no risk or discomfort that is associated with this study. I hope that the study will create the following benefits to the participants: it will provide the participants with much knowledge on the concept of strike and employment relations; it will also provide the participants with the opportunity to share their feelings and opinions regarding phenomenon of strikes in the public universities and it will also enable the participants to suggest ways and means in which the strike action can be addressed. This study when completed will provide the following benefits: it will contribute to the existing body of knowledge regarding strike action and employment relations; also it will provide measures which will help employers and governments in minimising or preventing strike actions in the country; furthermore the study will serve as a policy shaping document to governments and organisations when developing policies on strike and employment relations; in addition it will assist organisations in building sound employment relations in order to minimise the frequent occurrence of strikes and finally it will serve as a source of reference to students and researchers who intend to conduct similar studies in this field.

This study has been ethically reviewed and approved by the UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (approval number HSS/1045/016M).

In the event of any problems or concerns/questions you may contact the researcher at University KwaZulu-Natal on Tel. +27 31 2607864 or email: [dalminidv@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:dalminidv@ukzn.ac.za) or UKZN Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, contact details as follows:

#### HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

Research Office, Westville Campus Govan Mbeki  
Building

Private Bag X 54001

Durban 4000 KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: +27 31 2604557- Fax: 27 31 2604609

Email: [HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za)

Your participation in the study is voluntary and by participating, you are granting the researcher permission to use your responses. You may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time with no negative consequence. There will be no monetary gain from participating in the study. Your anonymity will be maintained by the researcher and the School of Management, I.T. & Governance and your responses will not be used for any purposes outside of this study.

All data, both electronic and hard copy, will be securely stored during the study and archived for 5 years. After this time, all data will be destroyed.

If you have any questions or concerns about participating in the study, please contact me or my research supervisor at the numbers listed above.

Sincerely

Mr. Lawrence Abiwu

---

## CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE

I .....(Name) have been informed about the study entitled impact of employee strike actions regarding employment relations in Accra Ghana public universities by Mr. Lawrence Abiwu.

I understand the purpose and procedures of the study. I have been given an opportunity to ask questions about the study and have had answers to my satisfaction.

I declare that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without affecting any of the benefits that I usually am entitled to.

I have been informed about any available compensation or medical treatment if injury occurs to me as a result of study-related procedures.

If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study I understand that I may contact the researcher at University of KwaZulu-Natal on Tel +233 243618419 or email:

abiwu.lawrence@yahoo.com.

If I have any questions or concerns about my rights as a study participant, or if I am concerned about an aspect of the study or the researchers then I may contact:

**HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION**

Research Office, Westville Campus Govan Mbeki

Building

Private Bag X 54001

Durban

4000

KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: +27 31 2604557 - Fax: 27 31 2604609

Email: [HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za)

I hereby provide consent to:

Audio-record my interview / focus group discussion YES / NO

Video-record my interview / focus group discussion YES / NO

Use of my photographs for research purposes YES / NO

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Participant**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Witness**  
**(Where applicable)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Translator**  
**(Where applicable)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**