

ASSESSMENT OF DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY SYMPTOMS AMONG UNIVERSITY OF MAIDUGURI STAFF DURING UNIVERSITIES INDUSTRIAL ACTION

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ABSTRACT

Depression is a mood disorder that occur as a result of continuous feelings of sadness, emptiness, and loss of joy. Major life events, such as bereavement or the loss of a job, non-payment of salary, financial crises can trigger depression. On the other hand, anxiety as an emotion disturbance characterized by feelings of tension, worried thoughts and physical changes like increased blood pressure. The aim of this study is to assess level of depression and anxiety among University of Maiduguri during the industrial action. A cross-sectional research survey was adopted for this study. The population of this study consist of all University of Maiduguri Staff numbering 8024, while 367 was used as sample size using. The instrument used to collect accurate information for this study is titled Assessment of Depression, Anxiety and Insomnia Symptoms (ADAIS). It uses 4-likert response mode. Descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentages were used to describe the demographic information of the respondents, mean and standard deviation were used to answered the research questions, while inferential statistics of Independent Sampled t-test was used to test the hypotheses. Result showed reveals that University of Maiduguri staff were depressed, as a result of this the level of their anxiety was rated high during the industrial action. Moreover, there was significant relationship between depression and anxiety among University of Maiduguri staff during the last industrial action ($p < 0.05$). Based on the findings of this study, it was observed that there was is high level of anxiety and depression among university staff during industrial action. It was recommended that government should fulfil the promises made with university workers which is the major cause of strike, and remove the policy of no work no payment.

Keywords: Depression, anxiety, symptoms.

1. INTRODUCTION

Nigeria has 217 licensed universities, out of which, 49 are owns by federal government, 57 belongs to state governments, while the remaining 111 are runs by private operators. In January 2022 there were over 100,000 lecturers, the majority of them members of the Academic Staff Union of Universities. The country has a total of about 2.1 million university students (Nigeria's university strikes 2022). During an interactive session with Olukoju in June, 2022, this erudite of knowledge explained without prejudice to the justification for the strikes by university teaching and non-teaching workers, they have cumulatively disrupted the training of the workforce. The academic calendar is the immediate victim and the normal

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duration of academic programmes has been elongated, and this has implications for the career plans of students and staff. Among other things, the ongoing industrial action is a result of the Federal Government's failure to meet the ASUU's demands on the revitalisation of public universities; earned academic allowances; University Transparency Accountability Solution (UTAS); promotion arrears; renegotiation of 2009 ASUU-FGN agreement, and inconsistencies in the Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System (IPPIS) payments among others (The Guardian, 2022).

These challenges affect their academic performance and, by extension, the quality of their degrees. Striking staff themselves pay a steep price. Institutional staff exchanges, research activities, sabbatical and study leave, and promotion prospects suffer setbacks. They are denied wages each time government applies the no-work no-pay policy. However, these wages are eventually released after the suspension of each round of strikes. The national economy pays a high price for the disruption of a sub-sector that provides its workforce. The latest strike is the union's second in two years; the last strike in 2020 lasted nine months, effectively obliterating a whole academic calendar year. Data compiled by a local newspaper show that between 1999 and 2020, "ASUU went on strike for a total of 1,450 days." Going back to the late 1980s, there has rarely been a year that an academic session in Nigeria was not punctuated by one form of ASUU industrial action or the other (Obadare, 2022).

The National Executive Council (NEC) of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) held an emergency meeting at the Comrade Festus Iyayi National Secretariat, University of Abuja, Abuja on Sunday, 28th August, 2022, where the union declared indefinite strike (Vanguard, 2022). Since February 2022, ASUU had embark on industrial action, few weeks later, other University unions like SSANU, NASU and NAT also joined them making all public Universities in Nigeria to close down totally. As a result of their industrial action, their salary is withheld making all University works to be financially handicapped. Majority of these works collected loans from their finance institutions, after exhausted the money without refund the one they collected, their banks stopped given out their money because it is affecting their business transaction. Others went to their customers to collect food stuff on credit bases, after a while, the merchant stopped given them their food stuffs because the trader cannot continue to give out their commodities without settle the outstanding bills, and their children in private schools (primary, secondary and tertiary) are staying with them at home because of non-payment of tuition fee. Those that are staying in rent age house could afford to pay their money after their due has lapsed, and their landlord has given them quit notice. All these when put together caused stress and burn-out for them which eventually expose to various degree of illnesses like high blood pressure, anxiety, depression, insomnia just to mention few.

Depression is a mood disorder that occur as a result of continuous feelings of sadness, emptiness, and loss of joy. Major life events, such as bereavement or the loss of a job, non-payment of salary, financial crises can trigger depression. Depression often persists in spite of a change of circumstances and causes feelings that are intense, chronic, and not proportional to a person's circumstances, and its sign and symptoms include loss of interest or pleasure in hobbies and activities, difficulty sleeping, difficulty concentrating or making decisions (Evans-Lacko, Aguilar-Gaxiola, & Al-Hamzawi, 2018). Anxiety as an emotion disturbance characterized by feelings of tension, worried thoughts and physical changes like increased blood pressure (Ahsan, & Mohammad, 2017; Singh, Valsaraj, & Mohammad, 2013). The cause of anxiety may include environmental stressors, such as difficulties at work, relationship problems, or family issues, while the symptoms of anxiety include restlessness, uncontrollable feelings of worry, increased irritability, concentration difficulties, sleep difficulties or insomnia, such as problems in falling or staying asleep (Mohammad, & Ahsan, 2016; Mohammad, & Hassan, 2015; Institute of Health Metrics and Evaluation, 2021).

Insomnia is a common sleep disorder that can make it hard to fall asleep, hard to stay asleep, or cause you to wake up too early and not be able to get back to sleep.

It was reported that a staff of University of Benin (UNIBEN), named Carter Oshodin has committed suicide in Edo State over alleged hardship. DAILY POST gathered that the deceased was working as a data entry staff in the institution but became financially constrained following the strike action by the academic and non-academic unions in universities. Recall that the Federal Government had vowed that it would not pay the striking university workers, insisting on its no work no pay policy. It was learned that the deceased had lamented his inability to offset some bills including his daughter's school fees. He was said to have approached some neighbours soliciting financial help from them prior to his decision to take his own life (Daily Post, 2022). In University of Maiduguri, the situation revealed that almost sixty staff had demised, some voluntarily tendered their resignation letter, while others have developed different health problem like high blood pressure, sugar, depression, anxiety and difficult in sleep during the industrial action. It is against this background, this went to assess depression, anxiety, and insomnia symptoms among University of Maiduguri staff during the industrial active. The objectives of the study were to determine the level of anxiety and depression among University of Maiduguri during the industrial action.

2. METHODS AND MATERIALS

2.1 Design

A cross-sectional research survey was used for this study

2.2 Population and Sample

The population of this study consist of all University of Maiduguri Staff numbering 8024, while 367 was used as sample size using (Krejcie, & Morgan, 1970). The total number of Academic Staff Union of University ASUU in Maiduguri is 1,510, while Non- Academic Staff of University (SSANU, NAT, NASU) is 6,514. Proportionate sample technique was used because of variation in their populations, accidental sample technique was used to administered the questionnaire with the help three research assistant.

2.3 Research Instrument

The instrument used to collect accurate information for this study is titled Assessment of Depression, Anxiety and Insomnia Symptoms (ADAIS). The instrument is divided into four (4) sections. Section deals with demographic information of the respondents (sex, Marital Status, number of children, Profession). Section B deals with Self-rating Depression Scale (SDS), it was adopted and modified (Zung, 1965). It collects four major information of depression: the pervasive effect, the physiological equivalents, other disturbances, and psychomotor activities. It uses 4-likert response mode from A little of the time *to* most of the time (A little of the time =1, Some of the time=2, good part of time =3, most of the time =4). It has 14 items. Section C is State-Trait-Anxiety-Inventory, adopted and modifield from (Zung, 1965). It uses 4-likert response mode from not at all *to* very much so (Not at all NAA =1, Somewhat SW =2, Moderately So MS =3, Very Much So VMS =4). It has 14 items. It collects data on frightened, worried, nervous etc. The decision rule is that any item with mean score of 2.50 and above was regarded as not depressed, while item with mean score of less than 2.50 was regarded as depressed. Similarly, any item with mean score of 2.50 and above was regarded as low anxiety, while item with mean score of less than 2.50 was regarded as

low anxiety. The respondents were asked to please mark in the column which best describes how often they felt during the past Universities strike as a result of ‘no work, no staff salary’. The instrument was validated for content and face validity by some lecturer in the Department of Physical and Health Education University of Maiduguri. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Split-half reliability method. A drafted copy of the instrument was sent to Abubakar Tafabalewa University of Bauchi to test the reliability of the instrument. Twelve staff was used to test the reliability of the instrument (6 Academic staff and 6 non-academic staff). Data collected were analyzed using Cronbach Alpha reliability full test of 0.71 which adjudge it reliable.

2.4 Research Procedure

An ethical approval was obtained from the Research Ethics Committee (REC) of University of Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria. Data was collected from January 2023 to June February 2023 using self-administered questionnaires. The questionnaires were distributed by the researchers and two research assistants. Questionnaires were given to the staff in their offices. The questionnaires were collected after 5 days of administered. Only Questionnaires that were correctly filled were sorted, coded and analyzed.

2.5 Method of Data Analyses

Descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentages were used to describe the demographic information of the respondents, mean and standard deviation were used to answered the research questions, while inferential statistics of Independent Sampled t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significant. Data analysis was done using SPSS version 20.

3. RESULTS

Table 2: Demographic Information of the Respondents (n=363)

	Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Gender		
	Male	226	43.8%
	Female	137	56.2%
2.	Age		
	25-34	59	16.3%
	35-44	98	26.9%
	45-54	124	34.2%
	55 and above	82	22.6%
3.	Cadre		
	Academic Staff	69	19.0%
	Non-Academic Staff	294	81.0%
4.	RANK		
	Senior Staff	139	38.3 %
	Junior Staff	224	61.7%

Table 2 which shows information on demographic information indicated that 226(43.8%) were male, while 137(56.2%) were female, 69(19.0%) of these respondents were academic staff, and 294(81.0%) were non-academic staff. The table equally revealed that 59(16.3%) were between the ages of 25-34, 98(26.9%) were between the ages of 35-44, 124(34.2%) were between the ages of 45-54, while 82(22.6%) of these respondents were between the ages

of 55 and above. The table further revealed that 139(38.3 %) of this University staff were senior staff, while 224(61.7%) were junior staff. Therefore, most of these respondents were non-academic staff.

Table 3: What is the level of depression among University of Maiduguri during the industrial action? (n=363)

S.N.	Statement	Mean	SD	Decision
1.	I have crying spells or feel like it.	2.04	1.03	Depressed
2.	I eat as much as I used to.	1.97	1.02	Depressed
3.	My heart beats faster than usual	2.07	1.01	Depressed
4.	I have trouble sleeping at night.	2.10	1.04	Depressed
5.	I feel down-hearted and blue.	2.01	1.01	Depressed
6.	I find it easy to do the things I used to.	2.32	1.05	Depressed
7	I still enjoy the things I used to do.	2.15	1.18	Depressed
8.	I get tired very easy.	2.06	1.06	Depressed
9.	I feel hopeful about the future	2.81	0.40	Not depressed
10.	I still enjoy sex	1.61	0.78	Depressed
11.	I notice that I am losing weight	2.70	0.29	Not depressed
12.	I find it easy to make decisions.	1.76	0.89	Depressed
13.	I feel that I am useful and needed.	2.79	0.80	Not depressed
14.	I am more irritable than usual.	1.68	1.07	Depressed
	Total	2.14	0.90	Depressed

A little of the time =1, Some of the time=2, good part of time =3, most of the time =4

Table 3 shows mean and standard deviation scores of levels of depression among University of Maiduguri staff during the industrial action. Moreover, the Table 3 shows that the respondents rated more of the items below a mean score of 2.50, this reveals that University of Maiduguri staff were depressed during the industrial action. More so, the total mean scores and total standard deviation 2.14 and 0.90 respectively are practical proof backing the respondent's statement.

Table 4: What is the Level of Anxiety among University of Maiduguri During the Industrial Action? (n=363)

S.N.	Statement	Mean	S.D.	Decision
1.	I feel satisfied	1.73	.86	High
2.	I feel frightened	1.76	.89	High
3.	I feel comfortable	1.61	.82	High
4.	I feel upset	1.60	.85	High
5.	I am worried	1.67	.87	High
6.	I feel pleasant	1.76	.92	High
7	I feel nervous	1.81	.93	High
8.	I feel calm	1.75	.91	High
9.	I feel tense	3.82	.48	Low
10.	I am worried	1.74	.91	High
11.	I feel confused	1.79	1.01	High
12.	I feel self-confident	2.63	0.33	Low
13.	I feel secure	3.57	0.45	Low
14.	I feel content	2.20	1.03	High
	Total	1.10	0.80	High

Key: Not at all (NAA), Somewhat (SW), Moderately So (MS), Very Much So (VMS)

Table 4 shows mean and standard deviation scores of levels of anxiety among University of Maiduguri staff during the industrial action. Moreover, the Table 4 shows that the respondents rated more of the items below a mean score of 2.50, this reveals that anxiety among University

of Maiduguri staff were high during the industrial action. More so, the total mean scores and total standard deviation 1.10 and 0.80 respectively are practical proof backing the respondent's statement.

Table 5: Pearson Product Moment Coefficient of Relationship between Depression and Anxiety among University of Maiduguri Staff During Industrial Action

Variables	Mean	Std. Dev	N	Df	R	Prob	Decision
Depression	1.94	0.311	363	361	.371*	0.000	Rejected
Anxiety	1.74	0.267	363	361			

df=361, r=0.371, Prob=0.000

Table 5 indicated that depression has a mean of 1.94 and standard deviation of 0.311; also, anxiety has mean of 1.74 and standard deviation of 0.267. Correlation coefficient (r) value of 0.371 indicates a strong moderate correlation between depression and anxiety. The low p -value (0.000) suggests that this correlation is statistically significant, further supporting the rejection of the null hypothesis. This shows that the stated hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between depression and anxiety among University of Maiduguri staff during the last industrial action was rejected. Therefore, there is significant relationship between depression and anxiety among University of Maiduguri staff during the last industrial action ($p < 0.05$).

4. DISCUSSION

This study was carried-out to assess depression and anxiety symptoms among University of Maiduguri staff during the industrial active. The result showed that most of these respondents showed symptoms of depressed during the industrial action. This is confirmed as very many of the participants rated more of the items below a mean score of 2.50, this reveals that University of Maiduguri staff were depressed during the industrial action. More so, the total mean scores and total standard deviation 2.14 and 0.90 respectively are practical proof backing the respondent's statement. This is not surprised as depression is caused by stressful live events such as loss of job, death of love one among others. These University staff were not paid for eight months (ASSU), five months (5) NAT and NASSU for months, and individual who is not collecting his/her monthly salary for these periods and has no other means of livelihood will be depressed. This is consistent with a previous study conducted by Song et al., (2021), who reported that the depression scores of grass-root civil servants ranged from 30 to 89 represent the mean and SD of 54.47 and 9.84 respectively, while that of anxiety scores ranged from 25 to 91, that the mean is 48.23 (SD = 11.17). The researcher also found that 65.2% of the civil servants had depression, the standard score of SDS > 53, and 42.1% civil servants had anxiety, the standard score of SAS > 50.

This study is in line with the study Gavin et al., (2015) where he discovered that depression is connected with mild to severe anxiety level among workers participating in the study. Having anxiety gives 5.9 times more likelihood of having depression compared to subjects whose measurement showed their anxiety was minimal. This study is also corroborating other findings who reported that almost half of the participants that are suffering from anxiety are also diagnosed with depression and, although they are clinically different disorders, individuals may experience symptoms of anxiety and depression together, such as nervousness, irritability and concentration problems (WHO, 2012). The result of this is in line with a metal analysis study conducted by Kunzler et al., (2021) during the COVID-19 period, where the result revealed that depression, anxiety, and insomnia are prevalent among people in quarantine during the COVID-19 period.

Furthermore, the study indicated that anxiety among University of Maiduguri staff were high during the industrial action. This can be seen as the respondents rated more of the items below a mean score of 2.50. More so, the total mean scores and total standard deviation 1.10 and 0.80 respectively are practical proof backing the respondent's statement. The result of this study corroborates the earlier finding of Asif, Mudassar, Shahzad, Raouf and Pervaiz (2020). The writers reported that the mean of depression, anxiety and stress among university students were $M=15.08$, $M=18.25$ and $M=19.03$ respectively, while the frequency of depression, anxiety and stress among university students were found to be 75%, 88.4% and 84.4% respectively in their study. Moreover, the findings of their indicated that the anxiety is the most prevalent issue among the participants with highest percentage of 88.4%. The findings of this study are also related to another study conducted by Ghanim et al., (2022) who found that almost half of the Palestinian university students had moderate to severe anxiety, and a significant increase in the prevalence of depression and anxiety among university students was noticed. However, the result of this study contradicts the findings of Saddik et al., (2020) who stated that a lower prevalence of anxiety was observed among students in the United Arab Emirates, which could be explained by the obvious variation in the levels of citizens' welfare and area prosperity. Also, in a Chinese study, the prevalence of anxiety and depression was lower than expected which was explained by the survey coinciding a Chinese festival (Wang, Yang, Yang, Liu, Li & Zhang, 2020).

Similarly, there is significant relationship between depression and anxiety among University of Maiduguri staff during the last industrial action ($p<0.05$). The finding of this study indicated that there is significant relationship between depression and anxiety among University of Maiduguri staff during the last industrial action ($p<0.05$). According to Tracy (2022), relationship exists between depression and anxiety as a depressive person usually experiences a lot of anxiety, possibly even to the extent of having panic attacks. The result of his study indicated that 85% of the participants with major depression were also detected with generalized anxiety disorder and 35% had symptoms of panic disorder which is in line with the finding of this study. This is similar with the earlier study of Ghanim et al. (2022) who reported that there was a strong positive correlation between Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression (CES-D) and anxiety disorders (GAD-7) scores ($R=0.707$, p value <0.01). The findings of this study are related to the previous studies within Nigeria and beyond (Asa, & Lasebikan, 2016; Sufka, Feltenstein, Warnick, Acevedo, Webb, & Cartwright, 2006). They found that there was a high relationship between teachers' stress, anxiety disorder and depression, $P < 0.001$ separately. They stated further that incidence of stress as determined by the Teachers' Stress Scale was 340 (72.2%), depression was 43 (29.3%), generalized anxiety disorder 44 (29.5%). Similarly, this study corroborates the study of Nie and Sun (2015), who found that excessive workload, job burnout, and depression were significantly correlated with each other.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it was observed that there was is high level of anxiety and depression among university staff during industrial action. Moreover, there is relationship between anxiety and depression among university staff during the last industrial action. It is recommended that university staff and other salary earners should find other means of livelihood instead of depending on their monthly salary alone so as to overcome financial problem whenever they are on industrial action which is the major cause of depression. Further, government should fulfil the promises made with university workers which is the major cause of strike, and remove the policy of no work no payment.

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