

## IGBO POETRY AND PROTEST: THE 2022 NIGERIA VARSITY STRIKE

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### Abstract

The 2022 Nigeria Varsity Lecturers strike has been a contentious and highly publicized event, with many people expressing strong opinions on both sides of the issue. The strike disrupted academic schedules, delayed graduations, and resulted in a decline in the quality of education. In the midst of this strife, Igbo poets have used their craft as a means of protesting and bringing attention to the strike, and their works have helped to shape the wider conversation around the strike. In this article, the researcher delves into the ways in which Igbo poets have engaged with the strike, to identify the challenges faced by the education sector in Nigeria due to the strike and through examining range of Igbo poems written in response to the event, the researcher also showcased the aftermath of the strike. This article explores the themes and issues that these poets address, looking at how their works reflect the experiences and perspectives of those involved in the strike. Also, the researcher considers how the Igbo poetry engages with wider debates and issues surrounding the strike, and how it contributes to the public discourse on the strike. The resource mobilization theory is used in this study and through analysis, the researcher shed light on the role that poetry can play in social and political protest, and to offer a deeper understanding of the ways in which Igbo poets are using their craft to speak out on important issues of the day. In doing so, this study aims to provide a nuanced and multifaceted view of the 2022 Nigeria varsity strike, one that takes into account the complex and varied experiences and viewpoints of those involved in the event.

**Keywords:** Poetry, protest, strike

### Introduction

The 2022 Nigeria varsity strike has been a heavy challenging event, with lecturers across the country demanding better working conditions, pay, and benefits. The strike has had a significant impact on the education system in Nigeria, with many students facing disruptions to their studies and schools being forced to close. In the midst of this crisis, a number of Igbo poets have used their craft as a means of protesting and bringing attention to the strike. Poetry has long been recognized as a powerful tool for social and political protest, with many Igbo poets throughout history using their works to speak truth to power and to give voice to the struggles of the marginalized and oppressed. As Osundare (2001:8) said that Poetry is the most democratic of all literary genres, the most accessible, the most easily understandable, the most adaptable to local issues and the most capable of transcending linguistic, cultural and national barriers. In the case of the strike, Igbo poets have used their works to express their support for the striking lecturers, to highlight the issues at stake, and to call for change.

The use of poetry in protest is not new, of course. Throughout history, poets have used their craft as a means of speaking truth to power and of giving voice to the struggles of the marginalized and oppressed. As the poet and scholar Rich (1995:23) argued, that "Poetry is above all a concentration of the power of language, which is the power of our ultimate relationship to everything in the universe" From the ancient time of the Igbo people to the present day, poets have used their works to challenge injustice, to call for change, and to inspire others to action. In this way, poetry has played a vital role in shaping public discourse and in bringing about social and political change. In the case of the 2022 Nigeria varsity strike, Igbo poetry has served as a means of bringing the perspectives and experiences of those involved in the strike to a wider audience. By using their words to express their views on the strike, Igbo poets have helped to shape the public conversation around the event and to bring attention to the issues at stake. Through their works, these poets have provided a unique and powerful perspective on the strike, one that has helped to deepen our understanding of the complex and varied experiences and viewpoints of those involved in the event.

This study explores the ways in which Igbo poets have engaged with the 2022 Nigeria varsity strike, examining a range of Igbo poems written in response to the event. The researcher looks at the themes and issues that these poets address, and how their works reflect the experiences and perspectives of those involved in the strike. The researcher also considers how the poetry engages with wider debates and issues surrounding the strike, and how it contributes to the public discourse on the strike. Following from the above conceptual explication, this paper attempts to look at the various ways Igbo poets have addressed the issues of Strike and how much impact it has on their development, education and the society. The resource mobilization literary theory was adopted in analysing two contemporary Igbo poems that address the issues of strike in Nigeria University as a citadel of learning and development. The poems are: “Sùturaikì (Abùbuòrù)” (Strike) by Nkechinyere Okediadi in *Ije Uwa* and “Straik na Naijiria” (Strike in Nigeria) by Tina Onuegbu in *Akònauche*. This is to determine the extent to which the poets address the issues as aforementioned. Through the analysis, the researcher shed light on the role that poetry can play in social and political protest, and to offer a deeper understanding of the ways in which Igbo poets are using their craft to speak out on important issues of the day. In doing so, this study aims to provide a nuanced and multifaceted view of the 2022 Nigeria varsity strike, one that takes into account the complex and varied experiences and viewpoints of those involved in the event.

### Contributions of Poets

According to Okpewho (2005), literature has a long history in Nigeria, with the oral tradition playing a central role in the transmission of cultural values and beliefs. Adeleke (2009:8) argues that the written literature of Nigeria has been shaped by the country's diverse cultures and histories, with the works of writers such as Wole Soyinka, Chinua Achebe, Okebalama, Egudu and others serving as important cultural touchstones. Ezenwa-Ohaeto (2012:14) notes that the themes of Igbo literature have been varied, with writers tackling issues such as colonialism, post-colonialism, gender, education, finance, culture and identity. Ikechukwu (2014:21) argues that Igbo literature has also been marked by a sense of social and political engagement, with writers using their work to comment on and critique the society in which they live.

According to Onyiuke (2016:5), the rise of digital platforms has had a significant impact on the distribution and consumption of literature in Nigeria. The growth of e-book markets and online literary journals has expanded the reach of Igbo literature, making it more accessible to a global audience. There is a rich tradition of poetry and protest in Nigeria, with many Igbo poets using their work to speak out against social and political injustice. The use of Igbo poetry as a form of resistance and protest can be traced back to pre-colonial Nigeria, where oral poets, known as griots, played a significant role in preserving the history and culture of Igbo ethnic groups. In modern times, Nigeria poets have continued to use their work to address issues such as colonialism, military dictatorship, and corruption. One notable example is the poet and activist Ken Saro-Wiwa, who was executed for speaking out against environmental degradation caused by oil exploration in the Niger Delta. Most of the Igbo poets who have used their work to address social and political issues include Nolue Emenajo, Asonye Uba-Mgbemena, and Innocent Uzoma Nwadike, a Nobel laureate, who is known for his politically charged poetry and plays, which often address issues such as culture identification and unity, corruption and human rights violations. Abani is another poet and novelist who has used his work to explore themes of identity, political violence, and social justice. Osundare, a professor of English and a leading figure in the Nigerian literary scene, is known for his socially engaged poetry, which addresses issues such as poverty, corruption, and the abuse of power.

In recent years, the use of poetry as a means of protest has also been evident in the work of younger Nigerian poets such as Paul Azino and Inua Ellams. Azino, a poet and performer, has used his work to address issues of police brutality and government corruption, while Ellams is known for his socially engaged poetry and spoken word performances, which address themes of identity, race, and social justice. The literature of Igbo poets reflects the country's complex and often tumultuous history, as well as the ongoing struggle for social and political change.

### Poetry as a Protest

Igbo Poetry has a long history of being used as a means of protest and social commentary. From ancient Igbo grits and bards to modern-day spoken word artists, poets have often used their work to speak out against injustice and to advocate for social and political change. In Nigeria, Igbo poetry has played a particularly significant role in the country's struggle for democracy and social justice. Igbo poets such as Ken Innocent Uzoma Nwadike, Nkechinyere Okediadi, and Nolue Emenanjo have used their work to address issues such as Governance, Culture, Education, Igbo communal life, corruption, and environmental degradation. Their poetry serves not only as a means of artistic expression, but also as a tool for raising awareness and fostering social change. The use of poetry as a form of protest is not limited to Nigeria. Igbo Poets around the world have used their work to speak out against injustice and to advocate for social and political change. For example, poets such as Ifeanyi Ugwunnadi, Ezenwa Ohaeto, Gabriella, I. Nwaozuzu and Romanus Ezeuko have used their work to address issues of race, oppression, and social inequality. Finally Igbo poetry has proven to be a powerful tool for protest and social commentary, capable of fostering change and inspiring action. As Nigerian poet Niyi Osundare has noted, "The pen, after all, is mightier than the sword. Poetry, with its ability to touch the soul and change the mind, can be a potent weapon in the struggle for social justice."

According to Oyelaran (2005:41), protests have been a common feature of the Nigerian political landscape, with various groups using protests as a means of expressing their grievances and demanding change. Adebayo (2009:24) argues that protests have often been met with repression from the state, with protesters being arrested, detained, and sometimes killed. Despite this, protests have continued to be a popular means of voicing discontent, particularly among youth and civil society groups. Going further he said that means of protest could be strike as in when it concerns the social injustice going on in the educational sector. To Oyewo (2012:17), the causes of protests in Nigeria have been varied, including issues such as bad governance, lack of access to basic services, and economic inequality. Protest in the view of Eze (2014:12) argues that

“Protests in Nigeria have often been driven by a sense of frustration and disillusionment with the political system, and that protesters are often motivated by a desire for change and accountability”.

According to Oni (2016:15), the use of poetry and social media has had a significant impact on the organization and spread of protests as well as varsity strike in Nigeria. The rise of platforms such as Twitter and Facebook has allowed protesters to quickly disseminate information and mobilize support, leading to the emergence of new forms of collective action.

From the view of Adekanye (2007:34), strikes have a long history in Nigeria, with the first recorded strike dating back to 1918. In the decades that followed, strikes have been used as a means of protest by various groups, including workers, students, and market women. According to Olufemi (2013:21), strike have often been met with repression from the state, and that trade unions have faced challenges in organizing strikes due to government interference and the intimidation of union leaders. Elufiede (2010:9) argues that the effectiveness of strikes in Nigeria has been limited by a number of factors, including the government's use of the courts to obtain injunctions against strikes, the use of strikebreakers, and the lack of solidarity among workers. In addition, strikes have often been hampered by the inability of unions to mobilize sufficient numbers of workers, as well as the lack of support from the general public. Despite these challenges, strikes have continued to be a common form of protest in Nigeria. In the words of Adeniji (2012:16), the frequency of strikes has increased in recent years, with strikes occurring in a variety of sectors including education, health, and the public sector. Adewale (2015:4) argues that the increasing use of strikes reflects a failure of the government to address the grievances of workers and other groups, and suggests that the use of strikes is likely to continue until the underlying issues are addressed.

### **Theoretical Framework**

One theoretical approach that could be particularly useful for analyzing the use of poetry as a form of protest in the context of the 2022 Nigerian varsity strike is the sociology of social movements, which is also a literary theory. The sociology of social movements is a field of study that examines the

emergence, organization, and impacts of collective action and social change. Within this field, there is a rich tradition of research on the role that art and culture play in the development and mobilization of social movements.

One influential theory within the sociology of social movements is the "resource mobilization" perspective, which was developed by sociologists John McCarthy and Mayer Zald in the 1970s. This theory suggests that social movements emerge and succeed to the extent that they are able to mobilize resources such as money, people, and symbolic capital (including cultural and artistic resources) in order to achieve their goals. Applying the resource mobilization perspective to the use of poetry as a form of protest in the context of the 2022 Nigerian varsity Lecturers' strike stipulate that Igbo poets and other cultural producers use their work to communicate and mobilize around issues related to the strike, and it has contributed to the overall success of the movement for Igbo poetry is used to raise awareness, generate support, and challenge power dynamics within the larger social and political context. For instance, through their poetry, they have been able to raise awareness about the issues at stake in the strike, such as inadequate pay and working conditions for lecturers. They have also used their work to generate support for the strike, both within the academic community and among the general public. By leveraging the power of their artistic work, these poets and cultural producers have been able to recruit supporters and build a sense of solidarity around the cause.

Additionally, from the theoretical analysis of the selected Igbo poetry, it's been seen that the use of poetry as a form of protest in the context of the 2022 Nigerian varsity lecturers strike illustrates the potential of artistic expression to mobilize resources and contribute to social and political change, as outlined by the resource mobilization perspective. Through their artistic work, poets and other cultural producers have been able to communicate, mobilize, and challenge power dynamics, ultimately contributing to the success of the movement. Overall, the sociology of social movements, and particularly the resource mobilization perspective, offers a useful framework for understanding the role that poetry and other forms of artistic expression can play in shaping social and political change.

### **Data Presentation and Analysis**

Here, the selected poems are analyzed.

### **Impact of the 2022 Varsity Strike**

The impact of the strike on education, university lecturers, parents and student is something noteworthy as it was clearly represented in the selected Igbo poetry used for this research. The use of literature as a powerful mirror to reflect the past, present, possible, probable and actual actions and reactions of men in the society is exploited by many a writer, particularly in Nigeria; where truth often seems to be stranger than fiction (Ifejirika 2014:121). Here, the researcher based on the selected Igbo poetry critically analyzed how the poets depicted issues around strike in their work of art.

### **Financial Strain**

The financial strain caused by the strike is not unique to Nigeria and this issue has been present in other forms of literature, where strikes have been represented in various ways. Non-payment of salary during the strike has been seen to be the cause of financial strain for the lecturers and their families, as it made them unable to meet their basic expenses and literally incur debts. This no doubt led to feelings of stress, anxiety, and frustration, as well as difficulties in paying for necessities such as food, housing, and healthcare. The poets both showcased in their works that a prolonged strike can have a significant impact on the local economy, including on businesses that rely on the income of striking workers. This invariably affects not only the lecturers themselves, but also the broader community. The personal struggles of the lecturers and their families caused by financial strain can have a big impact on an individual's mental and physical well-being, as well as on their family and to some extent cause death. Onuegbu depicts this thus in *Akɔnuche*:

Straik! Straik!! Straik!!!  
 I napula Najirija otutu agamnihu  
 Otutu mkpuruobi nokwa na nwute

Ọtutu akunaaba Naijiria na-efu.  
Ọtutu mmekpaahu diiri gi na ezinaulo gi. (Pg.177)

Strike! Strike!! Strike!!!  
You have taken away from Nigeria many progress  
Many souls are in pain  
Many Nigeria's wealth is lost  
Many afflictions await you and your family. (Pg.177)

In *Ije Uwa*, the poet portrays the impact of financial strain thus:

Suturaiki (Abubuoru)  
Ajo anu ka i bu  
I laala otutu ndu n'iyi (Pg.56)

Strike (Strike)  
You are a deadly animal  
You have wasted so many lives. (Pg.56)

The financial impact caused by lost wages during the strike from this poetic extract is a reminder that the struggle for fair wages and working conditions is not just about those directly involved in the strike, but about the well-being of the families and entire nation. Also, financial strain may result in death or loss of a family member or even a nation, where by the wealth of the nation is stagnated. It is a call to action for all of us to support the striking lecturers in their fight for a better future. Through their powerful and evocative poetry, Igbo poets have given voice to the financial struggle faced by so many in the country and have called for change and support.

### **Opportunity for Personal and Professional Growth**

It worthy to note that the prolonged 2022 varsity strike made lecturers to maximize their potentials and as such create multiple sources of income for comfortable living. The poetry used in analyzing this research pointed out that although the strike could be said to be grievous however it was all that negative oriented as it gave room for the younger lecturers to explore their potentials and increase their product. Also, lecturers were able to come together and advocate for the issues that mattered most to them. Thus, as seen in this extract from *Ije Uwa*:

Olee mgbe i ga-ebi?  
Omere ndi okenye oke n'ezi, ngwere n'uzo (Pg.57)

When would you stop?  
You have made the younger ones to look outside. (Pg.57)

This shows that strike could have a negative impact as much as a positive impact. Also this highlighted in a clear manner the effort the younger lecturer to seek asylum in other industries while some maximized the digital space opportunity like linked, twitter, pinterest, facebook and others where they can trade their talent and offer services for financial stability. Through oral survey it was also gathered that some lecturers explored into the technology world and today those knowledge are theirs for eternity.

### **Divided Solidarity**

During the varsity strike of 2022, the union under which Nigeria University belonged to experienced divide solidarity of their member. This in a very succinct way is seen among the themes of the poetry selected for this research. Literally lecturers have individual needs, while some echo on solidarity some others whom perhaps are in danger of losing their sanity and humanity because of lack of finance and yet so many responsibility tends to drift away. Okediadi showcased it this extract from *Ije Uwa* thus:

Abubuoru!

I bu mma ihu abuo  
Ndi kwe na ndi ekweghi. (Pg.57)

Strike!  
You are double edge sword  
Those for and against. (Pg.57)

This goes to show that, in the event of strike as a means of protest that it may not be welcomed by all because the impact might be different on two individuals and as such the parents and society at large.

### **Apathy**

Strike from the poetic perspective and through some cultural oral interview carried out leads to apathy towards the teaching profession and passion. Unfortunately, not only can strike cause apathy also the intention of the strike not being met, like the improvement of service condition remunerations, it could make one develop cold feet and perhaps lose taste of the growing passion to teach and impact. This is seen in *Akọnauche* thus:

Straiki bu ngwa agha ndi umengwu  
Gi oghaa Straiki  
I na-arusikwa oru gi ike?  
Matakwa na otu ubochi i juru oru,  
I napula Najirija otutu agamnihu. (Pg.177)

Strike is a tool for laziness  
You that's back from strike  
Are you working diligently?  
Be aware that a day you refused to work,  
You have denied Nigeria much progress. (Pg.177)

Empathy from this extract delay a nation's progress and success and everything possible should be done to terminate the threat that gives rise and room for prolonged strike.

### **The Role of Community Support**

Support has proven to be the best part of human life on earth. The period of prolonged strike is considered an evaluation time, a period to show how much impact one especially a lecturer has made on his community to warrant the return at a perilous time. Also, this is a time lecturers receive support from their communities during the strike, including from students, fellow educators, and other allies which could take many forms, such as emotional support, financial assistance, and practical help. This is seen thus in *Akọnauche*:

Nwanne m  
Were nwayo rachaa  
Ya bu ofe di oku  
Were ngwaagha mkparitauka,  
Mata agbataobi ga-enyere gi aka  
Ya bu ngwaogu onye mmeri (Pg.177)

Brothers  
Take it easy while licking  
That hot soup  
Make use of the media space  
To find your helper  
It is the fighting armor for the victorious. (Pg.177)

Through this, the notion of support as the impact of varsity strike 2022 could be seen. the poet through this extract has shown that support during strike towards lecturers are important ways of communal living and in turn reduces the effect of strike on the striking lecture, student and even the parents and goes on to strengthens the relationship.

### **The Role of the Government and other Authorities**

The back and forth of the negotiation to end up the strike seems like the government and other authorities may have played a role in the strike, by opposing the demands of lecturers' and supporting the Government. The poets pointed out hoe the failed negotiations, mediation, and other efforts to resolve the conflict has generated to loss of trust on the part of the government. The government played a major role in breaking the trust the lecturers had on them there by lying and dishing unachieved promises as a way to cajole the varsity lecturers back to classroom without meeting their demand. Thus in *Akọnauche*:

Ọ bụ na unu amaghị,  
Na ọtụtụ ndị isi aba okpu Naijiria  
Ndi eriwe echetaghị umu,  
Ha egobiela ndi nkwuzi. (Pg.174)

So you people didn't know  
That those heady Nigeria Rulers  
Those that embezzle without rememering the masses  
They have bought the mediators over. (Pg.174)

Also in *Ije Uwa*, the poet pointed out the deceit and lies with the government use to sabotage the peaceful strike protest of the varsity lecturers thus:

Abubuorū!  
I mere ndi ochichi ji asi asi  
Ha na-ekwe nkwa erughi ala obi  
Oru akwu ugwo bu iwe gi. (Pg.57)

Strike!  
You caused the lies of the Rulers  
They promise not from the depth of their heart  
Work without pay is your anger. (Pg.57)

From these excerpts, it's also shown how the government embezzles money and then subject lecturers to work without pay and such in a very grievous way would sooner or later make university education to be deserted space of talents, sound mind and academic experts.

### **Disruption of Education**

The strike from the artistic view of the selected Igbo Poetry have not only proven to disrupt students' education, but has also lead to cancelled classes, postponed exams, and other difficulties which is a negative impact on their academic performance and progress. Also the impact might also be stress and anxiety on the part of the student as it would take a long call to wake up the over slept brain to academic function. Thus in *Ije Uwa*:

Abubu oru  
I laala otutu ndu n'iyi  
Umuka agaghi akwukwo  
Umagboghobja Ufodu ji maka gi  
Tuọ ime ezi. (Pg.56)  
Umukorobja Ufodu ji maka gi zuo  
Ohi amxghi amu

I bu orja nye nne na nna. (Pg.57)

Strike

You have wasted a lot of lives

Student don't go to school

Some of the young girls have because of you

Conceived out of wed lock. (Pg.56)

Some young boys has because of you resulted to stealing

Without being taught

You are a sickness to parents. (Pg.57)

The poet in a special manner pointed out how disruption of education can a lot of menace to student. An idle mind is really a devil's playing ground, while the stoppage of school can cause some girls to conceive outside wed lock it can equally make the boys to result to arm robbery and as such be a pain in the neck of parents and all these vices corrupts the society.

### Professional Consequences

The varsity strike of the year 2022 have had negative consequences for the lecturers' professional lives, such as damage to their reputation, reduced job security, and difficulty advancing in their careers. Non-payment of salary during the strike has negative consequences for the lecturers' professional lives, such as making them to question their worth and impact on education, academics and the lives of student. Through the selected Igbo poetry, it could be seen how the lecturers have been reduce to mere societal caricature, family members and friends throwing missiles of insult here and there and this in turn raises a question of does the Government regard teaching as a noble profession? Thus in *Ije Uwa*:

Ndi oru aghasara n'ulo

Ha aburula ihe ochi

Onweghi onye mazi uche ndi ochichi. (pg.57)

Workers are now at home

They have become an object of caricature

No one knows the mind of the government.(Pg.57)

During the varsity strike of the year 2022, the lecturers' job security was questioned through the effort of the government to create another union aside the Academic Staff Union of the University (ASUU) of lecturers and enforce them to go back to classroom without proper settlement the issues of the lingering strike. These and more are what the poet frowns at thereby lending their voice for a lasting solution to an amicable resolution between the government and the lecturers'.

### Aftermath of the Strike

It is important to let the society be aware of the impending doom as a result of the prolonged strike. This section reflects on the aftermath of the strike and the possible long-term consequences of the strike events that took place in Nigeria University in the year 2022. From the selected poetry, the poet show a keen interest and ask when it is expect for the strike to end which can only mean that using artistic and expressive futuristic lens, the poet has may be seen the aftermath of strike as one to be avoided at all cost necessary and possible. The extract read thus in *Ije Uwa*:

Suturaiki

Olee mgbe i ga-ebi?

Ndi oru aghasara n'ulo.

Olee mgbe i ga-ebi?

Olee mgbe i ga-ebi? (Pg.57)

Strike

When would you end?



Workers are at home.  
When would you end?  
When would you end? (Pg.57)

Added to the themes seen in the selected Igbo poetry, which reflected the year 2022 varsity strike consequences and also the data gathered from the traditional oral interview, it was gathered that the aftermath of varsity strike could be the following but not limited to it:

- ❖ **Resistance:** This goes on to explain that even if the lecturers' demands were not met, the act of striking itself can be seen as a form of resistance against the injustices they were facing. The lecturers may have felt that they were standing up for their beliefs and values, and that they had taken a brave and meaningful action to bring attention to the issues that mattered to them and that resistances is what the society fears that it has come to stay.
- ❖ **Injustice:** According to the poet, that if the lecturers' demands were not met, it could be seen as a further injustice on top of the original injustices that led to the strike which invariably lead to feelings of disappointment, frustration, and resentment, as well as a desire to continue fighting for change.
- ❖ **Education:** from the poet's view, the strike did not lead to improvements in the education system, rather it could be seen as a missed opportunity to address important issues such as inadequate funding, poor working conditions, and lack of support for students and this would lead to a sense of disillusionment and disappointment among those who participated in the strike and those who supported it.
- ❖ **Labor rights:** The poets frowns at unfavorable condition and situation that could happen if the lecturers' demands were not met, that it could be seen as a setback in the broader struggle for labor rights and fair treatment for all workers which would lead to feelings of discouragement and a need to regroup and find new ways to advocate for change.
- ❖ **The long-term consequences of the strike:** The poets through their artistic and expressive verse pointed out that the 2022 Nigeria varsity strike may have had long-term consequences for the lecturers, including changes to their working conditions, compensation, and other aspects of their professional lives. It could also have had broader impacts on the education system and society as a whole.

### **Recommendations**

In this time of crisis and struggle, it is important that we come together to support the demands of the striking lecturers in Nigeria. Their struggle for fair treatment and better working conditions is not only about the rights and livelihoods of educators, but also about the future of education and the well-being of Nigerian society as a whole. We call on readers and the society at large to take action by speaking out in support of the striking lecturers and by advocating for better funding and support for University education in Nigeria. Furthermore, it is crucial that we are aware of the broader political and social context in which this strike is taking place. Issues of labor rights and education are deeply connected with other issues such as economic inequality and corruption. By understanding these connections and working to address the root causes of these problems, we can help to create a more just and equitable society.

Additionally, this is a moment to reflect on the ways in which Igbo poetry and other forms of artistic expression can be used as powerful tools of protest and resistance. By engaging with the work of Igbo poets and other artists who are writing about the strike, we can gain a deeper understanding of the issues at stake and the emotions that are driving the struggle. Finally, we must also encourage the use of peaceful protests and creative forms of resistance as an alternative to violence in expressing dissent. It is crucial that all parties involved in the strike ensure that all forms of protest are carried out in peaceful manner and that people's safety is always taken into consideration.

### **Summary and Conclusion**

This research "Igbo Poetry and Protest: The 2022 Nigeria Varsity Strike" examines the use of poetry as a form of protest in the context of a hypothetical strike by Nigerian University in 2022. The article explores the ways in which Igbo poets throughout history have used their work as a means of expressing

dissent and drawing attention to social and political issues. In the context of the strike, poetry can serve as a powerful tool for lecturers and students to voice their frustrations and dissatisfaction with the government's handling of the situation. It can also be used to convey the personal and academic impacts of the strike on their lives. This paper looks at different forms at which the Igbo poets use their artistic expressive language to convey the message of the striking lecturers and students. The article also considers the historical significance of poetry as a form of protest. It examines how Igbo poets throughout history have used their work to comment on social and political issues and bring attention to important causes. It notes that Igbo poetry has been used as a means of resistance in many societies and has played an important role in social and political movements. The researcher through the selected poetic works provides extracts written to show historical recognition of strikes and other forms of protest to show how Igbo poetry can be used as a powerful tool of expression and resistance.

The paper goes on to discuss the challenges faced by lecturers and students during the 2022 varsity strike, and how the Igbo poetry might bring out their feeling and perspective. It also mentioned about the impact of the 2022 strike on the education system and society as a whole. The Igbo poetry provided in this research work also offers a window into the emotions and struggles of those affected by the strike, providing a deeper understanding of the human cost of such industrial action. This work of research "Poetry and Protest: The 2022 Nigeria varsity Strike" highlights the power of Igbo poetry as a tool for social and political change. The use of Igbo poetry in the context of strike serves as a means for lecturers and students to express their dissatisfaction with the government's handling of the strike and the negative effects it has had on their lives. This paper shows the significance of the Igbo poetry as a form of protest and how it can be used to bring attention to important issues and advocate for change. Furthermore, it showcases how Igbo poetry can be used in various forms of protest and can bring out the emotions and feelings of those who are impacted by such events. The paper calls for more attention to be paid to the issues raised by the strike, and the rights and needs of the striking lecturers. It also emphasizes the importance of using art, such as poetry, as a means of protest and bringing attention to important issues.

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