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END BAD GOVERNANCE PROTEST: IMPACT ON ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES IN AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY, ZARIA

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the effect of the 2024 EndBadGovernance protest on academic activities at Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria, the study utilized a qualitative research approach a type of research that focuses on gaining in-depth understanding of social phenomena, experiences, and perspectives, rather than relying on numerical data, The protest, driven by nationwide outrage over economic hardship, insecurity and poor governance, significantly impacted educational institutions. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, involving students, academic staff, and administrative personnel. The findings of the study involves, a halt in Academic activities as the protest led to suspension of lectures, rescheduling of examinations, restricted access to university facilities, and impaired communication between students and management more so, it has posed Psychological Impact as residents around the location as well as students reported elevated anxiety, fear, and uncertainty. The study Recommends the creation of Emergency Academic Policies such as rapid use of online modules and flexible examination windows—to maintain academic continuity during curfews or similar disruption and also Expand mental health of students and staffs by counseling services to address the emotional fallout of unrest and curfew-related isolation. Promote Structured Student Engagement such as student–administration liaison groups or grievance committees to facilitate early identification and peaceful resolution of campus concerns before escalations occur. Heightening security measures in the campus to prevent both internal and external factors from causing destruction and insecurity within the campus.

Keywords*: Governance, Protest, Academics, Activities*

1.1 Introduction:

Protests are a fundamental form of civic expression and a crucial indicator of societal well-being globally. They range from peaceful demonstrations to more confrontational actions, driven by a wide array of grievances. Both worldwide and within Nigeria, protests serve as a mechanism for citizens to demand change, accountability, and justice from their governments and other powerful entities. The past year and current period (2024-2025) have seen a continuation of widespread protests across the globe, often fueled by interconnected issues like soaring inflation, rising cost of living, unemployment, and economic inequality are primary drivers (Alabi, 2024). Many countries are still grappling with the economic aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic and geopolitical conflicts (like the Russia-Ukraine war) that have impacted global supply chains and energy/food prices, Conflicts like the Israel-Palestine crisis have sparked significant pro-Palestinian protests on university campuses and in major cities worldwide, as well as counter-protests (Usman, 2025)

Protest in Nigeria is a recurring socio-political phenomenon and a major avenue through which citizens express dissatisfaction with government policies, economic hardship, social injustice, police brutality, corruption, poor governance, and other societal issues. Protests in Nigeria range from peaceful demonstrations to violent uprisings from the colonial era's Aba Women's Riot to End Sars Protest, and they often reflect the deep-rooted frustrations of the populace (Smith, 2020).

The "End Bad Governance" protests in Nigeria in 2024 were a significant expression of widespread public discontent, primarily driven by severe economic hardship and a perceived failure of governance. These were not a single, isolated event, but rather a series of decentralized mass demonstrations that gained momentum, particularly in August and October 2024. The protests stemmed from a confluence of deep-seated grievances, which reached a boiling point in 2024. The EndBadGovernanceInNigeria protest with majorly 10-point demands which lasted for 10 days, from 1st – 10th August, 2024 was a movement to deeply lament that Nigerian are fed up with bad governance, corruption, and the rising cost of living that has left millions struggling and obvious mismanagement of the nation’s resources without sincere accountability. Similarly, Tonye (2024) highlighted the 10 points demands of the end bad governance protest to include: constitutional and judicial reforms, establish a living wage, electoral reform, human capital development, protect farms and farmers, government waste / cost of governance/ bloated MASS insecurity, unemployment, high cost of living as well as hunger protruding in the stomachs of Nigerians and

most importantly the removal of petroleum subsidy by President Bola Ahmed Tinubu in May 2023 as he resumed office. Meanwhile, the movement was significant, not just for its broad demands, such as reducing the cost of governance and reinstating the oil subsidy removed last year, but also for its ability to unite Nigerians across regional, ethnic, and religious lines and the use of social media and advocacy.

The protests escalated significantly on August 1, 2024, becoming nationwide. They occurred in major cities including Lagos, Abuja, Kano, Kaduna, Gombe, Jigawa, and Borno and Primarily mass mobilization and street protests. Social media played a crucial role in organizing and amplifying the movement, using hashtags like #EndBadGovernance and EndBadGovernanceInNigeria. Despite the severe crackdown in August, protesters called for renewed demonstrations on Nigeria's Independence Day, October 1, 2024, under the banner #FearlessInOctober, signaling their unwavering resolve. (Tonye,2024)

The *End Bad Governance* protest ended **not with a resolution**, but with a **slow decline** due to **state repression**, **loss of coordination**, and **institutional shutdowns**, including at **ABU Zaria**. The issues raised, however, remain unresolved, and the movement lives on in ongoing activism and academic discourse. As the Nigerian government responded to the protests with severe repression as Security forces (Army and Police) were deployed to disperse protesters, often using tear gas and live bullets. Reports indicated scores of deaths (over 22+ protesters) and numerous injuries across the country, particularly in Northern states like Borno, Niger, Kaduna (including a minor killed in Zaria), Kano, and Jigawa, over 1,000 protesters were arrested. Organizers were targeted, with some facing charges as severe as treason. A photojournalist was also arrested. And 24-hour curfews were imposed in several states, including Borno, Kano, Jigawa, and Katsina, to curb the protests. The "End Bad Governance" protests significantly impacted Zaria, much like other major cities and similar to those in other parts of Kaduna State, were reported to have been hijacked by criminal elements (hoodlums) (news channel,2024)

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Protest is crucial for a healthy democracy and social progress. The 2024 *End Bad Governance* protest, which swept across various parts of Nigeria, was a response to widespread dissatisfaction with poor leadership, rising insecurity, economic hardship, and systemic corruption. In May 2023, President

Bola Tinubu's administration removed the long-standing fuel subsidy. While seen as a necessary economic reform by some economists and international bodies (like the World Bank and IMF) to free up government funds, it led to an immediate tripling of petrol prices. This drastically increased transportation costs for goods and people, triggering a cascading effect on all other prices. pervasive feeling of governmental neglect, lack of accountability, and rampant corruption at various levels of government deeply frustrated citizens. (Udoudom *etal*, 2025)

According to (Umar, 2024) Zaria Protesters, largely youth, expressed deep dissatisfaction with what they perceived as "bad governance" and a lack of empathy from political leaders. Some protesters in Zaria were noted to be carrying Russian flags, a symbolic gesture interpreted by some as an expression of extreme frustration with the Nigerian government and a longing for alternative governance systems. Some were seen with placards like “Enough is Enough” “Secure North” ‘Rice was 8k in 2013 now rice is 100k’ The protests in Zaria, and other parts of Kaduna State, quickly escalated beyond peaceful demonstrations. Authorities and some media reports claimed that the protests were "hijacked by criminal elements (hoodlums)". These elements allegedly engaged in looting of shops and vandalization of both private and public properties. This accusation was used by the state government to justify its subsequent actions. Specific instances of vandalism reported included the razing of the Zaria office of the Kaduna State Traffic Law Enforcement Agency (KASTLEA)

Following the escalating violence and looting, the Kaduna State Security Council, led by Governor Uba Sani, imposed a 24-hour curfew on Kaduna and Zaria Metropolises effective August 5, 2024. This curfew was implemented to restore order. The most tragic and defining event of the Zaria protests, particularly in Samaru, was the killing of 16-year-old Isma'il Muhammad, according to multiple reports, including those from Channels Television and Amnesty International, Isma'il Muhammad was allegedly shot by a soldier inside his father's house in Samaru. (Punch news, 2024)

More so at ABU Zaria, academic activities were significantly affected. Samaru, being the immediate host community to Ahmadu Bello University, was directly affected by the curfew and heightened security presence. Residents, including students and staff of ABU living in Samaru, were forced to remain indoors. Shops, markets, and other businesses in Samaru would have been completely shut down during the curfew, impacting livelihoods. The presence of armed security personnel, reports of violence, and the tragic death of a minor created an atmosphere of fear and tension in the community.

With all these records of causalities and losses, the study will investigate how the protest disrupted academic activities.

1.3 Research Question

i. How has End bad governance affect Academic activities at Ahmadu Bello University Zaria?

2.1 Conceptual Exploration

Protest: Protest is a form of individual or collective action aimed at expressing ideas, views, or values of dissent, opposition, denunciation, or vindication. Examples include the expression of political, social, or cultural opinions, views, or perspectives; the vocalization of support or criticism regarding a group, party, or the government itself; the reaction to a policy or the denunciation of a public problem; the affirmation of identity or raising awareness about a group's situation of discrimination and social exclusion. Protests—and government responsiveness to them—are often seen as a critical part of a healthy democracy (Tilly 2025; Gillion, 2020; Gause, 2022). While citizens with widely-shared views can vote to achieve their desired outcomes, protests can cover those outside the mainstream an alternative to signal their preferences (Battaglini, 2017).1 For example, protests can highlight opinions that are reasonably aligned to mainstream views but are overlooked because they are pertinent to small or specific groups. Alternatively, protests can be a way for citizens to express views that are misaligned with the mainstream; indeed, protesters are often characterized as extremists with fringe views. However, when electoral systems produce politicians (and by extension policies and institutions) that are misaligned with mainstream preferences, protests may provide a means to express fewer radical views and to signal dissatisfaction with unrepresentative extremes. For example, protests against the overturning of Roe v. Wade represent views shared by the majority of the population (Lucey, 2022). In such cases, it is not protesters who are extremists with fringe views, but the politicians who claim to represent them.

List of Major Protests in Nigeria:

According to Eseigbe *eta*l (2025) Nigeria have a number of protests both peaceful and unpeaceful stemming from the precolonial era to date

1. **Aba Women's Riot (1929) and Abeokuta Women's Revolt (1947):** These were significant protests by women against colonial taxation and unfair policies.
2. **Ali Must Go" (1978) and Anti-SAP Riots (1989):** Student and labor-led protests against government policies, including education fee increases and the Structural Adjustment Program.
3. **June 12 Protests (1993):** Widespread demonstrations against the annulment of the 1993 presidential election results.
4. **Occupy Nigeria (2012):** Mass protests against the removal of fuel subsidies, which led to significant price hikes.
5. **EndSARS (2020):** A youth-led movement against police brutality and for broader governance reforms. This protest gained immense traction through social media and saw significant nationwide participation.
6. **End Bad Governance Protests (August and October 2024):** Inspired in part by protests in Kenya, these recent demonstrations saw youth across Nigeria protesting high living costs, corruption, and insecurity, and demanding a reversal of President Bola Tinubu's economic reforms.

2.2 Governance: is a broad and multifaceted concept that refers to the process of governing. It's more than just "government," though a government is a primary actor in governance. It encompasses the systems, structures, processes, rules, and relationships through which power is exercised, decisions are made, and resources are managed within any organized group or entity (Franklin, 2023).

1. The Act or Process of Governing: At its simplest, governance is about how something is governed or controlled. This applies to a country, an organization, a city, a community, or even a family.
2. Beyond Formal Government: While often associated with states and public administration, governance is broader than just the formal institutions of government (e.g., legislature, executive, judiciary). It includes:

State Actors: Government agencies, civil service, security forces.

Non-State Actors: Civil society organizations (NGOs, community groups), private sector businesses, media, traditional institutions, and citizens themselves.

Formal and Informal Rules: Not just laws and policies, but also social norms, customs, conventions, and ethical guidelines that influence behavior and decision-making

Governance is fundamentally about how power is used in the management of collective affairs. This includes: Decision-Making which is the processes by which decisions are arrived at. Implementation: How those decisions are put into action. Oversight and Accountability: How those in power are held responsible for their actions

"Governance" is a broad and multifaceted concept that refers to the process of governing. It's more than just "government," though a government is a primary actor in governance. It encompasses the systems, structures, processes, rules, and relationships through which power is exercised, decisions are made, and resources are managed within any organized group or entity.

- **World Bank's Definition:** "The manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development." This highlights the practical application and outcome-oriented nature of governance.
- **UNDP's Definition:** "The exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country's affairs at all levels. It comprises mechanisms, processes, and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations, and mediate their differences." This emphasizes the multi-level and participatory aspects.
- **Merriam-Webster:** "The act or process of governing or overseeing the control and direction of something (such as a country or an organization)."

2.2.1 Types of Governance: The concept of governance applies to various contexts which includes

- **Public Governance:** Refers to how a state or country is managed, encompassing its government, laws, policies, and interactions with civil society and the private sector.
- **Corporate Governance:** The system by which companies are directed and controlled. It involves the relationships between a company's management, its board of directors, its shareholders, and other stakeholders.
- **Global Governance:** The complex of formal and informal institutions, mechanisms, relationships, and processes between states, markets, and citizens, both inter- and trans-

governmental, by which collective interests are articulated, rights and obligations are established, and differences are mediated.

- **Environmental Governance:** The rules, practices, and institutions that guide human interactions with the natural environment.
- **E-Governance:** The application of information and communication technology (ICT) to the processes of government functioning and the delivery of public services.

Bad Governance

Bad governance is mainly the relationship between the governing authority and those being governed due to the decision-making. This article will discuss lousy governance, the effects of poor governance, and some examples of bad governance. As a result of the decision-making between the ruling and those who are being ruled, the problem of bad governance arises. External circumstances or decisions, such as violations of central or accepted norms, such as liberal democracy, and poor economic policy, generate this unfavourable relationship (Berir,2019). Bad governance refers to government-level administration, although lousy and lousy governments are different. Corruption, deception, and the adoption of unfair policies are all examples of bad governance. As a result, other expressions of inadequate management have varying degrees of severity and potential influence in their respective settings.

Bad governance refers to how decisions are made in government and business. It is also the polar opposite of good leadership.

Bad governance entails systemic corruption and a lack of openness and accountability, arbitrary policymaking, and the deception of those who are ruled.

Causes of bad governance

- Lack of accountability and voice

Bad governance occurs when governing entities refuse to listen to the voices of those they manage and are not willing to take responsibility for their conduct. By dismissing the voices of headed people, the governing body no longer hears or considers their ideas. Democratic governments emphasise accountability to ensure that the public is aware of what is going on and has a plan of action if

something goes wrong. In turn, a lack of accountability breeds distrust between the two parties, leading to instability. The parties have an unfavourable connection as a result of doubt and uncertainty.

- Political underdevelopment

The political underdevelopment that characterises most of the 'South' arises mainly from how nations have been formed and political power moulded in the global economic and political systems framework through contacts with the wealthier 'core' countries. To a considerable extent, political underdevelopment is caused by state leaders' lack of reliance on their populace. In terms of formal organisational traits, poor world states are pretty similar. The variation in state functioning is primarily due to wide variances in state-society relationship patterns.

- Corruption

Corruption and bad governance are often thought to go hand in hand. Corruption can be seen in various settings, from governmental to economic. Corruption can occur in different ways. The presence of crime within a governing body leads to poor governance because officials prioritise their interests over others.

In developing countries, crime impacts social services, such as health care and education, and law enforcement authorities, such as the police.

2.2.2 Causes of end bad governance protest in Nigeria (#EndBadGovernance)

The root causes of the "End Bad Governance" movement in Nigeria can be traced to two primary issues: economic hardship and poor governance. These factors have led to widespread frustration among citizens, who feel deeply disillusioned with their government officials and the current administration. Citizens have grown increasingly frustrated due to economic hardship and ineffective representation by government officials. Many Nigerians feel disillusioned and anxious about the current administration, often blaming it for the rising cost of living. Nigerians belief that things get worst when President Bola Tinubu announced the need to remove the fuel subsidy, arguing that it was benefiting other countries and some few Nigerians rather than easing the burden on Nigerians. However, since the removal of the fuel subsidy, the economic situation and cost of living have worsened, making life increasingly difficult for the majority of Nigerians.

Economic Hardship: Many Nigerians are grappling with severe economic difficulties, characterized by high inflation, skyrocketing prices, and diminished purchasing power. This economic strain has been exacerbated by recent government policies, including the controversial removal of fuel subsidies. When President Bola Tinubu took office, he advocated for the removal of these subsidies, arguing that they were benefiting certain countries rather than easing the burden on Nigerians. However, since this policy change, the cost of living has surged, making daily life increasingly challenging for a significant portion of the population (Inibehe 2024)

In an interview with one of the protesters, he *said "We are protesting because we are struggling with hunger and cannot afford basic necessities like food, water, clothing, and medical care due to the high inflation rate. Our demand is simply for the reversal of the policies that have driven up the cost of living."* Nigeria is currently facing its most severe economic crisis in a generation, with annual inflation reaching a staggering 34.19%, the highest rate seen in nearly thirty years. The economic strain is particularly acute in the cost of living, where food prices have surged even more dramatically. In and other states in the country, the prices of food stuffs has skyrocketed to nearly four times what it was just a year ago. This rapid increase in food costs exemplifies the broader financial hardship affecting many Nigerians, highlighting the critical nature of the current economic challenges.

Poor Governance: Alongside economic issues, the Nigerian public has expressed deep dissatisfaction with the current administration's governance. Many citizens believe that the government's decisions and actions are ineffective and fail to address their needs. This sentiment is compounded by perceptions of corruption and mismanagement within the government, which has further eroded trust and confidence in public officials.

The frustration with both the economic situation and perceived poor governance has led to widespread discontent. Citizens feel that the government is not only failing to mitigate the effects of economic hardship but is also contributing to it through mismanagement and ineffective policies. As a result, the "End Bad Governance" movement has gained momentum, reflecting a broader demand for significant reforms and a more accountable government that can address both economic and governance issues effectively.

The "End Bad Governance" protests are driven by the twin issues of economic hardship and poor governance. The removal of fuel subsidies has intensified the economic strain on ordinary Nigerians,

while dissatisfaction with government officials' performance has fueled calls for systemic change. The combination of these factors has created a volatile environment, where citizens are demanding both immediate relief and long-term reform (Ekon,2025).

2.3 Empirical review

Chukwuma & Anyogu (2025) in their research on end-bad-governance protests in Nigeria and south east zone non-participation: a dialectic analysis" by focus: This study, published in 2025, analyzes the dynamics of the End-Bad-Governance (EBG) protests that occurred in Nigeria from August 1st to 10th, 2024, with a particular focus on the non-participation of the South East region. It applies the 'Relative Deprivation' theory, 'Social Identity' theory, and 'Framing' theory to understand the protest.The paper utilized content analysis of secondary data and dialectic synthesis. The study revealed a complex interplay between national discontent with widespread corruption, rising cost of living, hunger, and overall governance failures, and regional identity. It indicated that while the EBG protests were a national call for a unified front against bad governance, the South East's reluctance to participate reflected a distinct understanding of governance shaped by local historical experiences and socio-political contexts, including issues of marginalization and ethnic identity. The non-involvement of the zone was interpreted as a justification of their dissatisfaction with the decaying governance system.

Udoinyang & Nwazuni (2024) investigate social media and protest on the Nigerian economy and democracy: a case study of end sars and bad governance protest**.**This research explores the effects of social media and protests on the Nigerian economy and democracy, using both the #EndSARS and #EndBadGovernance protests as case studies. The study adopted a mixed-methods approach, utilizing primary and secondary data, with a sample size of 400 participants. The findings revealed numerous negative impacts of the protests, including decreased work hours, disruption of economic activities, spread of misinformation, reduced job-seeking efforts, weakened currency, and strained government resources. Social media and protests were also found to lead to division within Nigerian society, intimidation of opposing voices, threats to national unity, and erosion of democratic norms. The authors emphasized the need for government regulations on social media, promotion of digital literacy, responsible online usage, addressing socio-economic issues driving protests, and fostering dialogue for democratic reforms. The study noted that during the August 2024 End Bad Governance protest, Nigeria lost about N400 billion worth of goods daily.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

Conflict Theory:

Conflict Theory is a sociological perspective that views society as an arena of inequality where different social groups compete for limited resources such as power, wealth, and opportunities. Rather than emphasizing social harmony and stability, the theory argues that social order is maintained through domination and coercion by powerful groups, while conflict is a natural and inevitable feature of social life. Social change, according to this theory, occurs primarily through conflict rather than consensus.

Conflict Theory is particularly useful for analyzing protests, strikes, and social movements because it explains how marginalized or disadvantaged groups react when governance systems fail to meet their needs. In such situations, tension between the ruling class and the masses often escalates into open resistance, including demonstrations and civil unrest (Ferrare & Phillippo 2023)

2. Proponent of Conflict Theory

According to Prayogi (2023), the principal proponent of Conflict Theory is **Karl Marx (1818–1883)**. Marx developed the theory in his analysis of capitalist societies, arguing that society is divided into classes based on their relationship to the means of production. He identified two major classes:

- **The bourgeoisie** (ruling class), who control political and economic power
- **The proletariat** (working class), who are exploited and marginalized

Marx believed that conflict between these classes was inevitable due to unequal distribution of resources and power. Over time, this conflict would lead to social change and transformation.

Although Marx focused mainly on economic class, modern scholars have expanded Conflict Theory to include conflicts based on **political power, governance, education, ethnicity, and access to social services**.

3. Key Assumptions of Conflict Theory

Conflict Theory is based on several core assumptions:

1. **Society is characterized by inequality:** Resources, power, and opportunities are unevenly distributed among groups.
2. **Power determines social order:** Dominant groups maintain control through laws, policies, and institutions that favor their interests.
3. **Conflict is inevitable:** Social conflict arises when disadvantaged groups become aware of their exploitation or marginalization.
4. **Social institutions reflect elite interests:** Institutions such as government, education, and security systems often serve the ruling class rather than the masses.
5. **Social change results from conflict:** Major social transformations occur through protests, revolutions, or collective resistance rather than peaceful consensus.

2.4.1 Relevance of Conflict Theory to the EndBadGovernance Protest and Academic Activities in ABU Zaria

The EndBadGovernance protest generated widespread instability that significantly affected academic activities at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Security concerns arising from the conflict between the state and protesting citizens led to the suspension of lectures, examinations, and administrative operations, as well as restrictions on movement within and around the campus. Although the university was not a direct target, students and staff were affected by curfews, road blockages, fear of violence, and increased security presence. This situation supports Conflict Theory, which explains how unresolved power imbalances and governance failures escalate into social conflict, with educational institutions bearing the collateral consequences of such unrest.

Society is characterized by inequality

The EndBadGovernance protest emerged from widespread dissatisfaction with economic hardship, rising cost of living, unemployment, and poor service delivery. These conditions reflect deep structural inequalities between the governing elite and the general population. In this study, respondents indicated that students and staff of ABU Zaria were indirectly affected by these inequalities through disrupted academic schedules, limited access to campus, and increased living costs, showing how broader societal inequality spilled into the university system.

Power is concentrated in the hands of the dominant group

Conflict Theory assumes that political and economic power is controlled by a small elite. During the protest, government authorities exercised their power through security deployments, restrictions on movement, and public order measures. These actions directly affected ABU Zaria, leading to campus shutdowns, suspension of lectures, and restrictions on student activities. This demonstrates how decisions made by those in power shaped the academic environment without direct input from students and staff.

Conflict is inevitable when grievances remain unresolved

The theory posits that when grievances such as poor governance and economic hardship persist, conflict becomes unavoidable. The EndBadGovernance protest represents this inevitable confrontation between citizens and the state. The study found that the resulting unrest created fear and uncertainty within ABU Zaria, making normal academic activities impossible and forcing the institution to suspend operations for safety reasons.

Social institutions reflect and absorb the consequences of conflict

According to Conflict Theory, institutions such as education are not neutral; they are affected by wider power struggles. In this study, ABU Zaria functioned as an institution that absorbed the consequences of the protest. Academic calendars were disrupted, examinations postponed, and research activities halted, even though the university was not directly involved in the protest. This confirms the assumption that institutions often become casualties of social conflict.

Social change occurs through conflict, not consensus

Conflict Theory assumes that meaningful change results from collective resistance rather than peaceful agreement. The EndBadGovernance protest sought to challenge existing governance structures and demand reforms. Although the immediate outcome was disruption, the study suggests that such protests raise awareness, pressure authorities, and stimulate public debate. However, the academic disruption at ABU Zaria highlights the unintended costs of conflict-driven social change, particularly on education.

3.0 Research Design and Methodology

This study adopts Qualitative research is a type of approach uses non-numerical data, such as interviews, observations, and textual analysis, to gather rich information. A structured Interview was used to get in-depth Information about how the end bad governance Protest affected academic activities

3.1 Population and Sample Size

The sampling technique for the study utilized purposive sampling to select participants who have direct knowledge or experience with the end bad governance protest. Sample size was arrived at by selecting samples from each faculty at Ahmadu Bello University consist of 16 faculties 2 students from each Faculties making 32 students were Interviewed also a 16 staffs from each faculty was interview. Therefore, a total of 48 sample was selected

3.2 Sources of Data

Sources of data for this study was obtained using two sources which is primary source which is interview and secondary source which is the use of journals, newspapers, Government reports on protests, unrest and conflicts in Nigeria.

3.3 Study Limitation

The study depended on participants' self-reported experiences, which may be subject to recall bias, emotional influence, or selective reporting. Some students and staff may have underreported or exaggerated certain impacts, particularly regarding psychological stress or participation in the protests.

Finally, the timing of data collection—immediately following the protests—may have influenced responses, as participants' perceptions were still shaped by heightened emotions and uncertainty. Longer-term effects on academic performance, mental health, or institutional policy changes were not captured in this study.

4.0 Analytical Discussions

This section presents findings from interviews with 48 participants, including students, lecturers, and administrative staff in Zaria, who were affected by the 2024 EndBadGovernance protest. Analysis was done manually revealed five major themes, each with subthemes that reflect the depth and complexity of the participants' experiences.

This section presents findings from in-depth interviews with fourty eight (48) participants comprising students, lecturers, and administrative staff of Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria, who were affected by the 2024 EndBadGovernance (EBG) protest. The participants were purposively selected to capture diverse perspectives based on role, level of exposure to the protest, and residence status (on-campus and off-campus).

4.0.1 Data Analysis Procedure

Data were analyzed manually using thematic analysis, following a systematic, multi-step process to ensure analytical rigor and transparency. The interview data were analyzed manually using thematic analysis, involving systematic familiarization with the transcripts, inductive coding, development of themes, iterative review and refinement of themes, and final naming and interpretation to ensure analytical rigor and transparency. All interview recordings were transcribed verbatim and read repeatedly to achieve familiarization with the data. During this stage, initial impressions and recurring issues were noted. Second, open coding was conducted by identifying meaningful units of text related to participants' experiences of the protest and its impact on academic activities. These codes were generated inductively from the data

Also, related codes were examined and grouped into broader categories based on patterns of similarity and difference. This process involved constant comparison across interviews to ensure consistency and to capture variations in experiences among different participant groups. Fourth, the categories were refined into five major themes, each with relevant subthemes that reflected the depth, complexity, and interconnectedness of participants' narratives. Finally, the themes were reviewed and validated against the original transcripts to ensure that they accurately represented participants' accounts and were supported by sufficient empirical evidence. Representative verbatim quotations were then selected to illustrate each theme.

P: Describes Participants ranging from students and Staffs

Theme 1: Disruption to Academic Activities

Nearly all participants reported that the protest significantly disrupted academic routines. Classes were canceled or postponed, and some academic activities were indefinitely suspended.

"We couldn't attend lectures for almost two weeks. Even after the protests ended, catching up was difficult." (P1,P3 student)*I live outside the university the protest was more prominent outside we couldn't come to school for lectures due to the curfew imposed (P24,P10, P3) "My test was postponed. It caused a lot of anxiety."* (P4, student) *It was difficult to leave the campus. The university market was closed we fed on what we have (P12,P9) "We couldn't read in the library since most of the structures were locked and inaccessible."* (P8)

- *Most lecturers, lab technicians and Librarians stay off campus making it difficult to move during Curfew (P16, P28, P21, P25)*

In addition to lecture interruptions, the protests affected research timelines and assessment schedules. Some students missed tests and seminars due to the restricted movement and internet issues.

- *"I missed my continuous assessment test because I couldn't log in."* (P6, student)

Theme 2: Emotional and Psychological Impact

The protest created significant emotional strain among students and staff, with many expressing feelings of fear, anxiety, and frustration.

- *"It caused a lot of anxiety."* (P4, student)
- *"It was frustrating, but it also revealed the level of dissatisfaction among the youth."* (P2, lecturer)
- *"I was scared. It was my first experience with protest on campus."* (P10, student)
- *We heard Gun shots which made us to stay indoors (P27,P13)*

The uncertainty surrounding the protest, especially among first-year students, led to confusion and isolation

Theme 3: Civic Engagement and Political Awareness

While the protest disrupted academic life, several participants saw it as a necessary act of civil resistance. There was a strong undercurrent of political consciousness in the narratives, especially among older students and staff.

- *"Honestly, I think the protest was necessary. We're suffering under poor governance and bad policies."* (P4, student)

- *"It was a wake-up call. I now see that political issues directly affect our academic lives."* (P5, postgraduate student)

However, not all participants were politically engaged. Some younger students expressed confusion or detachment from the protest's aims.

- *"I don't even know what the protest was about in detail."* (P10, P7,P19 student)

Theme 4: Institutional Response and Preparedness

Participants described a lack of adequate institutional response to the crisis. The university's unpreparedness was evident in communication breakdowns, delays in rescheduling academic activities, and inadequate contingency plans.

- *"We were not informed early enough, so the university couldn't take proactive steps."* (P3, administrator)
- *Our lecturers rushed us to finish up the curriculum due to delay caused by the protest, it wasn't easy*
- *The University does not have lecture alternatives like (Lecture applications) and software's that does not need Internet connectivity P28, P13*
- *"Most departments have no remote working plan."* (P8, HOD)
- *"Staff salaries were delayed too because of the disruption in the finance office."* (P7, P18, P20)

This theme highlights the vulnerability of academic institutions to social disruptions and their limited capacity to manage emergencies.

Theme 5: Infrastructure and Digital Challenges

Digital tools, meant to support continuity of learning during disruptions, were not available in the University or largely ineffective due to infrastructure deficits. Students and lecturers faced poor internet connectivity, power outages, and a lack of standardized online platforms.

- *"The internet was really bad that week."* (P6, student)
- *"We tried to teach through WhatsApp and Telegram, but not all students could access the materials."* (P9, lecturer)

In response to escalating violence, looting, and breakdown of public order in parts of Kaduna State, including Zaria, the state government under Governor Uba Sani imposed a 24-hour curfew on August 5, 2024. This curfew, which restricted movement from 6 pm to 8 am, was intended to curb further violence but had immediate and far-reaching implications for academic life at ABU. Students living off-campus were unable to return to their hostels or attend scheduled academic activities. The curfew also disrupted the logistics of academic planning, as staff and administrative workers were either absent or unreachable during restricted hours. Essential services like internet cafés, transportation, and food vendors on and around campus were affected, further exacerbating student hardship. The atmosphere of fear created by curfew enforcement—with reports of arrests and intimidation—also discouraged academic gatherings and fostered an environment of silence and caution.

4.1 Discussions of findings

The End Bad Governance protest significantly affected academic activities at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

The findings of this study clearly demonstrate that the End Bad Governance (EBG) protest disrupted academic routines at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Data from student and staff interviews reveal that lectures were canceled or postponed, assessments were delayed, and access to essential academic facilities was limited. Many students reported missing classes and tests due to restricted movement and curfew enforcement, while staff absenteeism further hindered teaching and administrative processes. These disruptions created substantial setbacks in curriculum delivery, research timelines, and academic progression.

The study further shows that the protest had notable emotional and psychological impacts on both students and staff. Respondents reported anxiety, fear, and frustration as key emotional responses to the uncertainty and perceived threats during the protest. First-year students, in particular, experienced confusion and isolation due to limited prior exposure to social protests and crisis situations. These psychological impacts compounded the academic disruption, as stress and fear reduced students' ability to focus, study, and engage in learning activities effectively.

Interestingly, the protest also fostered civic engagement and political awareness among some participants. While younger or less informed students expressed confusion regarding the protest's objectives, many older students and staff reflected on the broader political implications of poor

governance. They acknowledged the protest as a necessary act of civil resistance and recognized how political issues could directly affect academic life. This finding highlights a dual effect of socio-political crises on educational institutions: while academic activities may be disrupted, students and staff can simultaneously develop heightened awareness of civic responsibilities and societal issues.

The study further indicates that institutional preparedness and response were inadequate to manage the crisis effectively. Participants highlighted communication breakdowns, delays in rescheduling activities, and the absence of contingency plans. The lack of digital infrastructure and online learning alternatives compounded the problem, leaving both students and lecturers struggling to continue academic activities during the curfew. Staff salaries and administrative processes were also disrupted, reflecting the broader vulnerability of academic institutions to social unrest.

Finally, infrastructure and digital limitations significantly worsened the situation. Poor internet connectivity, frequent power outages, and the absence of standardized remote learning platforms prevented the university from maintaining continuity in academic delivery. Attempts to use Social media for learning were largely ineffective due to unequal access among students. These findings demonstrate that digital readiness and resilient infrastructure are critical for mitigating the effects of social disruptions on higher education.

Overall, the findings align with prior research on the impacts of social unrest on academic institutions. Chukwuma and Anyogu's (2025) complements the findings from ABU Zaria complement work by providing empirical evidence of how national protests reverberate at institutional levels, affecting learning, mental health, and administrative functionality, while highlighting the role of individual awareness, social identity, and political consciousness in shaping responses to governance crises. show that protests, curfews, and civil disturbances reduce teaching and learning efficiency, increase anxiety among students, and expose weaknesses in institutional planning. In the context of ABU Zaria, the EBG protest not only disrupted academic schedules but also highlighted the importance of institutional preparedness, mental health support, and digital infrastructure in safeguarding education during social crisis

Conflict Theory conceptualizes social life as an arena of persistent struggles over power, resources, and competing interests. Within this framework, the End Bad Governance (EBG) protest can be understood not as an isolated disturbance, but as a manifestation of deeper structural inequalities and

perceived marginalization that generated collective resistance. The disruption of academic activities at Ahmadu Bello University (ABU) Zaria reflects how macro-level conflicts between the state and citizens extend into micro-level institutions, particularly public universities that depend heavily on state stability and resources.

Conflict Theory therefore provides a lens for interpreting these findings as outcomes of systemic struggles over control, access, and resources, rather than as temporary or random interruptions. The suspension of academic activities, delays in learning, and heightened insecurity underscore how entrenched inequalities and governance failures reproduce instability within educational institutions, reinforcing Marxist claims that social conflict is inherent in unequal social systems.

5.0 Conclusions

1) The protest caused significant interruptions to Ahmadu Bello university's academic calendar, classes, tests, and research activities were canceled, postponed, or indefinitely suspended due to curfew enforcement and restricted movement. Lectures were indefinitely suspended due to security threats and mass participation of students in protest activities within and beyond campus. Examination timetables were altered, and many students missed scheduled assessments due to movement restrictions..

2) The study results showed an impaired communication between Ahmadu Bello University's management and students. No bulletin or circular was received from the management to reduce the tension, participants reported a general feeling of exclusion from decision-making processes, especially during the height of the 2024 EndBadGovernance protest. Several students expressed frustration over the lack of timely information regarding class suspensions, examinations, and institutional responses to the protest. For instance, one participant noted:

"*We didn't hear anything from the school for days… rumors were everywhere, and nobody knew what was true or not."*

3) Students and staff interviewed reported high levels of emotional and psychological stress stemming from fear of violence, arrests, and uncertainty about their academic future. Many students described feeling anxious and mentally fatigued, particularly those who were caught in violent confrontations or were affected by the heavy-handed response of security agencies..

5.1 Recommendations

1) The University should have well-articulated contingency plans for academic continuity during crises, including provisions for online learning. Enhance digital infrastructure and capacity for online and blended learning to ensure that academic activities can continue remotely during physical disruptions. This requires investment in reliable internet access and training for both staff and students. More so A.B.U Develop more flexible academic calendars that can accommodate unforeseen disruptions without compromising the quality of education or unduly extending study periods.
2) ABU should establish clear and timely communication channels to keep students and staff informed during crises. Regular updates on class suspensions, examinations, and institutional responses should be provided through multiple platforms (email, SMS, social media, and official notice boards) to prevent misinformation and confusion.
3) The university should expand counseling and psychosocial support services to help students and staff cope with stress, anxiety, and fear arising from social unrest and academic disruptions. Proactive programs such as workshops, hotlines, and peer support networks can help maintain morale and focus during emergencies

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