

An Empirical Evaluation of Students Accommodation Challenges in a Non-Residential University

Odugbesan, J. Adetola
*Department of Geography and Regional Planning,
Faculty of Social and Management Sciences
Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye,
Ogun State, Nigeria.*

Abstract

The need for an effective and conducive students housing facility in a university cannot be over emphasized due to the fact that students are expected to be in a sound state of mind to excel in their academic endeavor which can be achieved by a good student housing system. Globally, student enrolment in higher institutions has been increasing in recent times without a corresponding student accommodation which makes the provision of accommodation facilities for tertiary students to remain a challenge for the government. 300 questionnaires were administered at the main campus of Olabisi Onabanjo University to elicit information on the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents; the assessment of building components and basic facilities; and the housing challenges and its impact on their study. The Students Perception Index (SPI) was used to determine the conditions of the building components conditions and it shows a bit above average in the rating with the mean index of 3.96. However, the mean index (3.28) for the basic facilities was far lower than the mean index for the building components. The Regression model summary ($R^2 = .044$) of the impact of the housing challenges on the students study indicate that all the variable identified could only provide 44% explanation of the variations in impact on the students study. Recommendations were proffered to guide the policy makers towards enhancing the students' moral and academic standard. Some of which include upgrading programme through the provision of water and electricity for the university host communities and partnership of the government and the university management with private sectors in building an affordable and comfortable student's accommodation.

Keywords: *Students Housing, Non-Residential University, Academic Standard,*

<http://internationalpolicybrief.org/journals/international-scientific-research-consortium-journals/intl-journal-of-development-strategies-in-humanities-vol5-no1-july-2015>

Background to the Study

Housing is often regarded as one of the basic human needs. It ranks second after food and thereafter clothing. It is a pre-requisite for the survival of man (Omole 2010). Housing as a unit of the environment has profound influence on the health, efficiency, social behaviour, satisfaction and general welfare of the community. It reflects the cultural, social and economic values of a society, as it is the best physical and historical evidence of the civilization of a country. Adedeji (2004) argued that housing issues affect the life of individuals as well as that of a nation; hence both nature and society ascribed great importance to the role it plays to bring about human comfort.

The World Health Organization (WHO) according to Omole (2010) describes housing as residential environment which includes the physical structure used for shelter, all necessary services, facilities, equipments and devices needed or desired for the physical and mental health and social well being of the family and individuals. The United Nations Ad-Hoc Group of Experts on Housing and Urban Development equally asserted that housing is neither a mere shelter nor household facilities alone. It is an essential need that comprises essential services and facilities, which make up a physical environment that link such individuals and his family to the community in which it evolves. Therefore, environmental amenities like waste disposal, water supply, road access and location services implied by the special links between necessary economic and social infrastructure like education, health and recreation are all parts of the package of services designated as housing.

This view was corroborated by Owoeye (2013) who stated that environment is the totality of all external conditions and influences to which an organism is subjected. It comprises, primarily, the man and his cultural and socio-economic lifestyles, the condition of housing, other environmental sub-systems and the concern of various institutional managements. Housing, as a substantive unit of the environment is described as residential environment. This includes the physical structure used for shelter, all necessary services, facilities, equipments and devices needed or desired for the physical and mental health and social well-being in the family and individual.

The need for an effective and conducive student housing facility in a University cannot be overemphasized due to the fact that students are expected to be in a sound state of mind to excel in their academic endeavor which can be achieved by a good student housing system. Since student housing provides not only physical protection but also a healthy social and behavioral stability, the productivity of a set of students may not be totally unconnected with their student housing condition (Aluko 2011).

Globally, student enrolment in higher institutions has been increasing in recent times, and it is estimated that there has been about 160% increase in tertiary education globally Sharma (2012). However, in many countries of the world, the provision of accommodation facilities for tertiary students continues to remain a challenge for the government (Centre for Global Education, 2002). As a result one of the important issues of concern to education management is the issue of students' accommodation globally. In many developed and developing countries, governments are not able to adequately provide accommodation for

students who successfully gain admission to pursue various programmes of study in higher institutions. As a result, other educational stakeholders have had to support government efforts, either in partnership with government or by solely providing private accommodation facilities for tertiary students on or off-campus (Centre for Global Education, 2002; Department for Education and Skills, 2003).

Tertiary institutions require adequate housing provision so as to be able to accommodate students without any physical, psychological or environmental effect. Although students accommodation is considered sine qua non in controlling students moral discipline and plays a vital role in increasing students academic performance, but it remain a challenging venture for institutions to manage. Like many other tertiary institutions, Olabisi Onabanjo University is one of the higher institutions in Nigeria which did not make provisions for student's accommodation due to the policy establishing the school and this has in turn created some challenges to both the students and communities accommodating them. The students have had to rely on housing provision by different surrounding communities.

As a result of the non-residential policy of the university, the students are being faced with the challenges of sourcing for accommodation off-campus; they compete in the housing market with other users like workers in the public sectors. The competition is intense especially in the neighborhood close to institutions with variations in housing conditions and other students' housing problems within the settlement. Their state of non-solvability makes their access to descent accommodation more difficult.

Lots of studies have been carried out on the accommodation quality and conditions of the students' home and their satisfaction (Uman, Abdrazack, Aiyejina and Ajagbe, 2012; Yusuff 2011; Isaac 2013; Olatunji 2014), but much have not been done on the relationship between the quality and conditions of students' home and their academic performance. And as such, the thrust of this paper is to fill the gap and proffer a better understanding on the relationship between students housing challenges, and their academic performance; the significance of housing challenges facing the students in a non-residential higher institution would also be determined. This is particularly useful in giving empirical bases for developing effective students' accommodation policy in the non-residential higher institutions in Nigeria.

Objective of the Study

To examine the accommodation challenges faced by student in a non residential university , especially the effect this has on academic performance.

Study Area

Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye is a state-owned and operated University in Ago-Iwoye, Ogun State Nigeria. The University was founded July 7, 1982 as Ogun State University and was renamed Olabisi Onabanjo University on May 29, 2001. It is an autonomous public and non-residential institution established by the Ogun State Government with the sole purpose of providing higher education.

The University is operated on a multi-campus basis. The main campus in Ago-Iwoye is popularly called Permanent site (PS) by the students which is home to Faculties of Science, Social and Management sciences, Arts, Education and Law; Colleges of Agricultural Sciences in Ayetoro, College of Engineering and Environmental Sciences in Ibogun, College of Medicine in Sagamu and Faculty of Pharmacy and Biochemistry in Ikenne.

Literature Review

Several studies have alluded to the fact that housing problems is one of the challenges facing the commuting students in non-residential universities and the resultant effect on their academic performance (Snyder 2009, Scott 2011, Mathew 2014, Olatunji 2014). In the work of Olatunji (2014) on students' housing quality in LAUTECH, though the study was basically on the registered students hostels with the university, he opined that students housing committee should be set up in non-residential universities and they should inspect housing before students occupy them. This he believes will ensure that students did not occupy substandard accommodation. Beside this, there shall be a regular routine inspection so as to ensure that those accommodations were maintained.

Umaru et al (2012) predicated that the off-campus accommodation by the students led to high demand for housing units within the surrounding communities, with increment in rent, development of sub-standard housing, and illegal expansion of existing buildings. Tinto (1987) concluded in his study that students who reside off-campus are disadvantaged when compared to their on-campus counterparts. He found that the former group spent less time on campus creating relationships with other students and staff and clearly had fewer opportunities to engage in quality interactions. Thus, these students are less likely to make a strong commitment to their studies. Umaru et al (2011) made a pertinent observation and stated that because of “the high levels of poverty in Africa and the unsuitability of the home environment for academic endeavor for the majority of students, suitable student accommodation needs to be provided for up to 100% of students in some contexts”.

Yusuff (2011) tilted her concern towards the effect of the challenges on the students' academic performance; she stated in her study that most students suffer from several challenges which include: incessant increase in house rent, domestic violence and neighbors disturbances. Late arrival for lectures and non-conducive atmosphere were some of the challenges faced by students of the non-residential University and concluded that all these factors may influence negatively on students academic studies. Snyder (2009) evaluated students' residency on or off campus and academic performance, his study concludes that student's residency on or off campus has a significant relationship with the students' academic performance. His view was corroborated by the work of Mathew (2014) who carried out similar study on the challenges of being a student of any public tertiary institution in Nigeria of today, and affirmed that inadequate accommodation is one of the main challenges facing the student.

A deep look at the various literatures reviewed above, it could be seen that the majority of them only assessed housing qualities passively without identifying consequence of students' accommodation challenges. Though, these studies are eye opener and stepping stone to better findings in future. The impact of students' housing challenges on their studies needs to be established, most especially in an emerging economy country like Nigeria.

Materials and Methods

Both primary and secondary data were used in this study, with greater emphasis on the primary. A study of this nature requires an adequate sample size that is representative of the diverse nature of the population under consideration taking due cognizance of the multi-campus nature of the University. The main campus in Ago-Iwoye was randomly selected out of the five campuses for the administration of the questionnaires and hence, 300 questionnaires were administered.

The questionnaires sought information on the major themes, namely demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the respondents on one hand; the assessment of building components and basic facilities; and the housing challenges and its impact on their studies on the other hand. Students Perception Index (SPI) was used to determine the quality of students' accommodation in Olabisi Onabanjo University's surrounding communities and the impact of the students' housing challenges on their academic was determined using Regression analysis.

Research Findings and Discussions

Socio-Economic Characteristics of Respondents

There was fair distribution between the two genders of 54.3% male to 44.3% female. Out of these 26.3% are 100 level students, 34.7% are 200 level, 17.7% are 300 level while 19.3% are 400 level. Information gathered on their accommodation status indicates that 63.7% lives alone which could be why some of them placed much emphasis on their privacy, while 35.7% have roommates (see Table 1). Out of these respondents, 28.3% prefer living off-campus, while 69.7% opted for on-campus accommodation.

Table 1: Socio-Economic Characteristics of Respondents

Socio-Economic Characteristic		Frequency No	Percent %
Gender	Male	163	54.3
	Female	133	44.3
	Total	296	98.6
Living Alone?	Yes	191	63.7
	No	106	35.3
	Total	297	99.0
Level of study	100 Level	79	26.3
	200 Level	104	34.7
	300 Level	53	17.7
	400 Level	58	19.3
	Total	294	98.0

Source: Authors field work, 2015

Assessment of Housing Characteristics of Respondents

Table 2 shows that majority of the respondents (53.3%) lives in a roomy type of accommodation (face-face), 7.0% in a flat type, while 40.7% lives in a self-contain. The rent cost of accommodation in the study indicates that 25.7% lives in an apartment that cost below #20,000, 35% lives in the one that ranges between #20,000 to #30,000, 14.3% respondents in #30,000-#40,000 while 22% lives in the one that cost above #40,000. The pattern of the rent cost shows that the rent cost is a bit on the high for a students' accommodation which could be as a result of the fact that the student have to compete with others within the community for the accommodation. This could also be linked to the reason why 35.3% of the respondents were not living alone. Moreover, 52.3% of the respondents opined that there is housing shortages while 39.3% thought otherwise.

Table 2: Assessment of Housing Characteristics of Respondents

Housing Characteristics of Respondents		Frequency No	Percent %
Types of Accommodation	Room Type	151	50.3
	Flat Type	21	7.0
	Self-Contain	122	40.7
	Others	5	1.7
	Total	299	99.7
Rent Cost	Below #20,000	77	25.7
	#20,000 - #30,000	105	35.0
	#30,000 - #40,000	43	14.3
	Above #40,000	68	22.7
	Total	293	97.7

Source: Authors field work, 2015

Assessment of Building Components and Conditions of Basic Facilities

The building components was rated using a rating scale of Excellent (6), Very Good (5), Good (4), Fair (3), Poor (2), Very Poor (1). The analysis was done using "Students Perception Index" (SPI). The index for each conditions of building components was calculated by dividing the summation of weight value (SWV) by the total number of responses. The SWV for each condition of building component was obtained through the addition of the product of the number of responses to each condition of building components and the respective weight value attached to each rating.

Mathematically expressed as $SWV = \sum X_i Y_i$ ----- Eq. I

Where:

SWV = Summation of Weight Value; X_i = number of respondents to rating i ; Y_i = the weight assigned to a rating (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6).

The index for each identified building therefore takes a value of between 6 and 1. The closer the value is to 6, the higher the perfect condition of such building components in the surrounding University community where the students live.

This is mathematically expressed as $SPI_a = \frac{SWV}{\sum X_i}$ ----- Eq. II

The Mean Index for the houses within the surrounding communities where the students live will therefore mathematically expressed as $SPI_b = \frac{SPI_a}{n}$ ----- Eq. III

Where (n) is the number of identified variables, in this case n = 6. From Table 3 below, SPI_b of 3.06 shows that the building components conditions of the houses residing by the students were above average in their rating and on individually, only the wall (3.81) and Door (3.89) were rated below the mean index of 3.96.

Table 3: Assessment of Building Components and Conditions of Basic Facilities

Building Components	Rating and Weight Value						SWV	SPI _a
	VP (1)	P (2)	F (3)	G (4)	VG (5)	E (6)		
Wall	21	18	63	123	40	33	1136	3.81
Floor	7	15	68	118	55	34	1192	4.01
Ceiling	5	21	60	116	56	36	1187	4.04
Roof	7	17	55	123	58	35	1198	4.06
Door	16	21	68	105	46	40	1152	3.89
Window	11	21	71	102	47	45	1179	3.97

Source: Authors field work, 2015

$$SPI_b = \frac{23.78}{6} = 3.96$$

Students' Rating of Basic Facilities Conditions

The basic facilities conditions of the students' accommodation were also studied, reason being that condition of these facilities is one of the basic components of a good housing environment.

The index was obtained the same way the index of the building component was calculated since they were rated on the same scale. The result shows that among the variables considered; water, toilet, electricity, drainage, burglary proof, kitchen, laundry and the physical environment; only the water (3.05), electricity (2.58) and drainage (2.13) were rated below the mean index (SPI_b) of 3.28 (see Table 4).

Table 4: Students' Rating of Basic Facilities Conditions

Basic Facilities	Rating and Weight Value						SWV	SPI _a
	VP (1)	P (2)	F (3)	G (4)	VG (5)	E (6)		
Water	51	50	95	58	23	21	909	3.05
Toilet	12	38	77	100	39	31	1109	3.70
Electricity	91	64	59	52	21	9	713	2.58
Drainage	41	45	93	73	21	17	617	2.13
Burglary Proof	31	21	81	85	41	36	1077	3.65
Kitchen	28	33	62	114	33	26	1057	3.57
Laundry	25	41	88	94	25	24	1016	3.43
Physical Environment	3	5	68	137	49	36	1226	4.11

Source: Authors field work, 2015

$$SPI_b = \frac{26.22}{8} = 3.28$$

8

Water availability is really one of the challenges facing the residents of the university surrounding communities where the students reside. This could be attributed to the fact that water is a basic necessity and it's one the challenges facing an emerging economy countries like Nigeria. The poor power supply expressed by the students in their responses shows that the epileptic power supply is a national problem in which the Olabisi Onabanjo University host communities are not exception. The low index shows by the drainage condition implies that most of Nigeria cities and towns were not properly channelized.

However, the Mean Index (SPI_b) of 3.28 for the conditions of basic facilities conditions only shows that the buildings were a bit fair in their conditions. This could be explained by the fact that Ago-Iwoye, Oru/Awa and Ijebu-Igbo which comprises of the surrounding communities that housed the permanent site of Olabisi Onabanjo University where the questionnaires were administered are emerging urban centres in Ogun State.

Students Housing Challenges

Table 5: Respondents Housing Challenges

Respondents Housing Challenges		Frequency	Percent %
		No	
Is there Housing Shortages	Yes	157	52.3
	No	118	39.3
	Total	275	91.7
Too Costly	Strongly Agree	47	15.7
	Agree	75	25.0
	Strongly Disagree	22	7.3
	Disagree	53	17.7
	Undecided	5	1.7
	Total	202	67.3
Too Far from campus	Strongly Agree	68	22.7
	Agree	74	24.7
	Strongly Disagree	24	8.0
	Disagree	32	10.7
	Undecided	4	1.3
	Total	202	67.3
Lack of Basic Facilities	Strongly Agree	76	25.3
	Agree	80	26.7
	Strongly Disagree	19	6.3
	Disagree	24	8.0
	Undecided	5	1.7
	Total	204	68.0
Lack of Security	Strongly Agree	81	27.0
	Agree	77	25.7
	Strongly Disagree	14	4.7
	Disagree	28	9.3
	Undecided	4	1.3
	Total	204	68.0
Neighborhood Dispute	Strongly Agree	48	16.0
	Agree	63	21.0
	Strongly Disagree	30	10.0
	Disagree	51	17.0
	Undecided	8	2.7
	Total	201	67.0
Access to Transport	Too Easy	23	7.7
	Not Easy	169	56.3
	Fair	104	34.7
	Total	296	98.7
Landlord/Landlady Problem	Yes	63	21.5
	No	230	76.7
	Total	293	97.7

Source: Authors field work, 2015

Responses to the housing shortages show that there is housing shortage (52.3%) while 39.3% thought otherwise. This can be related to the outcome of the results on the rent cost which shows a bit high rent. Among the variables considered among which is the cost of the accommodation reveals that the respondents agreed to the fact that it's too costly with cumulative percentage of 40.7% out of 67.3% respondents (see Table 5). The results for other challenges which are; too far from campus, lack of basic facilities, lack of security, neighborhood dispute, access to transport and landlord/landlady problem shows the same pattern, which indicates that they are indeed a challenge (see Table 5).

Students Accommodation Challenges Impact on their Study

From Table 6, it shows that 69.7% of the respondents prefer living on-campus, while 28.3% prefer off-campus. Among the reason adduced to by those prefer off-campus is their privacy which was extracted by the author from the interview granted by the respondents. When pressed further to know if living off-campus actually has any impact of their study, 63.3% of respondents agree while 31.7% disagree (see Table 6).

Table 6: Students Accommodation Challenges Impact on their Study

Accommodation Impact on Respondents Study		Frequency	Percent %
Prefer living off-campus	Yes	85	28.3
	No	209	69.7
	Total	294	98.0
Living on-campus impact on study	Yes	190	63.3
	No	95	31.7
	Total	285	95.0

Source: Authors field work, 2015

The regression analysis carried out to determine the housing challenges impact on the students study reveals that 44% of the variation in impact on study is accounted for by all the independent variables (see Table 7). Suffice to stress that all the variables contributes 44.0% to the explanation of what could have negative impact on the study of students living off-campus.

Table 7: Model Summary of Students Accommodation Challenges Impact on their Study

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.209(a)	.044	.000	.482

Source: Authors field work, 2015

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Landlord/Landlady Problem, Lack of Security, Accessibility to transport, Too Costly, Neighborhood Dispute, Too Far from Campus, Lack of Quality houses, Lack of basic facilities
- b. Dependent Variable: Dependent Variable. Living off-campus impact on study

Conclusion

Based on the major findings in the study, the following recommendations are put forward towards as policy guidelines towards achieving a conducive housing environment for learning for the students in a non-residential university. The first recommendation is the need for the Ogun State Government to upgrade some basic amenities such as water supply and electricity in Olabisi Onabanjo University surrounding

Communities; That will on a short term ameliorate the suffering of the students. Secondly, the policy establishing Olabisi Onabanjo University as a non-residential University requires an urgent review, in order to pave way for the Government and the University management to see students' accommodation as their responsibility. If those housing challenges identified could explain 44% of variations in explanation for a negative impact of students in a non-residential university on their study, having a suitable student's accommodation within the university will go a long way in uplifting the students' moral and academic standard in the university. In doing so, the strategy of Public-Private Partnership (PPP) or Build-Operate and Transfer (BOT) could be adopted by the Government or the Management of the institution. This is opined based on the paucity of fund challenges confronting most of the State government and tertiary institutions management in Nigeria in providing students with accommodation within the university.

References

- Adedeji, Y.M.D. (2004), "Sustainable Housing for Low-Income Industrial Workers in Ikeja-Ilupeju Estate: Materials Initiative Options." Paper presented at the School of Environmental Technology, Federal University of Technology, Akure.
- Aluko, O.E. (2011), "The Assessment of Housing Situation among Students in the Unilag." *African Research Review*. Vol.5 (3), No. 20.
- Centre for Global Education (2002), "Rich World, Poor World." A Guide to Global Development. Retrieved from : www.cgdev.org/files/2844_file_EDUCATION.pdf
- Department For Education & Skills (2013), "Widening Participation in Higher Education, United Kingdom."
- Isaac, A. (2013), "Problems of Non-Residential Students in Tertiary Educational Institutions in Ghana: A Micro-Level Statistical Evidence." *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies*. Vol.4 (4), Pp. 582-588.
- Mathew, I.A. (2014), "The Challenges of Being a Student of Any Public Tertiary Institution in Nigeria of Today." *Journal of Studies in Education*. Vol.4, No. 1.
- Olatunji, S.A. (2014), "A Study of Students Housing Quality in Ladoke Akintola University of Technology (LAUTECH), Ogbomosho, Nigeria." *Journal of Environment and Earth Science*. Vol. 4, No. 8.

- Omole, F.K. (2010), "Assessment of Housing Condition and Socio-Economic Life Style of Slum Dwellers in Akure, Nigeria." *Contemporary Management Research*. Vol. 6, No. 4, Pp. 273-290.
- Owoeye, J.O. (2013), "A Study on Environmental Habitability of Core Residential Neighborhood in Akure, Nigeria." *American Journal of Research Communication*. Vol. 1(2), Pp. 140- 153.
- Scott, M.H. (2011), "Understanding the Relationship between Undergraduate Housing Environment and Academic Self-Concept." An Unpublished Dissertation, the Graduate School, The Pennsylvania State University.
- Sharma, Y. (2012), "Fast Pace of Higher Education Enrolment Growth Predicted to Slow." *University World News Issue*, No. 213. Retrieved from: <http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php>
- Snyder, E.M. (2009), "The Relationship between Residency and Socio-Demographics to Academic Performance in NCAA Division 1 Freshman Athlete." *All Graduate Theses and Dissertations. Paper 534*. Retrieved from: <http://digitalcommons.usu.edu/etd/534>
- Tinto, V. (1987), "Leaving College: Rethinking the Causes and Aims of Students Attrition (2nd ed)." Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Umaru, E.T, Abdrazack N.T.A., Aiyejina W.T. & Ajagbe M.A. (2012), "The Impact of Non-Residential Tertiary Institutions on Housing in Lagos: A case study of Lagos State University." *Emerging Science and Technology: An International Journal*. Vol. 2, No. 4.
- Yusuff, O.S. (2011), "Students Access to Housing: A case of Lagos State University Students, Nigeria." *Journal of Sustainable Development*. Vol.4, No. 2.