

## ASSESSMENT OF FACILITIES IN THE MALE HOSTELS OF UNIVERSITY ENVIRONMENTS IN NIGERIA

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**ABSTRACT:** *The number of students seeking and getting admission into universities increases every year, and this has led to the failure of the original design of university hostels. Furthermore, student hostels in Nigeria have not received the desired attention from the government and management of institutions; there have been reported cases of students taking ill in hostels as a result of poor sanitary conditions. Thus, these have led to the study of university male hostels with the aim of assessing their facilities, in order to generate guidelines to improve the design, quality and worth of university hostels in Nigeria. To achieve this, primary and secondary research data were collected. The primary research data were from questionnaires administered to 100 students who are residents of the university hostel and direct observations of facilities in the university hostels. The secondary data were reviews of relevant literature from journals, books and other academic materials. Tables and photographs were used to present the research data. Among the findings of the research are: adequate storage facilities are not provided in the hostel bed rooms, and this has made the students to keep their properties indiscriminately; poor maintenance of hostel facilities is a challenge faced by the students. Among the recommended guidelines are: adequate storage facilities should be provided in the hostel bed rooms in the universities at the design stages to stop the students from keeping their properties indiscriminately; the university hostel facilities should be well maintained.*

**KEYWORDS:** facilities, hostels, Nigeria, students, universities.

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## INTRODUCTION

University hostels are student housing which are known for providing appropriate environment in which to sleep, study as well as opportunity for social and informal academic interchange (Pride, 1999). The aim of university hostels is to provide students with the necessary amenities to develop an integrated personality besides providing a calm and peaceful atmosphere for students. They can provide an environment that provides self-confidence and instills discipline in minds of students (UK Essays, 2015). The personal development of students could also be nurtured and supported through living in a community environment. One of the objectives of establishing hostels for university students is to provide them homes away from their main homes where they can put their best in academics.

One of the key features students and their parents are concerned about when enrolling in a university is the availability of student hostel (Ajayi *et al.*, 2015). Student hostels form part of facilities that students take into consideration before making a choice of the school they intend to attend among other considerations (Price *et al.*, 2003). This therefore makes it

imperative for schools to give student hostels a top priority while enhancing the reputation of the school among other contemporaries. Facilities in the student hostels include bedrooms which can serve the dual purpose of studying and sleeping, bathrooms and toilets, kitchen, laundry, recreational areas and access to internet services as this further enhances the learning experience. Abramson (2009) pointed out that student hostels can be further made exciting by providing facilities such as automated teller machines (ATM), car parking spaces, mini markets, bookshops and cafeterias within the precinct of the student hostels.

Inadequate maintenance of facilities of hostel accommodation for students is very common in Nigerian universities. According to Ajayi *et al.* (2015), student hostels in Nigeria have not received the desired attention from the government and management of institutions; there have been reported cases of students taking ill in hostels as a result of poor sanitary conditions. The number of students seeking and getting admission into universities increases every year (Olagunju and Zubairu, 2016). This has led to the failure of the original design of university hostels. The design of student hostels should provide a sense of good architecture which would have a lasting impression on the minds of students (Olagunju and Zubairu, 2016). It is crucial to note that student hostels must not only be adequately provided in relation to the student population in the universities but they must also be able to satisfy their needs if the best is to be appropriated from them. Thus, it became important that student hostels are well designed and built with standard, improved and well maintained facilities.

The aim of this study is to assess facilities in the male hostels of university environments, in order to generate guidelines to improve the design, quality and worth of university hostels in Nigeria. Objectives of this study are: to assess the condition of facilities in the university hostels; to determine the feelings of students with regards to the facilities in the university hostels; to find out how students are behaving with hostel facilities in the university. The scope of this study is the male hostels of a government university in the northern part of Nigeria. According to Wikipedia (2019), the highest point in the northern part of Nigeria is at 2,419 metres. The main rivers are the Niger and Benue Rivers which converge at Kabba province from where it travels southwards ultimately emptying into the Atlantic Ocean. The great savannah belt of the Great Plains of Hausa land dominates much of the rest of the province. This region experiences rainfall between 20 and 60 inches per year.

## METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Quantitative and qualitative research data were generated for this study through the use of descriptive survey method. Purposive sampling method is a judgmental, subjective or selective sampling due to the qualities the informants possess and usually, the samples being investigated are quite small with phenomenon of interest (Etikan *et al.*, 2016; Lund Research Limited, 2012; Palinkas *et al.*, 2015). Thus, a government university in the northern part of Nigeria was studied based on the rules of purposive sampling method because the increase in the number of students that are being admitted every year in the institution are significantly rated high.

The target population of this study is the male hostels in a government university in the northern part of Nigeria. Primary and secondary data were obtained for this research. To collect the primary data, questionnaires were randomly administered to 100 students who are residents of the male hostels of the university to assess facilities in the hostels. The outstanding benefits of making use of focus group method in a research is acquired in smaller groups of four or five participants (Masadeh, 2012; Morgan *et al.*, 2002). Thus, focus group discussions were organised for the students in the hostels with the help of four research assistants. In this research, focus group discussions that comprised of five students in 10 different groups were organised in the hostels. The reason for using up to 10 numbers of different focus groups in the hostels is to adequately and efficiently maximise the outstanding benefits of the research instrument or to get the maximum results from large numbers of the participants. Direct observation of the hostels is also parts of the primary data that were collected. Secondary data were obtained from reviews of relevant literature on facilities in student hostels such as academic journals, books and other academic materials that are relevant to this study. Tables and photographs were employed to present and analyse the research data.

## DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Facilities and the number of students in bed rooms, workable and non-workable facilities in the hostel, supply of water and electricity to the hostels, and the hostel environments were considered in this section.

### Facilities and the Number of Students in Bed Rooms

Observation showed that too many students (16 to 20 students) live in some bed rooms, and this has made the bed rooms to be over crowded as up to eight to ten number of double bunk beds were found without reading tables in the bed rooms. In some bed rooms, students put mats and mattresses on the floors to sleep without bed frames.

Out of 100 questionnaires administered to the students, 19% of the students responded that they are one to two students in a bed room, and 12% of the students responded that they are three to four students in a bed room. 14% of the students responded that they are five to seven students in a bed room, and 31% of the students responded that they are eight to ten students in a bed room; 24% of the students responded that other number of students in a bed room is eleven to twenty. Table 1 shows the distribution of responses of students to the questionnaires with regards to the number of students in bed rooms. Observation showed that adequate storage facilities are not provided in the hostel bed rooms and as a result of this issue, the properties of students such as pots, plates and bags are scattered on the floors.

**Table 1: Responses of Students to the Questionnaires with Regards to the Number of Students in Bed Rooms.**

| S/N | Number of Students in Bed Rooms | Number of Respondents | Percentage (%) of Respondents |
|-----|---------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1   | 1 - 2                           | 19                    | 19                            |
| 2   | 3 - 4                           | 12                    | 12                            |
| 3   | 5 - 7                           | 14                    | 14                            |
| 4   | 8 - 10                          | 31                    | 31                            |
| 5   | Others (11 - 20)                | 24                    | 24                            |

Source: Researchers' Field Work, 2018.

The focus group discussions with the students revealed that their challenge with the hostel facilities is poor maintenance of facilities. Similarly, it was observed that the ceiling of some of the bed rooms are damaged without maintenance work on them. It was further revealed that some kitchens and laundries are converted to bedrooms due to high demand for hostel accommodation. Furthermore, it was observed that the toilet facilities are very dirty.

#### **Workable and Non-workable Facilities in the Hostel**

Observation showed that the wires of some of the wall sockets in the bed rooms are exposed, and these can electrocute students. From 100 questionnaires administered to the students, 65% of the students responded that electric bulb in the bed rooms are in workable condition, while 35% of them responded that electric bulb in the bed rooms are not in workable condition. 61% of the students responded that electric wall sockets in the bed rooms are in workable condition, while 39% of them responded that electric wall sockets in the bed rooms are not in workable condition. 62% of the students responded that electric fans in the bed rooms are in workable condition, while 38% of them responded that electric fans in the bed rooms are not in workable condition. 37% of the students responded that water closets in the toilets are in workable condition, while 63% of them responded that water closets in the toilets are not in workable condition.

15% of the students responded that wash hand basins in the toilets are in workable condition, while 85% of them responded that wash hand basins in the toilets are not in workable condition. 19% of the students responded that bath tops in the bath rooms are in workable condition, while 81% of them responded that bath tops in the bath rooms are not in workable condition. 17% of the students responded that sinks in the laundries are in workable condition, while 83% of them responded that sinks in the laundries are not in workable condition. This issue in conjunction with the dirtiness and inadequate number of laundries in the hostels have led to washing of cloths on the corridors by students. Plate I shows a corridor where students wash cloths.



Plate I: Corridor where Students Wash Cloths (Source: Researchers' Field Work, 2018).

Furthermore, all the students responded to the questionnaires given to them that sinks in the kitchens are not in workable condition. This issue in conjunction with inadequate number of kitchens in the hostels have led to cooking of food in the bed rooms by students. Plate II shows a bed room where students cook; Table 2 shows the distribution of the responses of students to the questionnaires with regards to the workable and non-workable facilities in the hostel.





Plate II: Bed Room where Students Cook (Source: Researchers' Field Work, 2018).

**Table 2: Responses of Students to the Questionnaires with Regards to the Workable and Non-workable Facilities in the Hostel.**

| S/N | Type of (Facilities) Appliances        | Number (Percentage) of Workable Appliances | Number (Percentage) of Non-workable Appliances |
|-----|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| 1   | Electric Bulb in the Bed Rooms         | 65 (65%)                                   | 35 (35%)                                       |
| 2   | Electric Wall Sockets in the Bed Rooms | 61 (61%)                                   | 39 (39%)                                       |
| 3   | Electric Fans in the Bed Rooms         | 62 (62%)                                   | 38 (38%)                                       |
| 4   | Water Closets in the Toilets           | 37 (37%)                                   | 63 (63%)                                       |
| 5   | Wash Hand Basins in the Toilets        | 15 (15%)                                   | 85 (85%)                                       |
| 6   | Bath Tops in the Bath Rooms            | 19 (19%)                                   | 81 (81%)                                       |
| 7   | Sinks in the Laundries                 | 17 (17%)                                   | 83 (83%)                                       |
| 8   | Sinks in the Kitchens                  | 0 (0%)                                     | 100 (100%)                                     |

Source: Researchers' Field Work, 2018.

### **Supply of Water and Electricity to the Hostels**

All the students responded to 100 questionnaires administered to them that water is supplied to the hostel every day. However, it was observed that water is not supplied inside the hostels but it is supplied to the hostel environments for the students to fetch from there to the various places of use. The focus group discussions with the students revealed that there is no supply of water to the hostel environments until 10am to 11am Nigerian time which will stop around 6pm Nigerian time. In addition, all the students responded to the questionnaires that the supply of electricity to the hostel is few hours every day. From the focus group discussion with the students, there is no supply of public electric power to most of the hostels, however,

the supply of electricity to most of the hostels is only by electric power generator of the university which is only supplied from 6pm to 12pm Nigerian time; there is adequacy of external lighting in the hostel.

### Hostel Environments

Observation showed that the hostel environments are very dirty due to indiscriminate disposal of wastes. Also, the hostel environments are not regularly cleaned by the cleaners who are in charge. From 100 questionnaires administered to the students, 25% of them responded that the hostel environment is cleaned every day, and 26% of them responded that the hostel environment is cleaned once in two days. 15% of the students responded that the hostel environment is cleaned once in three days, and 34% of them responded that the hostel environment is cleaned once in a week. Table 3 shows the distribution of the responses of students to the questionnaires with regards to the cleaning of the hostel environments.

**Table 3: Responses of Students to the Questionnaires with Regards to the Cleaning of the Hostel Environments.**

| S/N | Interval of Cleaning | Number of Respondents | Percentage (%) of Respondents |
|-----|----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1   | Every Day            | 25                    | 25                            |
| 2   | Once in Two Days     | 26                    | 26                            |
| 3   | Once in Three Days   | 15                    | 15                            |
| 4   | Once in a Week       | 34                    | 34                            |

Source: Researchers' Field Work, 2018.

Observation revealed that student recreational areas and shops, restaurants, Automated Teller Machine (ATM) and defined parking spaces for cars are not available around the hostels exception of only one mini restaurant located around one hostel which functions from 11am to 4pm Nigerian time and does not function on Saturdays and Sundays as revealed from the focus group discussion with the students. However, ATM and local mini market consisting of shops and substandard restaurants are available in the university campus but they are far from the hostels.

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The importance of university hostels were considered as they are student housing which are known for providing appropriate environment in which to sleep, study as well as opportunity for social and informal academic interchange. In addition, the design of student hostels should provide a sense of good architecture which would have a lasting impression on the minds of students. Unfortunately, student hostels in Nigeria have not received the desired attention; there have been reported cases of students taking ill in hostels as a result of poor sanitary conditions. To this end, facilities in the male hostels of university environments were assessed, in order to generate guidelines to improve the design, quality and worth of university hostels in Nigeria.

Findings of the research showed that: too many students live in some bed rooms without reading tables, and this has made the bed rooms to be over crowded; adequate storage facilities are not provided in the hostel bed rooms, and this has made the students to keep their properties indiscriminately; poor maintenance of hostel facilities is a challenge faced by the students; some kitchens and laundries are converted to bedrooms due to high demand for hostel accommodations; toilet facilities are very dirty. Furthermore, the wires of some of the wall sockets in the hostel bed rooms are exposed, and these can electrocute students; non-working sinks in the laundries in conjunction with the dirtiness and inadequate number of laundries in the hostels have led to the washing of cloths on the hostel corridors by students; non-working sinks in the kitchens in conjunction with inadequate number of kitchens in the hostels have led to cooking of food in the bed rooms by students; the number (percentage) of non-workable appliances in the hostel is significantly rated high.

Findings of the research also showed that: water is not supplied inside the hostels but it is supplied to the hostel environments for the students to fetch from there to the various places of use; there is no stable supply of water to the hostel environments; the supply of electricity to the hostel is few hours every day; there is no supply of public electric power to most of the hostels, however, the supply of electricity to most of the hostels is only by electric power generator of the university which is only supplied from 6pm to 12pm Nigerian time. Moreover, the hostel environments are very dirty due to indiscriminate disposal of wastes, and they are not regularly cleaned by the cleaners who are in charge; student recreational areas, shops, restaurants, ATM and defined parking spaces for cars are not available around the university hostels exception of only one mini restaurant located around one hostel which is not functioning properly.

Having considered the findings of this research, the following guidelines are therefore recommended to improve the design, quality and worth of university hostels in Nigeria:

- i. Adequate hostel accommodations with readings tables must be provided in the universities to avoid the hostel bed rooms from being over crowded. Alternatively, admission of students into the universities should be made based on the available hostel accommodations with reading tables.
- ii. Adequate storage facilities should be provided in the hostel bed rooms in the universities at the design stages to stop the students from keeping their properties indiscriminately.
- iii. The university hostel facilities should be well maintained.
- iv. Kitchens and laundries in the university hostels should not be converted to bedrooms due to high demand for hostel accommodations.
- v. The toilet facilities should be made cleaned at all times.
- vi. The wires of all the wall sockets in the hostel bed rooms should not be exposed to avoid the risk of students being electrocuted.
- vii. Adequate number of sinks in the laundries should be provided in the university hostels, and they must be well cleaned in good working condition to stop the students from washing their cloths on the hostel corridors.



- viii. Adequate number of sinks in the kitchens should be provided in the university hostels, and they must be in good working condition to stop the students from cooking in the bed rooms.
- ix. All the appliances in the university hostels must be in good working condition.
- x. Water should be supplied into the university hostels to avoid students from fetching water from the hostel environments to the various places where it is been used.
- xi. There should be a stable supply of water into the university hostels.
- xii. There should be a stable supply of public electricity into all the university hostels.
- xiii. The hostel environments should be regularly cleaned by the cleaners who are in charge, and indiscriminate disposal of wastes should be controlled in the university hostels.
- xiv. There should be provision for student recreational areas, shops, restaurants, Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) and defined parking spaces for cars around the university hostels.
- xv. There should be proper functioning of restaurants in the university hostels.

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