

The Effects of Shortage of Accommodation on Students' Performance in Private Tertiary Institutions in Botswana

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Abstract

The student accommodation has been a major area of concern with increasing student population in Botswana. This study investigated the effects of shortage of accommodation on students' performance in the private tertiary institutions in Botswana. A questionnaire was used to collect data. The findings revealed that lack of space for construction of student hostels and lack of partnership between government and private tertiary institutions are some of the major causes to shortage of student accommodation. The study also found out that lack of hostel accommodation encourages truancy and consequently poor concentration on academic work. It was recommended that the government should provide land where student hostels will be built, especially near the institutions where students can easily have access and provide a walking distance.

Keywords: Student hostels/accommodation, student performance, Private tertiary institutions

1. Introduction

According to Molutsi (2013), Education in Botswana is provided by public schools and private schools and it is governed by Ministry of Education and Skills Development. Higher education in Botswana began in 1964 with the establishment of the regional University of Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland, subsequently renamed University of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland (UBLS), with its campus in Roma, Lesotho. Having inherited a largely illiterate population at independence in 1966, post-independent Botswana Tertiary Institutions experience shortage of accommodation for students. Private Tertiary Institutions are focusing on investing on classrooms and other infrastructure at their campuses and neglecting student hostels. To date, there is no Private Institution in Botswana which provides student accommodation on campus. This situation is worrisome as this situation is affecting the performance of students in Private Tertiary Institutions in Botswana. An examination of the investment strategies of the largest Botswana-based organizations revealed that none of the major financial institutions or property developers has identified student accommodation as an area of worthy of investment. Poor performance of students in Private Tertiary Institutions (PTIs) in Botswana is the problem. This seems to be caused by shortage of accommodation. The students travel long distances to school while others hitch hiking to school. Some students are renting and others are sharing rooms. Accommodation close to Tertiary Institutions is expensive and beyond the reach of many ordinary students, who majority of them are surviving on student allowance of P1420.00 per month. Based on this background students seem to be affected in their academic performance. Some students are failing to study due to lack of study resources like internet in locations where they are staying. Some compounds are noise which disturbs studying.

Botswana sees private universities as playing a key role in this expansion. According to online Mmegi news (2017), Private tertiary institutions in Botswana such as Limkokwing University of Creative Technologies, GIPS, ABM University College, Ba Isago University and Botho University do not have students' hostels to accommodate students. Shortage of student accommodation has led to numerous challenges on students. For example, students end up finding their own accommodation, squatter and stay in environments which are not conducive or even share rooms with their fellows. These challenges lead to students not performing well academically as they would not be able to study well. Some of the locations where students are staying are noisy and lack decent amenities for studying purposes. Some locations are too far from school and as a result some students end up getting late to school as they stay far from the campus. To some extend some students end up walking to school or hitch hiking and this may take a while to get to school in time.

Students in Private Tertiary Institutions are given P1420.00 per month as student living allowance. This amount seems to be inadequate as the students need to for accommodation rent, transport fares to and from school, stationery for school use and food among others. These challenges will force some students to squatter with boyfriends, sharing a room, lacking concentration on studies as students will be hustling for money for a living. Some end up staying in rooms where there is no electricity in order to try to accommodate the little living allowance that they are given to meet all their expenses, and this lead to those students not performing well academically because they only get a chance to study during the day and are pressured to do their assignments during the day as well. Some students stay where there is no access to internet; they end not doing their

assignments or even not having access to information that they need (Seepi, 2016). All these challenges will affect negatively the performance of students in private tertiary institutions in Botswana. Therefore, based on this background the researcher wants to investigate the effect of shortage of accommodation on student performance in private tertiary institutions in Botswana.

2. Literature review

2.1 Student accommodation

According to the Oxford Advance Learner's dictionary (2004) accommodation is a noun which means a place to live, work or stays in rented, temporary or furnished accommodation. Accommodation has to do with privacy, personal space, and territoriality. While Jennifer (2011) stated that accommodation concerns an individual's freedom of choice in a given physical setting with regard to what happens in it from one movement to another. Adequate accommodation is one of the student's personnel services that enhance the achievement of educational objectives or instruction in an educational institution. In the context of this study, hostel accommodation entails a place where students live; it is usually situated within school compound. The author further commented that Student accommodation can be seen as a place of abode for students; it is also a place where students live and it is usually situated within the College where students are accommodated in hostels or halls of residence. This student housing of residence, apart from protecting students from sun, rain, heat and cold, also represent a learning environment which has tremendous impact on the comfort, safety and academic performance of students. The essence is to enable students settle down and have a place of rest. The reason could be to enable students to feel the impact of school environment on the learning activities. Student accommodation is referred to a place where students can stay when their residence is located far from the educational institution and which is considered essential to students' needs, which also called student hostel/housing.

Khozai *et al.*, (2010) stated that student accommodation is regarded as a hostel which is a built with some institutional or formal characteristics and where students have access to the university recreational facilities. Life in a sustainable on-campus hostel makes students more independent as they share accommodation with at most four students at one time. Sustainable on-campus hostel life also makes them smart, active, disciplined, tolerant and socialized with other students and roommates, sharing space and facilities (Khozai *et al.*, 2010). Parents may be less worried when their children live at on-campus housing sites as there is higher security and safety than at off-campus housing. Jennifer (2011) stated that the goals of any tertiary education include the acquisition; development and inculcation of the proper value orientation for individual and societal survival and the development of intellectual capacities to enable the individual understand and appreciate his environment. These goals, as far as tertiary institutions are concerned cannot be achieved unless students in the tertiary institution are adequately accommodated and provided with safe drinking water, adequate sanitation, regular supply of electricity and access to affordable means of transport. Shortage of or inadequate accommodation among students is one of the causes of psychological difficulty, and the likely hood of disposition to aggression is high among students when they are not properly accommodated or when they are crowded.

This is because when an environment is not conducive, it leads or results in aggressive behaviors emanating from such environment. Human behavior is fundamentally related to attributes of physical environment. An environment determines the range of behavior or activities that can occur in it and most of the times determines in a more positive sense particular aspect or pattern of an individual's behavior. Therefore, the physical environment of where a student reside including condition of the place and the transport system, affect student behaviors either negatively or positively. Students frequently forfeit their academic work for a long period in search of accommodation. Most times, the students skip or miss lectures, examinations and practical as a result of problems emanating from shortage of student accommodation. In addition cases of frustration, friction, conflict, antagonisms and open confrontation are identified among roommates that are overcrowded, on corner/spaces and other facilities in the room. If students stay where it is crowded, poorly built and not adequately supplied with water, it can lead to epidemic or increased incidence of sickness so does affect students' performance negatively. Conversely good housing leads to good health and higher rate of academic participation. Jennifer went further to stress that one of the ways of curbing the problem of shortage of student accommodation is by involving private sector participation in the provision of hostels for students.

2.2 The Causes to shortage of student accommodation

The rise in population of student intake in tertiary institutions is considered as one of the causes to shortage of student accommodation which range from inadequate infrastructure facilities to overcrowding. It is essential for student housing to provide the basic infrastructure facility needed by the student. Such facilities include, toilets, running water, electricity, readily room, canteen, buttry, kitchenette and a recreation area provision of these facilities in good working condition (Aluko, 2011). The author further indicated that the need for an effective and conducive student housing facility in Universities/tertiary institutions 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

indeed 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. Recommendations made were that tertiary institutions authorities build hostels for the students and make sure that it accommodate all students in that institution. And also that the government should enter into a partnership with private entrepreneurs in which the student housing are constructed/built like Build Operate and Transfer BOT where initial funding and management are left to the private hands and closer attention should be paid to the management of student housing.

According to Duangpracha (2012) the housing shortage and the large increase in property prices and therefore rental accommodation availability and access has led to a large problem for all institutions in meeting housing needs in the local areas surrounding education providers. Many international students are unable to find suitable housing on account of the scarcity of residential hall accommodation and lack of housing in the private sector. The growth in university student population is outgrowing the supply of accommodation by the higher education institutions. That is the number of students enrolled exceeds the accommodation provided in such cases where the institution provide student housing. Recommendation was the hostels being extended to accommodate all students. This study is of relevancy to the current study in a sense that it indicate that for an institution that is willing to construct student housing/hostels is of importance to consider the highest number of students enrolled in that particular institution.

While Jennifer (2011) stated that one of the causes to shortage of student accommodation is the increase in student enrollment. It seems every year in tertiary institutions students numbers increase and this increase lead to shortage of accommodation. This development forced many students to live off-campus where they are exposed to all kinds of danger and threats. For those who are lucky to secure private accommodation within the campus, they are charged exorbitant rents. And even at that, safe drinking water and access to affordable means of transportation are not assured. All of these constraints affect students' academic achievement negatively. Poor funding from government, lack of maintenance between government, individuals and organizations as well as lack of space for construction of student housing constitute factors responsible for students' accommodation problems. Factors that are responsible for students' hostels accommodation problems such as increase in students' enrolment should be tackled by the school authority, so as to avoid over population. School authority in collaboration with the government should endeavor to build hostels for students in order to avoid the problem of shortage of student accommodation and also if constructed hostels should be located close to the lecture rooms for easy accessibility by students.

According to Chukwu (2001) more students than were originally planned live in a room, students struggle over bed spaces and room accessories, increase in students enrolment create accommodation problem due to the fact that students admitted tend to exceed the available facilities provided by the institutions. Problems facing the housing ranges from growing overcrowding of students that is actualizing to congestion and as a result, mounting to increase pressure on infrastructures, social amenities and rapidly deteriorating environment, the existing housing facilities has increase in pressure because of it shortage of dwelling units whereby as many as ten students shares a space allocated to four. In addition, the problems of unsanitary environment lead to outbreak of diseases and socio disorder. And also the problem of poor and erratic supply of electricity coupled with shortage of water supply within the housing has really an effect on the students in so many ways. For a more improved student housing, various problems need to be tackled to achieve success in various choice of study. The author further indicated one of the causes to shortage of student accommodation as inadequate funding of the educational sector does not allow the institutions to build student housing, in a sense that the institution is incapable of constructing housing for students. Students without hostel accommodation are exposing to hazards, poor living environment, lateness to class, and lack of concentration. The author recommended that the government should enter into a partnership with private entrepreneurs in which the student housing is constructed.

2.3 Impact of accommodation problems on students' performance

Joan (2010) indicated that if students live or reside where the environment is poor this may negatively affect their academic performance. When living conditions are poor, then students' academic performance is likely to be negatively affected. Something that cannot be neglected when looking at student's accommodation is security of students as students residing in insecure areas live in constant fear of theft which adversely affects their academic performance. Creating a secure environment makes students reading fun since they can read at any time of the night and this may lead to their academic excellence. Joan also outlined that noisy and overcrowded residences with inadequate security and lighting at night are the common examples of physical environments that undermine students, ability to engage in their studies. The overcrowded residences of students plus the minimal supervision and insecurity is one of the factors that affect students' academic performance. The facilities inside the rooms of residence should be adequate.

According to Khozaei *et al.*, (2012) the availability of student housing has been acknowledged as one of the

major issues that students must consider when choosing a university. If universities are unable to provide housing for students, students face additional pressure, and the lack of affordable off-campus housing may become a significant problem. The result is that, in choosing between two similar universities, students may prioritize the university with available on-campus housing. When students move far from home to attend university, they often need to minimize spending, and residence halls have been a proven means of achieving this goal. Consequently, many students prefer to reside in university residence halls. The issue of the affordability of residence halls aside, the profound impacts and benefits of residence halls on students must be considered. Because of the significance of these impacts, scholars have examined the influence of residence halls on students from various perspectives. Some even studies have suggested that residence halls may influence students' growth, behavior and academic performance. According to Murray (2010) many large universities require students to live in dormitories on the basis that living on campus leads to better classroom performance and lower drop out incidence. Large universities also provide a number of academic services in dormitories such as tutoring and student organizations that encourage an environment conducive to learning.

Oladiran (2013) indicates that the condition of the facilities can impact negatively or positively on students' performance effectiveness depending on the state of the building. Poor facilities and overcrowding have negative effect on students' performance. The author also indicated that inadequate or shortage of accommodation is one of the issues that students point out. And as to the inadequate accommodation student end up sharing beds which lead to being overcrowded. And this may negatively affect students' performance.

According to Jennifer (2011) Most times, the students are reported to skip or miss lectures, examinations and laboratory practical as a result of problems emanating from inadequate accommodation. In addition, there are frequent cases of frustration, friction, conflict, antagonisms and open confrontation among roommates in overcrowded student hostels, on usage of wardrobes, corner/spaces and other facilities in the room. The student hostel accommodations are not only appears to be inadequate but some of the existing ones are dilapidated and constitute danger to the health of the students and the entire college communities. For instance, the hostel accommodations are not conducive and deplorable and this affects the academic performance of students and their all-round development.

2.4 System Theory

The system theory hold that an organization is a social system made up of integrated parts. According to Nwankwo (2003), a system is a unit with series of interacted and interdependent parts, such that the interplay of any part affects the whole. A system is therefore a structure with interdependent parts. A Private Tertiary Institution in this manner is a social system that has structure and process. The administration of Private Tertiary Institution as a system involves management of such areas as curriculum, staff personnel, student personnel, funds, school plant, and school community relations. Providing student housing to student by institution management is very important aspect of student personnel and therefore a very vital area of institution administration. This theory is related to this study because the students in the Private tertiary institutions form part and parcel of that institution as a system. So this means that any aching part of the system will jeopardize the efficient working of the whole system. This entails that if the issue of shortage of student accommodation is not given due attention, it will dampen the morale of students and generate tension. This will of course affects their input in their studies and equally affect what they acquire in terms of knowledge, skills and values. The provision of accommodation to student by institution management therefore forms part of the system because if students do not perform well, being shortage of accommodation problem the institution gets affected also. System theory is significant to the present study in a sense that provision of student housing is an integral part of educational institutions.

3. Research Methodology

The study employed the descriptive method in order to ascertain and be able to describe the effects of shortage accommodation on students' performance in private tertiary institutions in Botswana. The targeted population of this study will consist of students and management of Bai sago University and Limkokwing University of Creative Technologies in Gaborone campuses which are approximately 8300 respectively. Simple random sampling was used and a questionnaire was used to collect the data. The researchers used the Raosoft sample size calculator software and the recommended sample size from a population of 8300 was 68 at 90 % confidence interval level, with 10% margin of error.

4. Data Findings Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Increase in student enrollment	20	1.00	5.00	3.8500	1.26803
Poor funding from Government	20	1.00	5.00	3.5000	1.14708
Lack of space for construction of student hostels	20	1.00	5.00	4.0000	1.25656
Lack of partnership between Government and Private Institutions	20	2.00	5.00	4.0000	1.12390
Lack of parental support	20	1.00	5.00	2.9500	1.09904
Inadequate trained personnel	20	1.00	5.00	2.4500	.99868
Government housing policies restrictions	20	1.00	4.00	3.4000	.88258
Valid N (list wise)	20				

Source: Raw primary data

Note: responses were based on a scale of: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral Agree or Disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree. The measures of central tendency were computed based on responses obtained from the management of both Ba Isago and Limkokwing University

4.1 Lack of space

The result indicated that the major cause of student accommodation in Private Tertiary Institutions in Botswana is caused by lack of space for construction. Management indicated that they do not have enough land to construct student hostels. This was indicated by a mean score measure of 4.0 with a standard deviation of 1.26. The mean score of 4.0 denotes that most of the management agree and strongly agree that lack of space is the major cause of shortage of student accommodation. The observed standard deviation of 1.26 is less than the observed mean of 4.0, therefore, there were no outliers which might have pulled to one end. Hence it can be inferred that there was consensus among management that lack of space is the major cause of shortage of accommodation for students. This might have been contributed by high cost of land for commercial purposes in Botswana.

4.2 Lack of partnership between Government and Private Institutions

Lack of partnership between Government and Private Institutions recorded a mean score of 4.0 with the standard deviation of 1.12. This shows that the amount of variation from the mean score of 4.0 was 1.12. This notion indicates that there was consensus among management from both institutions that lack of partnership with government is another major cause of shortage of student accommodation in Botswana. This seems to be contributed by lack of government support towards Private Tertiary Institutions infrastructure.

4.3 Increase in student enrollment

Increase in student enrollment recorded a mean score of 3.9 with the standard deviation of 1.27. This simply shows that the amount of variation from the mean score of 3.8 was 1.27. This point indicates that increase in student enrollment is undertaken as one of the causes of shortage of student accommodation in Private Tertiary Institutions in Botswana. This seems to be contributed by Private Tertiary Institutions in a sense where they enroll students without determining whether all enrolled students will be able to be accommodated. It seems that institutions intake higher number of students than they can accommodate.

4.4 Poor funding from government

Poor funding from government on average mean score of 3.5, indicates that management agree to the fact that poor funding from government is considered as a cause to shortage of student accommodation in Private Tertiary Institutions in Botswana. The amount of variation from the mean score of 3.8 was 1.14 (standard deviation). This seems to be contributed by the fact that government does not support infrastructure in these institutions. And also that government only provide funds for sponsorship and exclude the funds to build hostels/housing for students.

4.5 Government housing policies restrictions

Government housing policies restrictions attained a mean score of 3.4 on average with a standard deviation of 0.88. This indicate that management agreed to that government housing policies restrictions is in average as one of the causes to shortage of student accommodation in Botswana. This seems to be contributed by the fact that student accommodation is not considered in government policies.

4.6 Lack of parental support

Lack of parental support scored a mean score of 2.9 with a standard deviation of 1.09. This indicates that lack of parental as a cause of shortage of student accommodation in Private Tertiary Institutions in Botswana is not really regarded as a cause. This is indicated by the low mean score of 2.9 as this shows that management disagreed towards the point that lack of parental support maybe the cause to shortage of student accommodation.

4.7 Inadequate trained personnel

The inadequate trained personnel cause recorded one of the lowest mean score of 2.5 inferring that management of both Ba Isago and Limkokwing University does not really consider this as a major cause on shortage of student accommodation in Private Tertiary Institutions in Botswana. The observed mean score of 2.4 therefore shows that most of the management, strongly disagree to the view that inadequate trained personnel is a cause to shortage of student accommodation. The amount of variation between responses is denoted by a standard deviation score of 0.99 which is insignificant.

4.8 Responses from students of Ba Isago University and Limkokwing University

The result shows the responses from students of both Ba Isago and Limkokwing University on the problems of shortage of accommodation on student performance in Private Tertiary Institutions in Botswana using SPSS version 21.

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Lack of hostel accommodation encourage truancy and consequently poor concentration on academic work	48	1.00	5.00	4.3750	1.84110
Poor hostel accommodation is one of the major factors responsible for poor academic performance among students	48	1.00	5.00	3.6250	1.45317
Poor accommodation with its attendant characteristics such as lack of water, electricity supplies affects academic activities negatively	48	1.00	5.00	3.8125	1.17882
Student accommodation has no link with their academic pursuit	48	1.00	5.00	1.9375	1.06003
Poor student accommodation is one of the root causes of mass failure of students	48	1.00	5.00	3.5208	1.27145
Inadequate supply of social amenities e.g. water, electricity	48	1.00	5.00	3.5208	1.28807
Overcrowding (sharing a room)	48	1.00	5.00	3.2917	1.50118
Location of residency far from the Institution	48	1.00	5.00	4.2917	1.14777
Valid N (list wise)	48				

Source: Raw primary Data

Note: Responses were based on a scale of: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral Agree or Disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree. The measures of central tendency were computed based on responses obtained from the students of both Ba Isago and Limkokwing University

4.9 Lack of hostel accommodation encourage truancy and consequently poor concentration on academic work

The result in table 4.3 showed that the major problem of shortage of student accommodation in student performance in Private Tertiary Institutions in Botswana is that lack of hostel accommodation encourages truancy and consequently poor concentration on student academic work. Students indicated that absence of student hostels is indeed a major problem towards their academic work. This was indicated by a mean score measure of 4.3 with a standard deviation of 0.84. The mean score of 4.3 denotes that most of the students agree and strongly agree that lack of student hostel accommodation does encourage truancy and consequently poor concentration on academic work is the major problem of shortage of student accommodation.

4.10 Location of residency

Location of residency far from the institution recorded the mean score of 4.2 with a standard deviation of 1.14. These indicate that most of the students strongly agree and agree that location of where they reside is far from their institutions. This simply indicates that students rent out houses that are far from where school and this seems to be a problem of shortage of student accommodation. This seems to be contributed by the fact that institutions do not provide student housing thus lead to student renting rooms that are far from their institution.

4.11 Poor accommodation with its attendant characteristics

Poor accommodation with its attendant characteristics such as lack of water, electricity supply affects academic activities negatively attained a mean score of 3.7 with a standard deviation of 1.18. This indicates that students agree that poor accommodation with its attendant is considered as a problem of shortage of student accommodation in Private Tertiary Institutions in Botswana. This seems to be caused by the fact that students end up squatter in places where there is no water nor electricity as student housing is not provided by the institutions.

4.12 Poor hostel accommodation

Poor hostel accommodation is one of the major factors responsible for poor academic performance among students scored a mean score of 3.6 with standard deviation of 1.45. This indicates that fewer students agree that poor hostel accommodation is one of the major factors responsible for poor academic performance among students. It indicates that if students reside where it is not conducive this can lead to poor performance academically for students.

4.13 Inadequate supply of social amenities

Inadequate of social amenities such as water, electricity attained a mean score of 3.5 with a standard deviation of 1.28. This indicates that students agree that inadequate supply of social amenities is a problem of shortage of student accommodation. It seems that students are forced to reside where they do not have access to social amenities. And students encounter this as a problem towards shortage of student accommodation.

4.14 Poor student accommodation

Table 4.3 indicates poor student accommodation is one of the root causes of mass failure of students as a problem of shortage of student accommodation. Students indicate that poor accommodation is indeed one of the root causes towards mass failure of students. This is indicated by average mean score of 3.5 with a standard deviation of 1.27. This seems to be contributed by the fact that students reside where it is neither clean nor conducive or either where it is noisy which makes it difficult to study.

4.15 Overcrowding

Overcrowding recorded a mean score of 3.2 as an average score with a standard deviation of 1.50. This simply indicates that students agree that overcrowding is a considered one of the problems of shortage of student accommodation in Botswana. This seems to be contributed by the fact that students are forced to share rooms, because the amount they are getting does not favor their expenses so they are forced to share to accommodate that amount.

4.16 Student accommodation has no link with academic pursuit

Student accommodation has no link with academic pursuit attained a lowest mean score of 1.9 with a standard deviation of 1.06. This indicates that the students strongly disagree and disagree to that student accommodation has no link with their academic pursuit. This shows that student accommodation has a link towards their academic pursuit.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The study concluded that there was no available land to construct student accommodation and the available land is expensive for Private Tertiary Institution to acquire hence another cause of the shortage of student accommodation. The other major cause indicated was lack of partnership between government and Private Tertiary Institution. The study also espoused that the challenges/problems faced by student due to shortage of accommodation. The results indicated that lack of hostel accommodation encourages student absenteeism which consequently results to poor academic performance. In conclusion the researcher found that there is shortage of student accommodation in Private Tertiary Institutions in Botswana. The study also concluded that shortage of accommodation for students has negative effects towards student performance academically. It is recommended that Private Tertiary Institutions partnership with the government should be intensified for the provision or construction of housing to students. The researchers also recommends that property investors' partnership with Private Tertiary Institutions to help in the construction of student hostels or even raise funds to support the motive to build student housing. It is recommended that the government provide a land where student hostels will be built, especially near the institutions where students can easily have access and provide a walking distance. Government should provide funding for the construction of student housing.

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