Journal of Poverty, Investment and Development
ISSN 2422-846X An International Peer-reviewed Journal
Vol.33, 2017

Perspectives of Students on Private Hostel Facilities in Proximity to the Federal University of Technolgy, Akure, Nigeria

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Abstract
This study examined students' perspectives on private hostel facilities, focusing on selected private hostels within Federal University of Technology environs, with a view to ensuring the functionality and optimal performance of the facilities in the hostel. The targeted population of this research consists of the private hostels around south gate of Federal University of Technology and its environs. Data was obtained through the distribution of structured questionnaires. A total number of two hundred and eighty one (281) questionnaires were administered and (234) representing 83.27% of the questionnaires were retrieved. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics (relative importance index and weighted mean score). Results of the data obtained revealed that internet connectivity and electricity were the most needed facilities in the hostels with mean scores of 4.6410 and 4.4701 respectively. Privacy and length of lease were the major factors that influenced students' decision to reside in private hostels. The research further revealed that students were highly satisfied with security, road network, waste disposal system but were dissatisfied with common room, electricity, internet connectivity and laundry facilities. The research recommended and concluded that facilities in private hostels need to be improved upon. This will greatly improve the comfortability of the students and influence their academic performance positively.

1. INTRODUCTION

The importance of housing covers all aspects of human life. Primarily, it involves physical protection from hazards which ordinarily may be regarded as shelter but also provide the setting for many of the basic biological and social processes necessary to sustain life, which permit healthy growth and development of the mind (Aluko, 2009). One form of housing is Students' Housing (also known as Hostel) which is a vital component of institutions of learning in all cultures and climates. Although, hostel accommodation is not a direct action element in the learning environment of the education sector but is seen as an indirect or teaching support facility used to increase instructional effectiveness, improve the cleanness, orderliness and safety as well as increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the students in the learning environment (Alaka, 2007).

In the past, students' housing existed traditionally and almost exclusively on-campus in Nigeria. However, Akingbohungbe and Akinluyi (2012) stated that student population explosion and paradigm shift in university on-campus accommodation policy combined to give rise to spontaneous development of commercial Off-campus (Private) Students' Hostel. Adebisi, Ezeokoli, Oletubo and Alade (2015) further corroborated this by stating that the siting and expansion of the Federal University of Technology, Akure (FUTA) have attracted academic and non-academic staff, students, parents and those providing support services to live close to their employment centers resulting in increased economic activities. This however has led to increased demand for residential accommodation within the neighbourhood of the FUTA which used to be a cocoa plantation in its early years of existence. Student hostel has been a major area of concern with increasing student population as a result of increasing interest in the higher institution of learning over the years. 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). Average growth rate of students' population in FUTA is 9.5%; the average growth rate of the students living on the campus is 2.4% while that of the off-campus dwellers is 12.3% (Adebisi et al., 2015). Adebisi et al. (2015) further stated that the percentage of students residing off-campus out of the total students' population increased from 62.74% in 2001/2002 session to 80.88% in 2011/2012 session.

This rise in population has brought to the fore various problematic conditions of students' hostel, ranging from inadequate infrastructural facilities such as electricity, toilets, water, canteen, kitchenette and

recreational areas to overcrowding. In addition, it has indeed met with renewed interest in sourcing and researching the best practicable approach towards the enablement, efficient, conducive and academic driven environment (Aluko, 2011). This has resulted to continuous need for private investors to fill the gap for the provision of hostel accommodation for students due to the increase in enrolment of students into the universities. This is because hostel accommodations provided by the institution management are grossly inadequate and facilities are been over stretched (Ojo et al., 2013, Adebisi et al., 2015). Therefore, there is a need to evaluate from the students' perspective the facilities provided in such hostels by private investors who are mostly profit driven bearing in mind that students are expected to be in a good state of mind to excel in their academic endeavour which can be achieved by a good students' housing system. It is against this background that this study is undertaken to examine students' perspectives on private hostel facilities of selected private hostels within FUTA environment.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Infrastructure is described as the aggregate of all facilities that allow a city to function effectively. The elements of infrastructure include housing, electricity, pipe-borne water, drainage, waste disposal, roads, sewage, health, education, telecommunications and institutional structures like police station, firefighting stations, banks and post offices (Nubi, 2003). One of the determinants of property value is infrastructural facilities, the presence of which leads to appreciation in accommodation value (Adebayo, 2006). Sixsmith (1986) however opined that house which is mostly referred to as home is not a single place for each person, rather a number of places can fill this role simultaneously. Similarly Klis van der and Karsten (2008) further stated that home can be dual-residence situation in which one dwelling is near the workplace and the other is the family residence (hometown). This concept as referenced by Sixsmith (1986), Klis van der and Karsten (2008) are comparable to commuter residence. A student for example, has both a university accommodation close to the college and a home in his or her hometown. Students demand and require a second residence (i.e. university housing), where they stay during school days which is temporary in nature. Moore (2000) stated that people attach a variety of connotations to their understanding of a house but the understanding among students of student housing are similarly diverse. Susilawati (2001) and Khozaei et al (2010) defined student housing as a densely building with many rooms in which each room contains several beds. According to this definition, student housing provides sleeping and living quarters, usually without private bath, for a large number of people and such housing is furnished and rented by the bed. In addition, students housing goes by many names such as halls of residence (Amole, 2005), student dormitory (Kaya and Erkip, 2001).

Student housing continues to be an integral part of facilities provided by higher learning institutions to enable students expand their intellectual capabilities. As such, Amole (2009) view student housing to be made up of bedroom units including other shared utilities such as bathrooms, kitchens, laundry, toilets, recreation rooms and canteens which can be situated either on each floor or block or for the entire student housing accommodation. Najib and Yusuf (2009) view student housing as a place that offers security and privacy in which the university housing administrators can meet the student needs and expectations by letting such spaces to them. It is worthy to note that students' lives on campus are not limited to just room accommodation, washroom, pantry and common and recreation rooms, there are other facilities that will enhance a quality stay for them hence these facilities can also be known as support services (Najib, 2011), as it contributes to meeting the needs and expectations of the students. Abramson (2009) listed such services as cafeteria, mini market or bookshop and banking system inclusive of automated teller machine (ATM) to be within the vicinity of the student housing. Aside from these, there is also the need to provide adequate water supply, garbage disposal, fire safety, closed-circuit television (CCTV), 24-hour security guards on duty, adequate fencing of the student housing, provision of burglary proof on the windows, as all these will ensure the students safety (Olujimi and Bello, 2009; Abramson, 2009).

According to Olujimi and Bello (2009), kitchens, private bathrooms, study lounges and social spaces are considered basic necessities in student hostels. Schenke (2008) stressed the need for internet access, either through a network connection or wi-fi, in each student's room. Moreover, Abramson (2009) finds that extra amenities such as ATM machines, parking lots, mini markets, bookstores and cafeterias should also be provided in student hostels. The inclusion of these sophisticated students' housing features result in a higher level of residential satisfaction (Abramson, 2009; Khozaei *et al.*, 2010).

3. METHODOLOGY

The data for the study was collected from students residing in the private hostels located around the south gate of FUTA. Using self-enumeration due to the non-availability of data, there are 940 private hostels located at FUTA south gate which constitute the sample frame. Adopting Yamane, Taro. (1976) simplified formula to calculate sample size, 281 was arrived at. However, out of the 281 questionnaires administered on a student in each of the hostel, 234 questionnaires were retrieved, representing 83.27% of the sample size.

Descriptive statistic was used to analyze the data collected. Weighted means score was used to assess the basic facilities needed in the private hostels and factors influencing students' decision to reside in private hostels. Also, Relative satisfaction index was used to identify the level of satisfaction of students with the quality of facilities available in the private hostels.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

This section of the study presents the analysis of data collected from the study area and the discussion of results. The analysis was structured to assess the basic facilities needed in the private hostels, factors influencing students' decisions to reside in private hostels and the level of satisfaction of students with the quality of facilities available in the private hostels.

Table 1: The Basic Facilities Needed In Students' Private Hostel.

FACILITIES	Frequency (%)					Mean	Rank
	HN	N	FN	NN	ENN		
Electricity	140(59.8)	64(27.4)	30(12.8)	0(0)	0(0)	4.4701	2
Water Supply	128(54.7)	56(23.9)	25(10.7)	15(6.4)	10(4.3)	4.1838	3
Waste disposal	46(19.7)	73(31.2)	80(34.2)	35(15.0)	0(0)	3.5556	4
Drainage	46(19.7)	51(21.8)	91(38.9)	28(12.0)	18(7.7)	3.3376	5
Security	31(13.2)	45(19.2)	44(18.8)	69(29.5)	45(19.2)	2.7728	10
Internet connectivity	150(64.1)	84(35.9)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	4.6410	1
Common room	9(3.8)	15(6.4)	17(7.3)	96(41.0)	97(41.5)	1.9017	11
Toilet and bathroom	54(23.1)	51(21.8)	47(20.1)	37(15.8)	45(19.2)	3.1368	7
Laundry	15(6.4)	31(13.2)	154(65.8)	25(10.8)	9(3.8)	3.0769	8
Wall finishes	23(9.8)	29(12.4)	80(34.2)	90(38.5)	12(5.1)	2.8333	9
Road network	55(23.5)	46(19.7)	76(32.5)	32(13.7)	25(10.7)	3.3162	6

Source: Field Survey,2015

Note: HN-Highly Needed, N-Needed, FN-Fairly Needed, NN-Not Needed, ENN-Extremely Not Needed

Table 1 revealed the basic facilities needed in private hostels; the various responses have been assessed, presented and ranked for better meaning and interpretation to the research. From the table, the most needed facility in private hostels is internet connectivity with a mean score of 4.6410; water and electricity ranked 2nd and 3rd with mean scores of 4.5470 and 4.4701 respectively. The least needed facility is a common room with mean score of 1.9017.

The study shows the basic facilities needed in private hostels within the study area, with internet connectivity and electricity been ranked as the most needed facilities as shown in the Table. Oral interview carried out on the respondents further explained that internet connectivity off-campus is very poor. Schenke (2008) highlights the value placed on Internet access, either through a network connection or wi-fi, in each student's room. Most private hostel providers do not make provisions for internet access; they do not even take it into consideration. Students living on-campus enjoys free access to internet. For example, there are occasions where students on-campus browse free of charge by enjoying the school's wi-fi but the reverse is the case off-campus. The state of electricity is very poor as seen from the table, it is been ranked number 2, students complained bitterly about the epileptic state of electricity, which they say is worse than been imagined. This could be attributed to the fact that the population of the private hostels has increased the housing stock around the area without the corresponding increase in power supply unit. Hence, consumption per house has been reduced, less effective and inefficient and this has greatly affected not only power availability period but has also slowed down the reading habit of students because they need electricity to even charge their battery-powered lamps for reading.

The table further revealed that the least needed facility is common room. This could be attributed to the fact that majority of the hostels are self-contained and the students don't really see the essence of doing things in the open glare. They are of the opinion that common room is a support service and thus they do not attach much importance to it. Security is ranked number 10; this is because the level of security around the study area is high. The efforts of the local security unit popularly called vigilante is felt as observed by the students. This is in line with the findings of Ojo et al (2013) that the crime rate of privatized students' hostel in FUTA, Akure is very low and very satisfactory.

Table 2: Factors Influencing Students' Decision to Reside In Private Hostels

FACTORS	VH	H	UD	L	VL	Mean	Rank
Privacy	155(66.2)	55(23.5)	8(3.4)	10(4.3)	6(2.6)	4.4658	1
Room size	101(43.2)	70(29.9)	39(16.7)	15(6.4)	9(3.8)	4.0214	3
Security	54(23.1)	39(16.7)	70(29.9)	39(16.7)	32(13.7)	3.1880	8
Length of lease	101(43.2)	85(36.3)	23(9.8)	19(8.1)	6(2.6)	4.0940	2
Available facilities	95(40.6)	78(33.3)	25(10.7)	16(6.8)	20(8.5)	3.9060	4
Proximity to school	70(29.9)	93(39.7)	23(9.8)	19(8.1)	29(12.4)	3.6667	6
Feeling of crowding	39(16.7)	23(9.8)	64(27.4)	15(6.4)	93(39.7)	2.5726	10
Hostel rules and regulation	46(19.7)	31(13.2)	39(16.7)	47(20.1)	71(30.3)	2.7179	9
Good and clean	70(29.9)	94(40.2)	39(16.7)	23(9.8)	8(3.4)	3.8333	5
Amount paid as rent	85(36.3)	53(22.6)	39(16.7)	27(11.5)	30(12.8)	3.5812	7

Source: Field Survey,2015

Note: VH-Very High, H-High, UD-Undecided, L-Low, VL-Very Low.

Table 2 showed the factors that influence student's decision to reside in private hostels. Findings from the table reveal that privacy was ranked number 1 with a mean score of 4.4658, length of lease and room size were ranked second and third with mean scores of 4.0940 and 4.0214 respectively. The least influencing factors as inferred from the table are hostel rules and regulations and feeling of crowding with mean scores of 2.7179 and 2.5726 accordingly.

In other to explore students' perspectives on private hostels facilities, the factors influencing students' decision to reside in private hostels were investigated. Privacy ranked first (mean score of 4.4648) which could be linked to the fact that the main reason students reside off-campus is for them to enjoy their individual privacy, which of course they cannot get on-campus hostel. This corroborates the opinion of Thomsen (2007) which reveals that 'the possibility for personalization of private rooms is highly appreciated in order to create a home sense Length of lease is ranked second (mean score of 4.0940). As regards the length of lease, private hostels have a longer lease usually a year as compared to on-campus hostel where the length of lease is usually per session after which the students are mandated to leave the hostel premises. When compared to the on-campus hostels, the size of the room also influences students to reside off –campus. Hostel rules and regulations is ranked 9th (mean score of 2.7129) because the rules and regulations off- campus differ from one private hostel to the other and majority of the hostels do not even have rules that guide them. Thus this factor does not really influence their decision. Feeling of crowding is ranked the least (mean score of 2.5726) which suggest that majority of the students do not really attach much importance to the density of the hostel.

Table 3: Level of Satisfaction of Students with the Quality of Facilities Available in Private Hostel

FACILITIES	Frequency (%)					Mean	Relative Satisfaction Index	Rank
	HS	MS	S	FS	NS			
Electricity	17(7.3)	38(16.2)	48(20.5)	60(25.6)	71(30.3)	2.4444	48.8	8
Water Supply	11(4.7)	54(23.1)	71(30.3)	65(27.8)	33(14.1)	2.7650	55.4	7
Waste disposal	27(11.5)	54(23.1)	71(30.3)	60(25.6)	22(9.4)	3.0171	60.4	3
Drainage	22(9.4)	33(14.1)	108(46.2)	44(18.8)	27(11.5)	2.9103	58.2	6
Security	33(14.1)	82(35.0)	76(32.5)	33(14.1)	10(4.3)	3.4060	68.2	1
Internet connectivity	0(0)	27(11.5)	33(14.1)	60(25.6)	114(48.7)	1.8846	37.6	11
Common room	10(4.3)	16(6.8)	28(12.0)	78(33.3)	102(43.6)	1.9487	39.0	9
Toilet and bathroom	33(14.1)	49(20.9)	54(23.1)	65(27.8)	33(14.1)	2.9316	58.6	5
Laundry	11(4.7)	18(7.7)	27(11.5)	71(30.3)	107(45.7)	1.9530	39.0	9
Wall finishes	33(14.1)	33(14.1)	93(39.7)	48(20.5)	27(11.5)	2.9872	59.6	4
Road network	46(19.7)	71(30.3)	65(27.8)	16(6.8)	36(15.4)	3.3205	66.4	2
						Ma-RSI	**53.7**	

Source: Field Survey,2015

Note: HS-Highly Satisfied, M-Moderately Satisfied, S-Satisfied, FS-Fairly Satisfied, NS-Not Satisfied.
Ma-RSI: Mean aggregate Relative Satisfaction Index

Table 3 assessed the level of students' satisfaction with the quality of facilities available in private hostels. As shown by the table, the mean aggregate relative satisfaction index is 53.7% and the facilities that have relative satisfaction index greater than this is considered to give students satisfaction in the hostel. These facilities include water supply, waste disposal, drainage, security, toilet and bathroom, wall finishes and road network with security and road network been ranked 1st and 2nd with relative satisfaction indices of 68.2 and 66.4 respectively. Facilities that have lesser than 53.7% are considered to give unsatisfactory and such include laundry, common room, internet and electricity. The facility with the most prominent dissatisfaction is internet

connectivity with a relative satisfaction index of 37.6%. Laundry and common room have same relative satisfaction index of 39.0%.

The study also revealed the satisfaction level of students with the available facilities in the hostel. Using the method adopted by Ojo and Oloruntoba (2012), which states that for a service or facility to be identified as one of the most prominent sources of dissatisfaction within an area, its satisfaction factor must be lower than the groups means aggregate relative satisfaction index (RSI). This implies that students are satisfied with all the facilities listed on the table except laundry, common room, internet connectivity and electricity. From the interview conducted, it was observed that only a few hostels have laundry facility where students can wash/iron their clothes) and common room where the students can hold meetings. Electricity is another facility in a bad state, thus students are dissatisfied with it. The supply of electricity is so unstable that students have to go to school to read at night, they have to carry their lamps and phones to charge in school and this can really affect their academic performances. Students are also dissatisfied with the internet connectivity as they are not able to enjoy the free Wi-Fi which their mates living on campus enjoy; if they have to do so it means they must leave their hostels and go on-campus.

Students are very satisfied with the security system off-campus, as the local security unit known as vigilante is very active, and theft and crime rate is rather low. The road network is also in an acceptable state since most of them have to make use of footpaths to school, thus students are very satisfied with it. Waste disposal is another facility that students are satisfied with, this is due to the fact that the mobile trucks used in evacuating the waste are effective to a reasonable extent.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The paper has examined the perspectives of students of FUTA on private hostel facilities. Quite a number of the facilities needed are lacking in majority of the hostels. Furthermore, privacy and length of lease are major factors influencing students' decisions to reside of campus. It was further revealed that students are dissatisfied with facilities such as internet connectivity, laundry, electricity amongst others. Therefore, the private hostel providers should be encouraged to equip the hostels with facilities that will enhance the wellbeing, hence the academic performance of the students. Furthermore, to achieve high level of satisfaction with the available facilities, room should be created for appropriate feedback mechanism to monitor the state and performance of facilities periodically. Finally, the government should be called upon to look into improving the poor state of electricity in FUTA environs.

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