

STUDENTS' SATISFACTION WITH HOSTEL FACILITIES IN FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, AKURE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The importance of the social environment in students' life cannot be overemphasized. Availability, adequacy, and functionality of hostel facilities are the key factors in the determination of students' satisfaction. Using the hostels in the Federal University of Technology, Akure as a case study, the facilities provided in the hostels were identified and the level of satisfaction with each of the facilities measured using Relative Satisfaction Index. Questionnaires were used in data collection from a total of 322 students taken as the sample size for the study. The study revealed that respondents were dissatisfied with the adequacy and functionality of some facilities such as the laundry, bathroom and toilet facilities due to distance from rooms and the level of cleanliness. The paper recommends the need for provision of more hostels with better designs and current facilities through public-private partnership to meet the needs of the growing students' population.

Keywords: Facility, hostel, satisfaction, students, Akure.

INTRODUCTION

The importance of the social environment in students' life cannot be overemphasized. One of the key features students and their parents are concerned about when enrolling in a university is the availability of student housing. The significance of housing as a major determinant of man's welfare, life sustenance and survival cannot be over emphasized. It has and will always be a prime concern to individual, family, community and the nation at large. Housing is paramount to human existence as it ranks among the top three needs of man. Its provision has always been of great necessity to man. As a unit of the environment, housing has profound influence on the health, efficiency and social welfare of the community (Omole, 2001). Students' housing form part of the 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 students housing a top priority while enhancing the reputation of the school among other contemporaries.

The students' housing is said to include facilities such as bedrooms which can serve the dual purpose of study and sleeping, bathrooms and toilets, kitchen, laundry, recreational areas and access to internet services as this further enhance the study-learning experience. Abramson (2009) on his part, stated that the student housing can be further made exciting by providing further facilities such as ATM machines, car park, mini markets, bookshops and cafeterias within the precinct of the students' housing.

Students' housing in Nigeria has not received the desired attention both from the government and the management of the institutions as Ubong (2007) observed that hostel accommodation has not received adequate attention although it is an important component of pupil personnel management, inadequate maintenance of the services and infrastructure of hostel accommodation is very common. There have been reported cases of students taking ill in the hostels as a result of poor sanitary conditions. It is crucial to note that student hostel must not only be adequately provided for in relation to the student population of a university, but it must also be able to satisfy their needs if the best is to be appropriated from them. Satisfaction being a process of evaluation between what was received and what was expected is the most widely adopted description of user satisfaction in the current literature (Parker and Mathews 2001). Satisfying users of any facility (including hostel facility) should be one of the main objectives of providing

such facility in the first instance. Singh (2006) believes that user satisfaction has a positive effect on an organisation's profitability, educational institution inclusive. Some authors further state that it is not enough to merely satisfy users but importantly, ensure users are extremely satisfied (Sivadas and Baker-Prewitt, 2000; Bowen and Chen, 2001).

Hence, it is important that research is conducted to find out student satisfaction in hostel facilities put in place because when students are satisfied with the facilities provided in their residence halls, it will lead to enhancement in the academic excellence of the students and reduction in complaints being filed against the management among others. This paper aims at ascertaining the adequacy of the facilities provided in the students' hostels of the Federal University of Technology, Akure with a view to assess the level of satisfaction of the students with the available facilities.

LITERATURE REVIEW ON HOUSING SATISFACTION

Satisfaction in housing means the sentiments of satisfaction and happiness to the housing place which creates these feelings (Abramson, 2010). Housing is often viewed as an entity involving a large number of units displaying aspects such as physical quality, location, standard of services offered by the government and private owners as well as neighbourhood characteristics (Curley, 2003). The physical entity of housing ties down a person or family to personal services and relationships. A housing that fulfills one's daily needs provide a high satisfaction rate to occupants. Satisfaction towards the living conditions means no complaints are made since the housing units fulfill the needs and aspirations of the residents. Satisfaction towards the housing environment reflects residents' reaction towards their living environment. In general, housing has been accepted as a main component towards a quality life.

The concept of housing satisfaction is multi-layered. Elsinga and Hoeksta (2005) and Hassanain (2008) display similar views on the concept of housing satisfaction based on their observation on past studies. In their opinion, the concept of housing satisfaction has been used for four major objectives. It is the key to predict an individual's perception on the overall quality of life. It is also an indicator of individual mobility which later changes the demand on housing and influences surrounding area change. Thirdly, it is used as an ad hoc measurement of private sector development success as an evaluation tool to measure resident's acceptance of prevailing

shortcomings for existing surrounding area development. Finally, housing satisfaction acts as a variable in determining the relationship between the resident's background and his attitude towards mobility.

There are factors that are associated with housing satisfaction. These factors can be broadly categorized as physical, social and management factors. Physical factors are those related to the physical characteristics of a dwelling and its surrounding environment. Regarding the physical factors, empirical studies have shown that housing satisfaction is associated with an improvement of security control (Mohit, Ibrahim and Rashid 2010); dwelling design and privacy (Day, 2000); unit size and length of stay (Fang, 2006); property value, housing adequacy and available housing space, adaptability and flexibility of spaces (Berkoz et al., 2009); and satisfaction with the facilities of surrounding environment (Patricia and Yusof, 2013). All of these factors emphasize the importance of the physical attributes of the constructed environment on residents' satisfaction. Liu (1999) study residential satisfaction in housing estates: a Hong Kong perspective on automation in construction and study presented factors (on both physical and social levels) which influence residential satisfaction of a sample of occupants in a chosen residential area in Hong Kong. Findings showed that there exists a high level of dissatisfaction amongst the public housing occupants. However, the major concerns of the public housing occupants lie in the areas of maintenance and cleanliness of the estate, integrity of the building fabric and ease of access by public transport while the major concerns of the private housing occupants lie in the lack of facilities for the disabled as well as for recreational, elderly and childcare facilities. In the other words, a dwelling can provide more satisfaction to its residents if, besides being available, it meets the residents' requirements.

Social factors concern the personal characteristics of the people who reside in these dwellings as well as their feelings and perceptions of the environment. Studies have shown that housing satisfaction is associated with the personality characteristics of the residents (Bruin and Cook, 1997), perceived quality and physical comfort (Khozaei et al., 2007), residents' relationship with management staff (James et al., 2009), home ownership (Elsinga and Hoekstra, 2005) and aggregate income (Frank and Enkawa, 2008).

The findings of research of Fatoye and Odusanmi (2009) in Nigeria on the evaluation of housing performance based on occupiers' satisfaction

approach showed that the occupiers were most satisfied with criteria under design such as the number of rooms in their houses, the ceiling height, the location of different rooms, and nearness to religion (worship) location. They were least satisfied with the criteria under the subsystems of estate layout and site location, and access to local facilities and city-wide services such as nearness of house to fire-fighting stations.

These factors emphasize the influence that residents' personality has on their satisfaction. Thus, one may conclude that, if these factors affect housing satisfaction, the provision of housing that fulfills everyone's needs is impossible. This may be true, but most researchers assume that there are similarities between people's perceptions of the environment. These similarities allow researchers to draw generalization about the influence of these factors on satisfaction, yet at the same time be aware that two people will not be exactly similar.

Several scholars have more specifically focused on student housing satisfaction. Najib, Yusuf and Abidin (2011) studied student residential satisfaction in research universities. The study identified some significant predictors of student housing satisfaction, such as "cleanliness, safety, hall program and activities, and opportunities to provide input into decision-making in the hall". Similarly, Ubong (2007) study concluded that "high quality facilities, positive roommate relationships, strong floor communities and quiet study environments are the most important predictors of students' satisfaction with their hall". Studies show that giving freedom to students to choose their own roommate increases their level of housing satisfaction (Stern et al., 2007).

For instance, Kayas and Erkip (2001) investigated the influence of physical attributes of campus accommodation on student satisfaction in Bilkent University, Ankara. The outcome of this study revealed that students living on the highest floor perceived their rooms larger and found them less crowded in comparison to those on the lowest floor. This perception according to the authors led to an increase in the level of students' satisfaction with their living condition. An earlier study by Karlin, et al. (1979) also confirmed that hostel room size can indeed influence students' level of satisfaction. Hence, their study showed that students who lived in triple sharing rooms were less satisfied and unhappier with their living conditions than students residing in double sharing rooms.

Amole (2009) reported the results of a study of residential satisfaction in students' housing in Nigeria. The study examined how satisfied students were and the factors which predicted residential satisfaction. Specifically, it examined whether the morphological configurations of the halls of residence would predict residential satisfaction. Data were obtained from questionnaires distributed to a sample of 1124 respondents from all the halls of residences in four residential universities in Southwestern Nigeria. More than half (53%) of the respondents were dissatisfied with their residences and the variables which explained satisfaction were the social qualities of the residences, especially, the social densities; the kitchenette, bathroom and storage facilities and some demographic characteristics of the students. The morphological configuration of the halls of residence was also found to be a predictor of satisfaction and the characteristics which appeared most significant were the plan form and the length of the corridor. The regression model explained 65% of the variance in R². An instructive finding was that satisfaction appeared most critical in the bedroom.

Najib, Yusuf and Abidin (2011) investigated the level of student satisfaction with campus student housing facilities (SHF) at Malaysian Research Universities (RUs) and the relationship between satisfaction and loyalty behaviour. The student residential satisfaction (SRS) framework was proposed to investigate residential satisfaction from the students' viewpoint. Questionnaires were distributed to respondents in three RUs. In general, students are satisfied with the provided SHF with the SRS index of 2.96 or 74 per cent satisfaction level and there is a significant relationship between overall satisfaction and loyalty behaviour. The results also confirmed that the proposed model was an adequate instrument to measure SRS.

The study of Adewunmi, Omirin and Famuyiwa (2011) adopted an investigative approach to post-occupancy evaluation using major technical and functional criteria of performance on the facilities of a postgraduate hostel at the campus of the University of Lagos, Akoka, Yaba, Nigeria. Data collection was based on a survey through self-administered questionnaires in which users of the building were asked to report on their perceptions and experience of the facility. The user satisfaction survey was developed based on the students' feedback on their experience with 29 identified performance criteria obtained from a review of the literature and an interview with a member of the university's hall management committee. The user

satisfaction survey identified areas of deficiency, particularly in maintenance and facilitated the assessment of the overall performance of the building.

Previous studies have indicated that good housing management could increase the relative satisfaction of students in their residence halls. The role played by the management in managing the housing environment is crucial especially in student housing. Effects of management can be discerned through the way hostel allocation was carried out, implementation of the law, hygiene, maintenance, security and students' relations. The relationship between the housing management and students pose a large influence on students' housing satisfaction (Price et al., 2003). This research therefore seeks to undertake an in-depth investigation on students' satisfaction with hostel facilities in The Federal University of Technology, Akure, Nigeria.

THE STUDY AREA

The Federal University of Technology, Akure (FUTA) was founded in 1981 under a drive by the government of Nigeria to create universities that specialize in producing graduates with practical as well as theoretical knowledge. The first students were admitted in 1982 to a five-year degree program. Students' enrolment for undergraduate programmes for 2013/2014 academic session was fourteen thousand out of which only one thousand nine hundred and twenty three students (approximately 14 percent) were officially accommodated in the hostels. There is no preferential treatment for allocating bed spaces to students in these residence halls, except for 100level and 500level students, disabled students and athletes who represent the university in various competitions. 100level students are considered because they are new on campus while 500level students are also considered because of their final year project. Hence, bed spaces are allocated based on students' promptness to apply at the beginning of each academic session. Table 1 shows the distribution of male and female students in the various hostels and the year of establishment.

TABLE 1: HOSTELS AND YEAR OF ESTABLISHMENT

Name of Hostel	Gender of Occupants	Bed Spaces	Year Established
Lady Deborah Jibowu Hall	Female	330	1990
Annex 1	Female	80	2001
Annex 2	Female	80	2001
Annex 3	Female	80	2001
Jadesola Akande Hall	Female	220	2011
Chief Akindeko Hall	Male	630	1982
M.K.O. Abiola Hall	Male	315	1990

Peter Adeniyi Hall	Male	188	2011
Total		1,923	

Source: Students’ Affairs Unit of the University.

The grand total for all the bed spaces in FUTA undergraduate hostels is One Thousand nine hundred and twenty three (1,923). 1133 spaces (59%) were for males while 790 (41%) were for females. Being a technological school, there are usually more males than females in the student population.

RESEARCH METHODS

The research design is descriptive and relies on data collection from respondents through the use of close-ended questionnaires. Stratified random sampling technique was adopted to reach the target population who were students in the various hostels on campus. From the sample frame of 1,923 students who got bed spaces in the halls of residence in 2013/2014 academic session, a sample size was derived by means of a demographic formula for determination of sample sizes (Otte, 2006). The formula is as follows:

$$N = P (100 - P) \times Z^2 / D^2 \text{ -----equation (1)}$$

Where:

N = required sample size

P = anticipated prevalence

D = allowable error estimate (desired precision)

Z = appropriate value from the normal distribution for the desired confidence level

The research anticipated a minimum response rate of 70% and an allowable error estimated of within 5% of the true prevalence:

$$70 (100 - 70) \times (1.96^2 / 5^2) = 322$$

Therefore, a total of 322 students were taken as the sample size for the study. 280 of the questionnaires were retrieved which form 86.9% of the distributed questionnaires. Data were analyzed through Relative Satisfaction Index (RSI), the formula is given as:

$$RSI = (5n_5 + 4n_4 + 3n_3 + 2n_2 + 1n_1) / 5N \text{ -----equation 2}$$

n_1 is the number of criteria with Strongly dissatisfied

n_2 is the number of criteria with dissatisfied

n_3 is the number with neither satisfied nor dissatisfied

n_4 is the number with satisfied

n_5 is the number of criteria with Strongly satisfied

N is the total number of questionnaires filled and collected in the area

RESULTS

The data got included the gender of respondents, condition of facilities and level of satisfaction with facilities. The results are presented in Tables 2, 3 and 4 respectively.

Table 2: Gender of respondents

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Male	130	46.4
Female	150	53.6
Total	280	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Table 2 shows the frequency distribution of the respondents' gender. 46.4% of the respondents were male while 53.6% were female.

Table 3: Condition of the Facilities

Facilities	Condition of Facilities				Very Poor	Weighted Mean	Rank
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor			
Electricity Supply	51(18.2)	154 (55)	72(25.7)	3(1.07)	0	3.93	1 st
Water Supply	33(11.79)	145(51.79)	88(31.43)	14(5)	0	3.70	2 nd
Waste Disposal	47(16.79)	111(39.64)	96(34.29)	18(6.4)	8(2.86)	3.61	3 rd
Others	22(7.86)	110(39.29)	101(36.07)	24 (8.57)	23(8.21)	3.30	4 th
Kitchenette	13(4.64)	96(34.29)	98(35)	49(17.5)	24(8.57)	3.09	5 th
Bathroom	6(2.14)	71(25.36)	123(43.93)	70(25)	10(3.57)	2.98	6 th
Drainage	20(7.14)	57(20.36)	122(43.57)	41(14.64)	40(14.29)	2.91	7 th
Fence	25(8.93)	104(37.14)	32(11.43)	32(11.43)	87(31.07)	2.81	8 th
Recreation Room	15(5.36)	64(22.86)	89(31.79)	43(15.36)	69(24.64)	2.69	9 th
Laundry	32(11.43)	42(15)	79(28.21)	59(21.07)	68(24.29)	2.68	10 th
Standby Gen.	13(4.64)	41(14.64)	108(38.57)	6(2.14)	50(17.86)	2.64	11 th
Toilet	10(3.57)	35(12.5)	113(40.36)	76(27.14)	46(16.43)	2.60	12 th
ICT/Reading	20(7.14)	41(14.64)	83(29.64)	65(23.21)	71(25.36)	2.55	13 th
Security	10(3.57)	24(8.57)	107(38.21)	80(28.57)	58(20.71)	2.45	14 th
Firefighting Equipment	6(2.14)	33(11.79)	83(29.64)	67(23.92)	91(32.5)	2.27	15 th

Source: Field Survey, 2014

It is observed from the table above that electricity supply is the most functional facility with a mean score of 3.93 and have been ranked 1st. This is the reason why most students prefer to stay in school hostels because constant electricity supply aids reading. Water supply and waste disposal were ranked second and third respectively. The least functional facilities are

firefighting equipment, security and ICT/Reading room. Although fire extinguishers were on the walls at strategic locations in the hostel, occupants were not given orientation on how to use them. The ICT / Reading room did not have enough space and there was no internet connection to enhance browsing in the hostels.

Table 4: Level of satisfaction of the students to the available facilities provided

Facilities	Level of Satisfaction to the available Facilities					RSI	Rank
	Strongly Satisfied	Satisfied	Undecided	Dissatisfied	Strongly Dissatisfied		
Electricity	51(18.2)	144 (51.4)	72(25.7)	6(2.14)	3(1.07)	0.76	1 st
Water Supply	44(15.71)	135(48.21)	78(27.86)	16(5.71)	7(2.5)	0.73	2 nd
Standby Gen.	54(19.29)	129(46.07)	18(6.43)	60(21.4)	19 (6.79)	0.70	3 rd
Security	42(15)	142(50.71)	27(9.64)	51(18.21)	18(6.43)	0.70	3 rd
ICT/Reading	22(7.86)	153(54.64)	15(5.36)	74(26.43)	16(5.71)	0.66	5 th
Fence	22(7.86)	135(48.21)	51(18.21)	47(16.79)	25(8.93)	0.66	5 th
Kitchenette	18(6.43)	119(42.5)	72(25.71)	54(19.29)	17(6.07)	0.65	7 th
Waste Disposal	17(6.07)	111(39.64)	69(34.64)	58(20.71)	25(8.93)	0.63	8 rd
Others	17(6.07)	128(45.71)	54(19.29)	41(14.64)	40(14.28)	0.63	8 th
Recreation Area	18(6.43)	94(33.57)	89(31.79)	53(18.93)	26(9.29)	0.62	10 th
Bathroom	18(6.43)	99(35.36)	79(28.21)	64(22.86)	20(7.14)	0.62	10 th
Drainage	16(5.71)	58(20.71)	53(18.93)	92(32.86)	61(21.78)	0.51	12 th
Toilet	10(3.57)	35(12.5)	73(26.07)	96(34.29)	66(23.57)	0.48	13 th
Laundry	4(1.43)	44(15.71)	56(20)	76(27.14)	100(35.71)	0.44	14 th
Firefighting Equipment	8(2.86)	33(11.79)	42(15)	96(34.29)	101(36.07)	0.42	15 th

Source: Field Survey, 2014

The overall satisfaction level with the entire facilities was further analyzed in Table 4. The level of satisfaction with the facilities such as electricity, water supply and the availability of standby generator were highest with satisfaction indexes of 0.76, 0.73 and 0.70 respectively and were ranked 1st, 2nd and 3rd.

The students were not satisfied with the location of the laundry rooms, toilets and bathrooms. This is as a result of the design of the hostels as these facilities were located at the far end of the building such that students staying at the other end have to travel a long distance to get to and from them. Hence only the few students whose rooms were located close to the toilets and bathrooms were satisfied with the location whereas Hassanain (2008) noted that there should be close proximity of the bathrooms to rooms. On the whole, the level of satisfaction for the bathrooms is 0.62 which

therefore translate that the students were not very satisfied with the bathrooms.

For the toilets, students were not also satisfied with the location and as well as the cleanliness of the toilets. This is due to the number of people using the facility and also due to the lackadaisical attitude of the cleaners in ensuring constant cleanliness of the toilets. This substantiates Hassanain (2008) that cleanliness is important since hygienic environment promotes healthy life. On the whole, the level of satisfaction for the toilets is 0.48 and that of laundry is 0.44 which therefore translate that the students were dissatisfied with the toilets and laundry.

Students were relatively satisfied with the kitchenette and its facilities such as sinks, cooking slabs, etc. On the whole, the level of satisfaction for the kitchenette is 0.65 which therefore translate that the students are relatively satisfied with the kitchenette although spacious but the electric sockets are inadequate.

CONCLUSION AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The study has revealed the facilities available in the hostels in The Federal University of Technology, Akure, Nigeria to include electricity, water supply, waste disposal, toilets, bathrooms, laundry, kitchenette, ICT/reading room, fire fighting equipments, security and recreation areas among others. The level of students' satisfaction with hostel facilities such as electricity and water supply were high while that of toilet, laundry and firefighting equipment were low. Students were not very satisfied with bathrooms and kitchenette. The results showed that the students are dissatisfied with facilities either because they are inadequate in number or quality or because of the location. This therefore implies that the hostel facilities in the school are not giving enough satisfaction for the student population. The result of this study is also in line with the result of Amole (2009a) which was also carried out in Nigeria showing a level of dissatisfaction of the students with the hostel facilities.

The school management needs to take necessary steps to address these inadequacies. To this end, the study recommends the need for the school management to build more hostels for both male and female students to accommodate the growing population. Also, better construction designs that will reduce travel time to toilets and bathrooms should be built. The cleanliness of the toilets should be improved by making the cleaners work

two shifts in the hostels. Facilities that enhance the academic performance of students living in the hostels such as internet connectivity should be prioritized. Regular inspection and maintenance should be carried out in hostels and adequate funding should be provided for this purpose.

Finally, private developers should be engaged in a partnership scheme with the school management to construct more hostels on campus with current state of the art facilities which will meet the needs of the growing population of the students.

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