

STUDENTS' WELFARE SERVICES AND SCHOOL-LIFE SATISFACTION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS

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Abstract

Nigerian tertiary institutions, especially universities, had witnessed protests, students-management clashes, complete shutdown of institutions among others, which were as a result of students dissatisfaction, particularly about welfare services on campus. This study therefore investigates the extent to which welfare services relate to school-life satisfaction of students, using the University of Lagos, Nigeria, as a case study. The correlational research design was adopted for the study. The population consisted 6124 final year students of the University, out of which 400 students were drawn across 10 faculties using simple random sampling technique. A 20-item self-constructed questionnaire was used to collect data for the study. The data collected were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation, at 0.05 level of significance. The findings showed that a strong, positive and significant relationship exists between hostel accommodation service and school-life satisfaction of students, while a moderate, positive and significant relationship exists between security services and school-life satisfaction. It was concluded that students' welfare services contribute significantly to school-life satisfaction, which may consequently enhance effective institutional management and better learning outcome of students. The study recommends among others that existing policy on students accommodation be reviewed to improve on provision of increased and better facilities. The security services also should be 21st century compliant to accomplish the goals of sustainable educational development.

Introduction

Attainment of peace, progress and high academic outcome in tertiary institutions is largely dependent on provision of welfare services and service delivery in the institutions. Students' welfare services are significant in institutional day-to-day operations, failure of which may lead to protests, programme disruptions or violence, apart from academic dysfunction. Academic and non-academic operations can only be carried out successfully if auxiliary supports are provided in sufficient quantity and quality in tertiary institutions, especially in the university system, where high level manpower is

produced. Surt Foundation (2010) describes welfare services as actions or procedures that cover the basic well-being of the individuals and the society. These services may be provided as a citizenship right, or negotiated in the market, and managed by governments and institutions or private actors.

Welfare problems which are caused by lack, or shortage of basic amenities are major significant factor currently producing student unrest in Nigerian universities. The inadequate hostel accommodation; unsatisfactory supply of food and catering services; overcrowded lecture halls and hostels; lack of financial aid and poor sanitary conditions tend to make students' campus life and experience a very traumatic one. Students studying under these dehumanizing conditions tend to lose sleep, lose concentration and as a result, may behave in manners not generally approved by the authorities of their institutions (Aluede & Aluede, 1999; Uzoka 1993; Yalokwu, 1992). Aluede et al. (2005) postulated that problems make students' life within and outside Nigerian university campuses, frequently a traumatic experience; which is the major reason why students of various Nigerian university campuses frequently demand an overhaul of the entire system (Tawari, 1986). Today, in Nigeria, students' militancy in the Nigerian universities has come to be recognised as one of the most visible perennial problems of significance when compared with other social vices in Nigeria university campuses like campus cult activities, cases of examination malpractices, and drug abuse and addiction (Nwokwule, 1992).

Life in the university is expected to be relatively comfortable and satisfactory for students to develop their potentials psychologically, socially, politically, mentally and professionally. School-life satisfaction, therefore, is a major phenomenon in institutional management.

Life satisfaction has been described as an overall cognitive assessment of one's quality of life. This assessment is based on how people believe their life should be in relation to how it is (Nasir, 2014). Satisfaction can be defined as a state felt by a person who has experienced performance or an outcome that fulfil his or her expectation (Hanaysha, Abdullah, & Warokka, 2011). Satisfaction can also be perceived as the intentional performance which results in one's contentment (Malik & Usman, 2010).

Obviously, satisfaction is a function of relative level of expectations and perceived performance. The expectation may go as far as before the students even enter the higher education, suggesting that it is important for the institutions to determine first what the students expect before entering the university (Palacio, Meneses & Perez, 2002). Carey, Cambiano and De Vore (2002) believe that satisfaction actually covers issues of students' perception and experiences during the college years. Student satisfaction is being shaped

continually by repeated experiences in life on campus. Institutions that desire to deliver quality programmes and services to students must be concerned with every aspects of the students' experience on campus. This to a large extent determines students' school-life satisfaction.

School-life satisfaction is a major issue facing most institutions in developing nations, especially in the present age where globalization has opened up doors to socio-economic and technological events in developed countries of the world. Educational institutions struggle to achieve student satisfaction in order to attract more customers to the institutions. The level of satisfaction of students with services offered by the school also aids their school-life satisfaction. Institutional-life satisfaction involves the students' perception about the quality of life enjoyed in the school system. It refers to how individual student views the quality of services enjoyed in the school system as they pursue their academic goals and aspirations (Hasnain, 2013). School-life satisfaction also refers to the outcome of individual student's evaluation of the experiences in an institution. The satisfaction of students is more important in highly competitive economy or private institutions where the quality of service provided is a strong determinant of students' satisfaction as well as the institutions survival. In most advanced countries of the world, where educational institutions compete for both national and international students, adequate provision of quality service that meets the needs of the students are appropriately provided in order to stay above competitors (Thiuri, 2010).

DeShields, Kara, and Kaynak (as cited in Hassanain, 2008) stated that higher educational institutions should view their students as the major customer and as such ensure they genuinely provide services that will satisfy the needs of these students in the school. Obviously, this should be the basic goal of institutions and they must continually strive to exceed the expectations of the students. Jarvis (as cited in Hassanain) noted that the success of these higher education institutions depends upon the satisfaction of their students which is used by these institutions to search out their strengths and weaknesses. Student satisfaction is a key component of student life and learning, and a gauge of whether an institution is providing an experience that students deem worthwhile (Noel-Levitz, as cited in Thiuri). Hassanain (2008) stated that student satisfaction does not depend only on the teaching but a detailed evaluation of the different factors, services and programmes in an institution.

One of the key features students and their parents are concerned about when enrolling in a university is the availability of student welfare services. The significance of basic amenities as a major determinant of man's welfare,

life sustenance and survival cannot be over emphasized. Ajayi, Akuankawa, and Yusuf (2015) opined that welfare services have and will always be a prime concern to individual, family, community and the nation at large. According to Nabil, Al-Jaber, and Hussein (2014), one would want to know about the quality of education being provided to students, their level of satisfaction, achievement and absorption capacity, as these people represent the nation's future. It is therefore imperative for schools to give students welfare a top priority while building the reputation of the school among other contemporaries with the ultimate aim of enhancing students' satisfaction.

Students' satisfaction is the students' feeling of pleasure attained by comparing the school's welfare services or university management performance (outcome) in relation to his or her expectation. If the management's performance falls short of expectations, the students are dissatisfied. If the performance matches the students' expectation, the students are satisfied. Wiers-Jenssen, Stensaker and Groggaard (as cited in Stoltenberg, 2011) also opined that students' satisfaction has to do with the students' assessments of the services provided by universities and colleges. Several factors within the school system that influence or determine students' satisfaction and motivation to learn include; accommodation, security, power supply, instructional delivery, internet facilities, convenience and relaxation facilities, transportation and road network, and medical facilities among others. Changes in any of these variables will affect students' satisfaction in one way or the other. When students are dissatisfied with school life, especially resident students, they express it in so many ways including protests either peaceful or such that could lead to wanton destruction of school programme or properties that could hinder the smooth running of the university. It is noteworthy, that university student satisfaction is an important component in attracting and retaining high achievers, who, in turn, improve the reputation and standing of the university (Nabil, Al-Jaber & Hussein, 2014).

It is apparent that availability of these essential services is crucial to the achievement of the goals and objectives of institutions of learning. However, findings on students' welfare services has been reported in several literatures yet many offer little discussion on how or whether the aforementioned welfare services are a correlate of school-life satisfaction. This research targets this gap by investigating the correlation between the selected students' welfare services (medical, hostel accommodation, and security services) and school life satisfaction at the University of Lagos, Lagos, Nigeria.

Students' welfare services can be referred to as all the services provided by the school to cater for the well-being of the students in order to bring about satisfaction and motivation to learn. These include Medical services, Hostel Accommodation, Security Services, Power supply, amongst others. The importance of these services cannot be over emphasized. This is because when the students are satisfied with the provision of these services, they cooperate with the management team for the smooth running of the institution. On the other hand, when they are dissatisfied and ignored, they express their grief through unionism.

Students' dissatisfaction is one of the management problems facing most public tertiary institutions in Nigeria. In Nigerian public universities, there had been several strike actions, violent protests, management-students' clashes, lecturer-student clashes, extension of school calendar, and complete shutdown of schools, amongst other issues that arose because the students were dissatisfied with the state of services provided by their various institutions.

It seems adequate provision of these welfare services and the proper management of existing ones is paramount to addressing the issue of students' dissatisfaction and other spill over effects it has on the institution's reputation. This therefore has necessitated this research that examines the extent to which students' welfare services correlate to school-life satisfaction at the University of Lagos, Lagos, Nigeria.

Research Purpose

The study investigated the extent to which students' welfare services relate to school life satisfaction of students at the University of Lagos. Specifically, the study pursued the following purposes:

1. To evaluate the relationship between hostel accommodation services and school-life satisfaction of students in the University of Lagos.
2. To determinewhether security services relate to school-life satisfaction of students.
3. To assess the relationship between medical services and school life satisfaction of students.

The study was guided by the following hypotheses:

1. Hostel accommodation service is not significantly related to school-life satisfaction of students.
2. Security services does not significantly relate to school-life satisfaction of students.

3. Medical services does not significantly relate to school-life satisfaction of students.

Method

The correlational research design was adopted for the study. This design was chosen because it involves collection of data to find out the relationship that exists among the variables of the study. Siegle (2015) stated that correlational research design is used to determine the extent to which two or more variables are related among a single group of people without attempting to manipulate the variables. The population consisted of 6,124 final year students at the University of Lagos, out of which 400 students were drawn across 10 faculties using the multi stage sampling approach which involved stratification into the faculties, proportionate sampling based on the population of each faculty and the simple random sampling technique which was used to select the actual participants of the study. A 20-item self-structured questionnaire was used to elicit data for the study, three research hypotheses were also raised to guide the study. The instrument was validated by two experts in instrument design while the reliability of this instrument was determined after it was pilot tested on students who did not participate in the study. The data obtained was subjected to Cronbach Alpha analysis and a reliability coefficient of 0.76 showed the instrument was reliable. The hypotheses were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation, at 0.05 level of significance. The analysis was carried out using the IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23.

Results

Table 1: Relationship between Medical Services and School Life Satisfaction

Variable	Mean	SD	N	Df	r	p	Rmk	Decision
Medical Services	3.11	2.02						
School Life Satisfaction	5.23	2.62	400	398	0.64	0.01	Sig	Reject Ho ₁

***Significant p<0.05**

Information on Table 1 reveals that there is a moderate, positive and significant relationship between medical services and school-life satisfaction of students at the University of Lagos ($r(400)=0.64$, $df=398$; $p>0.05$). Thus, the null hypothesis which states that medical services do not significantly relate to School-life satisfaction of students at the University of Lagos was rejected.

This implies that medical services significantly relate to school-life satisfaction of students at the University of Lagos.

Table 2: Relationship between Hostel Accommodation Service and School Life Satisfaction

Variable	Mean	SD	N	Df	r	P	Rmk	Decision
Hostel Accommodation Service	9.04	3.20						
School Life Satisfaction	5.23	2.62	400	398	0.72	0.02	Sig	Reject Ho2

***Significant $p < 0.05$**

Table 2 shows that a strong, positive and significant relationship exist between hostel accommodation service and school life satisfaction ($r(400) = 0.72$; $df = 398$; $p < 0.05$). Thus, the null hypothesis which states that hostel accommodation service is not significantly related to school life satisfaction of students at the University of Lagos was rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between hostel accommodation service and school life satisfaction.

Table 3: Relationship between Security Services and School Life Satisfaction

Variable	Mean	SD	N	Df	r	p	Rmk	Decision
Security Services	6.20	3.46						
School Life Satisfaction	5.23	2.62	400	398	0.58	0.01	Sig	Reject Ho2

***Significant $p < 0.05$**

The findings of hypothesis three as depicted on Table 3 shows that a moderate, positive and significant relationship exist between security services and school-life satisfaction ($r(400) = 0.58$; $df = 398$; $p < 0.05$). Thus, the null hypothesis which states that security services does not significantly relate to school-life satisfaction of students at the University of Lagos was rejected. It therefore implies that security services on campus significantly relate to school-life satisfaction of students at the University of Lagos.

Discussion

In summary, a strong, positive and significant relationship exists between hostel accommodation service and school life satisfaction, while a moderate, positive and significant relationship exists between security services and school-life satisfaction. There is also a moderate, positive and significant relationship between medical services and school-life satisfaction of students at the University of Lagos. The first hypothesis revealed that a strong, positive and significant relationship exists between hostel accommodation service and school life satisfaction. The adequacy of hostel accommodation for students, the space, reading rooms and quality of facilities provided in the hostel supports students' academic activities as well as their satisfaction in school. Obviously, the quality of hostels significantly influences students school-life satisfaction. The findings of this hypothesis agree with the study conducted by Aluko (2011) which confirmed that a significant relationship exists between hostel accommodation service and school-life satisfaction. Similarly, it is in agreement with the findings of Ajayi, Ajani, Nwosu (2015) where it was established that a significant relationship exists between hostel accommodation service and school-life satisfaction. However, it contradicts the findings of Price (2005) who found that no significant relationship exists between hostel accommodation service and school-life satisfaction.

The findings further revealed that a moderate, positive and significant relationship exist between security services and school-life satisfaction. This is in line with the findings of Ahamefula (2017) who established that a significant relationship exists between security services and school-life satisfaction. It also supports the findings of Akporoiro & Okon (2015) where it was confirmed that a significant relationship exists between security services and school-life satisfaction. The findings of this hypothesis however contradicts the findings of a study conducted by Ajayi, Akuankawa, and Yusuf (2015) who found that no significant relationship exists between security services and school-life satisfaction. The findings of the third hypothesis revealed that there is a moderate, positive and significant relationship between medical services and school-life satisfaction of students at the University of Lagos. This could mean that the quality of medical services provided for students determine their health condition and ability to cope with school-life at the University of Lagos. The quality of personnel, the waiting time for students and the quality of services provided at the medical centre are significant factors that determine students' school-life satisfaction. This agrees with the findings of a study by Christmas & Dorman (as cited McCaig, 2013) where it was found that a significant relationship exists between medical

services and school-life satisfaction of students. It also supports the findings of a study carried out by Fattah (2016) where it was confirmed that a significant relationship exists between medical services and school-life satisfaction of students. However, it negates the findings of a study by Varinli & Cakir (as cited in Akporoiro & Okon, 2015) where it was confirmed that no significant relationship exists between medical services and school-life satisfaction of students.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Tertiary institutions, especially universities in Nigeria, had witnessed numerous strike actions, violent protests, students-management clashes, complete shutdown of institutions among others due to dissatisfaction of students about provision of welfare services and service delivery on campus. The issue of effective welfare services is crucial in institutional management across the globe. This is because effectiveness of the services even when provided depends largely on a number of factors, ranging from budgetary allocation, personnel training, school culture, students' enrolment, to government policy among others. This study examined students-life satisfaction in relation to welfare services focusing on the impact of students' hostel accommodation, security services and medical services in the University of Lagos, Nigeria.

The study concludes that satisfaction is a vague and precise concept and the actual expression of the state of satisfaction varies from one person to another. The status of satisfaction relies on many psychological and physical variables. Students' level of satisfaction with the services received on campus depends on individual student's expectation and other variables that serve as yardstick against which the student compares the institutions services. In other words, satisfaction is a psychological state.

Recommendations

1. Institutions of learning must understand the numerous needs of their customers more especially the students, in order to enhance their institutional-life satisfaction.
2. Hostel accommodation for students should be made a priority and there should be a review of the capacity building of the personnel in charge of welfare services in the university in order to keep them abreast of the global trends in their various fields, assignments and responsibilities conducive enough to boost their morale and improve their academic performance.

3. The security personnel should be adequately and constantly retrained with 21st century equipment and strategies to guarantee the protection of lives and property in the institution. The state of medical facilities in all higher institutions of learning should be improved for better services.
4. Government should endeavour to increase the budget allocation to higher institutions, especially universities, to improve the state of their facilities.
5. Private organizations should be encouraged to get involved more in the provision of quality services in the university system in order to produce high quality manpower and to achieve sustainable development in Nigeria.

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