


EXTRAORDINARY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Trends and Issues in Education in Nigeria

A Book of Readings in Memory of
Prof. (Mrs.) E. O. O. Busari

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Chapter 27

Physical Facilities in Nigerian Universities: Implications for Repositioning the Institutions for Global Competition

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Introduction

The United Nations Declaration of Human Rights observed that "...everyone has the right to education and higher education shall equally be made accessible to all on the basis of merit (Kaplan 2003). The Federal Government, recognizing the role of universities in the production of high level human resources for the labour market, planned for equity in accessibility by requesting the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) to provide opportunities for eligible Nigerians and to diversify the intake according to national spread in the placement of candidates. It was expected that placement would be on the basis of merit, catchment area and the educational less advantages states.

Ogunu and Omoike (2004); Olarinoye (2000) and Omolewa (2007) identified some government policies and reforms that further encouraged access to education and the spread of knowledge. With governments divest of her hold on university education, autonomy has not only been given to existing universities, privatization has been supported. This implies that states, private individuals and organisations are now involved in the establishment, funding and management of universities. They asserted that this actually facilitated

the increase in the number of universities, which rose astronomically from six in 1975 to 47 in 2003. Placement of students also followed this trend when 376,000 were enrolled in 1997 and in 2001, 775,900 were enrolled. This represents an increase of 48 percent in four years. Some 'push factors' such as pressure from parents, university staff, friends and agents of proprietors have been identified to be responsible for the over-enrolment phenomenon and overshooting the carrying capacity in most Nigerian universities. Adedipe (2007) described carrying capacity of Nigeria university as the maximum number of students that the institution could sustain for quality education based on human and material resources. This research focused on the material resources and carrying capacity of Nigerian universities.

Over-enrolment has been a common feature in the universities today. The 2005 over-enrolment profile as recorded by the National University Commission (NUC) revealed that out of the 25 Federal Universities (18), representing 72% were over-enrolled while 13 out of the 19 state universities (representing 68.4%) also overenrolled. Only one of the seven private universities then, (14%) was reported to have overenrolled. Top ten overcrowded universities included five Federal universities and five state universities. With this scenario, there is no doubt that facilities may be over stretched which might produce adverse effect on the quality of students being produced.

Statement of Problem

Adedipe (2007) noted that inadequacy of such physical resources like classrooms, laboratories, libraries and other academic resources translates to poor results because it breeds overcrowdedness. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) observed that the planning and design of educational facilities for schools, colleges and universities has impact on educational outcomes. This outcome usually quantifies the management cost of the facilities which are substantial in the public education expenditure.

With the remarkable increase in both number of universities and the present trend of placement of students, resulting in over crowding and overstretched

rying capacity of facilities, one wonders if this tremendous increase in cement corresponds with the state of available and needed physical ilities. This research is set to examine the position of physical resources the face of increase in placement.

Research Questions

ne following research questions and hypothesis were formulated to guide ie research.

1. What is the position of Nigerian universities in the provision for physical facilities vis-à-vis placement of candidates.
2. Do Heads of Department participate in the planning of physical facilities?
3. How can Nigerian universities be positioned for global competitions?

Hypothesis

There is no significant disparity in universities rating of position for physical resources.

Purpose of the Research

One of the major concern of this research is to examine how universities plan to discharge their assignment in offering quality education especially in the area of physical facilities so as to keep pace with increase in placement of students. It is hoped that some proposed viable strategies will enhance repositioning of universities for global competition.

Methodology

A descriptive design was adopted for this research. All tertiary institutions in Lagos State formed the population of study. Two universities, one federal and one state owned university were selected for the study. The subjects include six heads of department from the faculty of education. The departments are science and technology, Human Kinetics, Adult Education, Arts and Social Sciences Education, Educational Administration, and Educational Foundation. From the faculty of Arts, Heads of Departments of English and Music participated in the study while from the faculty of Science, the head of department of Chemistry was selected. In all eighteen (18) heads of department (9 from each university) were sampled from the two

universities. The research instrument designed, consisted of two sections, section 'A' solicited for information on the level of involvement of heads of department in the planning of physical facilities while section B solicited information from the heads of the various departments on what strategies are being employed in the planning of facilities for their departments etc. and on the state of physical facilities in the universities. To ensure face validity, the designed questionnaire was given to experts for scrutiny. The questionnaire were first administered on five heads of department and a re-administration was done after two weeks interval. To determine the reliability, the Pearson Product Moment statistic was applied and a resultant coefficient of 0.67 and 0.65 were obtained for section A and B of the state university questionnaire respectively while 0.72 and 0.69 for the Federal University.

Result

Data analysis was by simple percentages and the t-test of difference.

Table I: Opinion of Head of Department on the Position of Physical Facilities in a Federal University

S/N		Agree		Disagree	
		No.	%	No.	%
1	As a head of department, I am involved in estimation and planning for physical facilities.	02	22.2	07	77.8
2	I am in control over the identification and provision of physical facilities.	0	0.0	09	100
3	Proposed/estimated physical facilities are rarely provided.	04	44.0	05	55.6
4	Facilities are flexible and innovative for large numbers.	0	0.00	09	100
5	Infrastructure performance is low due to lack of basic amenities.	02	22.2	07	77.8
6	Infrastructure is regularly refurbished and updated.	04	44.4	05	55.6
7	The buildings are adequate and structurally sound	0	0.0	09	100
8	The facilities have low operating costs	04	44.4	05	55.6
9	Infrastructure is spatially efficient.	05	55.6	04	44.4
10	Available chairs and tables provide comfort	0	0.0	09	100
11	Facilities in my department accommodates current curriculum and preferred mode of teaching and learning.	0	0.0	09	100
12	The arrangement guarantees that human right is respected.	01	11.1	08	88.9
13	Facilities makes room for good positioning of computes, overhead projectors and screen.	04	44.4	05	55.6
14	Departmental facilities provide for access to learners with disabilities.	0	0.0	09	100
15	Seating arrangement enhances learners contact time.	02	22.2	07	77.8
16	Available power supply supports working facilities adequately.	0	0.0	09	100
17	Available physical facilities are presently over stretched.	03	33.3	06	66.6

Source: Field Work

About 78 percent of the heads of department reported that they were not involved in estimation for physical facilities while 22 percent said they participate in deciding for needed facilities. In the case of control over the identification and provision of physical facilities and in the issue of facilities being flexible and innovative for large numbers all the respondents said that they were not in control neither are facilities flexible enough to accommodate large numbers. However, 56 percent of the respondents disagreed that the infrastructure is regularly refurbished and they operate at low cost.

All the respondents disagreed that the buildings are adequately and structurally sound and also that available chairs and tables provide comfort, while only 44 percent disagree that infrastructure is spatially efficient.

Only 11 percent of them agree that arrangement guarantees that human right is respected and that seating arrangement enhances learners contact time respectively. However, all the respondents disagree that departmental facilities provide access to learners with disabilities and that available power supply supports working facilities adequately.

It is worrisome that only four, which is 44 percent of the population agree that facilities make room for good positioning of computers, overhead projectors and screen, while the rest 56 percent disagree.

As heads of departments majority of respondents (88.9) were not involved in the process of estimation of needed physical facilities in their departments neither could they identify the physical facilities to be provided. Facilities in the departments did not accommodate current curriculum and preferred mode of teaching and learning. This was confirmed by a majority support (88.9%) for absence of room to make for good positioning of computers, overhead projectors and screen.

Table II: The Position of Physical Facilities in a State University

S/N		Agree		Disagree	
		No	%	No	%
1	As a head of department, I am involved in estimation and planning for physical facilities.	01	11.1	08	88.9
2	I am in control over the identification and provision of physical facilities.	0	0.0	09	100
3	Proposed/estimated physical facilities are rarely provided.	02	22.2	07	77.8
4	Facilities are flexible and innovative for large numbers.	0	0.00	09	100
5	Infrastructure performance is low due to lack of basic amenities.	04	44.4	05	55.6
6	Infrastructure is regularly refurbished and updated	02	22.2	07	77.8
7	The buildings are adequate and structurally sound	0	0.0	09	100
8	The facilities have low operating costs	06	66.7	03	33.3
9	Infrastructure is spatially efficient	03	33.3	06	67.7
10	Available chairs and tables provide comfort	0	0.0	09	100
11	Facilities in my department accommodates current curriculum and preferred mode of teaching and learning.	01	11.1	08	89.9
12	The arrangement guarantees that human right is respected.	02	22.2	07	78.8
13	Facilities makes room for good positioning of computes, overhead projectors and screen.	01	11.1	08	88.9
14	Departmental facilities provide for access to learners with disabilities.	0	0.0	09	100
15	Seating arrangement enhances learners contact time.	02	22.2	07	77.8
16	Available power supply supports working facilities adequately.	0	0.0	09	100
17	Available physical facilities are presently over stretched.	08	89.9	01	11.1

Source: Field Work

As heads of departments majority of respondents (88.9) are not involved in the process of estimation of needed physical facilities in their departments neither could they identify physical facilities to be provided.

Facilities in the departments did not accommodate current curriculum and preferred mode of teaching and learning. This was confirmed by a majority support (88.9%) for absence of room to make for good positioning of computers, overhead projectors and screen. All sampled heads of departments in this state university (100%) agreed that there is no available power supply to support working facilities adequately.

Table III: Differences in Position of Physical Facilities in State and Federal Universities

N	Degree of Freedom	Std	t-cal	t-critical	Remark
18	16	1.29	-15.8	2.12	Hypothesis Accept

* Significance 0.05 probability level

Hypothesis accepted

Table III above shows that there is no significant difference in the position of physical facilities in state and federal universities. This finding is not surprising because the situation in both state and federal universities appears to be the same. Without adequate physical facilities, one begins to wonder how effective teaching and learning will take place, the issue of quality is also at stake. For quality education to be realized, the essential physical facilities must be available. On the relationship between school facility conditions and the delivery of instruction, Duyour (2010) indicated that six of the ten facility conditions are statistically and positively associated with the delivery of instruction. These six facility conditions significantly predicted the delivery of instruction after controlling other extraneous variables. Facility conditions was reported in the study to account for 43.0 percent of the explained variations on the delivery of instructions with a medium effect. Adeogun (2001) also found a positive relationship between institutional resources and the academic performance of students. Also Ojoawo (1989), Odubunmi, Adeboyeje and UNESCO (2002) support the finding of this study when they assert that without adequate physical facilities, no worthwhile learning can take place. With the tremendous increase in enrolment, one should have expected government authorities to match this large numbers of students with appropriate and adequate facilities. Since it appears that the problem of massification has come to stay, there is urgent need for something to be done about provision of physical facilities so that quality will not be compromised.

Uzoka and Fabiyi (2007) observed that for proper teaching and learning to take place, there must be adequate infrastructure and in many tertiary institutions in the country, the lecture halls are overcrowded and many of the

students stay outside because of inadequate accommodation. Even those who are seated inside are not comfortable because there are no air conditioners or fans and classrooms are poorly ventilated and not well lit. They also reported that laboratory equipments were obsolete and the libraries had few and out dated books.

Conclusion

The research has identified some of the problems that are associated with the provision of physical facilities in universities in Nigeria. These problems according to the finding emanated from the planning stage of the provision of facilities. The heads of departments in the universities agreed that they were not involved in the identification and provision of facilities needed in their departments. The choice and provision of those facilities are usually in the hands of higher authorities. Since heads of departments are closer to the point of implementation of educational programmes they should be given autonomy to participate actively in the planning stage of the provision of physical facilities. University lecture classrooms are not convenient for proper positioning of modern electronic gadgets that will accommodate current curriculum and the globally acceptable mode of teaching and learning, emphasizing interaction sessions. If our educational programmes must be converted to educational spaces, planners and users of physical facilities need to know about current practices. It is therefore suggested that to avoid overcrowding, the multi campus system – spread of campuses could be embraced.

Development of maintenance standards, schedules and labour requirement for the grounds, mechanical and electrical systems in each of the buildings should be institutionalized. In order to ensure that maintenance standards are being met, there is need for the implementation of a direct quality assurance program.

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