



Off-Campus Policy on The Social and Academic Activities of Undergraduates in Nigerian Tertiary Institution

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Abstract

The paper examined the challenges of undergraduate's students on off-campus life on their social life and academic performance. It is a form of descriptive design that uses a representative sample to collect data. The population consist of all undergraduate students in all the six faculties of Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko. A simple random sampling technique was used to select 200 students, the instrument for data collection was self-constructed questionnaire titled "off-campus, social and academic life of undergraduates" on four-point likert scale. The face and content validity of the instrument was ascertained by the researchers. Test-retest technique was used by the researcher, Pearson product movement correlation was used to determine the correlation coefficient which was 0.76. Three hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The hypotheses were tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis. The result indicated that there was a significant relationship between off-campus life and academic activities of undergraduate students. The result also showed that there was a significant relationship between off-campus life and academic activities of undergraduate students, and finally the result revealed that there is a significant relationship between off-campus life and academic activities of undergraduate students. It was suggested that The Management of the institution should monitor the activities of students living off-campus.

Keywords Off-Campus, Social, Academic, Undergraduates

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades student enrolments have grown rapidly in Africa and Nigeria 'as a whole. This status quo increases the demand for students' accommodation. The establishment and development of student off campus lifestyles is a challenge for many universities in Nigeria as a result of the continuing extension of higher education institutions and rising student numbers. The higher educational institutions (HEI) provided accommodation facilities in Nigeria and generally have few vacancies, and each year the number of applicants exceeds the available accommodation.

Onclin, (2014) noted that "tertiary institutions' involvement in off campus policy was not just useful for attracting students; it would also influence students' success, students' retention rates, and students' satisfaction". Nimako and Bondinuba, (2013) also identified off campus policy as an important factor that enhances tertiary students' living and learning and suggested that adequate accommodation facilities be provided to students so that they could make the most of their educational opportunity.

Tertiary institutions have the responsibility to provide decent off campus policy for students who successfully gain admission to pursue various programs of study. For government institutions, accommodation facilities are usually provided by the government. However, as a result of high demand for tertiary education in recent times, governments of



many countries are not able to adequately provide accommodation for students of tertiary institutions Sharma, (2012). Consequently, other educational stakeholders have had to support government efforts, either in partnership with government or by solely providing private accommodation facilities for tertiary students on or off-campus, Centre for Global Education, (2002).

Moore (2000) also found out that some students preferred off-campus to on-campus due to lack of privacy, noise and sharing of bed space that is associated with on-campus accommodation. Therefore, students prefer to reside off-campus if they could secure a cheaper, decent and good housing that was in close proximity to campus with adequate facilities and could offer privacy. Living environment can be examined from various standpoints, such as an architectural, economic, social and cultural perspective. In recent decades, the interest in research on living environment has risen, and various approaches, concepts and viewpoints have been applied by housing researchers from an extensive range of disciplines.

Urban and housing politics and sociology have in general contributed to understanding the market mechanisms of housing supply and demand, and the living conditions of different social groups. The second category, studies of people and their findings have commonly focused on the viewpoints of the individual on housing. Thomsen, (2008) stated that as housing is a complex field that comprises many disciplines. Lawrence (2009) calls for an interdisciplinary research approach that lies the knowledge from various disciplines, and thus enabling simultaneously address interdependent factors.

Housing is part of students' social life at the tertiary institutions in Africa. From liable information, students housing in tertiary institutions in Nigeria is severely overcrowded (Amole, 2007). For example, over the last two decades, students housing the University of Ibadan have reached a crisis level. The main cause of this perennial problem is the increasing number of students being admitted, without a commensurate increase in the number of bed spaces. This situation has been aggravated by the absence of affordable and safe alternative housing in the neighbourhoods surrounding the university Agboola, (2005).

The population of students admitted into Nigerian Universities is more than the population of students accommodated in recent time from 55 in 1948 to 8,000 in 2015. This had led to overcrowding, poor health, poor academic performance, squatting in halls of residence, which has forced some students to stay off campus. Therefore, there is need for the government and university authorities to look into the accommodation issues faced by the students as a result of shortage and poor quality of students' housing in the universities and how they affect the students. The issue of students' off campus life cannot be ignored in the overall development process and plan of the ivory tower of learning. Students of tertiary institutions constitute a sizeable proportion of the total active population of the society and conscious efforts their housing needs must be effected in various policy decisions in order to ice qualified graduates.

It is the totality of the immediate physical environment, largely man-made in which people (students) live, grow and decline. Housing remains the most important use in any city urban settlement, accounting for 50% or more of the entire land-including student housing



Cities Alliance, (2006). More structured types of student accommodation developed gradually along with the university, and initially as an initiative taken by the University (Merrill, 2005).

Owolabi, (2015) described students off campus as a place where students live within or outside the campus. Students residing within the houses on the campus known as on-campus students, while those residing in houses outside the campus known as off-campus students. The provision of students' accommodation helps in catering for students' housing needs in accomplishing academic, living, and social life during their study life span at the university Hassanain, (2008).

Social life is students' experiences that includes interpersonal relationships with friends and families both on and off-campus. Social experiences also include living circumstances, partying, and other situations that require personal interaction with others. Students' involvement in campus academic and social activities eases the transition into college Perna, (2005). Peer interaction and involvement are also its factors that impact the shared activities, courses in common with peers, and other support systems are a few examples of support mechanisms that are especially for the success of students Lucas and Robinson (2011).

Lundberg (2013) opines that the lack of research on non-traditional social experiences is that students divided in their life responsibilities that on-campus social experiences are not a priority. The literature points to social integration as a predictor for students' success, 1 more information is needed about the way student experiences and multiple lives foster or hinder students' interaction and engagement in the university environment. Students who commute to and from campus with no social connection's involvement are at increased risk for attrition Astin, (2013). For commuter students who are employed, learning is not hindered if they are engaged in social experiences while enrolled in college Lundberg, (2013). Social life of students' off-campus has engaged with a lot of advantages and disadvantages. However, students off-campus are usually exposed to a lot of social vices, peer pressures, taking of hard drugs, lying hard and keeping late at night.

Universities will normally provide accommodation particularly to students whose hometowns are far from the University. Every facility such as cafe, reading space, fast-internet, transportation, sports center, is provided to help the students comfortably. Normally, each room is equipped with a single bed, study table, and closet. Students can easily attend classes without having problems of transportation they can be actively involved in activities organized by the university. Being residents in university accommodation, they are expected to adhere to all the rules and regulations. To some students, they opt to rent rooms or living off-campus which meet their comfort level, privacy and convenience without having to comply with the rules and regulations set by the university's management. Some universities can no longer provide enough accommodation due to the increasing number of students' enrolment. This has resulted in only the first and final year students, those physically challenged and the students who involved in sports activities will be provided with accommodation Matthew, (2014). Insufficient accommodation within the university campus may lead the students to rent houses or rooms that are near the university, giving



rise to the "undergraduates" phenomena of an influx of students within privately rented accommodation in particular neighborhood Smith, (2005) as stated Stevenson and Askham (2011).

Students off campus has also been viewed as a means of encouraging fiscal extravagance in residential universities. However, the advantages of on-campus students' residence as an integral part of university education outweighs the arguments of students seeking their accommodation, including arguments based on the financial extravagance of residential colleges. This has led to the problems of on-housing and off-campus accommodation in tertiary institutions in Nigeria, different reasons for deplorable student housing situations abound, but prominent among these are the problems of shortage of halls of residence, light, basic facilities and services, water, poor health, poor academic performance, social activities, religious, sporting and substandard housing, which has affected students' lie performance Agbola, (2005).

Undergraduates' life is the process that caused from residential concentration higher education students and goes along with spatial structure alterations which social, economic, cultural and physical impacts in locality cluster of higher education institutes Smith and Denholm, (2006). Muslim (2013) contended that that the process is supposed to have density pressures and can stimulate social isolation and the widening socio-spatial polarization of different social groups, which indirectly would impact the students' quality of life. The phenomenon has particularly drawn much attention of research on students housing across Nigerian tertiary institutions, owing to the upsurge "admission seekers into these higher institutions of learning.

The importance of housing covers the entire aspects of human life. Primarily, res physical protection from hazards which ordinarily may be regarded as but also provide the setting from many of the basic biological and social process necessary to sustain life, which permitting the healthy growth and lent of the mind Aluko, (2011). However, off campus policy problem is one major issue normally discussed in the world today. This is due to the dire le of accommodation; the demands for it far surpass the number available for living. This deficit in housing requirements is a product of many factors amongst which include: increased population; rural urban migration; industrialization; emergence of commercial and mega cities; climatic change; natural disasters such as quakes, war, famine, drought and others. This off campus policy deficiency is not restricted to urban centers across the world alone, it now extends to other various institutions where residential need of staff, students and personnel have to be taken care of, this includes institutions of learning, military and para military institutions and industrial sites among others. On the part of institutions of higher learning such as Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Educations, gross inadequacy of housing accommodations has been a reoccurring issue of concern to management and government at all levels, this is due to increasing number of admission seekers on yearly basis. According to figures from the National Universities Commission (NUC), provision of student housing is less than 30% of demand NUC, (2000), the available accommodations on campuses are short in supply while the few stocks are stretched leading to many students seeking for their accommodation need off campus. However, due to other



problems such as cost of transportation and time taken to campus associated with distance, majority of students give preference to staying accommodation in close proximity to the school environment. This in turn has generated some quantum of challenges which without doubt can adversely affect its' optimum performance.

Students have options to choose either university accommodation (some refer to as residential accommodation) or off-campus private accommodation (non-residential accommodation). A good housing and decent accommodation play a significant role in healthy living and leads to improved productivity especially those in tertiary institutions, who require good accommodation in a serene environment for assimilation of what they have been taught and when students are satisfied with facilities provided in their residence halls, it will lead to enhancement in the academic excellence of the students Azeez, (2016).

Statement of the Problem

More students living far away from their homes were admitted yearly, the implication of this policy further exacerbates students' housing problems. Both off-campus and on-campus housing accommodation are not free of criticism. Some scholars have suggested that students' housing is uneconomical. For example, halls of residence are relatively uneconomical building type, fitting out a large number of small spaces with furniture, fittings and ironmongery, which inevitably pushes the cost higher. If space and financial constraints are determined from the outset, this does not leave much room to maneuver, and buildings tend to design into cell-like study/bedrooms linked by a long corridor.

Off-campus students are subjected to disturbances ranging from undue interference to gossip from co-tenants, unbearable loud noises and deafening music from parties, incessant and epileptic power supply which may have negative effects on their academic performance, while their counterparts in on-campus housing are also facing similar problems in terms of poor management of facilities and motivation which have effects on their academic performance resulting in low grades.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to examine the influence of off-campus policy life of undergraduate students. Specifically, this study would seek to examine:

1. The challenges encountered by undergraduate students living off-campus life the effects of off campus life experience on academic activities.
2. The possible solutions to the challenges faced by off campus student the relationship between off-campus life and the social life of the students.

Research Hypothesis

1. There is no significant relationship between off-campus life and academic activities of undergraduate students
2. There is no significant relationship between off-campus life and student's social life
3. There is no significant relationship between academic and social life of undergraduate students



METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. It is a form of descriptive design that uses a representative sample to collect data for systematic description of existing situation or phenomenon. The population consisted of all undergraduates' students in Ondo State. A simple random sampling technique was used to choose the sample for the study. The sample of the study consisted of 200 Undergraduates students of Adekunle Ajasin University, Ondo State. The instrument for data collection was a self-constructed questionnaire titled, "off-campus, social and academic life of undergraduates" copies of the questionnaire were distributed and 200 were returned. The instrument was divided into sections; sections A contain personal data of the respondents. While section B contains the item to answer the question raised. The face and content validity of the instrument was ascertained by the researchers. Test-retest technique was used by the researcher; the questionnaire was distributed to some sample of twenty students in Ekiti State University, within two-week interval the same instrument was re-administered to the same set of students and Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to determine the correlation coefficient which was 0.79 which certified that the questionnaire was reliable. Data were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between off-campus life and academic activities of undergraduate students.

Table 1: Showing the Pearson moment correlation coefficient of the relationship between off-campus life and academic activities of undergraduate students.

Variable	N	DF	Cal. r-val	Critical r-value	Decision
Off-campus life	180	198	0.416	0.713	Rejected
Academic Activities	20				

Table 1 show that the calculated value of 0.416 is greater than r-tab 0.713 at 0.05 level of Significance. Therefore, the hypothesis that states that there is no significant relationship between off-campus life and academic activities of undergraduate students is rejected. Based on this finding it can be further implied that there was a significant relationship between off-campus life and academic activities of undergraduate students.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between off-campus life and academic activities of Undergraduate Students.



Table 2: Showing the Pearson moment correlation coefficient of the relationship between off-campus life and academic activities of undergraduate students

Variable	N	DF	Cal. r-val	Critical r-value	Decision
Off-campus life	180	198	0.643	0.713	Rejected
Academic Activities	20				

Table 2 showed that the calculated value of 0.416 is greater than r-tab 0.713 at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the hypothesis that states that there is no significant relationship between off-campus life and academic activities of undergraduate students is rejected. Based on this finding it can be further implied that there was a significant relationship between off-campus life and academic activities of undergraduate students.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationship between academic and social life of undergraduate students.

Table 3: Showing the Pearson moment correlation coefficient of the relationship between off-campus life and academic activities of undergraduate students

Variable	N	DF	Cal. r-val	Critical r-value	Decision
Academic life	180	198	0.534	0.713	Rejected
Social Life	20				

Table 3 show that the calculated value of 0.416 is greater than r-tab 0.713 at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the hypothesis that states that there is no significant relationship between off-campus life and academic activities of undergraduate students is rejected. Based on this finding it can further imply that there is a significant relationship between off-campus life and academic activities of undergraduate students.

Discussion of Findings

The result of research hypothesis one which stated that there is no significant relationship between off-campus life and academic activities of undergraduate students is rejected. This implies that off-campus life significantly affect the academic activities of undergraduate students. This finding is supported by Frazier, (2009) who conducted a study to determine if there is a significant difference between the academic achievement of students that lived on-campus and off-campus counterparts, as measured by their grade point



average (GPA). The author also claimed that progress and retention were higher among students who lived on-campus, regardless of race, gender, or condition of admittance. The hypothesis tested therefore revealed that there is a significant relationship between off-campus life and academic activities of undergraduate's students.

The result of research hypothesis two which state that there is no significant relationship between off-campus life and student's social life is rejected. This implies that off-campus life significantly influences student's social life of undergraduate's students. This is supported by the work of Paulsen & John, (2012) who opined that academic and social integration are critical factors for university student success and may be even more important for employed students with lower socio-economic status. The hypothesis tested therefore revealed that there is a significant relationship between off-campus life and student's life of Undergraduates' students

The result of research hypothesis three which state that there is no significant relationship between academic and social life of undergraduate students is rejected. This is supported by the work of Perna (2005) that social life significantly influences student's academic life of undergraduates' students. Social experiences also include living circumstances, partying, and other situations that require personal interaction with others. The hypothesis tested therefore revealed that there was a significant relationship between off-campus life and student's life of undergraduates' students.

CONCLUSION

Going by the outcome of the study, the conclusion drawn from this study was that off-campus policy has a great influence on the social life of undergraduate students in the tertiary institution

Recommendation

In view of the above findings, the following recommendations were made.

- The University authority should make accommodation available for students.
- The Management of the institution should monitor the activities of students living off-campus.
- The University should enlighten the students during orientation to focus more on their academics rather than their social life.

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