

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Housing Satisfaction among Students in Tertiary Institutions in Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The paper focused on examining the satisfaction of students with hostel accommodation in tertiary institutions in Calabar, Cross River State Nigeria. The study sought specifically to identify the level at which students were satisfied with hostel accommodation using fifteen (15) variables. In order to obtain data, three (3) tertiary institutions within the study area were purposively sampled. A total of 150 copies of questionnaire were distributed to residents in the school hostels. Specifically, 50 copies of questionnaire were distributed in each residential hostel in schools that were sample out. Analysis were done using both descriptive statistics such as frequencies and simple percentages as well as relative satisfaction index (RSI) to determine the level of satisfaction of students in the hostels. A five point Likert scale was adopted in explaining the level of satisfaction of students with the hostels. The findings revealed that the students were fairly satisfied with the quality, condition and general standards of the hostels in the study area. This is due to the fact that certain facilities that need to be on ground to boost satisfaction level of students were not adequately provided. For instance, it was noted that students do not have maximum access to ICT facilities in hostels. It was also revealed that privacy in hostels had the weakest contribution to student satisfaction in the hostels. In order to boost satisfaction of residents with hostel accommodation, it was suggested that hostels be maintained regularly to avoid deterioration of facilities. It was also recommended that more residential units be developed to accommodate students in the study area. Equally, the students' priority should be given concern in the housing development process.

Keywords: Environmental quality Hostel accommodation, housing quality, housing environment, level of satisfaction.

Introduction

Housing is a fundamental need for human beings. It is regarded as a primary human need. Other needs of humans are food and clothing (Akpu and Sarah, 2015). Among the above basic needs of man, housing is ranked second only to food in the daily needs of humans (Ojikpong, Agbor and Emri, 2016). Generally, housing endows it owner with a social identity, thus integrating him with his immediate social milieu. Therefore, owning a house provides significant security and status in the society. Hence, housing has a profound influence on man's health, education, social behaviour, employment, productivity, awareness on development opportunities, safety, crime and general wellbeing. This justifies the fact that housing is more than mere shelter as it encompasses all the social services and utilities that go to make a community or neighbourhood a livable environment (Ojikpong *et al.*, 2016). With housing, spaces for work, sleep, recreation as well as other social requirements are provided. Furthermore, housing units are required for various uses. For instance, in commercial uses, housing

units are required for storage of goods as well as for shops and warehouses while in institutional uses, housing units are demanded to serve as administrative complexes and housing units are in high demand for residential purposes. The importance of housing has made access to housing units to remain a fundamental human right (UN Habitat, 2006). In educational institutions specifically, housing units are needed for classrooms, as well as to accommodate teaching and learning equipment/facilities, provide spaces for administration and accommodate staff and students. Against this backdrop, the need for housing units in the school environment cannot be over emphasized. Even more, housing units are needed for accommodation purposes for students.

Studies from the fields of Education and Humanities have shown positive relationships between students' accommodation and their academic performances. For instance, Etikan, Bala, Babatope, Yuvali and Bakir (2017) observed that the quality and condition of hostels accommodating students had a profound influence on the learning outcome of students in Cyprus. They noted

specifically that the housing condition and its settings had serious implications on academic performance of students. In a similar study in Ghana, Zotorvie (2020) showed that proximity to lecture halls, spacious and well ventilated rooms, calm and peaceful environments, availability of study area, accommodation fee, and availability of electricity and water were the critical factors that influenced the students' choice of residential accommodation. He also noted a significant effect between the types of accommodation and academic performance of students. Elsewhere, in Sri Lanka, Mansoor and Ali (2015) observed that the academic performance of students were largely tied to the quality of the hostels and other places of accommodation. They specifically established a positive relationship between student academic performance and residential housing quality. In Nigeria, available studies (Bella-Omunagbe, 2015; Ajayi, Nwosu and Ajani, 2015; Ifaturoti, 2017) made similar observations. They reported that students' residential apartments play integral roles in their academic performance. Generally, staying in conducive environments allow students to be healthy enough to face academic exercises with confidence. Health is wealth they say and health of students is largely determined by the quality of the houses and environments that they stay and live in.

Understanding the importance of accommodating students within close proximity to tertiary institutions, some tertiary institutions have made arrangements for the development of hostels for students. Apart from the fact that hostels help students overcome accommodation problems to an extent, they also serve as a means for revenue generation by the institution. For instance, schools that provide hostel accommodation for its students usually attach demand charges before granting access to students to be residents in the hostels. This implies that hostel provision is not only beneficial to the students but it is equally beneficial to the tertiary institutions. However, it is not enough to provide housing for students to reside while pursuing their academics, the quality and condition of the houses play very vital roles in determining habitability of the housing structures. In developing countries, scholars that have questioned the quality of housing units and the facilities that are provided for students (Ubong, 2007; Sawyerr and Yusuf, 2013; Odaudu and Yahaya, 2019). Sawyerr and Yusuf, (2013) noted a dissatisfaction of polytechnic students with the quality, condition and state of facilities in the hostels while Ubong (2007) noted that despite the fact that hostel development is usually given out as contract to private developers, the quality of the residential apartments together with the facilities that are provided are in Nigerian hostels do not stand the test of time. As a result, deterioration and dilapidation sets in quickly. In virtually all cases, the carrying capacities of the hostels are exceeded due to overcrowding in rooms by students and deterioration becomes inevitable in such cases. Odaudu and Yahaya (2019) also highlighted that adequate

facilities are not provided for students in Nigerian hostel bed rooms. They observed that, storage facilities are lacking and as such, students litter their properties indiscriminately. There is also poor maintenance of hostel facilities further threatening the serenity of hostels in Nigeria. With the assertion that good quality residential accommodation has effect on the academic performance of students and the submission that hostels in Nigeria are becoming derelict and moribund, it is clear that there is need to appraise the facilities, condition and quality of hostels. The need to further appraise the level of satisfaction of students with the hostels that are accommodating them stems from the fact that most students have their origins from distant states and do not have family members to stay with as some could not even afford rent payment for off-campus accommodation. Equally, taking off-campus accommodation is expensive for the average students and most of them cannot afford such. To this end, students end up prioritizing hostel accommodation.

In Calabar, Cross River State, there are several tertiary institutions. For instance, there exist the University of Calabar, University of Cross River, School of Health Technology and School of Nursing among others. These schools have made provision for hostel accommodation for their students. However, the satisfaction of the students with the quality, condition and nature of facilities in the hostels has not been ascertained in available literature. Holistically, the inability of existing studies to appraise the level of satisfaction of hostel students with the housing units they are being accommodated in suggest that there is a gap in knowledge that needs to be filled. However, an understanding of the level of satisfaction of students with the housing facilities, its quality and condition will go a long way in enhancing policy statements that will be made towards housing sustainability in the study area. Based on this premise, the paper sets out to assess the level of satisfaction of students with hostel accommodation in Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria.

Literature Review

Concept of Housing Quality

On a general basis, quality defines the mental and moral attribute of a particular thing (Bichi, Abdu and Adam, 2018). Specifically, it is the quality of a thing that makes it unique and distinguished. In virtually all cases, the quality that makes up a thing are the features that are used in explaining what the thing is. Furthermore, quality is used in the description of the nature, features, condition or properties and constituents of a particular thing. Therefore, understanding the meaning of quality is dependent on the user, the user's desires/aspirations as well as the understanding of certain factors that goes along with describing the thing. In this regard, quality is a function of the user's desire/aspiration as well as the purpose the product intends to serve (Bichi *et al.*, 2018). Housing

quality is regarded as the grade or level of acceptability of dwelling units and their associated and immediate residential environment, including the design and functionality of housing structures, building materials used, the amount of internal and external space pertaining to the dwelling, housing utilities, and basic service provision. Housing quality is further defined by the physical conditions of the buildings together with the facilities and services that make living in a particular area conducive.

Housing quality is a complex concept. It encapsulate the quantitative and qualitative dimensions of residential units, their immediate surroundings, and the needs of the occupants. The concept of housing quality relates to standards and conditions. However, it is primarily concerned with the objective structural, material, social and economic constituents of housing products or outcomes that can be measured and that result from the performance of the housing sector. These factors include considerations such as price, quantity, tenure, economic impacts, environmental impacts, and structural norms of housing standards. In spite of the perspective in which quality of houses may be viewed, it should be such that the housing units satisfies the occupants. For the occupants of the structure to be satisfied, certain variables need to be ascertained such as the building orientation, the size of the rooms, windows and height as well as building lines and setbacks. Furthermore, the definition of quality of housing incorporates the facilities in the building. Therefore, in the development and maintenance of hostels, factors such as physical conditions of the building has to be satisfactorily met in line with established standards and necessary facilities.

Housing Satisfaction

The satisfaction of residents in housing units is a function of variables such as location, facilities and environmental quality. Khan (2021) in his study in Bangladesh employed residential satisfaction index (RSI) in explaining twenty-two variables of four components. The components were social environment, neighborhood environment, public services and facilities, and dwelling units. His results indicated that public services/facilities social environment and neighborhood environment have greater impact on the dwelling units. His findings also showed that the nature of the environment make the younger ones to be more satisfied than the older. Maina (2021) in Gombe used descriptive and inferential statistics in analyzing housing satisfaction. His findings showed that residents of public housing in Gombe were generally dissatisfied with their housing environments. Their dissatisfaction was based on the fact that major housing facilities were lacking. Equally, Onifade, Lawanson and Adewale (2018) in Lagos observed that number of rooms occupied, types of building are the sustainable housing satisfaction determinants in medium and low density areas while number of rooms occupied is a major determinant in high density areas.

Further studies have explained the satisfaction of students with housing units in tertiary institutions. Adeleye, Akinpelu and Azeez (2018) examined students' satisfaction with hostel accommodation in selected public tertiary institutions in Oyo State, Nigeria. The major components they used for the assessment were the environment, dwelling and management. They used descriptive statistics satisfaction indices were used in determining the degree of students' satisfaction with each of the housing components. Their findings indicated that the level of students' housing satisfaction depends on variables such as environment, dwelling and management of the housing systems. Specifically, they noted that the level of students' satisfaction with the housing environment, dwellings and management in the University of Ibadan was satisfactory and housing components in The Polytechnic, Ibadan was unsatisfactory. They also revealed that housing components can drastically influence the satisfaction of students in the hostels. Odaudu and Yahaya (2019) noted that hostels lack major facilities and are not in good condition and as such, the occupants which are students are not satisfied with the quality, condition and standard of the hostels. They noted that storage facilities were not provided in hostels and as such, students end up littering their belongings indiscriminately. Ajani *et al.*, (2018) observed that the absence of basic amenities and facilities in student residential hostels have continued to threaten housing satisfaction among students in Akure. Using relative satisfaction index, they observed that residents of hostels were largely dissatisfied with the state of the facilities and amenities in the hostels. They further noted that laundry, bathroom and toilet facilities were located distant from rooms of residence and as such, laundry facilities are not maintained regularly. In a similar study, Ifaturoti (2017) in Lagos applied cluster sampling in selecting hostels while randomly selecting occupants of hostels for data collection. He noted that owners of private hostels in Yaba made provision for security of premises, water supply and room size were adequate enough for residents. Due to the availability of the facilities, residents were mostly satisfied with the quality of the housing facilities as there is equally ease of transportation to school, nearness to centres of religious worship and security. The implication is that privately owned hostels provided residents with better facilities than institution-owned/managed hostels.

In other related studies, Bichi *et al.*, (2018) assessed the condition and quality of hostels Kano University of Science and Technology, Wudil with a view to understanding the satisfaction of students with the housing facilities. Using questionnaire for data collection, descriptive and inferential statistics were used in carrying out analysis. Their findings showed that majority of the facilities in the hostels were in good condition. They noted that hostels had facilities such as electricity supply, water supply, efficient waste disposal systems, standby generator, security, fence, bathroom and toilets, fire-

Source: Eteng and Ajom, (2021)

Methods

The descriptive design was employed in the study. Data for the study were obtained using copies of questionnaire. The target population in the study were students who were resident in hostels in tertiary institutions in Calabar. In order to obtain data, hostel residents in three (3) tertiary institutions were purposively selected. The institutions are the University of Calabar, University of Cross River and College of Health Technology. In each of the sampled schools, 50 students who were identified to be residents in the school hostels were sampled out for questionnaire administration. Having in mind that 50 students were randomly selected in the 3 different institutions, 150 copies of questionnaire were used for data collection. The questionnaire were subdivided to male and female

residents in the hostels. To this end, 75 female hostel residents were given questionnaire to complete and same was done to the male residents. Data were further analysed using Relative Satisfaction Index (RSI). RSI is mathematically represented as follows: $RSI = (5n_5 + 4n_4 + 3n_3 + 2n_2 + 1n_1) / 5N$. A five point likert scale was adopted in the study. Specifically, 5 represented very satisfied, 4 represented satisfied, 3 was fairly satisfied and 2 was dissatisfied. Furthermore, 1 represented strongly dissatisfied.

Results and Discussions

Gender and Age of Respondents

Table 1 shows the gender and age of respondents. As stated earlier, 75 copies of questionnaire were distributed to males and same to females.

Table 1: Gender and Age of Respondents

Variable	Frequency (%)	Level of Housing Satisfaction in Tertiary Institutions	
Gender			
Male	75(50)	The information in Table 2 shows the level of satisfaction of the residents of hostels in the study area based on fifteen (15) variables. The Table showed the RSI mean for each variable. It revealed that environmental quality and walking distance to lecture halls were the most satisfactory indices to students that stay in the hostels. Residents in hostels were faced with challenges of privacy in rooms. Hence, residents in hostels were overcrowded as such, their privacy was affected. In all, the overall mean score showed that residents in the hostels were fairly satisfied with the quality, condition and facilities in the hostels in tertiary institutions in the study area. The reason for their fair satisfaction is largely tied to the fact that the facilities provided in the hostels were not basically in good condition nor were there in a completely dilapidated state.	
Female	75(50)		
Total	150(100)		
Age			
Below 18	68(45.3)		
18 – 20	72(48)		
21 – 30	8(5.3)		
31-above	2(1.4)		
Total	150(100)		

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Response therefore showed that equal percentages were observed. However, dominant occupants of hostels in tertiary institution in the study area were those below 18years old. The information in the table indicated that the older the students, the less likely they are to reside in the hostels.

Table 2. Level of Housing Satisfaction in Tertiary Institutions

Variables	Very Satisfied (%)	Satisfied (%)	Fairly Satisfied (%)	Dissatisfied (%)	Very Dissatisfied (%)	RSI
1 Environmental Quality	63(42)	38(25.3)	16(10.7)	19(12.7)	14(9.3)	3.8
2 Walking distance to lecture halls	48(32)	42(28)	16(10.6)	26(17.3)	18(12)	3.5
3 Room size	26(17.3)	46(30.7)	31(20.7)	29(19.3)	18(12)	3.2
4 Privacy in room	13(8.7)	39(26)	6(4)	41(27.3)	51(34)	1.9
5 Ventilation	11(7.3)	19(12.7)	32(21.3)	23(15.3)	65(43.3)	2.3
6 Hostel security	22(22)	28(18.7)	36(24)	32(21.3)	21(14)	3.1
7 Hostel rules	18(12)	19(12.7)	42(28)	36(24)	25(16.7)	2.9
8 Sanitation	37(24.7)	25(16.7)	35(23.3)	29(19.3)	24(16)	3.1
9 Water supply	48(32)	28(18.7)	41(27.3)	24(16)	9(6)	3.2
10 Electricity	39(32)	46(30.6)	14(9.3)	26(17.3)	25(16.7)	3.3
11 Fire-fighting equipment	22(14.7)	18(12)	24(16)	38(25.3)	48(32)	2.5
12 Bathroom/laundry	21(14)	15(10)	21(14)	32(21.3)	61(40.7)	2.4

	facilities						
13	Recreational facilities	55(36.7)	39(26)	31(20.7)	14(9.3)	11(7.3)	3.7
13	ICT facilities	26(17.3)	33(22)	52(34.7)	16(10.7)	23(15.3)	3.2
14	Standby Generator	28(18.7)	41(27.3)	52(34.7)	18(12)	11(7.3)	3.4

RSI=45.5/15 =3

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study appraised the level of satisfaction of students who are residents in academic hostels in tertiary institutions in Calabar. It was observed in the study that the housing units, the facilities and its quality/environment only fairly satisfied students. This implies that the level of satisfaction of the environment is not very satisfactory. This is due to the fact that residents do not have maximum access to facilities that are capable of making living within the school environment meaningful. It should be noted that the inability of students to live very satisfactorily in hostels has the potentials of affecting their academic performances as noted in earlier studies. For instance, when students are residing in unsafe and unhealthy environments, the chances of performing academically well become slim. Furthermore, the living condition of students which can be boosted by access to ICT facilities can drastically improve academic performances. Based on the submissions that students are not very satisfied in the hostels, it was suggested that facilities in hostels be maintained regularly. This will help in avoiding deterioration of existing facilities. As well, security and other necessities of life should be provided for students so as to improve their living condition in hostels in the study area. Finally, more halls of accommodation should be developed by school management and partners in schools within the study area so as to avoid overcrowding in rooms which have negative effect on student privacy in the hostels.

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