

# **A consideration of the adequacy of teaching facilities in the universities of the South Western Zone of Nigeria**

By

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The Nigerian University system has grown in number, infrastructure as well as in enrolment since the establishment of the first University College in Ibadan in 1948. At present, according to the National Universities Commission (NUC, 2009), there are 95 Universities (27 Federal, 34 State and 34 Private) in the three categories of Federal, State and Private in Nigeria. The question is that as the institutions are increasing, are the facilities also commensurately increasing? The purpose of the study was therefore to investigate the availability, adequacy and condition of facilities in these Universities in the South West of Nigeria. It has been established that the status of facilities in Institutions affect the quality of education Omotayo (2008). Studies have also shown that there is a positive correlation between students' high achievement and school facilities (Earthman, 2002; Adeogun, 1999) and research has shown that these affect the morale of students. The research was survey in design and purposively sampled Universities under the three categories, using random sampling technique to select and administer the instrument (a 25-item questionnaire and Observation Schedule) to a total of 300 students in the three tertiary Institutions. Data collected were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Among the findings was that even though facilities were generally available, they were largely not in good condition and this is having a negative effect on the morale of the students in these institutions. It was suggested, among others, that better maintenance culture be developed in order to add value to education, guarantee quality and encourage sustainable national development.

## **Background**

Nigeria has come to recognise the importance of education to national development especially at the tertiary level and has severally demonstrated her commitment to spreading educational opportunities to all up to the tertiary level (in accordance with the aspirations of Education For All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as well as the National Policy on Education (FGN, 2004). This is further demonstrated through the increase in intake into the Universities as well as the creation of more Universities in Nigeria over the years. There is no doubt that the Nigerian University system has grown in number, infrastructure as well as in enrolment since the

establishment of the first University College of Ibadan in 1948. As of 2008, according to Jibril and Obaje (2008) there were 92 Universities in Nigeria. By 2009, the Nigerian National Universities Commission recognised 95 Universities (27 Federal, 34 State and 34 Private) - (NUC, 2009).

In spite of Nigeria's demonstrated efforts to extend education, Osinubi (2003) worries that this effort may not have been adequately harnessed. He lamented the strategy adopted by government; that, having devoted a huge amount of financial resources to the development of University education, due to poor implementation strategies, they have wound up using the money to build towns and municipal facilities, rather, to the detriment of academic infrastructure. Also under controversy is the lack of availability of infrastructure or poor maintenance culture, especially in Primary and Secondary schools in Nigeria with numerous evidence of leaking roofs, peeling walls, inadequate seats and overpopulation and ill-equipped laboratories according to Oni and Adepegba (2009). This is due, in part, to government's inability to fulfilling prior promises of rehabilitation or provision of said facilities.

It is generally accepted that good facilities are needed for good education. Omotayo et al (2008) maintain that the provision of adequate facilities will ensure quality education. All of these would have implications for the conduct of educational activities in higher institutions of learning and the lack may therefore lead to the general decline of higher education.

Facilities include physical and material assets and can be generally defined as buildings, properties and major infrastructure, also referred to within the Facility Management Industry as the "built environment" IES (2006). Teaching facilities include all of the infrastructure and material resources that are used to support the delivery of quality education. Infrastructure refers to basic physical and organisational structures needed for the successful running of the institution. According to IES (2006), this can be seen in the form of any physical structure or space required by the institution for the performance of its programmes and related activities. Facilities are to support the University in accomplishing its academic, healthcare, research and public service activities by providing responsive and high-value infrastructure for a safe and functional physical environment. Campbell (1997) sorts facilities into 3 categories, consumables, non-consumables and physical plant (buildings and equipments). Other relevant facilities in the University environment include text books, laboratory equipment, computer machines, seating facilities, supply of electricity, technical and vocational facilities and array of courses offered which are all of paramount to the provision of qualitative education (Omotayo, 2008). He however noted that these important education facilities are either not available or inadequate or in a state of disrepair in most

institutions below the tertiary level. Osinubi (2003) is of the opinion that there is scant evidence on the part of the government to show its recognition for the importance of education to the nation considering the level of resources committed and the way they have been applied in these institutions. Ehiamezor (2001) on his part laments the observed poor maintenance culture of existing facilities.

Other issues that may exacerbate the problem include poor management which often manifests in poor maintenance culture, inadequate funding and lack of policy or poor record keeping and monitoring of existing facilities. Ehiamezor (op cit) recognises four types of maintenance - preventive, periodic, recurring and emergency which are necessary in keeping existing facilities in working condition.

There is no doubt that the adequate provision of educational facilities is imperative for quality assurance. It has been argued that the provision of facilities has a positive correlation with academic achievement because studies have shown that there is a positive correlation between students' high achievement and school facilities (Earthman, 2002; Adeogun, 1999). State of infrastructure is also believed to affect the academic aspirations as well as students' morale or feelings (Stack, 1997). There is again the question of morale which has to do with the positive or negative feeling within a group of people. It is important to find out the extent to which the level of availability of the said facilities impact on the students' psychological well-being based upon a sense of its contribution to the achievement of their academic purpose. How does the state of facilities in the institution affect their sense of enthusiasm and dedication to their academic objectives and its achievement?

## **Problem**

There is no doubt that a lot of money has been spent on equipping Universities with different facilities but are they adequate and well maintained? There have been numerous studies on facilities in Secondary Schools but not that many at the University level. There have been several complaints in the Primary and Secondary school sectors about the general state of disrepute of facilities which has contributed in no small measure to the general collapse of education (Jimoh, 2005). There is however a dearth of literature on the situation of facilities in the University environment. However, if the problem of availability and adequacy of facilities is not tackled,

quality assurance may be jeopardised in the University environment apart from the inability for students and staff to perform optimally. What then is the situation of facilities in institutions of higher learning? The study looks at the implication of provision and adequacy thereof in the dispensation of education in some institutions of higher learning. In order to improve facilities there is first the need to see what is available and to examine their adequacy and how it affects morale.

### **Research questions**

1. To what extent are the institutions equipped to deliver educational goals?
2. What is the level of availability of educational facilities in the institutions?
3. What is the level of adequacy of these facilities?
4. What is the condition of the available facilities?
5. How does the status provision affect students' morale?

### **Hypotheses**

1. The availability of facilities in the university environment will not significantly affect the students' morale and academic performance.
2. The adequacy of facilities in the university environment will not significantly affect the students' morale and academic performance
3. The quality of facilities in the university environment will not significantly affect the students' morale and academic performance

### **Purpose**

The study is to determine whether the bid to spread the reach of education is adequately matched by the provision of the necessary resources to ensure a successful outcome so that there will not just be

a proliferation of institutions without enough resources to run them. Their study therefore set out to:

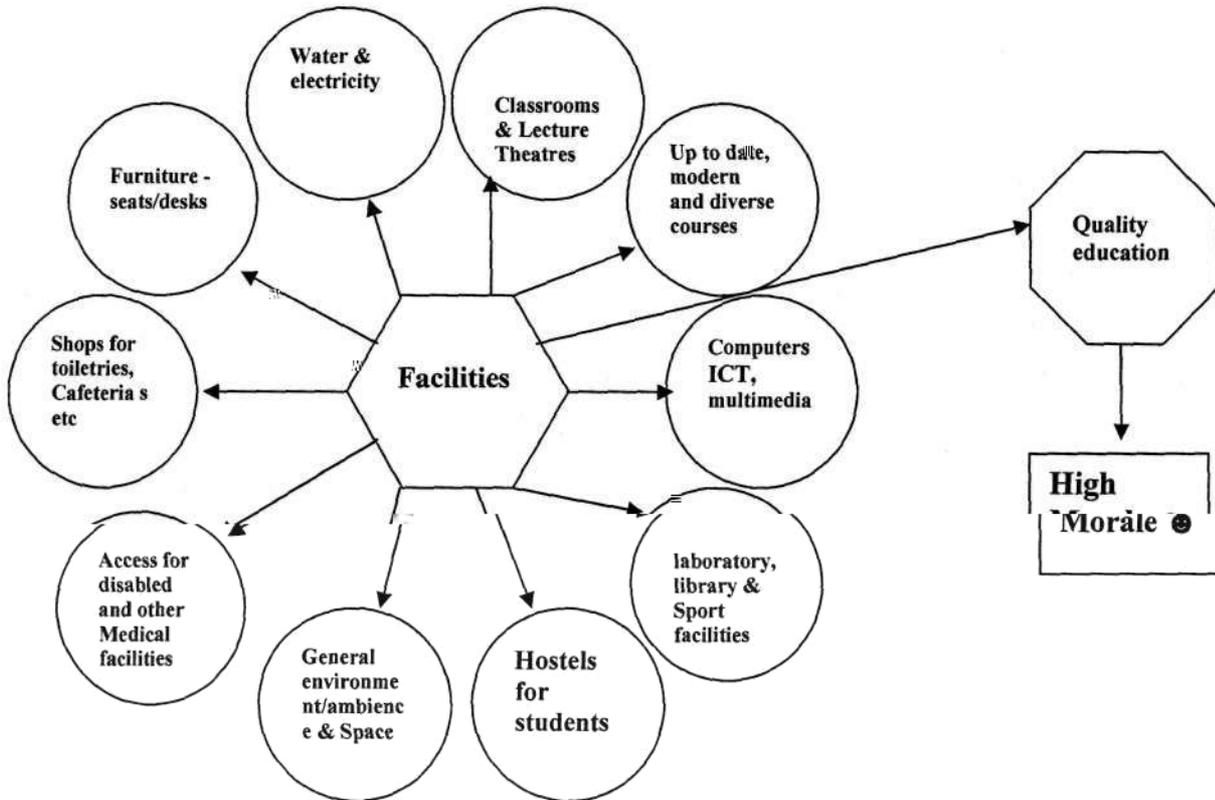
1. examine the level of provision or availability of facilities in the Universities
2. determine the adequacy of the provided facilities
3. assess the condition of the facilities
4. determine the effect of the situation of facilities on the morale of the student in terms of their academic activities.

### **Conceptual framework**

Facilities may be classed into resources which may be physical (buildings, space etc), human (academic and non-academic staff) or material (all equipment or teaching aids etc) in the university system along with programmes offered (availability of diverse programmes with up to date curriculum). All of these are necessary for the support of education at the University level.

School facilities are seen in terms of permanent physical structures (from site to buildings etc) and non-permanent according to Oyedeji (1998) Campbell refers to it as consumables and non-consumables or physical plant (Campbell, 1997:48). He says that they may be structural, motorised, typographic, natural or man-made conveniences. Jayeoba and Atanda (2005) list school building, furniture (seats, desks and chalkboard). Facilities may be seen as any and all of those physical and material resources that influence academic performance of students in the University environment. Even though facilities on their own cannot instruct, they contribute immensely to the end result of the academic exercise and have effect on the students' academic performance. The relationship can be diagrammatically presented thus:

Fig 1: Importance of facilities in the University environment



Source: The researcher

## Methodology

The study is a descriptive survey of the level of provision of resources for teaching/learning in three institutions of higher learning in the South Western Zone of Nigeria. The study took an example each from the three categories (using the criteria of ownership) Federal, State and Private Universities for the study. All three were conventional rather than specialised universities. The sampling technique was purposive for the choice of Universities, and the proportionate simple random sampling technique was used to pick a total of 300 students from the three Universities with 100 (hundred) respondents from each institution comprising students across all the Faculties. There were also Observation and Interview Schedules to view as many of these facilities as possible and corroborate the statements. The main instrument was a 25 - item questionnaire addressed to students to get their opinion of the level of availability, adequacy and condition of facilities in the Universities. There was also an informal 10 - item close ended self-structured oral interview along with an Observation Schedule. Data were collected with the help of three graduate assistants in the Department (with the use of camera pictures) and descriptive statistics and qualitative analysis used with simple percentages. The hypotheses were tested using the Pearson Moment Correlation.

## Findings

Fig 2: Distribution of Universities

|       |                        | Institution |         |               |                    |
|-------|------------------------|-------------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|       |                        | Frequency   | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | University 1 (Federal) | 100         | 33.3    | 33.3          | 33.3               |
|       | University 2 (State)   | 100         | 33.3    | 33.3          | 66.7               |
|       | University 3 (Private) | 100         | 33.3    | 33.3          | 100.0              |
|       | Total                  | 300         | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

The three institutions used were one of each of Federal, State and Private Universities sampled as presented in figure 2.

Figure 3: Distribution of the Faculties

|       |                 | Faculty   |         |               |                    |
|-------|-----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|       |                 | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Arts            | 93        | 31.0    | 31.0          | 31.0               |
|       | Science         | 107       | 35.7    | 35.7          | 66.7               |
|       | Social Sciences | 100       | 33.3    | 33.3          | 100.0              |
|       | Total           | 300       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

The Different Faculties (about 10) were merged to give a broad based classification of the three main course distributions as indicated in figure 3.

Fig 4: Toilet Facilities

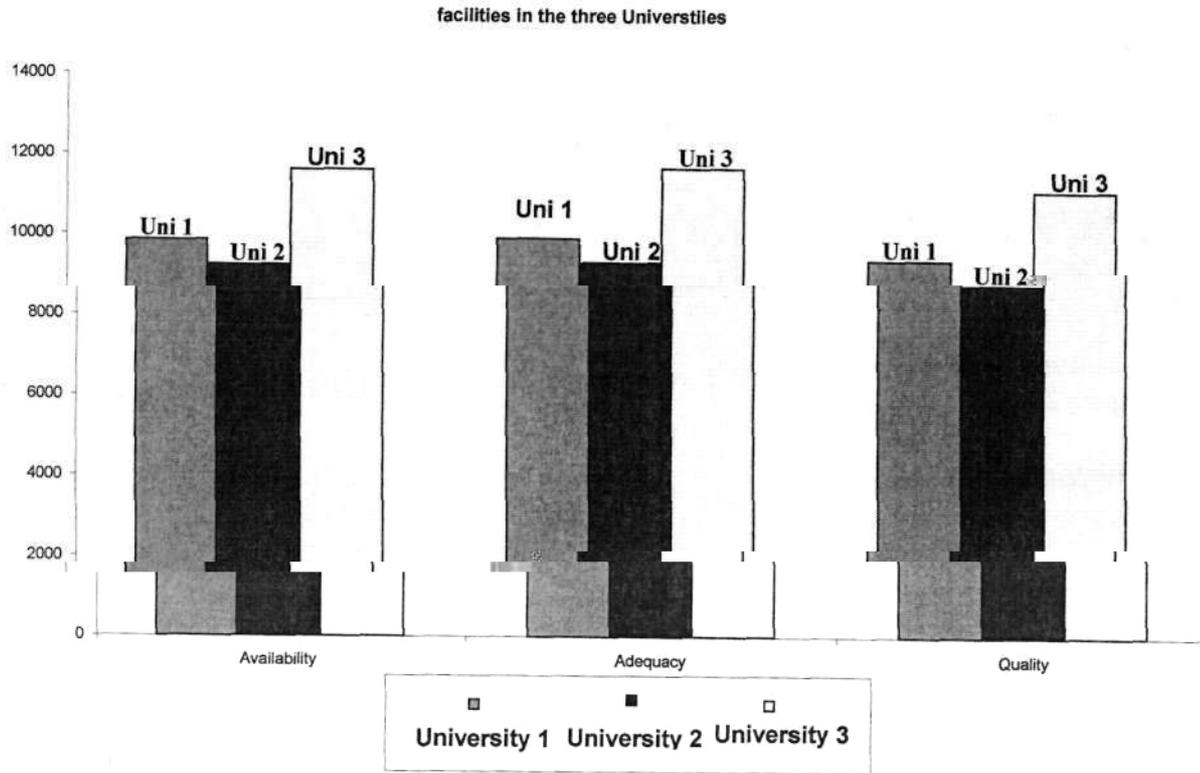
Institution \* Toilet facilities quality Crosstabulation

|             |              |                      | Quality of toilet facilities |       |       |           | Total  |
|-------------|--------------|----------------------|------------------------------|-------|-------|-----------|--------|
|             |              |                      | Very bad                     | Bad   | Good  | Very good |        |
| Institution | University 1 | Count                | 18                           | 23    | 58    | 1         | 100    |
|             |              | % within Institution | 18.0%                        | 23.0% | 58.0% | 1.0%      | 100.0% |
|             | University 2 | Count                | 11                           | 73    | 14    | 1         | 99     |
|             |              | % within Institution | 1.0%                         | 73.7% | 24.2% | 1.0%      | 100.0% |
|             | University 3 | Count                | 2                            | 28    | 46    | 24        | 100    |
|             |              | % within Institution | 2.0%                         | 28.0% | 46.0% | 24.0%     | 100.0% |
| Total       |              | Count                | 21                           | 154   | 108   | 16        | 299    |
|             |              | % within Institution | 7.0%                         | 51.5% | 36.1% | 5.4%      | 100.0% |

This is an example of one of the tables for each variable. For the toilet facilities, the availability levels were higher for Universities 1 and 3 but low for University 2. The quality of the availability is indicated in cross tabulation in table 4 above. The result indicates a high negative value at 73.7% on what were available for the number 2 institution.

Fig 5: Level of provision of facilities in the institutions

The study revealed the general level of provision of facilities in the three institutions examined as shown in figure 5



The summary of provision of facilities in the three institutions show the highest level of provision for University 3, followed by University 1. University 2 has the lowest in terms of overall provision of facilities.

Fig. 6: The effect of provision of facilities on students' morale

Pearson moment correlations

|              |                     | Adequacy | Morale | Availability | Quality |
|--------------|---------------------|----------|--------|--------------|---------|
| Adequacy     | Pearson Correlation | 1        | .076   | .998 **      | .996**  |
|              | N                   |          | 300    | 300          | 300     |
| Morale       | Pearson Correlation |          | 1      | .061         | .053    |
|              | N                   |          |        | 300          | 300     |
| Availability | Pearson Correlation |          |        | 1            | .997 ** |
|              | N                   |          |        |              | 300     |
| Quality      | Pearson Correlation |          |        |              | 1       |
|              | N                   |          |        |              |         |

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The table shows a high positive correlation between morale and all the variables - availability, adequacy and quality of facilities in the institutions at .076, .061, .053 respectively which were all significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed). This suggests that as facilities become more available,

adequate and of good quality it raises the morale of the students and this will invariably impact on their ability to achieve their academic goals.

## **Discussion**

A summary of the facilities that were available and adequate in all three institutions include staff strength the classroom equipment like whiteboard, fans and lighting, courses run by the institution, shops and cafeteria, health care and sports facilities (though some respondents in one of the institution had problems with cafeteria and sports facilities as there were some indication of low quality). Seats and desks were available in all the institutions though the lifespan of the furniture must be considered and some of the furniture was in a disreputable condition which is affected by the maintenance culture. Also the bench-style seating arrangement was not necessarily seen as the best option for Universities (these bench type seats became a necessity when large crowds are considered and may indicate overcrowding). There were generally many Lecture rooms and Theatres but they were not adequate in some cases and some of the rooms were too small for the number of students utilising the facility.

Facilities that were generally in short supply were ICT/computers and hostels. Other facilities that may present problems or that were not available across all three institutions include water, electricity and access for disabled students. The problem of electricity is a general one and most institutions, like other organizations have to rely heavily on power generating sets to make up for the inadequate power supply. Water supply can also be epileptic at times. Access for the disabled are obviously generally not built into the infrastructure as a rule (maybe because some of the Universities did not have a definite admission policy for them or may not have any disabled students) and any concessions will have to be deliberately added. The toilet facilities were adequate in two of the institutions but not adequate in University 2, and the lack of water supply may also affect the general cleanliness.

The implication of problems with facilities is that it will have an impact on the student' morale. When any or all of these facilities are either not available, adequate or in good condition, they have been seen to divert the attention of the students from their primary goal of learning. It was also noted that students seem to be resigned to some of these discomforts and learnt either to by pass or live with them, but there is no doubt that it affects their morale one way or another. Therefore if we truly want students to undergo their education in relative peace and in a conducive atmosphere,

it is necessary to pay due attention to the provision of facilities in these higher institutions of learning so that students can put in their best efforts and get quality returns in education.

Most of the institutions are relatively well equipped with the necessary facilities that will help facilitate the achievement of educational goals. The level of availability may therefore be said to be high generally. The levels of adequacy though were comparatively lower, which means that even though facilities were largely available, they may not always be in enough quantities to satisfy all users simultaneously. Condition of the facilities were rated the lowest which suggests that available facilities may not always be in very good condition and this alludes to the maintenance culture generally. All of these were seen to have a high positive correlation with the students' morale. This means that the state of facilities contribute to the students' morale and may affect their learning ability.

The general findings indicate that facilities were largely available in the three institutions. They were however not adequate in some cases and the quality of available facilities were also not up to standard in other cases. The correlation coefficient indicated that there was a correlation between availability, adequacy and quality of the facilities and the morale of the students. Findings agree with Ojedele (1989) that facilities contribute to educational activities and achievement of objectives. Also that the physical classroom environment affects learning outcome (Okolo and Sarki, 2005)

## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

If all three indices of availability, adequacy and quality therefore affect the morale of the students and their academic performance, it stands to reason that facilities must not be only available but must also be adequate and in good condition in order to encourage students achievement in higher education, especially if Nigeria is to enjoy adequate and quality manpower supply and well trained graduates who can compete in the international market (as the world is becoming a global village) and service her democratic status effectively as well as run the economy.

If our higher institutions of learning genuinely wish to produce graduates of high standard who will be able to compete favourably in the international job market, there is the need to pay more attention to the state of existing facilities in our tertiary institutions. The following suggestions were proffered based on the findings of the study. It is necessary to generally maintain, monitor and

operate the assets so that they can work for the institution and invariably add value to education and ensure quality education. Our poor maintenance culture must be checked. Governing bodies must also give adequate and timely financial support towards the maintenance of the existing structures. Multinationals could also be approached to donate funds and infrastructure (as they have been known to do) as all possible avenues must be explored in order to effect improvements in, not only access to higher education but also quality teaching and expanded research opportunities, so that ultimately quality can be ensured and the Universities' profile in global rankings elevated.

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