

*Full Length Research Paper*

# Problems of facilities in South-West Nigerian universities and the way forward

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**This paper examined the problems of facilities in South West Nigerian universities. The study population consists of all academic staff in 10 public universities in South West Nigeria, while the sample was made up of 500 academic staff randomly selected from the 10 universities. A self-designed instrument tagged “Problem of Facilities in Universities Questionnaire (PFUQ)” was used to collect relevant data for the study. The data collected were analyzed using frequency counts and percentage scores. The findings show that, the financial support to the universities was not adequate, the universities were not provided with adequate facilities while students and staff maintenance culture contributed to high destruction of the available facilities. Based on the findings, it was recommended that the government should provide adequate funds to the universities in its annual budgetary allocation. Besides, adequate provision of facilities should be provided while students should be well-educated on how to maintain available facilities in Nigerian universities.**

**Keywords:** Problems of facilities, South West, Nigeria, population, questionnaire, universities.

## INTRODUCTION

In Nigeria as well as in other countries, education is perceived as a tool for socio-economic and political developments and as such it is accorded the necessary attention. This position is amplified in the Nigerian National Policy on Education, which stated that education is an instrument par excellence for effecting national development, (The National policy of Education, 2004). It is added further that education shall continue to be highly rated in the national development plans because education is the most important instrument of change and that any fundamental change in the intellectual and social outlook of any society has to be preceded by educational revolution.

Recently, study by Jekayinka (1993), Suleman and Atiku (1997) and Ajayi and Ayodele (2001), proved that adequate supply of instructional resources has significant effects on student's performance and enhances the effectiveness of instructional delivery and supervision. However, there seems to be in Nigerian schools an alarming shortage and even complete absence of instructional materials. UNESCO (1998) further stressed that monitoring of learning achievement report on the available instructional materials in the 960 Sample primary schools across the country revealed that

chalkboard and chalk were the only materials, reported as being adequately available in the schools.

Ajayi and Ayodele (2001) further explained that the situation in secondary schools to some tertiary institutions are not much different as can be judged from the availability of basic instructional facilities such as lecture rooms, office accommodation, laboratories, workshops, sporting facilities, equipment in libraries, and so on.

The World Bank (1988) also noticed a correlation between economic development and the development of university education and that enrolment ratio in university education is one of the indices of development. The quality of university education is often a reflection of the performance of university graduates in the labour market which is also dependent on the quality of academic programmes and provision of instructional facilities provided by the various universities.

In the last two decades, university education in Nigeria has witnessed exponential increase in students' yearly enrolment. This has led to the establishment of more institutions and the employment of more teaching and non-teaching personnel, thus increasing the cost of education. The non-corresponding expansion in facilities, equipment and material resources has resulted in the

gradual collapse of the university education system. Various scholars like Psacharopoulos, (1993); Aghenta, (1993); Adeyemi and Igbineweka, (2000) emphasized the significance of various categories of physical facilities towards the quality of education at the different levels of the educational system. Hallak (1977) identified school buildings, classroom accommodation, furniture, libraries, laboratories, recreational equipment, apparatus and other instructional materials as contributing to academic achievements.

The NUC (2006) reported that the presidential visitation panel that looked into the operations of all federal universities between 1999 and 2003 revealed that academic and physical facilities at the universities were in deplorable states with insufficient lecture theatres/halls, laboratories and so on. Thus, one begins to wonder how some of these universities scale the accreditation hurdle. That is why Ijaiya (2001) opined that the quality of education being provided for the Nigerian child has become a source of concern and lamented on the rot in the educational system. Also, Adeyemi and Igbineweka (2000) observed that mismatch between growing enrolment and provision of facilities especially in respect of seats for students leads to overcrowding. He added that overcrowding creates undue stress on available space and results in the creation of crowd behaviour, hanging outside the classrooms; and obscene activities around school premises. All these have negative effect on teaching and learning process.

The following research questions were raised:

1. Is there adequate financial support for university education?
2. Are the universities provided with adequate facilities?
3. Is the available facilities properly maintained?

The finding from this study is expected to serve as guides for the educational policy makers towards ensuring that adequate educational facilities are provided in Nigerian universities.

### **Review of related literature**

The development and expansion of the country's university system have led to a tremendous increase in the government expenditure in this level of education. This expansion and increase in students enrolment have actually affected the management of universities in the 1980s to date. (Eisemon and David, 1990). The resources available have not been able to merge the increase in students' enrolment and as such, the inadequate funding of the universities has, in no doubts, had calamitous effect on teaching, research and community services.

According to Aminu (1986) and Ade-Ajayi (2003), funding has a crucial role to play on quality of academic programmes. In the same vein, Hallak (1977), Agbenta,

(1993) Adeyemi and Igbineweka, (2000) emphasize the significance of different categories of physical facilities on the quality of academic programmes. According to these scholars, inadequacy of any category of these physical facilities could lead to overcrowding, stress, unruly behaviour, distractions and gradual decay of symbolic things that help pattern human behaviour.

When instructional aids are in short supply teaching and learning is impaired. This implies that the quality of academic programmes is adversely affected. According to Ajayi (2007) and Okebukola (2002), effective teaching-learning process cannot be guaranteed with inadequate instructional materials.

In the area of plant management, Oladipo (2001) observed that Nigerians have not developed the culture of maintaining facilities, especially public utilities. Aminu (1987) accused Nigerian universities of poor strategic planning in its physical development. He observed that large part of the capital fund in some Nigerian universities is tied to useless uncompleted projects that litter the campuses with many of them over designed, grandiose and were stated without proper financial planning. He added evidence of regrettable inefficiency, neglect and in some cases, gross lack of care in the Nigerian university system. He observed that in certain universities visited, laboratories were dusty; bottles of chemicals were left open on the benches, unlabeled. In addition, the few cupboards had suffered leaks and were dismantled and it was doubtful if any practical work could go on under such conditions. In addition, the microscopes were in a very poor state with mould on the lenses.

The problem of violence and cultist activities among university administrators and academia is observed to be assuming a more serious dimension. Oni (2006) noted that escalation of student violence and secret cult activities are part of the major problems facing the educational institutions in Nigeria. He added that the preponderance of student violence and secret cult have not only become an anathema but a negation of the ideals for which the institutions stand. With time these institutions may be unable to perform their roles and responsibilities in national development because lives and properties are no longer safe throughout the length and breadth of the country due to the activities of these groups. In the process of their activities, facilities like furniture, buildings, recreational facilities, instructional materials, information services, project vehicles and so on, worth of millions suffers because of lack of maintenance culture. All the above serve the basis upon which the study intend to find out the problem of facilities in South West Nigerian Universities.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The descriptive survey design was used for the study. The design is ideal because the study involved collecting data from universities academic staff with a view to determining the problems of facilities in South West Nigerian universities and to look for the way forward.

**Table 1.** Financial problems of providing facilities in universities.

S/N	Items	Agree	%	Disagree	%
1	Inadequate financial support from the government.	176	88	24	12
2	Inadequate internally generated revenue.	152	76	48	24
3	Erratic allocation of funds	167	83.5	33	16.5
4	Lack of instructional facilities	183	91.5	17	8.5
Average %			84.7		15.3

**Table 2.** Problems of facilities in the universities.

S/N	Items	Agree	%	Disagree	%
5	Shortage of conducive offices for academic staff	173	80.5	27	13.5
6	Shortage of instructional materials	159	79.5	41	20.5
7	Inadequate classrooms	176	88	24	12
8	Inadequate laboratory facilities	147	73.5	53	26.5
9	Epileptic supply of electricity	165	82.5	35	17.5
10	Inadequate water supply	153	76.5	47	23.5
11	Lack of good road network	148	74	52	26
12	Lack of information network services	141	70.5	59	29.5
			78.9		21.1

The population comprised of all academic staff in South West Nigerian universities. While 200 academic staff were drawn from 4 universities in South West Nigeria.

Data was collected by means of an instrument tagged 'Problems of Facilities in South West Nigerian Universities' (PFQ) constructed by the researcher and validated by other experts in Educational Foundations and Management. The instrument was also pilot-tested using a sample of 30 academic staff, who were not included in the sample that was finally drawn. The instrument yielded a correlation coefficient of 0.78 obtained by means of product moment correlation statistics.

The instrument has two sections, A and B. Section A sought background information about the respondents while Section B contained items on problems of facilities in South West Nigerian universities. The respondents were asked to indicate their agreement or disagreement on the items in the questionnaire based on their experience. The data collected were analyzed using frequency counts and percentage scores.

## RESULTS

### Research Question 1

Is there adequate financial support for provision of facilities in universities? Table 1 revealed the financial problems of providing facilities in universities. On item 1, 88% of the respondents agreed that government did not give adequate financial assistance towards providing facilities; while 76% indicated that there was no internally generated revenue to provide facilities. Up to 83.5% respondents agreed that erratic allocation of funds contributed to inadequate facilities. As many as 91.5% of the

respondents indicated that financial support for the provision of facilities has not been given by the philanthropists. On the average, the table shows that adequate financial support has not been provided for facilities in the universities.

### Research Question 2

Are the Universities provided with adequate facilities? Table 2 is on the problems of facilities in the universities. The table shows that 86.5% of the respondents agreed that there were shortage of conducive offices for academic staff, shortage of instructional materials for teaching and learning (79.5%), inadequate classrooms for lectures (88%), inadequate laboratories to carryout experiments (73.5%), epileptic supply of electricity (82.5%), inadequate water supply for use (76.5%), lack of good road network (74%) and lack of information services (70.5%). On the average, 78.9% of the respondents agreed that the universities face the problem of facilities.

### Research Question 3

Are the available facilities in the universities properly maintained? Table 3 shows that there is a problem of maintaining facilities in the universities. There are inadequate monitoring of the facilities by university authorities (92.5%), lack of matching facilities with students' enrolment leading to over-strengthening of the available facilities (81%), poor administration of facilities

**Table 3.** Maintenance of facilities in the universities.

S/N	Items	Agree	%	Disagree	%
13	Inadequate monitoring of facilities by university authority	185	92.5	15	7.5
14	Lack of matching facilities with students enrolment	162	81	38	19
15	Poor administration of facilities	143	71.5	57	28.5
16	Lack of repairs to the damaged facilities	137	68.5	63	31.5
17	Destruction of facilities during students crises	179	89.5	21	10.5
18	Lack of maintenance culture	182	91	18	9
			82.3		17.7

for use (71.5%), lack of repairs to the damaged facilities during students' crises (89.5%) and lack of maintenance culture (91%). On the average, 82.3% of the respondents agreed that the universities in South West Nigeria faced the problem of facilities maintenance.

## DISCUSSION

The result obtained in Table one clearly revealed that adequate financial support has not been provided for the provision of facilities in the universities. This could be simply because of the money voted for university education is not adequate to cater for necessary facilities. This finding negates the earlier studies which show that funding has a crucial role to play on the quality of academic programmes (Aminu, 1986; Ade-Ajayi, 2003). The funding also contradict the opinion of Aminu (1987) that large part of the capital fund in some Nigerian universities is tied to useless uncompleted projects that litter the campuses.

Results as shown in Table 2 merely confirm that the universities faced the problem of facilities. The implication is that inadequacy of any category of physical facilities could lead to overcrowding, stress, unruly behaviour, distractions (Hallak, 1977; Agbenta, 1993; Adeyemi and Igbineweka, 2000). In the same vein, Okebukola (2002) and Ajayi (2007) affirmed that effective teaching and leaning process cannot be guaranteed with inadequate instructional materials.

Other observation from the findings is that universities in South West Nigeria faced problem of maintenance culture. The finding was in line with Oladipo (2001) who asserted that Nigerians have not developed the culture of maintaining facilities, especially public utilities. The finding also support Oni (2006) that escalation of student violence and secret cults' activities are the major problems facing the educational institutions. He observed that lives and properties are no longer safe due to the activities of these groups.

## Conclusion and recommendations

The study revealed the major factors that are responsible for the problems of facilities in South West Nigerian

universities which include inadequate financial support, inadequate provision of facilities and maintenance culture.

Based on the findings, it was recommended that the funding of university education should be improved and proper consideration should be given to the provision of facilities in the annual budget by the government. Also, attention should be given to the provision of facilities such as conducive offices, instructional materials, classrooms, laboratories, supply of electricity, water supply, road network and information services. There is need to pay attention to the areas of maintenance culture by the university authorities.

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