

Facilities provision in public tertiary education institutions for employability in a competitive society

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Abstract

The study which investigated facilities provision in public tertiary education for employability in a competitive society in Anambra State was anchored on two research questions and two hypotheses. Descriptive survey research design was employed. The population of the study comprised 6 public tertiary institutions in Anambra State. Total enumeration sampling technique was utilized thus all the 6 government tertiary institutions were used for the study. 50 lecturers and 100 students were selected in each of these public tertiary institutions as respondents numbering 900. The researchers developed an instrument titled “Facilities Provision in Tertiary Education for Employability Questionnaire” (FPTEEQ) which was used to elicit information from the participants. The validity of the instrument was certified, an internal consistency reliability test was conducted and yielded an index of 0.85 thus considered reliable. The administration of the instrument was carried out by the researchers and two trained research assistants, the collected data were coded, weighted and analyzed in accordance with the research questions. Mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research questions while *t*-test statistics was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed but not limited to: there is acute inadequate provision of relevant mobile educational materials in tertiary education institutions in Anambra State. The researchers therefore recommended that the appropriate agencies should expedite action in the provision of needed educational facilities to ensure credible production of employable graduates that could triumph and excel in the competitive labor market globally.

Keywords

Competitive society, employability, facilities provision, public tertiary education.

INTRODUCTION

University education, which is one of the tertiary levels of education, is the last level of education in Nigeria’s educational system. The goal of tertiary education, in Federal Republic of Nigeria, are; contribute to national development through high level manpower training, promote and encourage scholarship, entrepreneurship and community service, reduce skill shortages through the production of high skilled human capital [1], that is capable of competition with

their counterparts all over the world among others. This implies that tertiary education is expected to imbue the recipients with employable skills (hard and soft skills) that could make them highly valued/priced in the labor market. It is in the light of this that tertiary education is prioritized and as such should be equipped adequately for it to function effectively and efficiently. Tertiary education thus reserves the duty of producing employable graduates that



attracts employers who would be ready to train and retain them for high productivity. Employable graduates are essential in the field of work especially in the society where competitive society exists. This is what prompted Pitan [2] to assert that structural unemployment is a result of lack of employable skills to fill the existing job openings.

Employability is the capacity to get employment in the first instance, ability to retain the job and still being capable of getting another job if so desired. Jackson [3], employability is a set of communicable skills as well as essential personality attributes which the employers of labor cherish and considers appropriate for accelerated job performances. Employable skills make the potential job seeker marketable in the field of work. Some of the employability skills as: teamwork, interpersonal skills, commitment, versatility, problem solving and many others. While noting the essence of employable skills in a competitive society, Sisavath [4] advised that students should be assisted to develop and improve their employable skills so as to have a competitive edge over other job seekers in the long run. In doing so, there is an utter need to ensure that every obstacle that could encumber the development of employable skills of the students should be eradicated. There is an obvious need for facility provision in any organization. These facilities serve as tools for achieving desired goals. These tools are put to use by the human elements in the process of the job performance.

School facilities just as the name suggests are those things that facilitate or promote teaching/learning efficacy. Facilities are working implements or tools for discharging one's duty. The human elements would be incapacitated in the absence or shortage of facilities provision. Facilities provision in tertiary education involves the school buildings, classroom blocks, libraries, laboratories, computer installations, source of power, furniture and a host of others. These are needed by the university staff to function thus producing students for employability in a competitive society. When these resources are lacking, both the students and lectures are challenged first by this deficiency and the quality of output cannot be guaranteed. Obviously, insufficient school facilities is one of the factors that is hampering assimilation of the subject matter by the students. Consequently, mar the attainment of employability in a competitive

society. This is the reason Pitan [2] averred that inadequate hostel accommodation space, ramshackle lecture halls, ill equipped libraries and lack of computer software among others are the reason for poor teaching and learning outcomes in most tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Similarly, Izuagba and Ezenwa [5] and Njuguna [6] reaffirmed that physical and material resources are school based factors that influence academic performance of students negatively or positively depending on the adequacy and usability.

Based on the above expositions, it becomes very crucial to ensure adequate facility provision in tertiary education for a better output. It is not new to attest to the fact that most Nigerian universities are totally lacking in the provision of these facilities to the extent that some students learn under trees under very harsh weather conditions. The classrooms are overcrowded with insufficient air and poor lighting. This has caused some students to stand outside the classroom and peep through the window just to catch the grim of the lecturer. The poor ventilation could aid the spread of communicable diseases. Uwaezuoke [7] aptly put that there are no functional seats and tables for the students, the available ones are in shambles sequel to this not only make teaching/learning interaction an uphill task but also the objectives a mirage. The lecturers are without offices, some use their cars as mini offices to see students during project writing and supervision as a result and there are incessant cases of missing scripts. It is worthy to note that these school facilities should not only be provided but should be sufficiently and qualitatively provided if the tertiary education products must be employable in a competitive society.

Stemming from the above assertion, Uwaezuoke [7] averred that educational resources fed into the system translate to the quality of the output from the system. Going by this process, when quality teachers, instructional materials, standard buildings and classrooms, good furniture and manageable class size, are plowed into the education system, competitive employable graduates are evinced unlike when substandard facilities and incompetent personnel are employed. This is in line with the statement that school facilities are building and equipment which could be permanent and semi-permanent such as machines, laboratory equipment, chalkboard, office tools etc [8]–[10]. The

scholars acknowledged that school facilities have a positive influence on the comfort, safety and academic performance of the student when adequately provided and in a functional state. On their own submission, Agbabi et al. [11] laid weight to the above declaration and affirmed that instructional facilities and good arrangement of seats and tables in the classroom facilitates excellent academic performance. Reverse is the case when the classroom is filled with broken chairs, tables, windows, doors, ceiling boards and craters on the floor. This is the reason Orupabo [12] posited that poor physical condition of the classrooms negates teaching/learning outcome as disruptive behavior could emerge thereby resulting in distractions, stimulate disorder and promote general misbehavior. Nzokurum and Obi [13] while supporting Orupabo [12], re-emphasized that it is quite impossible to effectively train employable graduates in the school where conducive environment for teaching and learning, adequate provision of fund for running the school, well-equipped workshops, laboratories with modern instructional facilities and tools malfunctioned prevail.

Towing the same lane, Omosidi et al. [14] elucidated that school facility means the school building, furniture, equipment, path-ways, playground etc. The trio reiterated that availability, relevance and adequacy of these facilities contribute to academic achievement. The quality of education that our children receive bears direct relevance to the availability or lack of physical facilities with which learning takes place [14]. Quality education, according to Alia and Alia [15], depends on the quality of instruction made possible through provision of other educational facilities. On his own part, Agwaranze [16] stated that educational facilities include those resources that expedite the teaching and learning process in the school such as buildings, teaching aids and other devices. In agreement, Okunamiri and Ajaeree [17] asserted that every institution of learning is expected to possess the basic physical facilities such as staff rooms and office block, laboratories/workshops etc. in sufficient quality and quantity, if the objectives must be achieved.

In line with above expositions, Obasi and Asodike [18] enlisted school facilities to include; furniture, equipment, books, conveniences like toilets etc. To Olele [19], instructional resources include visuals and non-visual elements used by

the teacher to impart desired knowledge and skills to the learners. In his own compliance, Adu et al. [20], [21] believed that instructional materials like test books, charts, graphs, workbooks etc. are important artifacts used in teaching/learning environment as it arouses the learners' interest, improves the learners thinking capability and develop the students' potentials in creativity and resourcefulness. Thus positions the students for employability in the competitive society.

Towing the same lane, Kpee [22] referred to the school plant as all the facilities needed for the smooth functioning of all the school programmes thus identified two major groups of school plants namely: Roaming (mobile) and Stationary (immobile) School plant. According to the Author, the roaming school plant pertains to those school facilities that can be moved from one place to another. The roaming school facilities involve all the school material resources with the exception of the buildings and its fixtures examples include; chairs, tables, chalk/marker, books, laboratory equipment, computers, offices, etc.

Stationary school plants are those school facilities that are immobile, in which case, they are fixed and cannot be moved. Examples include permanent school buildings, permanent fixtures and laboratory, structures, library structures, school location or site where the school is located, road network, etc. Kpee [22] also hinted that distance covered by students to and back from one lecture hall or laboratory could wear them out and result in boredom leading to irregular class attendance when the distance is long unlike when the halls or laboratories are closely linked together in a single building.

From the above elucidations, it is observed that fund, school climate, interpersonal relationships, time, aesthetic environment and communication network are all components of educational material resources. In order to clarify this, Kpee [22] asserted that school plants or facilities cover everything used by the school in one way or the other to bring about teaching and learning. Sequel to this, a fund which is the financial strength of the school that enables the procurement of the other facilities is a part of educational resources. Same applies to school climate which is the tone or atmosphere of the school closely linked with the emotional state of the school actors, time and alluring school environment make up educational facilities.

When the school climate is harsh the staff is disengaged but engaged when the school atmosphere is good.

Obviously, most school facilities are to some extent available in most schools but are either inadequate or ill-maintained which is a barrier to the production of employable graduates. It is unimaginable that in some schools facilities are provided but are not adequately put to use and in some instances abandoned, this could be as a result of poor planning and incompetent personnel to handle such [18]. In alignment with the above view point, it was that there is inadequate provision and maintenance of facilities in Nigerian schools [10], [23]. Facility provision is a channel through which organizational goals are achieved with the help of human elements who put them to use. This inadequacy of school facilities has resulted in epileptic educational delivery process which cannot in any way produce credible graduates for employability in a competitive society. The product from this facility insufficiency is half-baked and no employer seeks such.

It sounds ridiculous that most science students graduate from the universities without adequate access to laboratory equipment, apparatus and certain reagents. The same goes with those students in the computer science departments, mostly those who offer computer studies as elective or general course, most of them have not sat in front of a computer let alone make use of them. This is partly because of the large number of students from other departments resulting to over-crowded lecture halls and also the fragile nature of the computer system. In the words of Nwabueze and Ukaigwe [24], lack of computers in various departments/faculties, irregular power supply, lack of fund for updating and purchasing modern facilities, lack of maintenance culture, unconducive environment, poor office structures are all challenges facing the use of ICT devices for record management in South East universities. This could be as a result of inadequate provision of such devices and large class size. When these facilities are over-utilized due to inadequacy and extreme class size, damages of school facilities could be recorded [7]. These facilities not only aid teaching and learning in schools but also have some physical, psychological and social impact on the learners. Consequently, inhibits teaching/learning effectiveness when not in sufficient quantity

which in turn keeps the aim and objectives of education in fiasco.

Ostensibly, there are inadequate school facilities emanating from cases of dilapidated buildings and instructional materials, poor design of building which does not provide cross ventilation, exceeding classroom occupancy load, poor condition of laboratory equipment and apparatus in Nigerian Universities. It is in the light of the fore-going that Oluwuo et al. [25] emphasized that this disrupts school activities and creates hazardous environments, detracting from the smooth progress of education. Ebong [26] noted with dismay that in many Nigerian universities, the enrolment rate is on an alarming increase without due consideration on the expansion of funds to accommodate procurement of relevant educational facilities and maintenance of existing ones. The scholar concluded that this constitutes wastage because the educational facilities remained stationary in the midst of population increase.

Statement of the problem

Educational facilities are likened to hardware with which the software which is the curriculum is inculcated to the learners. More often than not, school facilities ran out when needed for use due to inadequate provision thus crumbling teaching/learning exercise. Suspiciously, there are incidences of massive graduate unemployment has been valueless many in the ever-competitive labor market. There are speculations as to what could have led to graduates roaming the streets in search of work. Pointing fingers were geared towards lack of establishment of new industries, poor quality of the tertiary education output, some were suspicious of the students' lack of interest in their studies, yet others blamed the dilapidated nature of the school facilities and so on. The researchers are bothered about the root cause of devaluation in tertiary education products that are supposed to be priced high owing to the level of education one has attained. Scanning through the production process in the education industry, the researchers decided to unravel the adequacy of facilities to figure out where lays the problem because of the essence of sufficient facility provision in producing saleable workforce hence this study.

Purpose of the study

The study was aimed at determining the level of adequacy of facilities provision in the public

tertiary education for employability in a competitive society in Anambra State, Nigeria. To be precise, the study is set out to: (1) determine the levels of adequacy of mobile facilities provision in the public tertiary education for employability in a competitive society Anambra State, Nigeria; (2) ascertain the levels of adequacy of immobile facilities provision in the public tertiary education for employability in a competitive society in Anambra State, Nigeria.

Research questions

The two research questions were: (RQ1) What are the levels of adequacy of mobile facilities provision in the public tertiary education for employability in a competitive society in Anambra State, Nigeria?; (RQ2) What are the levels of adequacy of immobile facilities provision in the public tertiary education for employability in a competitive society in Anambra State, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The two hypotheses were: (H1) There is no significant difference between the mean scores of students and lecturers on the levels of adequacy of mobile facilities provision in the public tertiary education for employability in a competitive society in Anambra State, Nigeria; (H2) There is no significant difference between the mean scores of students and lecturers on the levels of adequacy immobile facilities provision in the public tertiary education for employability in a competitive society in Anambra State, Nigeria.

RESEARCH METHOD

Descriptive survey research design was employed. The population of the study comprised 6 public tertiary institutions in Anambra State. Total enumeration sampling technique was utilized thus all the 6 public tertiary institutions were used for the study. 50 lecturers and 100 students were selected in each of these public tertiary institutions as respondents numbering 900.

The researchers developed an instrument titled "Facilities Provision in Tertiary Education for Employability Questionnaire" (FPTEEQ) which was used to elicit information from the participants. The validity of the instrument was certified, an internal consistency reliability test was conducted and the result was exposed to the

Spearman-Brown formula which yielded an index of 0.85 thus considered reliable.

The administration of the instrument was carried out by the researchers and two trained research assistants. Out of 900 copies of the questionnaire distributed, 856 were retrieved and used for the study. The instrument utilized a four-point Likert scale of Very Adequate (4), Adequate (3), Inadequate (2), Very Inadequate (1). The collected data were coded, weighted and analyzed in accordance with the research questions. The criterion mean is thus derived by $([4+3+2+1]=10)/4=2.5$. It stands to reason that a mean score of 2.5 and above represents adequate while below 2.5 stands for inadequate. Mean and standard deviation (SD) was used to answer the research questions while *t*-test statistics was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The research results are presented in the section the levels of adequacy of mobile and immobile facilities provision.

The levels of adequacy of mobile facilities provision

This section presents research results to answer RQ1 and H1. Specifically for RQ1, Table 1 summarizes the results of data analysis on participants' responses regarding the adequacy levels of mobile facilities provision.

Table 1 shows that items with serial numbers 3 and 10 have their mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.5 and are therefore adjudged adequate. Items with serial numbers 1, 2 and 4-9 as well as items 11-15 have their mean scores below the criterion mean of 2.5 thus accepted that class size, public address system, good seats and desks, functional ceiling fans, computers, laboratory equipment and specimens, quality medicine, water supply, clearing of dump site, toilet/urinary and access to free internet Wi-Fi are inadequate in Anambra State public tertiary institutions. The grand mean gave rise to 2.22 with the SD of 0.55 for lecturers and 2.2 with SD of 0.66 for the students.

The data analysis results to address H1 were presented in Table 2. Table 2 shows the mean scores of lecturers to be 2.22 with SD of 0.61, that of students 2.2 with SD of 0.66, the degree of freedom equal 855 with the *t*-calculated (*t*-cal) at 0.53 against *t*-critical (*t*-crit) of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance. Since the *t*-cal is less than the *t*-

crit, the hypothesis testing is not rejected but upheld that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of the lecturers and

students on the adequacy of mobile facilities provision for tertiary education in Anambra State public tertiary institutions.

Table 1. The Responses of the Participants on the Levels of Adequacy of Mobile Facilities Provision

Items	Lecturers			Students		
	Mean	SD	Remark	Mean	SD	Remark
1. Class size	2.3	0.68	Inadequate	2.2	0.69	Inadequate
2. Public address system	2.4	0.60	Inadequate	2.2	0.75	Inadequate
3. Writing board	2.5	0.62	Adequate	2.6	0.56	Adequate
4. Good seats and desks	2.2	0.46	Inadequate	2.0	0.58	Inadequate
5. Good ceiling fans	2.4	0.57	Inadequate	2.3	0.60	Inadequate
6. Computer installations	2.4	0.58	Inadequate	2.2	0.63	Inadequate
7. Laboratory equipment	2.2	0.65	Inadequate	2.4	0.65	Inadequate
8. Laboratory specimens	2.2	0.55	Inadequate	2.0	0.66	Inadequate
9. Laboratory chemicals/reagents	2.0	0.56	Inadequate	2.3	0.76	Inadequate
10. Library equipped with current books	2.8	0.64	Adequate	3.0	0.61	Adequate
11. Quality medicine available in the school clinic	2.3	0.60	Inadequate	2.2	0.70	Inadequate
12. Water supply	2.0	0.56	Inadequate	2.0	0.65	Inadequate
13. Clearing of dump site	2.0	0.64	Inadequate	2.0	0.64	Inadequate
14. Toilet/urinary	1.8	0.58	Inadequate	1.8	0.66	Inadequate
15. Access to free Internet/wi-fi in the school	1.8	0.61	Inadequate	1.8	0.75	Inadequate
Grand mean	2.22	0.55		2.2	0.66	

The levels of adequacy of immobile facilities provision

This section presents research results to answer RQ2 and H2. Specifically for RQ2, Table 3 is a recapitulation of the results of data analysis regarding the levels of adequacy of immobile facilities provision.

Table 3 shows that items with serial numbers 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 13, and 14 had their mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.5 thus acknowledged that laboratory structure, road network, level of vegetation, computer

laboratory, school field and topography, good dump site, security block and school clinic are all adequate in public tertiary institutions in Anambra State. Inversely, items with serial numbers 1, 3, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 15 had their mean scores below the criterion mean of 2.5 and are proclaimed inadequate in the Anambra State public tertiary institutions by the respondents. The grand mean stood at 2.39 with SD of 0.52 and 2.4 with SD of 0.56 for lecturers and students respectively.

Table 2. *t*-test Statistics for Respondents' Opinions on the Adequacy of Mobile Facilities Provision

Variables	N	Mean	SD	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i> -cal	<i>t</i> -crit	Remark
Lecturers	579	2.22	0.61	855	0.53	1.96	Not sig.
Students	277	2.2	0.66				

The data analysis results to address H1 were presented in Table 4. Table 4 shows the mean scores and standard deviation of lecturers (2.39 and 0.52) while that of the students had (2.4 and 0.56) with the degree of freedom of 855, the *t*-cal gave 1.05 against the *t*-crit of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance. Since the *t*-cal is less than the *t*-crit, the hypothesis testing is retained and declared that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of the lecturers and students on the

adequacy of immobile facilities provision for tertiary education in Anambra State public tertiary institutions.

Findings of the research

The first finding of this study revealed that mobile school facilities are inadequate for tertiary education in Anambra State public tertiary institutions. Mobile school facilities are classified under current expenditure, this is because their

constant usage coupled with their inadequacy often times leads to damages [7]. They are very crucial in teaching-learning efficacy. The corresponding hypothesis tested on Table 4 indicates that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of the participants on the adequacy of school facilities provision in Anambra State public tertiary education. This assertion has been confirmed by the previous researchers (e.g. Nwabueze and Ukaigwe [24] and Adu et al. [20], [21]) who perceived that instructional materials like test books, charts,

graphs, workbooks etc. are important artifacts used in teaching/learning environments. Moreover, availability, relevance and adequacy of these facilities contribute to high academic achievement. It arouses the learners' interest, improves the learners' thinking capability and develops the students' potentials in creativity and resourcefulness thus equips the students with much desired knowledge, skills and capabilities needed for employability in a competitive society.

Table 3. The Participants' Responses Regarding the Adequacy of Immobile Facilities Provision

Items	Lecturers			Students		
	Mean	SD	Remark	Mean	SD	Remark
1. School site	2.2	0.43	Inadequate	2.0	0.56	Inadequate
2. Laboratory structure	2.5	0.45	Adequate	2.8	0.44	Adequate
3. Lecture halls	2.0	0.42	Inadequate	2.3	0.65	Inadequate
4. Road network	2.5	0.34	Adequate	2.6	0.55	Adequate
5. Level of vegetation	2.8	0.56	Adequate	2.5	0.46	Adequate
6. Computer laboratory	2.6	0.54	Adequate	2.5	0.51	Adequate
7. School field	2.5	0.60	Adequate	2.8	0.50	Adequate
8. School topography	2.5	0.50	Adequate	2.5	0.63	Adequate
9. Office blocks	2.2	0.46	Inadequate	2.2	0.48	Inadequate
10. Bore hole for water supply	2.3	0.61	Inadequate	2.2	0.54	Inadequate
11. Toilet/Urinary	1.8	0.46	Inadequate	1.8	0.56	Inadequate
12. Good dump site	2.3	0.46	Adequate	2.2	0.55	Adequate
13. Security block	2.6	0.56	Adequate	2.8	0.65	Adequate
14. School clinic	3.0	0.54	Adequate	2.8	0.48	Adequate
15. Creational centre	2.2	0.35	Inadequate	2.0	0.56	Inadequate
Grand mean/SD	2.39	0.52		2.4	0.56	

The second finding of this study also revealed that immobile school facilities are inadequate for tertiary education in Anambra State public tertiary institutions. Immobile or stationery school facilities are essential mover in educational industry that accelerates the production of high skilled human capital that is

capable of competing with their counterpart globally. The corresponding hypothesis testing declared that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of the respondents on the adequacy of immobile school facilities provision in Anambra State public tertiary education.

Table 4. *t*-test Statistics on Respondents' Views on the Adequacy of Immobile Facilities Provision

Variables	N	Mean	SD	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i> -cal	<i>t</i> -crit	Remark
Lecturers	579	2.39	0.52	855	1.05	1.96	Not sig.
Students	277	2.4	0.56				

This is in concord with what was previously observed by several researchers (e.g. Okunamiri and Ajaeree [17], Alia and Alia [15], Oluwuo et al. [25], Omosidi et al. [14], Nzokurum and Obi [13]) that the quality of education that our children receive bears direct relevance to the availability or lack of physical facilities with

which learning takes place. The implication is that when these essential educational facilitators are lacking or insufficient, lecturers and students are handicapped and the production of employable graduates in a competitive society becomes futile and jettisoned.

CONCLUSION

Based on the result of the analysis and findings, it was concluded that both mobile and immobile school facilities are inadequately provided in Anambra State public tertiary education. The hypothesis testing declared that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of the respondents on the adequacy of school facilities provision in Anambra State tertiary education.

Following the findings and conclusion of this study, it was recommended as follows: (1) the

relevant authority should as a matter of urgency expedite action in providing suitable mobile educational facilities in public tertiary education for optimal usage and goal attainment, (2) the government or allied agency should deem it fit to adequately provide immobile school facilities in public tertiary education in Anambra State so as to produce employable graduates that could compete headlong with their counterparts world-wide.

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