

IMPACT OF MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ON THE EFFICIENCY OF SCHOOL FACILITIES IN NIGER DELTA UNIVERSITY, BAYELSA STATE.

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Abstract

Facilities management is an integral part of the overall management of tertiary Institutions. The actualization of the goals and objectives of education require the provision, maximum utilization and appropriate management of the facilities. The purpose of this study is to examine the state of school facilities in Nigerian tertiary institutions in comparison with cost of facilities and its management in the institutions. This was achieved by determining the availability of school facilities in Niger Delta University. Assessment of the various facilities managers in the institution, and determining if the cost expended on facilities management in the institution reflects the current state of the physical structures. The data collected were analyzed using mean method and simple percentages. The result revealed that availability of physical facilities in the institution had a mean value of 2.36, performance of the various facilities managers in the institution had a mean value of 2.760, and the simple percentage analysis showed that cost expended on facilities management in the institution, reflects the current state of the physical structures with a value of 89%. The findings from the study show that, the physical facilities in Niger Delta University were inadequate, cost of maintenance expended in the institution has a great impact on the state of the structures and performance of various facilities managers in the institution is just above average. Based on the findings, it was recommended that the government should provide adequate funds to the universities in respect to the provision and management of school facilities. Besides, students should be well-educated on how to maintain available facilities in Nigerian universities.

Keywords: School Facility Management, Operational Efficiency, Nigerian Tertiary Institutions and Impact.

Introduction

Education in general, and higher education in particular, are fundamental to the construction of knowledge, economy and society in all nations. Therefore, tertiary education is considered throughout the world to be the key to both individual and societal aspirations. For individuals; education beyond the secondary level is assumed to be the way societal esteem,

better paying jobs and so on, while for societies; it tends to be the key to technological development, productivity and economic growth.

Schools are established for the purpose of teaching and learning. It is also more important that the teachers and learners are properly accommodated to facilitate the teaching and learning that go on there. This is the essence of

the school plant and facilities (Alimi 2007). Therefore school facilities are the space interpretation and physical expression of the school curriculum. Physical facilities are known to be the largest single class of assets on the balance sheet of a nation or an institution (Hamer, 1988; Ameh and Oko, 2002). Facilities management is a distinct management function and, as such, involves a well defined and consistent set of responsibilities. Simply stated, it is management of a vital asset which is the organization's facilities. Facility management combines proven management with current technical knowledge to provide humane and effective work environments. It is the business practice of planning, providing and managing productive work environments (International Facility Management Association, 2011). In Nigeria, institutions of higher learning have been facing a lot of problems such as inadequate funding, inadequacy of equipment and facilities, indiscipline among staff and student and so on, which has adversely affected their academic performance. Higher education is the key for the development and achievement of every nation so the need of educational facilities to users cannot be overemphasized. The purpose of teaching and learning process is to bring about desirable change in the learner's behavior through critical thinking. The processes does not take place in a vacuum but rather in an environment structures to facilitate learning. In ideal situation for teaching and learning to take place, there must be adequate infrastructure. Consequently, provision of instructional materials has impact on student learning achievement in educational system.

Facilities management is an integral part of the overall management of the school. The actualization of the goals and objectives of education require the provision, maximum utilization and appropriate management of the facilities. School facilities consist of all types of buildings for academic and non-academic activities; equipment for academic and non-academic activities, areas for sports and games, landscape, farms and gardens including trees,

roads and paths. Others include furniture and toilet facilities, lighting, acoustics, storage facilities, parking lot, security, transportation, ICT, cleaning materials, food services, and special facilities for the physically challenge persons. Researchers have shown that non-availability and inadequacy of such facilities have great influence on the performance of both students and lecturers in higher institution of learning. The facilities can be categorized into physical and non-physical facilities.

Tertiary education is an important wheel for the development and progress of a nation so the importance of educational facilities which play host to a large number of users with various needs as characterized by tertiary education facilities cannot be overemphasized (Hassanain and Mudhei, 2006). This study focuses on the facilities management in the Federal University of Technology, Minna in comparison with the state of the physical structures in the University. The study is aimed at investigating the management of school facilities in Niger Delta University Amassoma, Bayelsa State. The specific objectives are to find out various facilities available in tertiary schools in Bayelsa state and how these facilities are properly managed and maintained.

Research Questions

Based on the findings, the following research questions were raised,

- 1) What types of facilities are available in tertiary institutions in Bayelsa State?
- 2) To what extent are these facilities efficiently utilized in tertiary institutions in Bayelsa State?
- 3) How effectively are these facilities maintained and managed in tertiary institutions in Bayelsa State?

2.0 Literature Review

The school facilities consist of all types of buildings for academic and non-academic activities, equipment for academic and nonacademic activities, areas for sports and games, landscape, farms and gardens including

trees, roads and paths. Others include furniture and toilet facilities, lighting, acoustics, storage facilities and packing lot, security, transportation, ICT, cleaning materials, food services, and special facilities for the physically challenged persons. These facilities play pivotal role in the actualization of the educational goals and objectives by satisfying the physical and emotional needs of the staff and students of the school.

The primary purpose of the teaching and learning process is to bring about desirable change in the learner's behaviour through critical thinking. This process does not take place in a vacuum but rather in an environment structures to facilitate learning. Olaleye (2011) observed that for proper teaching and learning to take place, there must be adequate infrastructure. However casual observation reveals that in many public tertiary institutions in Nigeria, the lecture halls are overcrowded and many of the students stay outside because of inadequate accommodation. Several studies have shown that a close relationship exists between the physical environment and the academic performance of students. Ajayi & Ayodele (2001), in their study proved that adequate supply of instructional resources has significant effects on students' performance and enhances the effectiveness of instructional delivery and supervision, such instructional facilities include lecture rooms, office accommodation, laboratories, workshops, sporting facilities, equipment in libraries, and so on. Facilities are materials designed to serve specific purposes. In the school system, there are multiplicity of facilities, which facilitate teaching and learning. They are used;

- (1) To illustrate concepts
- (2) Provide opportunity for firsthand experience
- (3) For experimentation and demonstration
- (4) For scientific investigation and discovery
- (5) To provide diversity of thoughts
- (6) For observation and inquiry
- (7) For development of scientific attitudes and skills

- (8) To protect the individual and also provide comfort

Physical facilities comprises of buildings, land, compound, equipment's, tools, space and so on, while the nonphysical facilities include consultancy, catering, security, supply, relocation and event and both are required to be planned, design, documented, resourced, provided or delivered and monitored (Carpenter & Oluafa, 2005). Whilst the quality of facility services is important to business in institutions and organizations around the world, where the customer impact is immediate, such as retail sites and hospital. Business sector is a key determining criticality of facility to core operations (Ogundele & Moronfoye, 2013). Facilities are organizations' resources just like human, technology, finance and time. Facilities play a facilitating role by providing all the necessary support to organization so that it can successfully carry out its business smoothly; properly managed facilities can make certain contribution to organization success International Facility Management Association (IFMA, 2011). These strategic roles and contributions include improving quality working life. Facilities are instrument of productivity; as such this closer integration of facilities brings important opportunities to provide a competitive advantage Alexander(2006).

Facility Management (FM) plays a prominent role in an organization's performance and productivity. Facility management has a high impact on people's productive, business model, and workplace environment. FM parameters such as power consumption and maintenance practice may affect the planning and the management. In an economic language, the success of managing and operating a facility depends on the ability to maximize its return per money invested. Public higher education organizations and institutions are a type of public sector organizations since they are funded by a government Teicholz, (2001). Consequently, managing and operating the

facilities differ from private sectors. For instance, the reviews and approvals of actions must go through layers of management. Also, maintenance contractors are rewarded with the lowest bid by delivering lowquality services. On the other hand, organization structure, Information Technology, aging buildings, insufficient financial resources, lousy maintenance practices, and planning are increasing the challenges in managing and operating the higher education facilities.

Methodology

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. This method was used because the study is based on the management of school facilities in nigerian tertiary institutions. The population of the study consist of all facility managers, teaching and non-teaching staff of Niger Delta University, Bayelsa State. A total of 50 respondents were included in the study, comprising 5 facility managers and 45 teaching and non-teaching staff. These individuals were randomly selected

from the entire population to form the study's sample size. The sample size was determined by adapting the recommendations of Nwana in Nwagu (2013) that sample sizes for specific population could be at least 40% for a population of few hundreds, 20% for many hundreds, 10% for few thousands and at most 5% for several thousands. Therefore the total population will be considered as sample size. The research instrument used in gathering data for the study was a questionnaire constructed by the researcher titled Managment of School Facilities in Nigeria Tertiary institutions Questionnaire (MSFNTIQ). The items were formulated in order to elicit the respondents' perception on the issue covered in the research topic. The data collected were analyzed using mean and percentages.

Result

Research question one

To know what facilities are available in tertiary schools in Bayelsa State.

Table 1: Responses on facilities available in tertiary schools in Bayelsa State.

N=50

S/N	STATEMENTS	SA	A	D	SD	M	Decisi on
1	Well structured buildings; classrooms, laboratories etc	48	2	-	-	4.0	Agree
2	Toilet facilities	43	5	2	-	3.8	Agree
3	Furniture and lighting facility	50	-	-	-	4.0	Agree
4.	Transportation facility	35	5	8	2	3.5	Agree
5.	ICT/ Security facility	26	14	10	-	3.3	Agree

Mean criterion= 2.50

The results in Table 1 above indicate that the respondents strongly agreed that there are well structured buildings in terms of classrooms, laboratries etc (mean = 4.0); toilet facilities were also available (Mean =3.8). The findings shows that all respondents were of the view that furniture and lighting facility is also available (mean =4.0). It was also observed that

transportation facility was readily available (mean= 3.5); Finally respondents were of the view that the ICT/ Security facility was not really available compared to other facilities (mean=3.3). In all the cases it should be noted that basic facilities are available in tertiary schools.

Research question two: To what extent are they efficiently used in tertiary schools in Bayelsa State.

Table 2: Responses on the use of facilities in tertiary schools.

N=50

S/N	STATEMENTS	SA	A	D	SD	M	Decision
1	Are the classrooms under utilized	-	-	17	33	1.3	Disagree
2	Are the toilet facilities always open for use	40	7	3	-	3.7	Agree
3	The furniture is good enough for use and the classrooms/laboratories are lightened up enough to aid learning.	48	2	-	-	4.0	Agree
4.	Transportation facility is well organized and utilized.	25	11	8	6	3.1	Agree
5.	ICT/ Security facility are sufficiently put in place and easily accessible.	22	7	20	1	3.0	Agree

Mean criterion= 2.50

The results in Table 2 above indicate that the respondents strongly disagreed that classrooms are under-utilized (mean = 1.3); it was observed toilet facilities were always open for use (Mean =3.7). The findings shows that all respondents were of the view that the furnitures are good enough for use and the classrooms/laboratories are lightened up enough to aid learning. (mean =4.0). It was also observed that transportation facility is well organized and utilized (mean=

3.1); Finally respondents were of the view that the ICT/ Security facility are sufficiently put in place and easily accessible.(mean=3.0). In all the cases it should be noted that facilities are efficiently utilized in tertiary schools.

Research question three

To what extent are they maintained and managed in tertiary schools in Byelsa State.

Table 3: Responses on the maintenance and management of facilities in tertiary schools.

N=50

S/N	STATEMENTS	SA	A	D	SD	M	Decision
1	The classrooms, laboratories etc are properly maintained and managed by the cleaning staff.	36	14	-	-	3.7	Agree
2	The toilets are always neat to use	12	13	20	5	2.6	Agree
3	The furniture's are in good shape and the lights are still very much good for use	28	2	17	3	3.1	Agree
4.	Transportation facility is properly managed by transport officers in charge	42	8	-	-	3.8	Agree
5.	ICT/ Security facility are always checked and cleaned to avoid damage.	30	8	2	10	3.2	Agree

Mean criterion= 2.50

The results in Table 3 above indicate that the respondents agreed that classrooms,

laboratories etc are properly maintained and managed by the cleaning staff.(mean = 3.7); it

was observed that toilet facilities are always neat to use (Mean = 2.6). The findings shows that respondents were of the view that the furniture's are in good shape and the lights are still very much good for use (mean = 3.1). It was also observed that transportation facility is properly managed by transport officers in charge (mean = 3.8); Finally respondents were of the view that ICT/ Security facility are always checked and cleaned to avoid damage. (mean = 3.2). In all the cases it should be noted that facilities are well maintained and managed in tertiary schools.

Discussion of findings

School facilities is an integral part of effective teaching and learning processes. From the study it can be observed that there are availability of basic facilities required and needed in the school system; most especially in tertiary institutions. But the maintenance culture is been called to question. Findings from research question one has shown the various facilities available in tertiary schools which includes electricity (lighting), classroom & lecture theatre, laboratory, library & sport facilities, computers, & ICT Securities, toilet etc.

Findings from research question two shows how these facilities are efficiently utilized in terms of their usage. What will be the need of a facility when it can't be put into sufficient use. This study has shown the importance of facilities, its usage and it can be properly maintained and managed. Findings from research question three shows the level of maintenance and management of school facilities. It can be observed that the maintenance culture and management of some of these facilities are relatively low. The toilet facilities suffer a great deal when it comes to maintenance and management likewise some other areas too. More importance should be put to the maintenance and management of school facilities most especially in tertiary institutions. Finally, the findings from the study shows that, the physical facilities in the universities were inadequate, cost of maintenance expended in the institution has a great impact on the state of

the structures and performance of various facilities managers in the institution is just above average.

Conclusion

Facility management needs to be encouraged for the benefit of both property owners and users. And the availability, adequacy and quality of school facilities affect the morale of the students and their academic performance which stands to reason that facilities must not be only available but must be adequate and in good condition in order to encourage students achievement in higher education especially in developing country like Nigeria. The bottom line is that the availability of facilities in any organization is important but more important is the effectiveness and efficiency in the management of facilities to achieve the desired goals. In a university, the desired goal is a conducive environment that will encourage education, research and outreach.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made;

1. Government should provide adequate funds to the universities in respect to the provision and management of school facilities.
2. Students should be well-educated on how to maintain available facilities in Nigerian universities.
3. Users of schools facilities should imbibe a good and proper maintenance culture for effective management of the facilities.

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