

The Impact of Off-Campus Accommodation on Students' Social Behaviour in Niger State Polytechnic, Bida Campus

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.62154/37jjwd72>

Abstract

Off-campus housing, gives students' chance of attaining independence toward their personal development because they are not under the control of either parents or institution's rules and regulations more or less on their own freedom and independent. The study aimed at examining the impact of off-campus accommodation on students' social behaviour in Niger state polytechnic, Bida campus. Descriptive survey was adopted, using sample size of 138 students living in various off-campus lodge, chi-square was used to test the formulated hypotheses and the result showed that there is no significant relationship between off-campus accommodation and students' social behaviour such as independence, freedom, personal growth and development. Conclusively, it is fundamental for all tertiary institutions and stakeholders to consider and prioritized students housing for ensuring adequate and good student houses are provided. Extra measures should be taken by the management of the polytechnic to monitor the activities and behaviours of students living on-campus since there is no significant difference between the behaviours of students' living off – campus and their counterparts living in on – campus.

Keywords: Off-Campus, On-Campus, Students' Behaviour, Independence, Accommodation.

Introduction

Accommodation of students is an important component and responsibility of tertiary institutions. The availability of adequate students' accommodation in a tertiary institution helps in attracting higher number of students from different backgrounds and state across the nation in pursuance of various academic programmes (Kolawole & Boluwatife, 2016). Tertiary institutions owned by both federal and state government to a large extent are unable to provide adequate and decent accommodation for students due to the persistent increased in number of students who gained admission annually and inadequate funding on the part of government (Sharma, 2012). The provision of adequate, healthy and quality accommodation to students in tertiary institution still remain a major challenge for tertiary institution and students' personal growth and development (Jiboye, 2010). This often results to the participation of other stakeholders in either partnering with the government or solely providing private accommodation facilities for students in on or off-campus (Centre for Global Education, 2002). Thus, making available two major choices for students' residences (to either reside in on-campus or off-campus), those who are fortunate to secure

campus accommodation (on-campus) which is inadequate in most cases, thereby, making other students to seek and reside in accommodations outside the school (off-campus) owned by private individuals in environment close to the institutions. Off-campus accommodation provides students with lots of opportunities such as freedom, independence and social integration. Donaldson et al, (2014) asserts that, students who reside in off-campus accommodation have great tendencies of personal development, since they are not under the control of their parents or school rules and regulations. However, various studies opined that on-campus accommodation has a positive impact on students' growth and development (Pike, 2002; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). It can be deduced from the above that off-campus accommodation helps in addressing the problem of accommodations inadequacy for students, it also provides a social environment that is attributed to independence, freedom, personal growth, adulthood lifecycle, reshaping students' social behaviour towards responsible citizenship, leadership and sound intellect for a successful adulthood and lifestyle.

Problem Statement

Off-campus accommodation is characterized with lots of challenges and threats which often affects negatively the students' comfort, convenience, safety and academic performance. Students living in off-campus accommodation are faced with lots of challenges than their counterparts living in on-campus residences (Muslim et al, 2012b). these challenges may include; insufficient housing, high rent, poor and inadequate learning facilities, cultural differences, insecurity and in some cases long distance to school. However, students' living off-campus also bring along with them all sort of traditions, norms, and culture which may positively or negatively affects their communities of residence. Despite these challenges, the interaction between off-campus students and their host communities will help in reshaping the student's social behaviour in terms of social interaction, integration, freedom, independence personal growth and responsible citizenship and leadership.

From literature available to the researcher, no study has been conducted to find out the impact of off-campus accommodation on student behaviour in the chosen study location (Niger State Polytechnic, Bida Campus). This study will bridge this research gap.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to examine the impact of off-campus accommodation on students' social behaviour in Niger state polytechnic, Bida campus, co-objectives include:

- To identify factors responsible for students' choice of accommodation
- To identify and assess the challenges faced by students living in off-campus accommodation. the impact of off-campus accommodation on students' social behaviour.

- To determine the extent to which off-campus accommodation influence student's personal growth and independence.

Research Questions

This research seeks to address the following questions:

- What are the responsible factors for students' choice of accommodation?
- What are the challenges faced by students' living in off-campus accommodation in Bida?
- Does off-campus accommodation influence student's personal, independence and to what extent?

Research Hypothesis

H₀: Off-campus accommodation and students' social behaviour has no significant relationship.

H₁: Off-campus accommodation and students' social behaviour has significant relationship.

Literature Review

Importance of Student Housing

The importance of students housing cannot be overemphasized as it deals with the socio-economic aspect of individual occupants. An excellent and comfortable housing environment often leads to comfort, satisfaction, convenience, life fulfillment and the attainment of reasonable and meaningful academic performance. It provides students with a healthy, behavioural and social stability as well as enhancing their productivity (Aluko, 2011), and further enhance student's commitment and total dedication to his academic activities (Flemming et' al, 2005). Consequently, for students to excel in their academic activities, they are required to be in a very sound mindset devoid of disruptions in the process of learning fully require a proper housing facility (Aluko, 2011; Oginga, 2013). Studies conducted by ja'afar (2012) and Muslim et'al, (2012a) disclosed that the success of a student has link or relation with certain factors of the environment he is living in. Therefore, the importance of student housing cannot be underscored, since there is a strong connection between student housing and the student social, academical and behavioural wellbeing. A very conducive housing often leads to student comfort, convenience, fulfilment and total satisfaction which in turn influence the student social behaviour, independence, personal growth and academic performance.

Types of Student Housing

Previous studies such as Li et'al, (2005); Muslim et'al, (2012a); Nimako & Bondinuba, (2013) and Garg et'al, (2014) reported and categorized student housing into two basic forms; on-campus residence (students residing within the school premises) and off-campus residence (students residing outside school premises). This categorization is mainly focusing on the

location of such houses without regards to ownership and management. Moreover, Najib et'al, (2015) opined that on-campus student housing is usually built within the institution environment, owned, control, and provides restricted form of independence and freedom to students. On the same vein he further explained that off-campus students housing is also usually been built outside the premises of the institution, owned, controlled and managed by private individuals and it provides absolute freedom and independence to students. Similarly, Turley & Wodtke, (2010) in their classification deals with ownership, in the sense that on-campus is owned by the institution while off-campus is owned by private persons. Additionally, some scholars often referred to students living in on-campus housing as 'residence hall students while those living in off-campus housing are tagged 'non-resident hall students (Khozaie et'al, 2010c; Bannin & Kuk, 2011; Muslim et al., 2012a; Garg et'al, 2014). However, student housing is classified into three models which includes; non-residential housing (institution does not have a student housing facility which simply means that students need to source for their accommodation), residential housing (institution provide housing facility to all students admitted) and the dual-residential housing (institution only provides housing facility to a segment of its students for a certain period or for a particular gender only) (Yusuff, 2011). Furthermore, Hammad et al., (2013) had a divergent view and perspective regarding student housing practiced in most part of the world. They classified student housing into four types namely: Traditional On-campus (normal housing built by the institution in their premises), Off-campus leased (housing built by private investors outside the premises of the institution leased to the management of the institution or directly to the students), On-campus school managed (housing facility built in the school premises through partnership, under certain agreement, managed by the institution), and Off-campus private (housing built outside the school premises and managed by private individuals or investors. It can be deduced from the above that, the classification of students housing may differ by name but are strongly related and can be streamlined into two major categories which is on-campus and off-campus in relation to the location as well as the opportunity for students' freedom and independence.

On-Campus Student Housing

Students living in on-campus accommodation are opportune to enjoy several advantages such as closeness to classes, laboratory, department, library and other institutional facilities which in turn may make them live more comfortably and allow them to actively participate in their academic endeavours as well as other extra curriculum functions that will help towards enhancing personal development and performance. An efficient on-campus housing help students in establishing a set of characters forming personal development and intellectual competence attainment and self fulfilment (Najib et'al, 2015). In the same vein, Ong et'al, (2013) asserts that on-campus housing has a significant impact on the behaviour of student through the creation of conducive educational and recreational environment. Similarly, several studies such as Rinn, (2004); Li et'al, (2005) and Pat-mbanu et'al, (2012) revealed that on-campus housing plays a vital role of motivating students towards

engaging actively in their academic activities. Additionally, Najib et'al, (2015) opines that on-campus housing helps in creating an educational environment that promotes collaboration, social cohesion and friendly community that develop and enhance social skills, making students more matured and fully prepared for leadership status in the future. It is a method of integrating students from diverse social and cultural backgrounds living in an environment guided by institutional rules and regulations which upholds the principle of team work, partial independence and leadership skills (*ibid*, 2015). Thus, on-campus housing can be seen as a form of student housing that provides lots of advantages such as; proximity to classes, library, and laboratory; offers relative independence and freedom, safe, comfortable, less cost, various educational aiding facilities (WiFi, stable power); leadership opportunities, personal development and social integration. This is because all residents are having common purpose of acquiring knowledge and are almost free from other social challenges offered by the real world which comprises of individuals with diverse interest (some literate, others illiterate).

Off-Campus Student Housing

This form of accommodation emanates as a result of the inability of tertiary institutions to provide adequate accommodations for admitted students. This could be because of the increase in number of students who applied and gained admission into the respective institution. Due to the increased in student population which exceeds the tertiary institution capacity to accommodate them, leading to a persistent and consistent dependence on private rented apartments outside the school premises (Rugg et'al, 2000). In this situation, students will be willing to live in any form of housing available in the neighbourhood of the institution without regards to his safety, comfort and convenience due to high demand by students and low supply by private house owners. Onwong'a, (2012) conducted a study in Nairobi (Kenya) and discovered that 70% of students living in off-campus housing are occupying houses that are family residential houses converted to hostels, whereas only 30% are originally built as student houses. One major attribute of off-campus housing is share apartment which signifies students sharing a room or flat. Student who lives in off-campus housing often have the chances of independence attainment towards personal development. This is because of the fact that students here are no longer under the control or guidance of their parents or guardians or even rules and regulations of institutions, as such have absolute freedom and independence which also can be an opportunity for them to enter and attain adulthood cycle. Donaldson et'al, (2014) observed that off-campus housing provides students with the opportunity to live life independently, free from all sorts of rules and regulations of parents or institutions of learning. Therefore, the freedom and independence offered by off-campus housing to students is strongly connected to the creation of a social environment that enhances independence, intellectuality and personal growth. Students' behaviour is shaped by off-campus accommodation towards good citizenship, responsible leadership and sound adulthood lifestyle. Although living in off-

campus accommodation also has its problems and challenges as it exposed students to the real world.

Challenges of Off-Campus Student Housing

Off-campus accommodation offers a range of opportunities to student in reshaping their social behaviour and experiencing how to live their lives in an environment different from their own and the real world. This new lifestyle will directly or indirectly affect student's behaviour and daily activities such as comfort, convenience, academic progress and safety. Muslim et'al, (2012b) disclosed that living in off-campus accommodation is more challenging than living in on-campus. There are several challenges faced by students living in off-campus accommodation as identified in the literature some of which includes: High cost of rent, insecurity, distance from campus and poor facilities for learning.

Factors Influencing Student Social Behaviour

Students' behaviour can be influenced by various factors ranging from the community, media, and peer groups. The community in which the student lives may be socially disorganised. The presence of poverty, low employment and education opportunities, gang activities, drug activities and crimes and the absence of cohesion among neighbours and community networking, the community becomes entirely dysfunctional (Peterson & Morgan, 2011; Gambo & Muktar, 2017). As a result, there is a divergence between the values of the family and the values of this disorganised community, and the school fails at synchronising them. Such a situation causes the adolescents to lack social competence such as pro social behaviour and emotional regulation (Vijila, Thomas & Ponnusamy, 2013). Besides, they may have inadequate respect for the cultural and traditional norms and manifest a low self-esteem. Adolescents with low self-esteem cannot handle their emotions and behaviour; they are disoriented (Naganandini, 2017). So, it is obvious that student indiscipline in schools is a reflection of signs of disorders in the community which surround the school and the society at large

Tertiary institution students are millennials and therefore their daily life at home, at school and even in their peer group is technology-driven. The new media dominate their lives (Council on Communications and Media, 2013). They are constantly involved in the "multi-tasking" process: they attend to the lesson and they also send messages, chat on the social network and even view YouTube on their mobile phones at the same time.

Individuals are more likely to give in to peer pressure and manifest unacceptable behaviour that may have a negative impact on themselves or on others such as what they value, knows, wears, eats and learns. Bezuidenhout, (2013) maintains that adults display disruptive behaviour in groups, not individually. This is based on the Social Learning Theory which posits that adolescents learn to display socially unacceptable behaviour when they interact with other people. Besides, growing adolescents take up their peers at school as their role models as their parents are no more considered as role models to them (Ndakwa, 2013). With peer pressure, students may take drugs, alcohol, tobacco and weapons, bully

other students who are not part of the group or who do not fit the group, and involved in illegal gang activities (Gitome, Katola & Nyabwari, 2013). They also often break the school rules to show their disapproval of the school authority and to challenge it; therefore, they are mainly involved in antisocial behaviour (Johnson, 2012).

Methodology

Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study which employed the use of a structured questionnaire comprising of two sections; namely, demographic characteristics of respondents and the perception of quality of off-campus accommodation and its influence on social behavior.

The population of the study is the total number of students living in various lodge in banyagi area of Bida which includes; Las Vegas with a population of seven (07) students, Corporate lodge with thirty five (35) students, Action lodge with thirty (30) students, Aso villa lodge with twelve (12) students, Better life lodge with eight (08) students, Scorpion lodge with ten (10) students, Mary land lodge with twenty one (21) students, Mexico lodge with twenty nine (29) students, Chocolate villa lodge with thirty five (35) students, White house lodge with ten (10) students and Leron lodge with thirteen (13) students making a total of two hundred and ten (210) students within the identified lodges. The sample size was 138 students using the Yaro-Yamani formula of sample size determination at 5% level of significance. Stratified random sampling technique was initially adopted to get the required respondents from each lodge and the simple random sampling was finally adopted in order to achieve a good sample representation and spread across various lodges under study in Banyagi Area of Bida. Both primary and secondary data was utilized for the study.

Primary data was sourced through the administration of questionnaire to respondents using the 5-Likert scale rating with 1 (Strongly Disagree), 2 (Disagree), 3 (Neutral), 4 (Agree) and 5 (Strongly Agree). Secondary data will be sourced through various mediums such as Google Scholar, Science Direct, Web of Science Textbooks, Journal Publications, Periodicals and Articles. Data collected from respondents was analyzed using simple percentages and tables while the hypotheses was tested using the Chi-Square Statistical technique.

Data Presentation and Analysis

This section presents the data collected from the field and its analysis with a view to explain the significant relationship between off-campus accommodation and how it influences students' behaviour in Niger state polytechnic, Bida campus.

Section A: Analysis of Demographic Characteristics

TABLE 1: Demographic characteristics of respondents

VARIABLES	RESPONSES/OPTIONS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Marital Status	Married	25	18
	Single	113	82
	Total	138	100
Age Bracket of Respondents	15 - 25	100	72
	26 - 35	26	19
	36 - 45	10	8
	45 & Above	02	1
	Total	138	100
Level of Study	HND	50	36
	ND	88	64
	Total	138	100

Source: Questionnaire Administered, 2024.

Table 1 above reveals that 25 respondents representing 18% are married, while 113 respondents representing 82% were not married. Therefore, the majority of respondents are singles. The table also showed that 100 respondents representing 72% are between the ages of 15 – 25 years, 26 respondents representing 19% are between the ages of 26 – 35 years, 10 respondents representing 8% are between the ages of 36 – 45 years while 02 respondents representing 1% were of the ages of 45 years and above. Thus, the majority of respondents are between the ages of 15 – 25 years.

It is also indicated in the table that 50 respondents representing 36% are in ND level of study while 88 respondents representing 64% are in HND level of study. Thus, the majority of respondents are ND students of the polytechnic.

Section B: Analysis of Responses to Research Questions

TABLE 2: Responses to research questions

QUESTIONS	RESPONSES/OPTIONS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Types of accommodation occupied by students	Single Rooms	98	71
	Self-Contained	40	29
	Total	138	100
Off-campus accommodation influence students' independence and freedom.	Strongly Agreed	80	58
	Agreed	20	15
	Neutral	10	7
	Disagreed	13	9
	Strongly Disagreed	15	11
Total	138	100	

TABLE 2: CONTD.

QUESTIONS	RESPONSES/OPTIONS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Off-campus accommodation influence students' personal growth and development.	Strongly Agreed	25	18
	Agreed	76	55
	Neutral	05	4
	Disagreed	20	14
	Strongly Disagreed	12	9
	Total	138	100
Students living in off-campus are more prone to negative social vices such as drug abuse, theft and sexual harassment.	Strongly Agreed	65	47
	Agreed	40	29
	Neutral	-	-
	Disagreed	30	22
	Strongly Disagreed	03	2
	Total	138	100

Source: Questionnaire Administered, 2024.

The table 2 above indicates that 98 respondents representing 71% are living in single rooms apartment while 40 respondents representing 29% are living in self-contained apartment. Therefore, the majority of respondents are living in single room apartments.

The table also reveals that 80 respondents representing 58% strongly agreed with the assertion that off-campus accommodation influence students' independence and freedom, 20 respondents representing 15% agreed with the assertion, 10 respondents representing 7% were neutral, 13 respondents representing 9% disagreed while 15 respondents representing 11% strongly disagreed. Thus, the majority of respondents strongly agreed with the assertion that off-campus accommodation influence students' independence and freedom.

The table above reveals that 25 respondents representing 18% strongly agreed with the assertion that off-campus accommodation influence students' personal growth and development, 76 respondents representing 55% agreed with the assertion, 05 respondents representing 4% were neutral, 20 respondents representing 14% disagreed while 12 respondents representing 9% strongly disagreed. Thus, the majority of respondents agreed with the assertion that off-campus accommodation influence students' personal growth and development.

The table further reveals that 65 respondents representing 47% strongly agreed with the assertion that students' living in off-campus are more prone to negative social vices such as drug abuse, theft and sexual harassment, 40 respondents representing 29% agreed with the assertion, no respondents representing 0% were neutral, 30 respondents representing 22% disagreed while 03 respondents representing 2% strongly disagreed. Thus, the majority of respondents strongly agreed with the assertion that students' living in off-campus are more prone to negative social vices such as theft, drug abuse and sexual harassment.

Statistical Test and Result Interpretation and Findings

TABLE 3: Computation of data for the validation of hypothesis

Fo	Fe	Fo – Fe	(Fo – Fe) ²	$\frac{(Fo - Fe)^2}{Fe}$
110	108	2	4	0.037
28	30	-2	4	0.133
106	108	-2	4	0.037
32	30	2	4	0.133
				0.34

Source: Questionnaire Administered, 2024.

Level of significance at 5% and degree of freedom = (r – 1) (c – 1) = 1

From the Table 3 analysis, the chi-square calculated value is 0.34 while the chi-square tabulated value is 3.84 which shows that the calculated value is less than the table value at 5% level of significance and df = 1. Therefore, the Ho hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between off-campus accommodation and students’ social behavior such as independence, freedom and personal growth was accepted.

The findings of this research can be summarized as follows:

- It was discovered that majority of off-campus residents are male students between the ages of 15 – 35 and this is due to lack of male student’s accommodation in the school.
- It was revealed from the study that there is no significant relationship between off-campus accommodation and students’ social behaviour such as independence, freedom, personal growth and development.
- The study also discovered that students’ living in off-campus accommodations are more prone to negative social vices such as theft, robbery, drug abuse, violence, high level of insecurity and social isolation.

Conclusion

Good housing condition will significantly influence students’ social behavior leading to their commitment and involvement in academic activities towards better performance and achieving their educational mission while on the contrary, reverse case will be the result. Traditionally, institutions of any kind have been to a varying degree associated with providing care, housing and surveillance services to the students in an effort to create favourable environment for learning. Therefore, it is fundamental for all tertiary institutions and stakeholders to consider and prioritised students housing for ensuring adequate and good student houses are provided. It becomes clear that students housing is far from adequate and private investors are playing major role in filling the shortfalls created by tertiary institution student housing as they accommodate majority of the students. Although these private developers are the key players in the provision of students housing and their roles is highly significant and commendable, but many studies have shown houses provided are not satisfactory quality wise, inadequate/poor quality facilities and services,

exorbitant rent rates and intractable insecurity. Tertiary institutions and governments should deem it necessary in ensuring that student housing facilities provided by private developers meets the requisite standards and conditions to enhance students' social behavior and learning.

Recommendations

In view of the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- Niger state polytechnic should provide accommodation for male students (students hostels) in order to reduce the risk of vulnerability to criminal activities such as robbery, sexual harassment and thuggery.
- Extra measures should be taken by the management to monitor the activities and behaviours of students living on-campus since there is no significant difference between the behaviours of students' living off – campus and their counterparts living in on – campus.
- Providing housing to student is important as it ease much of the hassles students may face and it will facilitate students to settle down quickly to face the academic rigour.

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