



**ADEQUACY ASSESSMENT OF GOVERNMENT'S BUDGETARY ALLOCATIONS
FOR THE PROVISION OF LECTURE HALLS IN NIGERIA'S FEDERAL
UNIVERSITIES**

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to assess the adequacy of federal government's budgetary allocations on the provision of lecture halls for undergraduate students in federal universities in North-Central Zone of Nigeria. Apart from extracting relevant Documents relating to budgetary allocations from the sampled universities, a descriptive research design was employed and data was collected from university Vice-Chancellors, bursary staff, lecturers and students from the five sampled federal universities. While all the 5 Vice-Chancellors were considered, a sample of 101 out of 254 bursary staff was sampled. In addition, 437 lecturers out of 2,912 were also sampled, 50 students were purposively sampled. The research instruments employed for data collection were questionnaires for bursary staff and lecturers, interview guide for university Vice-Chancellors, and Focus Group Discussion Guide for university students. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were employed to analyze the data. The findings from the field and documents showed that universities budgetary allocations for the provision of lecture halls were only 25 percent of their capital allocation in 2014. In addition, a simple regression model showed that budgetary allocations to universities influence the provisions of lecture halls. Furthermore, findings from the study also showed that even with inadequate lecture halls, the number of applicants and students' enrolment was on the increase thereby putting more pressure

on existing lecture halls. The study recommended among others that government should facilitate policies that will develop universities infrastructure so that adequate lecture halls can be constructed, and Vice-Chancellors should apart from investing in profitable ventures, mobilize Alumni and other stakeholders to be involved in the development of universities through the construction of lecture halls.

INTRODUCTION

University education globally is a capitalist intensive venture which requires adequate funding by way of budgetary allocations from government for public universities. The statuses of budgetary allocations by government to universities differ from country to country. The available global picture painted on government spending on university education as reported in 2006 for the United Kingdom, Germany, Spain and the United States of America stood at 1.1 percent, 0.9 percent, 0.9 percent and 1.0 percent of their GDP on universities education respectively (Heakal, 2009). These allocations according to Heakal were used for among others, building of lecture halls in universities.

Due to poor budgetary allocations, tertiary institutions in Africa are finding it increasingly difficult to build lecture halls as most lecture halls are overcrowded and equipment is outdated. The consequence of this is the inability of universities in most of Africa to keep pace with global developments in the management of universities as well as in the provision of lecture halls to students (World Bank, 2011).

A report by the World bank during the 2012 annual budgetary allocations for some African countries, showed that Nigeria trail other African countries with percentage allocation to its education sector in 2012 put at 8.4 percent. For instance, countries like Ghana allocated 31.0 percent, South Africa 25.8 percent and Kenya 23.0 percent to their education sectors in year 2012 (World Bank, 2011). Analysis of the government budgetary allocations to Nigeria's education sector from 2003 to 2013 shows that the sector received an average of 9 percent within the period under review (Abayomi, 2012),. This falls below the recommended 26 percent to the education sector by UNESCO implying that Nigerian federal universities are underfunded, with a possible negative effect on the provision of lecture halls for students.

Most studies about funding of public universities lack appropriate information and recommendations to solve the problem of adequacy of budgetary allocations to universities on the provision of lecture halls for undergraduate students' enrolment. Hence the need for this study which will be delimited in North-Central zone of Nigeria.

Objective of the study

The objective of this study was to establish the adequacy of federal government's budgetary allocations to universities and its influence on the provision of lecture halls for undergraduate students in federal universities in North-Central zone of Nigeria.

Research question

To achieve this objective, the study was guided by the following research question:

1. To what extent does adequacy of federal government budgetary allocations to universities influence provision of lecture halls for undergraduate students in federal universities in North-Central zone of Nigeria?

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Budgetary allocations and lecture halls in universities

Budgetary allocations play an important role in the development process of any country (Usman & Ijaiya, 2010). In Nigeria, they are made to universities by government through the education sector.

The Cambridge University in the United Kingdom in 2011, on the advice of the school's finance committee, earmarked a total amount of £350 million for a period of two years for its capital plan (Anderson, 2015). The funds were adequate and used for the construction of lecture halls and other facilities in the university, making students to learn in a conducive environment. Similarly, Gould (2012) reported that Kansas State University in the United States of America provided funds through budgetary allocations in 2011 for the construction of basic technology classrooms over a two-year timeframe. Each classroom consisting of common core technology costs \$11,000. That goal supported the university's initiative of enhancing facilities and infrastructure to meet evolving needs at a competitive level for conducive learning.

University education in Africa has been reduced to the substandard in which little or no learning is taking place, occasioned by lack of lecture halls, libraries and laboratories among others. University education of most African countries is in serious decline or deepening crises due largely to inadequate funding (Achimugu, 2006). In Rwanda, shortage of funds has resulted to a high shortage of classrooms and laboratories in Rwandan universities (The National University of Rwanda, 2010). This has affected the provision of lecture halls in most African universities.

Nkosi (2014) disclosed that 25 South African public universities were underfunded in 2014. Nkosi noted with concern that the growth in university education was not commensurate with budgetary allocations, this meant that funding was not enough for infrastructural development such as lecture halls. This contributed to overcrowding in lecture halls in the sampled universities in South Africa.

In Nigeria, Wali and Ololube (2015) conducted a study on management of diversification, achievements and challenges in relation to university education in Nigeria and found out that under-funding of education in Nigeria has affected every aspect of university life. That Nigeria's budgetary allocations for university education seem not to show any serious attempt to move Nigerian universities forward. That the situation Nigerian universities find themselves have resulted in negative effect on a number of areas. Such areas according to the study is the dearth of lecture halls in Nigerian universities, that it is so high to the extent that some faculties adopt the principle of first come first serve irrespective of the courses allotted to a lecture hall. The study generalized Nigerian universities without taking cognizance of their peculiarities.

Similarly, in a research conducted by Adebayo (2013) on the state of infrastructure in Nigerian higher institutions in 2012, it was revealed that 23.3 percent of infrastructural projects were abandoned, that the higher institutions can choose to abandon infrastructural projects such as lecture halls because the money for these projects may not be adequate. This means that if government does not release funds for a project, the project dies.

While these studies generalized all higher institutions including Polytechnics and Colleges of education in Nigeria and limited its scope to only infrastructural development, this study will be limited to Federal universities only and will also consider the adequacy of budgetary allocations on the provision of lecture halls for undergraduate students.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design which ensures that data are gathered from relatively large number of issues. John and James (2003) confirmed that descriptive survey entails gathering data and inferring from a study of sample group carefully selected from the total population. This study assessed the adequacy of federal government's budgetary allocations on the provision of lecture halls for undergraduate students in federal universities in North-Central zone of Nigeria.

Target Population

The target population of this study comprised of all the Vice-Chancellors, academic staff, bursary staff and students of federal universities in North-Central zone of Nigeria. The target

population of the study was therefore made up of all the 7 Vice-chancellors in the federal universities, 254 bursary staff and 2,912 lecturers of these universities.

This study also comprised of documents related to budgetary allocations as they influence provision of lecture halls of federal universities in North Central Nigeria. The budgetary allocations of the sampled universities were evaluated on the basis of each of the items listed above, with a view of analyzing and making conclusions.

Sample size and sampling techniques

A total of 5 federal universities were selected using a simple random sampling strategy out of 7 in the North-Central zone of Nigeria representing 71.4 percent of the study population were sampled for this study. The study employed the purposive sampling technique. Kasomo (2006) posited that purposive sampling allows the researcher to select respondents who would give relevant information pertaining to the phenomenon under study, ensure proper presentation of targeted population, and intensify study of selected items besides increasing accuracy of results.

The sample size for Vice-Chancellors and Bursary staff was 100 percent and 39.8 percent respectively. The researchers purposively sampled 15 percent of lecturers for the study. Therefore, a sample of 593 participants constituted the sample for this study. This comprised 5 vice chancellors, 437 Lecturers, 50 students and 101 bursary staff from the universities.

Research instruments

The research used a mixed methods approach. Mixed methods approach as the name suggests is where quantitative and qualitative methodologies are combined in carrying out a study to accomplish the research goals, which require diverse information from diverse stakeholders (Greene, Benjamin, & Goodyear, 2001).

The research instruments that were employed in this study included interview guide for university Vice-Chancellors, questionnaires for bursary staff and academic staff, focus group discussion for students, observation schedule and documents containing figures on budgetary allocations to universities.

RESULTS

Research Question: To what extent does the adequacy of federal government budgetary allocations to universities influence provision of lecture halls for undergraduate students in federal universities in North-Central zone of Nigeria?

Relevant data relating to universities budgetary allocations for capital allocations and lecture halls were extracted from the sampled universities documents. The data is as presented in

Figure1.

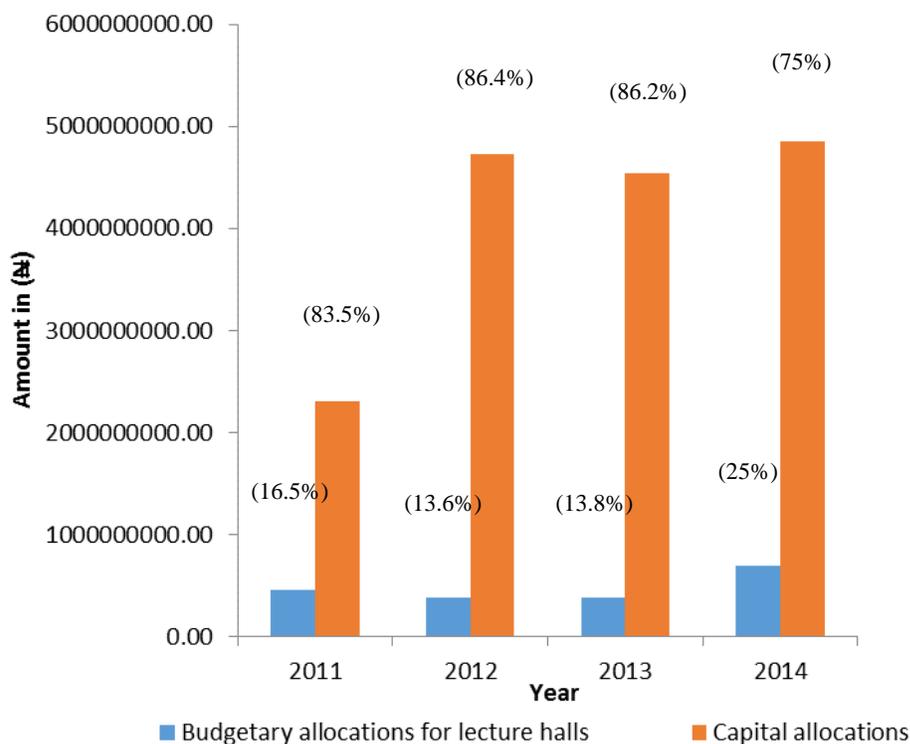


Fig 1. Universities capital budgetary and allocations for lecture halls including TETFund intervention (2011-2014)

Source: University documents from the five sampled universities

Note: Capital allocations include TETFund interventions to the sampled universities

1Ksh = N3

The data in Figure 1 shows that in 2013, budgetary allocations for the provision of lecture halls were N381, 721,796.61 which represent 13.8 percent of the capital allocations. This was corroborated by university Vice-Chancellors and bursary staff who disclosed that budgetary allocations for lecture halls were inadequate, with university Vice-Chancellors disclosing that an average of 67 percent of the required lecture halls are available. This means that universities budgetary allocations for the provision of lecture halls are inadequate. This is in line with Akpanuko (2012) who revealed that due to poor funding, the capacities of universities existing structures comprising of lecture halls can barely accommodate 20 percent of qualified applicants.

The responses of bursary staff were entered into a linear regression with provision of lecture halls for undergraduate students' enrolment as the dependent variable and budgetary allocations as the independent variable. Table 1 provides a summary on the model that emerged from the linear regression.

Table 1 Linear Regression Model Summary for extent of adequacy of budgetary allocations on provision of lecture halls for undergraduate students' enrolment

Regression statistics	
Model	1
R	.446 ^a
R Square	.199
Adjusted R Square	.191
Std. Error of the estimate	3.33761
Durbin Watson	1.668

As shown in Table 1, there is a simple correlation between provision of lecture halls for undergraduate students' enrolment and budgetary allocations to universities in federal universities represented by R has a value of .446. Furthermore the value of R^2 is .199, indicating that budgetary allocations to universities could account for 20 percent of provision of lecture halls in federal universities. This implies that the extent of adequacy of budgetary allocations to universities will predictably affect the provision of lecture halls in North-Central federal universities.

The findings further show that there could be other factors that explain the provision of lecture halls in federal universities in North-Central zone of Nigeria. Budgetary allocations to federal universities in North-Central Nigeria was the only variable entered that brought up 20 percent proportion of causality with the remaining 80 percent to be explained by other variables that might have an influence also. Furthermore, the Durbin-Watson test gave a value of 1.668, which is closer to 2 than it is to 0 and 4 signifying that there is no autocorrelation in the residual of the regressor.

The data collected from university lecturers also aided in furnishing a response for the research question. A simple frequency count of the percentage of respondents viewpoints were captured in a tabular form. Table 2 shows the views of university lecturers on how budgetary allocations influence the provision of lecture halls in universities.

Table 2. Distribution of percentage of respondents' views on influence of budgetary allocations on provision of lecture halls

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
Budgetary allocations are adequate for the construction of students' lecture halls	36.1	32.6	3	16.6	11.7
Undergraduate students are enrolled without consideration to existing lecture halls	17.4	19.2	6.6	32.5	24.3
Budgetary allocations influence the provision of lecture halls for undergraduate students' enrollment	17.2	18.3	3.9	35.9	24.7
Existing lecture halls are adequate for students	30.7	37.2	2.8	14.9	14.4
Students learn comfortably in existing lecture halls	28.4	33.7	4.4	19.7	13.8

N=437

Table 2 indicates that there is high degree of disagreement with the set of statements measuring whether budgetary allocations to universities are adequate for the provision of lecture halls or not. For instance, of the 437 lecturers who responded to this questionnaire, 68.7 percent disagreed that budgetary allocations are adequate for the construction of students' lecture halls in universities. In responding on the adequacy of budgetary allocations for the provision of lecture halls for undergraduate students' enrolment to universities, the university Vice-Chancellors reported that budgetary allocations to universities are not adequate to provide lecture halls for all categories of students in universities, which makes it difficult for students to learn comfortably thereby affecting their performance.

However, 56.8 percent agreed that undergraduate students are enrolled without consideration to existing lecture halls. It was evident that 60.6 percent agreed that budgetary allocations influence the provision of lecture halls for undergraduate students' enrolment. As to whether existing lecture halls are adequate for students or not, the lecturers presented a 67.9 percent depth of disagreement. Furthermore, 62.1 percent of the lecturers disagreed that students learn comfortably in existing lecture halls. On the whole, the direction for most of the indicators for adequacy of budgetary allocations tilted towards disagreement as against agreement thus indicating that budgetary allocations for the provision of lecture halls in universities are not adequate.

The university Vice-Chancellors also reported that budgetary allocations to universities are not adequate for the provision of lecture halls. They further reported that budgetary allocations to their universities influence the availability of lecture halls.

University students were asked in a focus group discussion on what they think of the availability and standard of their lecture halls. Most of them reported that their lecture halls were not befitting for them. This is how one university student puts it:

“Our lecture halls are nothing to write home about. This is because they are always overcrowded, in fact, in most cases, if you don't come to class early enough, you will end up listening to lectures by the window as if you are an intruder. In addition, the chairs and tables are not in good shape, making it difficult for us to take notes in class”.

This comment, together with other comments from the university students and Vice-Chancellors suggest that budgetary allocations to universities are not adequate for the provision of lecture halls in universities. They however disclosed that some lecture halls are comfortable for learning but that generally, lecture halls are in bad condition.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The thrust of the research question is to assess the adequacy of budgetary allocations on the provision of lecture halls for undergraduate students in federal universities in North-Central zone of Nigeria. The key data issues under adequacy of budgetary allocations on the provision of lecture halls include the fact that if budgetary allocations are increased for the provision of lecture halls, more lecture halls will be built and vice-versa. This finding concurs with Ekpenyong (2011) who in a study on underfunding of education and Africa's development challenges, revealed that the low quality of university education in most African countries is attributed to the problem of underfunding, which has resulted to inadequate and deteriorated

classrooms. Ekpenyong therefore confirmed that with more funding for the provision of lecture halls, more lecture halls will be constructed in universities.

In this present study, it was established that as a result of inadequate government budgetary allocations, there are inadequate lecture halls in universities. Only few lecture halls are in good shape, as lecture halls are generally inadequate, with most of the existing ones in bad shape. Furthermore, the findings of this study point to what Akeusola, Viatonu & Asikhia (2012) reported in a study on perceived causes and control of students' crises in Higher Institutions, that as a result of underfunding of the university system, most universities do not have functional lecture halls for teaching.

The next issue from these data relates to the fact that undergraduate students are enrolled without consideration to existing lecture halls. Since students are enrolled by universities management without considering existing lecture halls, it means that there is always pressure on the available lecture halls. This is because students and lecturers are made to learn and teach under unsuitable conditions, making it difficult for proper learning and teaching to take place. This concurs with Yakubu (2012) who reported that most university lecture halls are inadequate and they lack basic furniture, as students sit on bare floor or peep through windows to attend lectures. The report further stated that in some cases, over 1000 students are packed in lecture halls that are meant for less than 150 students. The report attributed this anomaly to poor funding of the university system.

Another issue raised in the data is that budgetary allocations influence the provision of lecture halls for undergraduate students. This means that if budgetary allocations for lecture halls are increased, more lecture halls will be constructed. And if budgetary allocations for lecture halls are not adequate, it means that few lecture halls will be constructed. In most cases, none is constructed. This is in line with Asiyai (2006) who revealed that the adequacy of budgetary allocations for the construction of lecture halls in universities, results to the provision of more lecture halls in universities.

It was also established in this study that existing lecture halls are not adequate for students in universities. This is because in most cases, student population far outweighs existing lecture halls in universities. Okebukola (2005) agreed with a disclosure that inadequate funding makes universities lecture halls not to have the capacities to accommodate the number of students they have, revealing that only about 30 percent of students' population have access to lecture halls in most cases.

In the same vein, it was also established in this study that students do not learn comfortably in existing lecture halls in universities. This is because they are always cramped together in halls that do not have the capacities to carry them, thereby making it uncomfortable for them to learn in such lecture halls. This is in line with Omoniyi (2013) who revealed that learning environment in universities is compromised by over-congested lecture halls, occasioned by inadequate budgetary allocations to universities.

Moreover, the researchers also observed that in most of the universities visited, apart from inadequate lecture halls, existing lecture halls were not spacious enough, walls and floors were dirty and had cracks, furniture were not well arranged and were generally not appropriate for use. This is in line with Odetunde (2004) who disclosed that due to poor funding, most universities lecture halls are unsuitable for use, because they are poorly ventilated, illuminated, furnished and environmentally depressing.

SUMMARY OF KEY RESEARCH FINDING

The key research finding of this study is that budgetary allocations to universities were not adequate for the provision of lecture halls in universities as only 67 percent of the required lecture halls are available. As a result of limited lecture halls, the admitted undergraduate students are cramped in lecture halls which affect their performance.

CONCLUSION

On the basis of the findings of the study, it was noted that budgetary allocations for the provision of lecture halls in universities were not adequate. Universities documents support this fact because in 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014, percentage of capital allocations for the provision of lecture halls were 19.69 percent, 7.97 percent, 8.41 percent and 14.24 percent respectively. It was further established that existing lecture halls were not adequate for students and students do not learn comfortably in universities, all as a result of inadequacy of budgetary allocations for the provision of lecture halls in universities, This was corroborated by university Vice-Chancellors and bursary staff who disclosed that budgetary allocations for lecture halls were inadequate, with university Vice-Chancellors disclosing that an average of 67 percent of the required lecture halls are available.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are proposed:

- i. There is the need for the federal government to create time to facilitate the revision of its policies on university infrastructural development so as to provide clear guidelines in infrastructure development as well as avoiding the delays which are experienced in the award of contracts for the construction of lecture halls.
- ii. The university Vice-Chancellors have a role to play in mobilizing alumni, state and local governments on the importance of their involvement in the infrastructure development process of universities. Through frequent meetings and courtesy visits, the Vice-Chancellors can inform them how their involvement in universities can create a lot of opportunities in facilitating infrastructural development in universities. This will go a long way in providing lecture halls to universities.

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