

Effects of Roommate Relationshipson Students Development, Covenant University, Ota

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Abstract: This paper examined the effect of roommate relationships on students' development. It used questionnaire to collect data from 470 respondents in a faith based university, Ota, Ogun State Nigeria. The study engaged Spearman's correlation method to test hypotheses formulated for the study at 0.01 level of significance. The study found correlation between roommate relationship and students' academic performance and students spiritual life. The study equally found a relationship between roommate relationship and involvement of students in social vices. Moreover, the study discovered correlation between roommate relationship and students emotional stability. Lastly, the study found correlation between roommate relationship and student resource management.

Key words: College • Roommate • Relationship

INTRODUCTION

The study on student development is never restricted to academics in developed nations. It equally involves diverse issues relating to hall of residence, off-campus apartments, parents' homes etc [1-3]. Thus, problems relating to students residential settings, whether on campus or off, have been of interest to many researchers, in these societies, for decades [4-6].

Despite the prevalence of large a body of literature on college roommate relationships in developed nations, over the years, the social problems relating to the university student life in residential settings, on campus, most especially, have not been fully explored in literature in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). The dearth of knowledge in this area in Nigeria is precarious and it could be attributed to the poor-state-of-the-art-facilities and poor funding of education system by the elite class in military and politics, since independence.

The inability of the Nigerian government to adequately provide decent accommodation for students [7, 8], as obtained in developed nations tertiary

institutions has resulted in private developer policy on student residential matters. This policy encourages individual members of the society to build houses for students. The practice has become pronounced in Nigerian higher institutions [8-11] to the extent that 80% of University student population live outside the campuses [12], not minding its consequences on students development. These according to this author include student becoming victims of exploitation from landlords and hostile communities. More often than not, many students are persistently in bloody confrontation with the host indigenes.

Since most Nigerian University students stay off campus as argues by [12], diverse issues relating to students social life relationships in the halls of residence has therefore become hidden to social researchers. Hence, scholarly works relating to on-campus students' accommodation system, to the best of our knowledge, have been hindered. The advent of private universities, with better state-of-the-art-facilities, which have hitherto been a major challenge in the public sector higher

education system, has brought to the fore the importance of on-campus accommodation system on students development.

In spite of the enormity and sensitivity of social life issues emanating from students' halls of residence, in the private Universities, however, no literature, to the best of our knowledge has discussed such social life issues in literature. This article does so in order to contribute to knowledge. Objectives of this study therefore are to examine if the roommate relationship: (i) enhances students' academic performance, (ii) encourages students' spiritual life (iii) influence students' management of resources, (iv) supports students' emotional stability, (v) discourages social vices among students.

The study is divided into three major parts, namely: Introduction, literature review, theoretical insights, methodology, findings and discussion. The study ends with suggestion for further studies and concluding remarks.

Operational Definition of Terms

College Hostel: A building that provide cheap accommodation and feeding for students

Roommate: A person who shares a room or apartment with another or others

Roommate Relationship: A type of connection that exists among students in the same room in higher institutions of learning.

Roommate Conflict: Misunderstanding among students who share the same room.

Literature Review

Examination of Research on College Roommate Relationships: College or university roommate relationships entail living and interacting with students of different background, lifestyle and personal habits, in the same room, for a specified period. In most cases, they are new persons meeting for the first time in life. Moreover, they are grouped together, either in two or three or four, in the same hall of residence, for academic pursuit. In some universities, programme of study is generally used as a criterion to allocate students to rooms. At times, the students' level of study is also a majorly as a criterion for allocating rooms to students.

In this arrangement, students do not determine the choice of their roommates. They are expected to accept students allocated to them and reside with them

peacefully. Also, students are not permitted to influence room allocation. They are expected to reside in rooms allocated to them. Although, students who are having challenges such as health, social, spiritual, moral are often put into consideration in the process of room allocation, but preferential treatment being used in the public sector higher education institution to allocate rooms to students in few hostels available is strictly prohibited in the private sector.

Dwelling on the above, residing with roommates is clearly different from living with one's family members or relatives. One's family member may want to tolerate and accommodate indecent behaviour, bad habits etc from somebody, because of blood relationship but one's roommates may never be at home with indecent behaviours and bad habits. Consequently, residing with roommates may lead to personality mismatch among students.

Reviewing in the past, a sample of 31,500 students (50.1% female and 44.1% male) in a survey in the United States, reported "frequent" or "occasional" conflict with roommates [13]. The implication of occasional conflict among students in the same room, as observed by the above authors could impact negatively on students' academic and social life. In another nationwide survey, 5.6% of undergraduates reported that roommate difficulties hindered their academic performance. These respondents claimed that they received a lower grade in an examination, received an incomplete, or dropped a course). Also, 4.0% students in the survey said that alcohol use through the influence of roommates impacted negatively on their social lives [14].

In an institution where stringent rules apply to student conduct in and out of campus, as obtainable in most of the private Based-Universities in Nigeria, through a first-hand experience the chief disciplinary personnel of one of these universities in Nigeria, roommate relationship often result in conflict, not only among the males students but also among the female students. Hence, it is evident that many students have faced the wrath of law for being involved in conflict, which relates to assault, physical combat and therefore expelled or suspended, depending on the gravity of the offence. Such cases used to emerge from a little misunderstanding roommate and since most of them are adolescent, they lack maturity needed to manage such conflicts successfully. Therefore, anyone found guilty is either asked to withdrawal from the university or suspended or expelled.

However, roommate conflict engenders widespread experience among tertiary students. One of the vital areas of roommate conflict could be cleaning

the room. Most youths from wealthy homes are very dirty. Probably because, are not permitted by their parents to involve in house shore. Parents of such children normally engaged the service of a house girl or house boy. Such children may have a problem of cleaning their rooms in higher institution because they were not observing daily shore at home. If one of the roommates is an opposite, it may cause problem among them.

Sharing of property could be another area of roommate conflict among students in the hostels. A student might be fine if his / her roommate rummages through his / her closet for needed items, but another roommate might see that as an invasion of privacy. In another development, if a roommate permits his or her roommates to use his or her properties, he or she might not be okay with him or her using them when he or she is out of the room.

The above two issues are parts of 12 areas of roommate's conflict identified by [15]. Others are: Smoking inside the room, making use of roommates' properties without obtaining permission from the owner, gossiping a fellow roommate, noise making in the room, cooking inside the room, unacceptable prayer groups activities by some members inside the room, different cult members in a room with different interests, roommates squatting too many friends against what other members can tolerate, having an affair with a roommate's lover, competition in the use of electrical appliances before lecture time and refusal of some roommates to settle bills.

However, it should be noted that most of the issues raised by [15] can never cause conflict in the private faith-based Universities. They are all activities prohibited by the law. Therefore such can only strive in the public sector higher education institutions where there are no stringent rules and regulations guiding students conduct.

Contrary to the above, previous studies show that student's roommate relationship is one of the most rewarding aspects of college life [2]. Most students could secure life friendship from college roommate relationship. It is possible for students to meet in the same room and hall and eventually become friends for life. Probably, this might have prompted many students to assume that their roommates will become friends for life, prior admission into higher institution. Nevertheless, living together involves something different from friendship; it involves being able to talk and share ideas, being tolerant and able to agree on how to handle situations. However, some students fail to realize that talking, sharing ideas and negotiating conflicts don't

require friendship. Hence, the best roommates might not be student's best friends, but it is also possible for students to have their roommates as best friends.

It has also been argued in academia that the quality of one's roommates' relationship predicts how well students will adjust to interpersonal experiences and their coping with academic demands. A student who has a bad roommate, who does not encourage academic activities, may be influenced to engage in less academic activities.

Besides, the quality of one roommate relationship as argued by [16] has a significant impact on the economic, spiritual and social life of other students. Students' ability to develop quality relationship at college according to this author predicts decreases in both internalizing and externalizing problem behaviours.

College roommate relationships are unique among students' interpersonal relationships because they live together. Roommates have frequent contact, negotiation of responsibilities and compromises about the living environment (e.g., noise level, sleep/waking hours, visitors and decor). Students' roommates are typically the first nonfamily members and first people of equal status (i.e., in contrast to a parent-child relationship) with whom they live. These "firsts" bring added challenges to students' abilities to get along with one another knowledge of roommate relationships and provide an overarching conceptualization.

State of Knowledge on College Accommodation in Higher Education in Nigeria: For students to study effectively and to pass their examinations [17] very well and also be properly impacted for their future leadership roles, a comfortable accommodation is very crucial and essential. Home defines peoples' comfort. If the home front is peaceful, the probability of advancement is real. But if the home front is on fire, no meaningful development is in view. It is on this note [18] submits.

The importance of housing covers the entire aspects of human life. Primarily, it involves physical protection from hazards which ordinarily may be regarded as shelter but also provide the setting from many of the basic biological and social processes necessary to sustain life, which permitting the healthy growth and development of the mind. In all, housing as a unit of the environment of man, has a profound influence on the health, social behaviour, satisfaction and general welfare of the community.

Thus, it reflects the cultural, social and economic values of a society as it is the best physical and historical evidence of civilization in a country [7].

In Nigeria, the original idea of hostel accommodation according to [15] was to provide a more conducive academic atmosphere for students. Given this, the first generation Universities built beautiful hostels, befitting the image of under-graduate and post-graduate students [10] similar to developed societies. Therefore, hostel accommodation could be regarded as an integral part of higher education. This arrangement enhances team and communal spirit among students and encourages learning that is better served by proximity of classrooms, libraries (and laboratories) to halls of residence [10].

With time, however, students in Nigerian tertiary institutions began to face the challenge of inadequate hostel accommodation [09], because the population of students continues to grow without corresponding growth in the number of halls of residence and other physical facilities. Hence, the capacity of all the existing universities was overshot severally. Although the number of higher institutions has been on the increase [19], since 1960, but maintenance [20] and funding of these Universities has been a major problem. In respect of poor maintenance, [20] claim that the application of '*not my father's business syndrome*' to government properties and state affairs by many Nigerians has been keeping physical facilities in a dilapidated state. With this believe, any property belonging to government is been used indiscriminately.

In areas of funding [21] maintains that funding of education system in Nigeria is one of the worse in the world. This makes it impossible for higher institution managements to maintain the existing hostels and also build ones for students who are trooping into tertiary institutions every year.

It has equally been argued that high level of corruption in tertiary institutions in Nigeria, either at federal and state level has been responsible for poor and lack of a decent accommodation for students. The fund for maintaining physical facilities are often siphoned by the elites in these institutions in collaboration their counterparts in government who put them there.

Theoretical Insights: Much work on reciprocity had been previously directed to social and economic systems of small communities as evident in the works of [22, 23].

More recently [24] associate the paradigm with the menace of political godfatherism in Nigeria. Given this, the model is more suitable for a study of this nature.

Reciprocity theory is largely associated with Bailey and people cited in [24]. According to these theorists, two types of reciprocity occur based upon social distance. The first is termed generalized reciprocity and it normally occurs in family and intimate relationships. This type of relationship is characterized by "giving without expectation of quick and equivalent return" but, both parties may reap long-term benefits from their give-and-take relationship Bailey and people cited in [24].

In Social Psychology, reciprocity theory connotes responding to a positive action with another positive action. However, it could be observed that the principle of reciprocity goes beyond positive action. It could also be a means of rewarding a negative action received from another person in the past [25]. This corroborates [26] who believes that people reward kind actions and punish unkind ones. In other words, the theory explains the law of seed time and harvest. Whatever a man sows, he reaps. He who therefore sows sparingly reaps sparingly while he who sows bountifully reaps bountifully.

Dwelling on the above, reciprocity could be perceived as a social construct that has to do with responses to human actions or behaviours.

Naturally, people are frequently much nicer and much more cooperative to those who have shown them favour in the past. Conversely, people are always much more nasty and brutal in response to hostile actions they previously received from other persons. Previous studies mostly from Psychologists and Economists show that reciprocity is a strong determinant of human behaviours in man society. Moreover, impressive literature in Sociology (ethnology and anthropology) indicates the universal presence of reciprocal behaviours among mankind. For instance, [22] believes that reciprocity is "no less universal and important element of culture than the incest taboo".

Given the view of [22] on cultural aspect of reciprocity, [23] discussed the escalation of corruption in Nigeria with reciprocity theory and argues that people reward kind actions shown to them in the past with favour, which often resorts to corruption. Similarly, [24] links the menace of political godfatherism with the principle of reciprocity. These authors argue that when godfathers assist their godsons to win election, they tend

to reciprocate them by awarding contracts to their godfathers, which usually yields millions of naira in returns.

In the context of students' roommate relationships, therefore, reciprocity theory seems to be very useful in analysis. This is because relationship between one student and his roommates in the same room could bring about rewards and punishments in the nearest future. For instance, if a student is very kind to his roommates today, he or she may likely need the assistance of one of them tomorrow and if such a case arises, the roommate may likely reciprocate bearing in mind the memories of the good olden days. But if the roommates behave badly to his or her roommates, he or she may never benefit anything from such a roommate in life. Therefore, it is observed that reciprocity theory deals with what is generally regarded as the give-and-take of relationships.

In functioning roommate relationships, some degree of general reciprocity could emerge. Students could be willing to compromise or give aid to their roommates with the assurance that their roommates will reciprocate in future. The major challenge is that some of these students are still very young. Therefore, they may not consider the implication of their behaviours at this tender age. But it is not impossible to imagine that some of them will still remember to reciprocate past actions melted on them whenever the occasion avails. In sociology and other social science disciplines where constant interaction with one another on a daily basis is needed, favourable actions could easily be forgotten, but more often than not, negative behaviours linger on in mankind memory. They serve as indelible marks that are very difficult to erase from peoples bodies.

Negative reciprocity in roommate relationship could occur when both students in a room fail to consider the interest of one another. This may be characterized by unwillingness to compromise or a lack of concern for the roommate's feelings and needs, which usually arises in hostile rooms where students are not living in harmony.

However, such attitude is not encouraged in private Faith-Based universities where students are expected to bear the burden of one another and to also live a peaceful life with their fellow students and impacted on their lives positively. This study intends to examine the reality of these issues in the university under study.

Methods

Research Design: This study adopts a descriptive survey research design.

Population and Sample Size: Student body represents the population of study. The total number in figure is 4, 200. Due to the resources at the researchers' disposal and time frame for a study of this nature, a sample of 470 respondents was drawn.

Sample Techniques: The university was divided into 23 departments. Each department produced respondents based on its population. In other words, the department with small number of students produced small sample while the department with large number of students produced large sample. Respondents were randomly selected from their departments afterwards.

Institution Under Study: Covenant University was established in October 21, 2002 by God through Bishop David Oyedepo, the President of the Living Faith Church Worldwide, also known as Winners Chapel. Given its mission statement, the University aims at creating knowledge and restore the dignity of the black man via a Human Development Total Man Concept driven curriculum employing innovative, leading-edge teaching and learning methods, research and professional services that promote integrated, life-applicable, life-transforming education, relevant to the context of science, Technology and Human Capacity building. Based on the vision of the university, the institution aims at becoming a leading World-Class Christian Mission University, committed to raising a new generation of leaders in all fields of human endeavour [27].

Research Instrument: The questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents. The instrument contains two sections-Section A and B. Section A comprises of 7 questions relating to socio-demographic characteristics of respondents while section B contained five questions connected with students roommates relationships. The section is an open ended type and provision was made for five options as indicated below:

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Research Questions:

- What influence does roommate relationship have on students' academic performance?
- How does roommate relationship impact students' spiritual life?

- What is the influence of roommate relationship on students involvement in social vices?
- What is the influence of roommates relationship on emotional stability of students?
- What correlation does roommate relationship has on students' resource management?

Research Hypotheses:

- H₁: There is a relationship between roommate relationship and students' academic performance
- H₂: There is a relationship between roommate relationship and students spiritual life.
- H₃: There is correlation between roommate relationship and involvement of students in social vices
- H₄: There is correlation between roommate relationship and students emotional stability
- H₅: There is correlation between roommate relationship and student resource management

Testing of Hypotheses

Hypothesis I:

- H₁: There is correlation between roommate relationship and students' academic performance

Given the estimated correlation result (0.976) between response variables "My roommates and I read together after class discussions" and "My roommates and I engage in group discussion every week" and I used to do my class assignments with my roommates and My roommates and I engage in group discussion every week at 0.963 all significant at 1 percent level. The study proceeds to accept the hypothesis that says there is correlation between roommate relationship and students' academic performance and reject the null hypothesis that says there is no correlation between roommate relationship and students' performance.

The result of investigation presented above is not surprising, the university under study emphasizes on the need for team work among the students and staff. This emphasis might have encouraged students to be engaging in group academic discussion with their roommates. Students who engage in group discussion with their roommates may likely perform better academically that those who do not engage in group discussion.

Hypothesis II:

- H₁: There is correlation between roommate relationship and spiritual life of students

The evidence from the spearman's correlation (0.983) for the response variable-my roommates are my prayer partners and "I used to share the word of God with my roommates with 1 percent level of significance and a positive correlation (0.986) with 1 percent level of significance for the two response variables "I used to share the word of God with my roommates and "My roommates encourage listening to gospel messages in our room after lecture hours" confirms the hypothesis that roommate relationship promotes spiritual life which suggests the rejection of the null hypothesis that there is no correlation between roommate relationship and student spiritual life.

The result presented above shows that students engage in spiritual exercises with their roommates. These include praying together, reading Scriptures together and listening to messages either audio or video. Observing these Christian activities together can make one's spiritual life to blossom in and outside the university environment.

Hypothesis III:

- H₁: Roommate relationship significantly influences the level of involvement in social vices.

The correlation coefficient (0.967) indicates a significant positive relationship between the response variable "My roommates don't watch indecent movies" and "My roommates don't drink alcoholic drinks" at 1 percent level of significance. There also exist a perfect correlation significant at 0.01 levels for the response cases "My roommates don't watch indecent movies" and "My roommates don't go to disco parties". Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis that roommate relationship do not significantly influences the level of involvement in social vices accept the hypothesis which implies that roommate relationship do significantly influence the level of involvement in social vices.

The result of investigations above goes to confirm differential association theory of [28] who maintain that how people act depends on how those around them desire them to act and how much they deviate from or conform to norms depends on differences in whom they associate with. Since those who are staying in the same room do not indulge in activities that can result in social vices, none of the members may become victim. Had it been that some of them were drinking alcoholic drinks, it would have been very easy to pressurize other to join in the act of drinking alcohol.

Table 1: Correlation Between Roommate Relationship and Academic performance

			My roommates and I engage in group discussion every week	My roommates and I read together after class discussions	I used to do my class assignments with my roommates
Spearman's rho	My roommates and I engage in group discussion every week	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.976**	.963**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000
		N	173	173	173
	My roommates and I read together after class discussions	Correlation Coefficient	.976**	1.000	.978**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000
		N	173	173	173
	I used to do my class assignments with my roommates	Correlation Coefficient	.963**	.978**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.
		N	173	173	173

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2: Correlation Between Roommate Relationship and Spiritual Life

			My roommates are my prayer partners	I used to share the word of God with my roommates	My roommates encourage listening to gospel messages in our room after lecture hours
Spearman's rho	My roommates are my prayer partners	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.983**	.986**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000
		N	173	173	173
	I used to share the word of God with my roommates	Correlation Coefficient	.983**	1.000	.989**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000
		N	173	173	173
	My roommates encourage listening to gospel messages in our room after lecture hours	Correlation Coefficient	.986**	.989**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.
		N	173	173	173

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3: Correlation Between Roommate Relationship and involvement in Social Vices

			My roommates don't watch indecent movies	My roommates don't drink alcoholic drinks	My roommates don't go to disco parties
Spearman's rho	My roommates don't watch indecent movies	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.967**	1.000**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.
		N	173	173	173
	My roommates don't drink alcoholic drinks	Correlation Coefficient	.967**	1.000	.967**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000
		N	173	173	173
	My roommates don't go to disco parties	Correlation Coefficient	1.000**	.967**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.
		N	173	173	173

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4: Correlation Between Roommate Relationship and emotional Stability

			My roommates are very sensitive to my emotional problem	My roommates are psychologically helpful	My roommates always provide emotional support
Spearman's rho	My roommates are very sensitive to my emotional problem	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.983**	.969**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000
		N	173	173	173
	My roommates are psychologically helpful	Correlation Coefficient	.983**	1.000	.968**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000
		N	173	173	173
	My roommates always provide emotional support	Correlation Coefficient	.969**	.968**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.
		N	173	173	173

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 5: Correlation Between Roommate Relationship and Management of resources

			My roommates offer financial assistance whenever I am broke.	My roommates do not encourage extravagant life	My roommates don't encourage waste of resources
Spearman's rho	My roommates offer financial assistance whenever I am broke.	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.980**	.969**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000
		N	173	173	173
	My roommates do not encourage extravagant life	Correlation Coefficient	.980**	1.000	.987**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000
		N	173	173	173
	My roommates don't encourage waste of resources	Correlation Coefficient	.969**	.987**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.
		N	173	173	173

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Hypothesis IV:

H₁: There is correlation between roommate relationship and emotional stability

Evidence from the estimated correlation coefficient from Table 4 indicates a significant strong correlation (0.983) between the response variables “My roommates are very sensitive to my emotional problem” and “My roommates are psychologically helpful at 0.01 level of significance”. Further evidence shows a statistically significant direct relationship for the response observations “My roommates are very sensitive to my emotional problem” and “My roommates always provide emotional support”. Hence we could accept the study hypothesis that roommate relationship supports emotional stability while we discard the null hypothesis that roommate relationship does not support emotional stability.

If roommates are not concerned about their welfare they will not be sensitive to one another. Therefore, it would be very difficult to assist themselves. On campus, students are often told to always be their brother's keeper and it must have been responsible for our finding here.

Hypothesis V:

H₁: There is correlation between roommate relationship and resources management

The analysis of the correlation result in Table 5 revealed a significant positive relationship (0.980) between the response variables “My roommates offer financial assistance whenever I am broke” and “My roommates do not encourage extravagant life” at 0.01 levels of significance. There also exists a strong significant correlation (0.969) between the response variables “My roommates offer financial assistance whenever I am broke” and “My roommates don't

encourage waste of resources” at 0.01 significant levels. We could therefore conclude that there is a significant relation and between roommate relationship and resource management. This leads to the acceptance of the hypothesis that there is correlation between roommate relationship and student resources management leading to rejection of the hypothesis.

As a faith based university, students are encouraged to be frugal and to also learn how to manage their resources effectively. They are equally admonished to love their neighbours by sharing their resources gladly. These must have informed the result of our finding in hypothesis five.

Summary of Findings: From the study, it was discovered that there is correlation between roommate relationship and students' academic performance. Also, the study found a relationship between roommate relationship and students spiritual life. The study equally found a relationship between roommate relationship and involvement of students in social vices. Moreover, the study discovered correlation between roommate relationship and students emotional stability. Lastly, the study found correlation between roommate relationship and student resource management.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that roommate relationship is of great benefits to students. The study confirms its usefulness in students' academic performance, spiritual, economic and social life.

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