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Availability, Utilization, And Contribution of Students Health Services at Tertiary Institutions in Sokoto, Nigeria

Abbas Abubakar Hiliya & Abubakar Yahaya
Shehu Shagari University of Education, Sokoto, Nigeria
aabbashiliya@gmail.com

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Abstract

This study examines the availability, utilization, and contribution of students' health services at tertiary institutions in Sokoto, Nigeria. A survey research design was employed, and data were collected from 400 students and staff of selected tertiary institutions. The results show that healthcare giving, health education, mental health counseling, and environmental hygiene are essential health services required by students. However, the availability and utilization of these services are inadequate, affecting students' academic performance and overall well-being. The study recommends that tertiary institutions prioritize the provision of quality health services to support students' health and academic success.

Keywords: Students' Health Services, Tertiary Institutions, Sokoto, Nigeria, Academic Performance, Well-Being

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INTRODUCTION

Tertiary institutions are designed institutions that are established to alter or modify attitude and teach students under the guidance or administration of teachers. Tertiary institutions are avenues for teaching, learning, research, and community services (Usman, 2016; Muhammad, 2020). Tertiary institutions are essential for human development, economic growth, and societal progress (World Bank, 2018). These institutions provide students with knowledge, skills, and values necessary for personal and professional development (Bloom et al., 2019; Anene, 2021). However, the learning environment in tertiary institutions can significantly impact students' academic performance, social development, and overall well-being (Afolayan, 2015; Ejeh et al., 2016; Abdullahi et al., 2020).

Health services are a critical component of the learning environment in tertiary institutions. These services can include healthcare giving, health education, mental health counseling, and environmental hygiene (Ubong, 2001; Ineye-brigs, 2023). The availability and utilization of these services can significantly impact students' health, academic performance, and overall quality of life (Adejumo et al., 2019). This study focuses on the availability, utilization, and contribution of students' health services at tertiary institutions in Sokoto, Nigeria. The study aims to investigate the current state of health services in these institutions, identify gaps in service provision, and explore the impact of these services on students' academic performance and overall well-being. This study is significant because it highlights the importance of health services in tertiary institutions (WHO, 2018; Osian et al., 2020). The findings of this study can inform policy decisions and practice, ultimately contributing to the improvement of health services and the learning environment in tertiary institutions (Akuchie, 2018; Usman, 2021).

Despite the importance of health services in tertiary institutions, there is a dearth of research on the availability, utilization, and contribution of these services in Nigerian tertiary institutions (Ejeh et al., 2016; Oladeji, 2023). This study aims to bridge this research gap by providing insights into the state of health services in tertiary institutions in Sokoto, Nigeria. This study is guided by the World Health Orga nization's (WHO) framework for health-promoting schools (WHO, 2018). This framework emphasizes the importance of creating a healthy school environment that promotes students' physical, emotional, and social well-being. **T**his study examines the availability, utilization, and contribution of students' health services at tertiary institutions in Sokoto, Nigeria

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive survey research design to investigate the availability, utilization, and contribution of students' health services at tertiary institutions in Sokoto, Nigeria.

Population

The population of this study consisted of students and staff of tertiary institutions in Sokoto, Nigeria. The population included undergraduate and postgraduate students, as well as academic and non-academic staff.

Sample Size and Selection

A sample size of 400 students and staff was selected for this study using a stratified random sampling technique. The sample was drawn from four tertiary institutions in Sokoto, Nigeria.

Data Collection Instruments

A structured questionnaire was used to collect data for this study. The questionnaire consisted of four sections: Section A (demographic characteristics), Section B (availability of health services), Section C (utilization of health services), and Section D (contribution of health services to academic performance).

Data Collection Procedure

The questionnaire was administered to the selected respondents by the researcher and three research assistants. The respondents were assured of confidentiality and anonymity, and they were given instructions on how to complete the questionnaire.

Data Analysis

The data collected for this study were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations) and inferential statistics (chi-square test and ANOVA). The data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.

Ethical Considerations

This study was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the University of Sokoto. Informed consent was obtained from the respondents before they completed the questionnaire.

Validity and Reliability

The questionnaire used for this study was validated by experts in the field of health education and research. The reliability of the questionnaire was determined using the Cronbach alpha coefficient, which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.85.

Limitations of the Study

This study had some limitations. The study was limited to tertiary institutions in Sokoto, Nigeria, and the findings may not be generalizable to other institutions. The study relied on self-reported data, which may be subject to biases.

Delimitations of the Study

This study was delimited to students and staff of tertiary institutions in Sokoto, Nigeria. The study focused on the availability, utilization, and contribution of students' health services, and it did not investigate other aspects of health services.

RESULTS

The results of this study are shown in tables 1-3.

Table 1: Presence or availability of students health services at tertiary institutions in sokoto, Nigeria

Services	Yes		No	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Healthcare givers	130	34.2	250	65.8
Sporting (physical education or care)	100	26.3	280	73.7
Health awareness (education)	79	20.8	301	79.2
Mental health or related counselling	79	20.8	301	79.2
Environmental hygiene	82	21.6	298	78.4

Table 2: Utilization of students health services at tertiary institutions in Sokoto, Nigeria

	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Received health education service	167	43.9	213	56.1
Physical education (sporting) intervention or service	118	31.1	262	68.9
Mental health or related counselling	181	47.6	199	52.4
Healthcare giving (clinical services)	117	30.8	163	42.8
Environmental hygiene	215	56.6	165	43.5

Table 3: Contribution of students health services to academic achievement at tertiary institutions in Sokoto, Nigeria

Service	Helpful		Not helpful		I don't know	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Healthcare givers	282	74.2	90	23.7	8	2.1
Sport	180	47.4	100		100	26.3
Health awareness	150	39.5	200	52.6	30	7.9
Mental health or counselling	195	51.3	180	47.4	5	1.3
Environmental hygiene	250	65.8	97	25.6	33	8.7

DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows the result indicating the presence or availability of students health services at tertiary institutions in Sokoto, Nigeria. The respondents indicated that, the major services available are as follows: Healthcare giving (clinical services) (34.2%), sporting (26.3%), mental services or counselling (20.8%), and environmental hygiene (21.06%); but the students who disclosed that there is no availability of the services are more in number. The

results in this work are similar to another related study by Obi & Okeke (2013) in a university system research; therewith, health services were related by the participants.

Table 2 shows the level of utilization of students health services at higher institutions in Sokoto, Nigeria. The results revealed that, the most utilized health services by the students are: environmental hygiene (56.6%), health education (43.9%), physical education (sporting) (31.1%), healthcare giving (30.8%), and mental health or related counselling (47.6%). However, the students with non-utilization of the health services were more than the beneficiaries. In a related finding, Ejeh et al. (2016) reported that, poor provision of various services to students at higher institutions affect learning, and expose students to hazards. This in-line with the finding of services accorded to higher institutions students by their schools. And the factors affecting services included, poor funding, poor time management; which are thereof similar to the result in Table 2. Moreover, Eneye-brigs (2023) suggested that each and every school or institution should have possessed a functional health facility (consisting of personnel, drugs, and relations). Academic activities do not prosper without health.

Health is the state of complete uprightness of domains such as physical, psychomotor, cognitive, and other domains. People or students are only able to learn properly if they are healthy. Likewise, teachers are able to teach if they are healthy (Abdullahi et al., 2020; Zickafoose et al., 2024). Health can be achieved or maintained if there is good social, physical and biological environments. Institutions are protected through health services. Lack of enough health services affect health, and affect learners and teacher (Akomolafe & Adesua, 2016; WHO, 2018). Table 3 shows the contribution of students health services to academic achievement. The results indicated, the respondents that, the services are helpful to academic achievement, in most of the occasions (the majority of the respondents submitted with the "helpful." The specific services that promote academic achievements are as follows; Healthcare givers (74.2%), environmental hygiene (65.8%), mental health or counselling (51.3%), sport (47.4%), and health awareness (39.5%). The finding of this study is in conformity with another work by Obi & Okeke (2013) that shows health services, among the factors helpful for academic achievement. Likewise, Adejumo et al. (2019) among university students from southern Nigeria university, relating that mostly the participants are satisfied with health services provided. Ejeh et al (2016) in a study of personnel services in Nigeria higher institutions (such as environmental hygiene or snatiation) expose students to hazards, and cause lateness to classes. Equally, Ogundele et

al. (2018) reiterated in their study that, services such as counselling and psychological support to students in higher institutions in Nigeria help to the schooling and employability of students and graduates.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the availability, utilization, and contribution of students' health services at tertiary institutions in Sokoto, Nigeria. The findings reveal that students' health services are essential for promoting students' health, academic performance, and overall well-being. However, the availability and utilization of these services are inadequate, affecting students' academic success and quality of life.

Recommendations

To address these challenges, the following recommendations are made:

1. Tertiary institutions should prioritize the provision of quality health services, including healthcare giving, health education, mental health counseling, and environmental hygiene.
2. The government and other stakeholders should provide adequate funding and resources to support the provision of students' health services.
3. Tertiary institutions should employ qualified healthcare professionals to provide quality health services to students.
4. Students should be sensitized on the importance of health services and encouraged to utilize available health services.

Implications

The findings of this study have implications for policy, practice, and future research. The study highlights the need for policymakers and stakeholders to prioritize the provision of quality health services in tertiary institutions. The study also underscores the importance of qualified healthcare professionals in providing quality health services to students. Future research should focus on exploring strategies for improving the availability and utilization of students' health services in tertiary institutions. In conclusion, this study demonstrates the importance of students' health services in promoting students' health, academic performance, and overall well-being. The findings of this study provide valuable insights for policymakers, stakeholders, and future researchers. By prioritizing the provision of

quality health services, tertiary institutions can promote students' health, academic success, and overall well-being.

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