

MANAGING TRANSPORTATION FOR GOALS ACHIEVEMENT IN UNIVERSITY OF PORT HARCOURT

By

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Abstract

This paper examines the factors militating against effective management of the transportation system for goals achievement in University of Port Harcourt. Three questions and one hypothesis were posed. It used related literature review, document analysis, interview schedules and questionnaire to elicit information from 5000 of the about 20,000 students and staff. It discovered 11 factors, a positive relationship between the students and staffs evaluation of these factors and concludes that transportation plays an important role in the achievement of university goals and objectives. Hence, recommends innovative strategies for effective management of transportation system for goals achievement in university of Port Harcourt.

Management is one of the most difficult activities of mankind. This is so because, according to Appleby (1980), Koontz and Wehrich (1989) and Nwachukwu (2007), management has to do with the effective and efficient utilization of available human and material resources for the purpose of achieving predetermined goals and objectives of the particular organization under consideration. University of Port Harcourt is one of such organizations. Like all other universities, it was established with the objectives of teaching, research and development, generating and dissemination of knowledge, community services and staff development, Aliu (2001), Alagoa (1999), Okoroma (2000). Its location and localization make it very unique. Such uniqueness stems from the fact that, although it is situated in a town called choba, in

Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State---the treasure base of the nation, it is scattered around it and separated by roads, some of which are inter-states, inter-local governments and inter-villages. Moreover, it has three main campuses namely, the “Abuja”, the “Choba” and “Delta”. These campuses are alternatively called parks. Thus there is the Abuja park, Choba park and Delta park.

It thus appears that these parks or the scenarios described above are the main point of reference as regards the managerial problems of the entire university. For example, the students who are the most numerous type of the human resources of the institution, complain bitterly about their inability to attend lectures regularly, submit assignments on time and partake in lectures, tests and examinations as well as other university activities as at when required and scheduled. On the other hand, the members of staff including the principal officers, senior members of staff, the junior members of staff as well as other stakeholders who come to the university in the course of their normal and other scheduled activities and appointments complain also about their inability to be on time for meetings, projects and other contractual obligations. The effect of these observations would mean a very serious contributing factor to the ineffective and inefficient achievement of the goals and objectives of not only the students but also for the members of staff as well as the other associated stakeholders. Also, it points to the obvious fact that all is not well with the transportation system or transportation business within the university irrespective of the fact that some of these visitors and private individuals have their own transportation buses and taxes and are ready to pay for others.

The Purpose of the Paper

1. To find out the factors militating against effective management of the transportation system for goals achievement in University of Port Harcourt.
2. To know how the students and the members of staff evaluate the factors militating against effective management of the transportation system for goals achievement in University of Port Harcourt.
3. To establish the relationship if any between the students and the members of staff evaluation of the factors militating against the effective management of the transportation system for goals achievement in University of Port Harcourt.

Research Questions

1. What are the factors militating against the effective management of the transportation system for goals achievement in University of Port Harcourt?
2. How do the students and members of staff evaluate the factors militating against effective management of the transportation system in University of Port Harcourt?
3. What is the relationship between the students and the members of staff evaluation of the factors militating against effective management of transportation system for goals achievement in University of Port Harcourt?

Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between the students and members of staff evaluation of the factors militating against effective management of the transportation system for goals achievement in University of Port Harcourt.

Methodology

The descriptive research design was used for this study due to the fact that the students, the members of staff and the other information needed do not require any further experiment in order to obtain them. According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2000), University of Port Harcourt has over 16 000 students and about 4,000 members of staff. Thus, from this population, the stratified random sampling technique was adopted to select a sample of 5,000 consisting of 4,000 students and 1,000 members of staff. This represents 25% of the population. The information from related literature reviewed, document analysis and interview schedules were used to construct questionnaire that were validated by senior colleagues in the educational system and tested for reliability. A fortnight was used to administer the questionnaire and there was a 100% rate of returns. The data were then sorted, collated and using frequencies, percentages and Pearson Product Moment Coefficient of correlation, the research questions were answered while the hypothesis was tested at 5% alpha level of significant.

Presentation and Analysis of Results

Research Question 1

Table 1: Factors Militating Against Effective Management of Transportation System for Goals Achievement in University of Port Harcourt.

S/N	Name of Militating Factors	Frequency N=5000	Percentage %	Remarks
1a.	Non availability of motor bikes and tricycles.	2, 350	47	Not accepted
2b	Non availability of University owned transportation bus.	4, 530	91	Accepted
3c	Non availability of Government owned transportation bus.	4, 674	94	Accepted
4d	Absence of intra campus transportation buses	4,425	88	Accepted
5e	Chaotic traffic jam or go-slows at peak periods.	4,751	95	Accepted
6f	Menace of uniformed officers activities at odd hours.	2,705	54	Accepted
7g	Poor road networks and linkages.	4,598	92	Accepted

8h	Insufficient number of communication transportation buses and taxi caps.	2,544	51	Accepted
9i	Exorbitant or high transportation fares.	2,743	55	Accepted
10j	Epileptic electricity power supply.	2,491	50	Accepted
11k	Weather and climatic condition.	2,269	45	Not accepted
12l	Balance-change palaver after payment of fares	2,456	49	Not accepted
13m	Transversal of east-west express road.	2,165	43	Not accepted
14n	Unplanned pedestrian roads and routes.	2,672	53	Accepted
15o	Absence of pedestrian / zebra/pelican crossing	3,784	76	Accepted
16p	Impromptu and indiscriminate fare increases.	2,400	48	Not accepted

Table 1 is about the factors militating against effective management of the transportation system for goals achievement in University of Port Harcourt. Specifically, it shows that factor number 1a, non availability of motor bikes and tricycles, has a frequency of 2, 350 out of the total 5000 sampled. This represents a score of 47% and it is not accepted as a militating factor because it is below the average score of 50%. Similarly, item 2b, non-availability of university owned transportation bus, has a frequency of 4,530 scored 91% and is accepted because the score is above the average score of 50%. The summarized position is that on the whole, only 11 militating factors are accepted.

Research Question 2

Table 2: Students and Staff Evaluations of Accepted Factors

S/No	Accepted factor	Evaluation percentage	
		Students	Staff
1	Chaotic traffic jam or go-slows at peak periods.	95	93
2	Non availability of Government owned transportation bus.	94	91
3	Poor road networks and communication linkages.	93	88
4	Non availability of University owned transportation bus.	91	89

5	Absence of intra campus transportation buses	89	86
6	Absence of pedestrian / zebra/pelican crossing	70	20
7	Exorbitant or high transportation fares.	58	42
8	Menace of uniformed officers activities at odd hours	48	77
9	Unplanned pedestrian roads and routes.	62	19
10	Insufficient number of transportation buses	54	40
11	Epileptic electricity power supply.	50	51

Table 2 shows the percentage evaluation of the accepted factors militating against effective management of the transportation system for goals achievement by the students and the members of staff of university of Port Harcourt. Specifically, for example, it shows that item No 1, traffic jam at peak periods, scored 95% for students and 93% by the members of staff while the last item, epileptic electricity supply, number 11 scored 50% for the students and 51% for the members of staff.

Research Question 3

Table 3 Students – Staff Relationship

Total					Remarks
Number of items N	Students' scores X	Staff scores Y	X²	Y²	
11	804	696	62,540	52,646	a positively strong relationship
Pearson's Product Moment Coefficient of correlation computed or calculated value (r) = 0.6797					

Table 3 supplies the data about the relationship between the students and the members of staff evaluation of the factors militating against effective management of transportation system for goals achievement in University of Port Harcourt. It shows that the Pearson's Product Moment Coefficient of correlation value of 0.6797 is computed from 11 items whose students and staff scores were respectively 804 and 696 in total. Therefore, the question is answered that there is a positively strong relationship between the evaluation of the students and members of staff of University of Port Harcourt as regards the factors militating against effective management of the transportation system in the University.

Testing of the Hypothesis

Table 4: Hypothesis Decision Table

Alpha level of significant	Degree of freedom	Pearson’s Product Moment Coefficient of correlation value (r)		Decision for hypothesis
		Calculated or computed	Critical / book or table	
5%	20	0.6797	0.423	Reject

Table 4 contains the data for testing the given hypothesis. It shows that with an alpha level of significant of 5% and 20 degree of freedom, the Pearson’s Product Moment Coefficient of correlation value (r) calculated/computed of 0.6797 is greater than the critical/book/table value of 0.423. Hence the hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, it is concluded that there is a significant relationship between the students and members of staff evaluation of the factors militating against effective management of the transportation system for goals achievement in University of Port Harcourt.

Summary Table of Accepted Factors

S/N	Name of Accepted Militating Factors	Frequencies			Percentages		
		Students 4,000	Staff 1000	Total 5000	Student 4000	Staff 1000	Total 5000
1	Chaotic traffic jam or go-slows at peak periods.	3,818	933	4,751	95	93	95
2	Non availability of Government owned transportation bus.	3,762	912	4,674	94	91	94
3	Poor road networks and communication linkages.	3,719	879	4,598	93	88	92
4	Non availability of University owned transportation bus.	3,640	890	4,530	91	89	91
5	Absence of intra campus transportation buses	3,561	864	4,425	89	96	88
6	Absence of pedestrian / zebra/pelican crossing	2,792	199	3,784	70	20	76
7	Exorbitant or high transportation fares.	2,324	419	2,743	58	42	55
8	Menace of uniformed officers activities at odd hours	1,934	771	2,705	48	77	54
9	Unplanned pedestrian roads and routes.	2,483	186	2,672	62	19	53
10	Insufficient number of transportation buses	2,147	397	2,544	54	40	51
11	Epileptic electricity power supply.	1,984	507	2,491	50	51	50

The above summary table shows that there are 11 accepted factors militating against the effective management of transportation system for goals achievement in University of Port Harcourt. Using the total frequencies and percentages for ranking, item Number 1, Chaotic Traffic Jam and go-slows at peak periods, has a total frequency

of 4,751 and 95% but frequencies of 3818 and 933 and percentages of 95% and 93% for students and staff respectively. Similar explanations could be inferred till the end.

Discussion of Findings and Implications for Innovation in University Management

The study on managing Transportation for goals achievement in University of Port Harcourt has firstly, supplied 11 accepted factors militating against effective management of the transportation system for goals achievement. The innovational implication of this is that there is a clear identification of areas and factors for direction, allocation and assignment of the human and material resources for effectiveness and efficiency. These are of prime importance and in agreement with the views of Appleby (1980), Koontz and Weihrich (1989) and Nwachukwu (2007) about management for goals achievement. Secondly, evaluation of these factors by both the students and members of staff reveals in very clear terms possible areas that could give rise to disagreements, disharmony and conflicts. Also, it is an indication of the scales of preference by the two most valuable groups of human resources of educational system. Thirdly, the study established a very strong positive relationship between the students and staff evaluations of the militating factors. This is a pointer to the management that the transportation system is a subsystem of a social system which the University operates in. It should be noted that the postiveness here is indicative of unity of purpose, direction, likeness and similarity. Finally the study revealed that there is a significant relationship between the students and members of staff evaluation of the accepted factors militating against effective management of the transportation system for goals achievement in University of Port Harcourt. This implies that transportation issues are central, pertinent and supreme to the students, members of staff as well as to the management if the goals and objectives for establishing the universities, according to Allagoa (1999), Okoroma(2000) and Aliu (2001), are to be achieved effectively and efficiently.

Conclusion

Transportation --- the system, business or process of carrying passengers and goods in a vehicle from one destination to another----- plays a very important role in the effective management of universities for goals achievement. Passengers of the University transportation system, who are mainly students, members of staff and visitors to the campuses, require a well managed transportation system that will not only be effective and efficient but also enhance the realization of individual's particular goals and the achievement of the overall goals and objectives generally.

Recommendations

- 1 Students Union Government and staff Union should jointly fight for free Government owned Transportation buses within the campuses only as evidence of actual free government transportation services to real students who should be truly the direct beneficiaries of these aspect of Government services and dividends of democracy.

- 2 Students Union Government and staff Union should jointly fight for University owned transportation buses to be made available for these would be properly organized, staffed, coordinated and controlled jointly.
- 3 University authorities and the government should make laws against indiscriminate erection of bus stops, parking along the roads to drop and pick passengers and goods outside designated parks.
- 4 Specially trained traffic warders should be placed on duty 24hours to control traffic situations in accordance with the periods of the day and seasons of University activities.
- 5 Inter campus bus services should stop only at specialized parks and give way for intra-campus bus services in this way traffic jam and pedestrians can be controlled.
- 6 Sufficient numbers of transportation buses should be made available with the tri-partied management of the transportation system by the Government free bus services, university owned bus services and privately owned bus services.

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