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ANALYSIS OF PRIVATE COSTS OF SCHOOLING BY STUDENTS OF THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION, AMBROSE ALLI UNIVERSITY, EKPOMA, EDO STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This paper looked at private cost of schooling by students of the Faculty of Education, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, Edo State, Nigeria. The study employed the descriptive survey based on ex-post facto research design. All the students in the Faculty of Education constituted the population of the study with exclusion of the Department of Library and Information Sciences. The purposive sampling technique was adopted in selecting 20 students from five departments in the faculty. Data on students' private costs were obtained from the respondents through the use of checklist. The data obtained was analysed with percentages. The results showed that private cost of schooling by students of the Faculty of Education was high. It also showed that a difference exists in the private costs of faculty of education students based on residence. It was also shown that a difference exist in the private cost of male and female students and that the private cost borne by the male students is lower than that of the female students. Based on the findings, it was recommended that the government should reduce the students' tuition fees by increasing its subvention to the institution to reduce the amount of private costs borne by students in their course of schooling and that special incentives be given to education students to encourage students' enrolment and retention in the Faculty.

Keywords: Analysis, Private Costs, Schooling, Students, Education

Introduction

University education in Nigeria has grown into a complex system in terms of structure, size, students' enrolment, programmes, management and the financial requirements for its sustainability. Priority is given to university education because of its role in the production of high-level manpower needed for the sustainable social and economic development of the nation regardless of the financial implications. University education is no doubt capital intensive; and finance is the basis for the success or failure of the project (Maduewesi, 2001 cited in Adeyemi, 2012).

However, its provision does not only depend on resource allocation, but also on the adequate planning and management of the resources that are predicated on the available fund (Aghenta 2001; Adeyemi & Ajayi 2006). In recent times, there is the contention as to who should bear the cost of education between the government and the beneficiaries of education. However, the consensus is that someone has to foot the bill of education most especially in the wake of ever-increasing growth of youth population and the attendant increase in enrolment ratio (Agboola & Adeyemi, 2012).

The use of time and money in education is an investment. Employment and better income in the future is a main incentive to postpone consumption and income. Many people believed that a higher level of education is associated with better chances to get a good job in the labor market. At the macro level, benefits to reduce state spending for other sectors with the aim to increasing the education sector spending are revenue through taxation. Indeed, an increase in demand for highly educated labour will increase returns to individuals and governments. Hence, more investments in education and training to enhance knowledge, creativity, and English communication skills are needed (MajlisTindakanEkonomi Negara, 2010). This is a strategic plan to reduce shortage of workers' basic skills and ability to perform the work required by employers (Nooriah & Zakiyah, 2015).

An understanding of costs, investment and education returns is very important to policy planners in determining access to education, taxation and advanced education for individuals (OECD, 2015). Therefore, cost analysis of education expenses should be carried out frequently because educational spending is not only consumption but an investment as it is able to generate future income (Woodhall, 1987; Blaug, 1973; Blundell, et al. 1996; Harmon, Oosterbeek & Walker 2003; Chevalier & Lydon 2001). It is to be noted that educational funding is a part of education and social policy that is subject to limited resources in the communities (Levin, 1995). Benson (1995) also stated that every society has always tried its best to provide the school system with its own financial resources. In the light of this,

education requires a huge amount of financial resources incurred by public funds. Therefore, it is essential for it to be distributed prudently so that the objectives of education system of developing countries like Nigeria can be achieved.

Private cost of education is an economic burden to the household and could be measured by a ratio to household income (Levin, 1995; Tsang, 1995). Thus, basic understanding for 'school financing is very important. This is due to the fact that the process to determine how much, where the resources are, and who is to bear the costs is complicated (Carnoy, 1995). Basically, direct and indirect private costs have been funded by households continuously as long as the students remain at school, college or university. In Nigeria, years of education to complete up to the degree level will take at least 16 years of schooling. So, how much does the student or household need to pay as its contribution in educating a child?

As demand for university education increases, so also the number of learners' enrolment. Based on the increased number of learners, the funding or financing of education has become unbearable on the government alone at all levels. In this regard, it becomes worrisome as to who should bear the costs of education between the government and the households or the direct beneficiaries of education.

However, the consensus is that someone has to foot the bill of education most especially in the wake of ever-increasing growth of youth population and the attendance increase in enrolment ratio (Agboola & Adeyemi, 2012).Therefore, for the aims of the education system to be achieved, both the government and private individuals who demand education must actively participate in financing the cost of education. It is to be noted that private individuals cannot be actively involved in financing the private cost of education without having a clear knowledge of the total cost of private education. In the light of this, this present paper sought to ascertain the private cost of students in the Faculty of Education, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, Edo State. The specific objectives of the study were to:

1. ascertain the private costs of students in the faculty of education, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, Edo State;
2. investigate the difference between the private costs of faculty of education students on the basis of their halls of residence; and
3. investigate the difference between the private costs of male and female students of the faculty of education, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, Edo State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. What is the private cost of students in the faculty of education, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, Edo State, Nigeria?
2. What is the difference between the private costs of faculty of education students on the basis of their halls of residence?
3. What is the difference between the cost of education of male and female students in the faculty of education?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Private Cost is incurred either by the individual, household or parents. It is further divided into direct private cost and indirect private cost. Direct private cost is the expenditure incurred directly by the household for educating an individual while indirect cost (opportunity cost) is the income foregone by the student while obtaining education and not being employed in the next best alternative. The calculation of private cost is based on primary data and it involves inclusion of many items of expenditure, which are likely to be misinterpreted or over-estimated by the respondents. Therefore, few scholars have calculated private cost of education. Direct private cost is the expenditure on schooling borne by the household. Besides expenses on fees, books, stationary and equipment, boarding and lodging payments, conveyance, transport and entertainment those on private tuition and coaching as well as pre-admission expenses are also included (Salim 1994). However, Mehta (1994) stated that some of the living expenses would have been made even if the student had not joined this particular course terms as cost of remaining at home and deducts these from private cost. Shortlidge (1974), Blaug (1969) make this correction by including only expenditure on tuition fee, books and stationary in private cost.

Some of the researchers have suggested yet another correction. By joining a particular course, that person has to forgo opportunity of earning income on the basis of his existing qualifications. This forgone income is treated as opportunity cost of education and is added to direct private cost (Kothari & Panchmuki, 1980; Schultz 1963; Bowman 1966; Blaug 1967; Tilak 1987; Salim 1994; and Mehta 1996).

There are number of issues related to the measurement of private cost of education. The existing studies, very few in numbers, raise and point out some of the interesting features. The private cost of education has crucial role in determining the access to education and various courses. The rising level of private costs of education has raised the equity issues in a very serious manner. The changed economic environment has raised the private cost of education with the entry of private players. One of the earliest studies done by Pillai (1965) was on ‘Parental Cost in the Education of Children in Government Arts and Science Colleges for the Three Year Degree’.

Wenli Li (2001) carried out a study on tuition, private demand and higher education in China. The data are from Urban Household Survey of the State Statistical Bureau of China, which was collected in August 1999. This study analyzes the willingness to pay for higher education and financial resources for students' educational expenditure by using a college student survey data, which was collected in December 1999. The study finds that the main part of financial resources is coming from family while students are learning at college and the gap of willingness to pay among different income groups is becoming larger and larger with the increase in tuition. Shah (1987) estimated the private cost of college education. The study found that the private costs were substantially high, and tuition fee formed only a very small portion of the total private cost. He proved that the high tuition cost acted as a potent constraint in the access to and expansion of higher education.

Salim (1997) estimated the private cost according to the socio-economic background of the students. It was found that, total private cost of engineering education was 21 per cent higher than that of the general education. In both engineering and as well as arts and science colleges, total private cost was higher for the graduate degree course than that of the postgraduate degree course. Further, the private cost of education in the government colleges was higher than that of the private colleges. Interestingly, out of the total private cost, almost 50 per cent share in the case of technical education and 61 per cent share in the case of general education was allocated to ‘incidental items’ of expenditure. Among the components of academic costs, college fee and funds, private tuition charges and expenditure on books played a significant role. In the case of incidental expenses, the largest share was marked for the hostel expenses, clothing and travel.

Cini (1999) in her study on the cost-benefit analysis of Arts Education in Trivananthapuram Districts (Kerala) estimated private cost per student at graduate (B.A.) and postgraduate (M.A.) levels education. She concluded that the highest proportion of private cost of higher education was on fees and funds charged by the colleges, books and stationery, etc. The study revealed that the private cost increases at each level of higher education, i.e. from 1st year of graduation (B.A. I) to 3rd year of graduation (B.A. III) and from Ist year of post-graduation (M.A I) to 2nd year of post-graduation (M.A. II).

Mathur (1974) studied (a) the growth and variation in educational expenditure during 1951-61 with respect to objects, institutions, states, sources and management, (b) the pattern of expenditure from different sources of education finance and (c) the relative performance of different states in education. He found that the total expenditure increased by 201 per cent and the expenditure per student increased by 162 per cent during 1951-61. It was also observed that out of the total growth of expenditure, 72.2 per cent was direct and the

remaining was indirect. Fees accounted for about one-fifth of the total expenditure on education. However, the relative contribution of fees to total expenditure on education found to be declining. In the same vein, Salim (1994) calculated private cost of higher education (general and technical) in Kerala and investigated into financial commitment of households according to socio-economic categories. He concluded degree courses to be costlier than the PG courses in both general and technical education. Net cost per student of technical education was 14 per cent higher than that of general education at the degree level and 359 times lower at the PG level.

In a similar study, Agboola and Adeyemi (2012) carried out a study on analysis of private cost of education in a selected Nigerian university. Data on private costs were obtained with checklist from students, while the demographic and institutional data were obtained from the university records. Percentage, mean, charts and cost-analysis formula were used to analyze data. The results revealed that there was a gap between the average institutional unit cost and private cost. Furthermore, private cost varied across gender, course and level of study and place of residence.

Methodology

This is a descriptive survey based on ex-post facto research design. It is ex-post facto because it looked at the private costs of education students for the 2019/2020 academic session. The entire 4,900 students in the faculty of education from 100 to 400 levels constituted the population. However, the purposive sampling technique was adopted in selecting 20 students from five departments in the faculty of education, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma and this gave a sample size of 100 students. Department of Library and Information Sciences was excluded because they are not taking education courses across levels and the Departments of Vocational and Technical Education and Business Education were used as one Department. Data on students' private costs (academic and nonacademic) were obtained from the respondents through the use of checklists. Costs were restricted to private costs. One hundred (100) randomly sampled full-time undergraduate students from 100 levels to the final year for 2019/2020 academic session formed the respondents for the study. The obtained data were analyzed using percentage and cost-analysis formula.

Results

Research Question One: What is the estimated private cost of students in the Faculty of Education, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, Edo State?

To answer the research question raised, the data obtained from the respondents were presented in Table 1 as follows:

Table 1: Estimated private costs of students in the faculty of education, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, Edo State

N=100							
		YEAR/LEVEL OF STUDY					Dollar ($)
S/No	ITEMS	100 Level	200 Level	300 Level	400 Level	TOTAL	
1.	Acceptance Fess	63,250	--	--	--	**63,250**	**175.69**
2.	School Fees	113,500	113,500	113,500	113,500	**454,000**	**1,261**
3.	Dues	8,500	8,500	8,500	13,000	**38,500**	**106.94**
4.	Course registration	3,150	5,500	500	500	**9,650**	**26.81**
5.	Teaching Practice	--	--	4,500	4,500	**9,000**	**25.0**
6.	Accommodation	80,000	75,000	75,000	75,000	**305,000**	**847.22**
7.	Cosmetics	6,500	6,500	6,500	6,500	**26,000**	**72.22**
8.	Pocket money (Daily expenses)	34,500	21,300	28,400	36,100	**120,300**	**224.17**
9.	Entertainment, sport and recreation	5000	5000	5000	5000	**20,000**	**55.56**
10.	Textbooks/photocopying handouts	10,500	9,500	9,400	11,600	**41,000**	**113.89**
11.	Transportation	4,800	4,800	4,800	4,800	**19,200**	**53.33**
12.	Miscellaneous	20,000	20,000	20,000	50,000	**80,000**	**222.22**
TOTAL		**₦349,700**	**₦269,600**	**₦276,100**	**₦320,500**	**₦1,215,900**	**3,377.5**

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Table 1 presented the private costs of students in the faculty of education, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, Edo State. It was shown that the total estimated private costs of education students at the first year of study is 349,700 ($971.39), at the second year of study **₦269600 ($748.89)**, at the third year of study **₦276,100 ($766.94)** and at the fourth year of study it increased to **₦320,500 ($890.28).** Therefore, the total estimated private cost of educating a student in the Faculty of Education, Ambrose Alli University as at 2019/2020 academic session is **₦1,215,900** which is equivalent to **$3377.5.**

Research Question 2: What is the difference between the private costs of faculty of education students based on residence?

Table 2: difference in the private cost of faculty of education students based on residence

Residence	Number of respondents	(%)	Estimated Total Private Cost
School Hostels	21	21.0	**₦1,011,700**
Rented Apartments	68	68.0	**₦1,215,900**

Living with parents	11	11.0	**₦830,900**
Total	**100**	**100**	

Table 2 presented the differences in the estimated private cost analysis of students based on their residence. It was revealed that students who reside in the school hostels have an estimated private costs of **₦1,011,700,** students in rented apartments outside the school premises have estimated private costs of **₦1**,215,900 and students living with their parents have estimated private cost of **₦830,900**. Therefore, the researcher concluded that there is a difference in the private cost of faculty of education students based on residence.

Research Question 3: What is the difference between the private costs of male and female students in the faculty of education, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, Edo State

Table 3: differences in the estimated private costs of male and female students in the faculty of education

Sex	Number of respondents	(%)	Estimated Total Private Costs
Male	44	44.0	**₦1,165,700**
Female	56	56.0	**₦1,195,900**
Total	100	100	

Table 3 showed the estimated private costs of male and female students in the faculty of education, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, Edo State. As shown in the table, 44 of the respondents were male while 56 of them were female. The table also showed that the estimated private cost of a male student is **₦1,165,700** while that of a female child is ₦1,195,900.It was also showed that the private cost borne by the male child is lower than that of the female child. Therefore, there is a difference in the private cost of a male and female student in the faculty of education, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma.

Discussion

The study revealed that the total estimated private cost of educating a student in the Faculty of Education, Ambrose Alli University as at 2018 is **₦1,215,900** which is equivalent to **$3377.5.** This implied that the cost of private individuals who seek education in the Faculty of Education, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma is expensive. This expensiveness may be as a result of the government increment in the cost of tuition fees, increment in the cost of renting accommodation, hike in fuel price which has affected the cost of transportation and the cost of some learning items. This finding is in line with Shah (1987) whose study found out that the private costs of students in college of education was

substantially high, and tuition fee formed only a very small portion of the total private cost. He proved that the high tuition cost acted as a potent constraint in the access to and expansion of higher education. This finding is also in agreement with the finding of Cini (1999) that the highest proportion of private cost of higher education was on fees and funds charged by the colleges, books and stationery, etc. The study revealed that the private cost increases at each level of higher education.

This study revealed that there is a difference in the private cost of faculty of education students based on residence. This difference may be influenced by the differences in the cost of accommodation, transportation to campus and the cost of commodities with the area which the student reside. This finding is in agreement with the finding of Agboola and Adeyemi (2012) whose study on analysis of private cost of education in a selected Nigerian university showed that private cost varied across place of residence.

The finding of this study also revealed that there is a difference in the private cost of a male and female student in the faculty of education, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma and the private cost borne by the male child is lower than that of the female child. This may be influenced by the cost of clothing, the choice of the girl child to occupy a self contain apartment in regards to privacy, the cost of cosmetics and other sanitary equipments. This finding is in agreement with the finding of Agboola and Adeyemi (2012) who investigated the analysis of private cost of education in a selected Nigerian university. the study revealed that private cost varied across gender, course and level of study and place of residence.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that the private costs of private individuals who seek education in the Faculty of Education, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma is high; that a difference exist in the private costs of faculty of education students based on residence and based on sex and that the private costs borne by the male students is lower than that of the female students.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

- The government or proprietors of the university should reduce the students' tuition fees as this will help to reduce the private costs of students.
- Government should increase the subventions to schools so that the levies placed on students in form of dues by Departments and Faculties in running administrative duties can be ameliorated.

- Government and school administrators should build more hostels for the students so that bulk of the students can be accommodated on campus since private costs of residency outside campus is higher.
- The parents and wards of students should be aware that training a female student through the university is higher than that of male student. By this awareness, they should stop comparing their children on the basis of sex.

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