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## **ABSTRACT**

Just as the society advances and the Nigerian population increases, there is an increasing number of aspiring students being admitted into tertiary institutions and little or no provision of adequate accommodation for them. This study examines ways of improving maintenance culture and its effect on quality of hostel properties in Nigerian institutions using University of Benin, Benin City, Edo state, Nigeria as a case study. The study employed the survey method. Data was collected from primary source using structured questionnaires which had closed ended questions. The questionnaire consisted of five sections. Section A dealt with the social characteristics of the respondents, Section B dealt with the respondents' perception of hostel building maintenance, Section C dealt with the respondents' view of the factors responsible for lack of hostel building maintenance, Section D aimed at capturing the respondents' take on possible solutions to the maintenance issues, while Section E dealt with

respondents' idea of a well maintained hostel building and the changes it will cause. The study found that problems that militate against hostel maintenance include; lack of maintenance policy, inadequate provision of funds for maintenance, poor execution of maintenance work by designated responsible units/agencies, corruption, lack of experienced staff (human capacity building), misuse of facilities by occupants, Lack of timely response to maintenance request, over-crowding, change in government, and poor architectural drawings/designs. The study therefore concluded that maintenance culture towards hostel properties in Nigerian universities is generally poor both on the part of the authorities and the students. From the study, it was confirmed that there is no laid-out plan or schedule for carrying out regular maintenance works on the hostel buildings.

The research equally pointed out ways of improving maintenance culture, it recommended that the school authorities together with the government should come up with maintenance policies and schedules in line with standards and enforce that all hostel buildings of Nigerian institutions are well maintained not only to improve the urban aesthetics but also to improve the wellbeing of the users. Preventive maintenance of hostel buildings should also be encouraged to avoid building failure.

**KEYWORDS:** Maintenance, Culture, Maintenance Culture, Hostel Properties, Public Properties, Institutions.

## **CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. BACKGROUND STATEMENT**

The Advanced Learners Dictionary defines maintenance as the process of protecting or preserving someone or something, or the process of keeping something in good condition. Culture, on the other hand, is a way of life, a lifestyle, customs, traditions, habits that portray the attributes of a person/people. Maintenance culture is an attitude which is sadly lacking in Nigeria, whether in the home, office, school or factory. Mbamali (2003) added that poor maintenance culture has become a widely recognized problem in Nigeria which has poorly affected the quality of public properties. Public property is property that is dedicated to public use and is a subset of state property. The term may be used either to describe the use to which the property is put, or to describe the character of its ownership (owned collectively by the population of a state). This is in contrast to private property, owned by an individual person or artificial entities that represent the financial interests of persons, such as corporations. State ownership, also called public ownership, government ownership or state property, are property interests that are vested in the state, rather than an individual or communities (Wikipedia, 2015). Maintenance culture in Nigeria is one of the lowest around the world, especially, in our principal towns and cities where the majority of public properties are located. In the rural areas, the story is different and pleasant to hear. The traditional practice of communal clearing of community owned places such as market playground is in almost every village and in private homes. Also, it is customary to refurbish building interiors with mixtures of cow dung or natural red clay. The end result is attractive and totally indigenous. According to Wahab (1995) the nation accords low priority to property management leading to neglect of public properties. Mbamali (2003) asserted that we have no maintenance policy and therefore no such culture exists. Neglect of maintenance has accumulated consequences in rapid increase in the deterioration of the fabric and finishes of a building, accompanied by a harmful effect on the content's occupants Seeley, (1987). Inadequate maintenance culture is a peculiar feature of almost every public building in Nigeria. According to Rotimi and Mtallib (1995) is partly due to poor maintenance culture on one hand and partly due to the absence of an appropriate benchmark. Gurjit (1990) asserted that lack of proper maintenance culture brings the life of these public building last before reaching the total obsolescence state. The declining maintenance culture in Nigeria and its effect on public buildings and all other properties has become a major problem to the government at various levels. This study examines ways of improving maintenance culture and its effect on quality of hostel properties in Nigerian institutions. A

great portion of a nation wealth is evident in the total value of its public properties and buildings; it is also an important factor in the production of the building to be preserved. A poorly maintained building in a decaying environment depresses the quality of life and contributes in some measures to anti social behaviour which threatens the socio-political environment it finds itself in. According to Stephen (2002) public properties services rarely perform as well as desired. The causes emanate from deficiencies in design, construction, commissioning and maintenance, many researchers have also observed that the generators of maintenance problems could be looked upon as having caused during the design stage or construction stage or initiated during the usage stage or the user's carefree attitudes (Bad maintenance culture) which will eventually deteriorate the condition of the property. He further said that all these could be planned for during the design stage. Maintenance problems though do manifest during the use of the building, their causes might be during the design stage. These made Dekker (2002) to assert that thinking on the maintenance should start in the design phase. According to Speight (2000), it is at the design stage that the maintenance burden can be positively influenced for better or for worse. Where the designer fails to make adequate consideration for minimizing maintenance problems, it always turns out to be a big problem when the building is eventually occupied for usage, the consideration for effective maintenance as one of the parameters for the building design. Seeley (1997) also said that a skilful design can reduce the amount of maintenance work and also make it easier to perform, since good maintenance begins on the drawing board.

## **1.2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Building maintenance is an important activity to keep a building in good condition. Even though the building seems like it is in perfect condition, there is a lot of maintenance work needed to be done in order to maintain such condition. To preserve and prolong the life of a building, maintenance is necessary to be carried out.

Oladimeji (1996) further described maintenance of public properties as the combination of any continuous actions carried out to retain a property in or restore it to an acceptable condition. Onwuka (1989) stated that maintenance culture is concerned with the planning and control of construction resources to ensure that necessary repairs and renewal are carried out with maximum efficiency and economy to enhance the quality of the property. However, this research is examining the ways of improving maintenance culture and quality of public properties in Nigeria.

Proper maintenance strategy plays an important role in the maintenance of a building. Proper maintenance strategy is able to affect the performance of maintenance. Good maintenance depends on the maintenance strategy used. Poor maintenance is also caused by using the improper maintenance strategy. Poor maintenance of public properties will lead to depreciation of property value, affect the condition of the building, make the users feel unsafe, cause inconvenience to the users, cause the building efficiency to drop and eventually cause the building to deteriorate rapidly.

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