

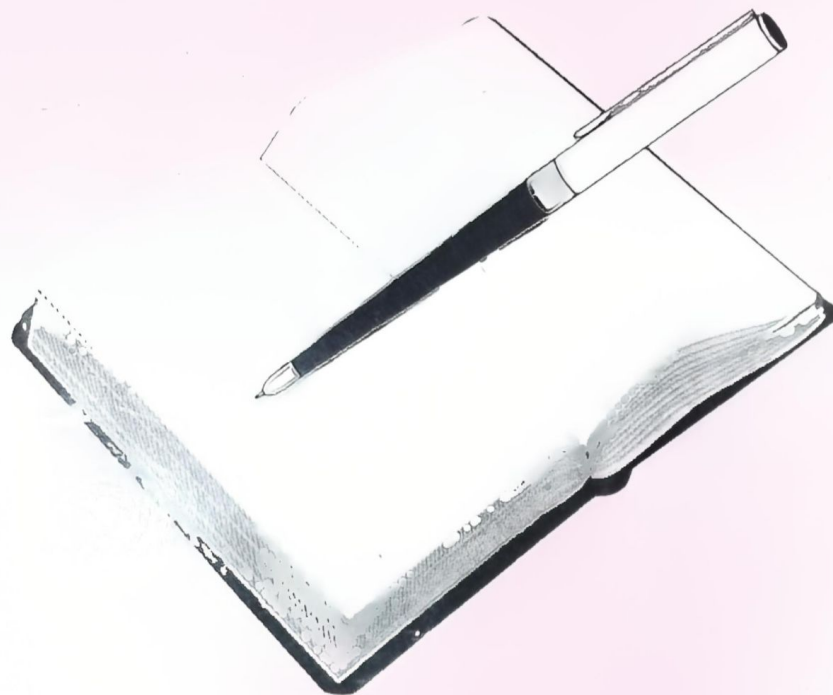
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Issues and Challenges facing Transport and Logistics Management Education in Nigeria: Students Perspective

Araoye Olarinkoye Ajiboye, CMILT,
Transport Management Technology Department,
School of Entrepreneurship and Management Technology,
Federal University of Technology, Minna, Nigeria

Abstract

Transportation education and training comes in form of formal and informal and the formal include diploma and degree programs all the way through to Ph. D. programs in transport and logistics field. The level of training requires will depend upon the specific need of individual and corporate bodies. However, the objectives of this paper is to examine the issues and challenges facing transport and logistics management education in Nigerian universities from the perspective of the students and to identify the factors affecting the quality of the transport and logistics management education. The study area is limited to the three pioneer universities that offer the course both at undergraduate and post graduate levels. Namely, Federal University of Technology, Owerri, Olabisi Onabanjo (formerly Ogun State) University, Ago Iwoye and Ladoké Akintola University of Technology, Ogbomoso. The method used to collect data was primary through the use of questionnaire, interview and participatory as well as reports from departments and universities while the data collected were subjected to descriptive statistical analysis using percentage, mean score and frequency. A total of 150 questionnaires were administered to transport management students in each of the three universities randomly irrespective of their level while all the questionnaires were properly filled and returned. The challenges associated with transport and logistics management education in the various universities and their solutions were ranked by giving their values as 3, 2 and 1 to seriously agreed, agreed and not agreed while the values were summed up and ranked according to their total values. It was observed that inadequate and high cost of transport textbooks, inadequate

experience and qualified core transport lecturers, inadequate practical exposure are some of the major issues and challenges facing transport management education in Nigeria. The study recommends that the university managements and the governments should encourage the study of transport and logistics courses by funding the departments well and encouraging both the staff and students through adequate post graduate trainings, provision of textbooks and journals as well as exposure to modern practical trainings.

Introduction

Transportation is the movement of people, goods, services and information from one geographical location to another through a specific mean or means for a particular purpose according to Ajiboye (1995). For instance, getting to and from office, school, religious or recreational centres require transportation, so does getting agricultural products from farms or industrial products from manufacturing companies into markets for the end users to purchase as observed by Adefolalu (1977), Ajiboye (1995), Ajiboye and Afolayan (2008, 2009), Ajiboye and Fapohunda (2008).

The word transportation is derived from the Latin word 'trans' meaning across and 'portare' meaning to carry. It creates time utility, which is getting a product to a destination on time and space utility which is the optimal utilization of space available for to carry large volumes of goods at a low cost. For instance, if a finished product is not moved to the market at the right time, it ceases to have value. In other words, transportation is basically the movement of goods, people and services while it answer some questions such as what move?, where do they move?, how do they move?, and why do they move?

Logistics on the other hand is a common terminology but most often wrongly misused. It is the science of managing inventory both in motion and in static condition. The Council of Logistics Management of United States of America (2003) defines logistics as the process of planning, implementing and controlling the efficient, effective flow of storage of goods, services and related information from point of origin to point of consumption for the purpose of confirming to customer requirements. The definition includes inbound, outbound, internal and external movements.

Transport and logistics education on the other hand is a process and

a series of activities aimed at enabling an individual to assimilate and develop knowledge, skills, values and understanding of the administration, management, planning, conduct or operation of any of the principal forms of transport, transit, traffic, locomotive, physical distribution, logistics or any activity related thereto as well as the research, development and study in or of the art and science of logistics and transport in all its branches by allowing a broad range of problems to be defined, analyzed and solved according to Ajiboye (2011).

Research Objectives

The objectives of this paper is to examine the issues and challenges facing transport and logistics management education in Nigerian universities from the perspective of the students and to identify the factors affecting the quality of the transport and logistics management education. This study is important because of its expected capability to contribute immensely to generating sufficient understanding of the transport and logistics management education in Nigeria. It is also expected that the results would bring to light factors that might assist the institutions in designing a better transport and logistics education curriculum that is sensitive to the development of transport sector thereby helping stakeholders and policy makers in the efforts at sensitizing and combating challenges facing the transport and logistics students. Against the foregoing background that measures have been taken over the years to undertake formally and seriously some manpower development for the exclusive benefit of the transport sector in Nigeria. In Nigeria, there are both private and public institutions that run training and educational programmes for the consumption of the transport industry ranging from the trade test to doctorate levels but faces a lot of challenges. This study however is an assessment of the issues and challenges facing Transport and Logistics Management education in Nigerian universities from the students' perspective.

Methodology

The study is limited to the pioneer universities that offer transport courses at both undergraduate and post graduate levels. Namely, Federal University of Technology, Owerri , Olabisi Onabanjo (formerly Ogun State) University, Ago Iwoye and Ladoke Akintola

University of Technology, Ogbomoso. The method used to collect data was primary through the use of questionnaire; interview and participatory while secondary data were collected from departments and universities. A total of 150 questionnaires were administered to Transport Management students in each of the universities randomly irrespective of their level while all the questionnaires were properly filled and returned. Respondents were classified according to their sex, age bracket, educational qualifications and level in the university. The challenges associated with transport and logistics management education in the various universities and their solutions were ranked. Values 3, 2 and 1 were assigned to seriously agreed, agreed and not agreed respectively. The values were summed up and ranked according to their total values. The data collected were subjected to descriptive statistical analysis using mean and percentage.

Challenges of Transport and Logistics Management Education in Nigerian Universities from Students Perspective

An attempt was made to find out from the respondents on the major issues and challenges facing Transport and Logistics Management education in the three pioneer universities that offered the transport courses from Diploma to Doctorate levels. Twelve constraints were identified by the respondents. Among these are inadequate instructional materials, inadequate practical works and field experience, high cost and scarcity of basic transport textbooks, inadequate lecture rooms and halls, inadequate qualified and experienced transport lecturers, insufficient orientation programmes for the students, difficulty in securing industrial training placement, inadequate political will to support transport and logistics training, lack of proper recognition of the course by the general public, too much of borrow and irrelevant courses and discrimination among students of other departments as well as inadequate motivational and financial assistance as shown in table 3.

High cost and scarcity of basic transport textbooks and journals was ranked first as a serious challenge facing transport education in Nigeria with a score total of 1350. Transport textbooks are generally scarce to find on shelves of bookshops and libraries and where available the price are extremely high compare to other subjects that have large number of students. Even at the library the books are not easy to come by and where found the demand is more than the supply. Inadequate trained and experienced professional lecturers with

training in core transport rank second with a score total of 1200. Most of the universities lack experience trained lecturers who have PhD in Transport Management / Studies, Maritime/ Shipping Management, Logistics and Supply Chain Management but have people with Geography, Economics, Urban and Regional Planning as well as Engineering background. However, most of the universities prefer to go for graduates of M.Sc / M.Tech Transport with minimum of Second Class Upper Division in any related fields in their undergraduate as the basic entry requirement. Inadequate instructional materials for study such as laboratories, projectors, computers, packages, internet was ranked third by the respondents with a score of 1150 while. Inadequate lecture rooms and halls, laboratories and libraries making learning environment not too conducive was ranked fourth with score total of 1040.

Table I: Analysis of Students' Responses on Challenges facing Transport and Logistics Management education in Nigeria Universities

Challenges	Seriously agreed	Agreed	Not agreed	Total	Score total	Ranks
Inadequate Instructional materials	250	200	-	450	1150	3
Inadequate practical work	200	140	110	450	990	6
High cost and scarcity of Textbooks	450	-	-	450	1350	1
Inadequate lecture rooms	190	210	50	450	1040	4
Inadequate qualified lecturers	300	150	-	450	1200	2
Insufficient orientation	180	130	140	450	940	8
Difficulty of IT placement	75	175	200	450	775	12
Inadequate political will on training	108	154	188	450	820	9
Lack of proper recognition	77	192	181	450	796	10
Too much of irrelevant courses	203	157	90	450	1013	5
Uncoordinated training among schools	95	153	202	450	793	11
Inadequate motivation	178	140	132	450	956	7
Sum	2306 (43%)	1801 (33%)	1293 (24%)	5400		

Ranking of Solutions to the Challenges

The ranking of solution to the challenges facing the transport and logistics management education in Nigeria were also considered. The solutions to improve the identified challenges shown and discussed above were ranked and discussed below as shown on table 2. Adequate provision of transport textbooks and journals at the libraries and subsidising of the price paid for transport books were also suggested while the government was encourage giving the importers tax holiday so as to bring in the books and this rank first with score total of 1350. This was followed in order of ranking by inadequate practical work and field experience which will expose the students to the world of transport and logistics are lacking in most of the universities with the score total of 990. Inadequate motivational and financial support in form of bursary awards and scholarships as well as awards to the outstanding students which will encourage students to put in their best was ranked seventh with the score total of 956.

Insufficient orientation programmes for the students through seminars, workshops, career talks and public recognition of the transport programmes was ranked as eighth by the respondents with score total of 40. It is believed that due to the newness of the programmes in the country, most of the students should be well oriented while public awareness should be created through schools, media houses, career counsellors among other which were not forth coming.

Inadequate political will from the government on the training and education of the transportants is seen as a challenge by the respondents in the sense that inadequate funding of the transport departments in acquiring some of the equipments needed as well as packages needed to ease training easier are not available to the students: This was ranked ninth with score total of 820.

Finally, the uncoordinating transport programme among the universities was seen as a challenge by the respondents as each university has its own focus on certain areas with score total of 793 and ranked eleventh. For instance Olabisi Onabanjo University Ago Iwoye focus on transport engineering and management and Ladoke Akintola University of Technology Omoso focus on transport technological management and Federal University of Technology Owerri based their curriculum mainly on transport technology.

Table 2: Solutions to the Challenges facing Transport and Logistics Management Education in Nigeria as Given by the Respondents

Solutions	Seriously agreed	Agreed	Not agreed	Total	Score	Rank
Introduction of practical	160	155	135	450	925	1
Special orientation	238	112	100	450	1038	2
Publicity of Transport program	250	160	40	450	1110	3
Provision of lecture rooms	409	41		450	1309	4
Adequate trained lecturers	304	146		450	912	11
Coordinated Transport programme	130	150	170	450	860	12
Provision of scholarship	280	130	40	450	1140	
Sufficient Orientation	236	144	70	450	1066	6
Adequate political will	176	148	126	450	950	8
Provision of Instructional materials	380		70	450	1066	6
Effective Administration	197	149	104	450	993	7
Adequate provision of books	450			450	1350	
Sum	820 (61.5%)	330 (29.1%)	170 (9.4%)	1320		
Mean STD	32	10	5	55		

Source: Author's field survey.

Difficulty of getting industrial training placement for the transport and logistics management students was ranked last by the respondents with a total of 775 as a challenge facing the transport and logistics management education in Nigeria. Many of the respondents could not get a place because of many factors such as unawareness of the programmes in the labour market, economic downturn and inability of students to move out of their hometowns.

Provision of adequate lecture rooms and halls was also one of the challenges. In order to learn under a very good atmosphere,

This was ranked second with score total of 1309 and the provision of instructional materials such as computers, learning aids, models, internet facilities among other was also suggested by the respondents and it ranked third with the score total of 1300.

Provision of incentives such as bursary, scholarship, research grants, and awards among other things that can motivate students to greater height was also suggested and this was ranked fourth with score total of 1140. Furthermore, the professional bodies such as the Chartered Institute of Transport and Logistics, Institute of Transport Administration of Nigeria, Chartered Institute of Shipping and the various Transport Department are encourage publicising transport programme and career within and outside the campus. This was ranked fifth with score total of 1110.

Encouragement and guiding of transport students through orientation programmes, seminars, workshops, study visits and career talks was also suggested by the respondents and ranked sixth with score total of 1066 while adequate political will on the part of the federal and state governments to fund the departments of Transport and university as a whole adequately This was ranked seventh with the score total of 1038. Similarly, the respondents suggested that effective administration should be in placed where students will free to approach their lecturers for advice and counselling while the department will be a home to visit. This was ranked eight with 993.

Adequate political will on the part of the federal and state governments to fund the departments of Transport and university as a whole adequately was also suggested by the respondent. It is ranked ninth with the score total of 950. This is however, followed by these solutions according to their ranks. Namely, introduction to practical works, experiments and field works, effective administration of transport management department and the university as well as adequate trained lecturer and coordinated transport program with total score of 993, 912 and 860 respectively.

This study shows that transport and logistics management education in Nigeria is facing a lot of challenges. Among these are inadequate instructional materials, inadequate practical works and field experience, high cost and scarcity of basic transport textbooks, inadequate lecture rooms and halls, inadequate qualified and experienced transport lecturers, insufficient orientation programmes for the students, difficulty in securing

industrial training placement, inadequate political will to support transport and logistics training, lack of proper recognition of the course by the general public, too much of borrow and irrelevant courses and discrimination among students of other departments as well as inadequate motivational and financial assistance.

Policy Recommendations

Based on the foregoing discussions from this study certain basic policy recommendations can be made:

- that the management of the university should adequately provide basic transport textbooks and journals at the various libraries;
- that the price paid for transport books should be subsidised by the federal government by giving the importers tax holiday so as to bring in the books cheaply;
- that there should be adequate provision of lecture rooms and halls with learning aids in order to learn under a very good atmosphere;
- that the university management should provide instructional materials such as computers, learning aids, models, internet facilities that will aid in the teaching and learning of transport and logistics courses;
- that the government, management and corporate bodies as well as individual should be encouraged to provide incentives such as bursary, scholarship, research grants, awards among other things that can motivate students to greater height;
- that the university management should source for experience and qualified staff and facilities;
- that the university management and the hosting department and faculty and school should encourage and guide transport students through orientation programmes, seminars, workshops, study visits and career talks;
- that effective administration should be in place where students will be free to approach their lecturers for advice and counselling;
- and that there should be adequate political will on the part of the federal and state governments to fund the department of Transport and university as a whole adequately.

Conclusion

This study has shown that transport and logistics management are importance to the socio economic development of the nation and there is an urgent need to promote transport and logistics management education in order to fill the gap of meeting the transport and logistics needs of Nigeria. However, there are issues and challenges facing the transport and logistics management education in Nigeria and it is the opinion of this researcher that if these challenges facing transport and logistics management education are carefully look into and well address by all stakeholders as suggested above, it will help in planning the education needs of the country in general and that of transport and logistics management in particular.

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