

*Full Length Research Paper*

# **Cost of University education under the weekend degree programme at Delta State University, Asaba**

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**The direct cost of higher education keep rising in the face of shrinking real budgetary allocation to education. In the absence of any documented evidence, the study sought to determine the cost of acquiring a degree from the Faculty of Management Sciences at Delta State University, Asaba Campus under the Weekend Degree Programme. Data for this study was collected from a random sample of 400 final year students. Data was collected and analyzed using simple percentage frequencies due to the nature of the study. Analysis of the data show that the expenditure profile is higher among female students while the cost component include tuition, accommodation, feeding and transportation. The study recommends that management should consider building hostels for Weekend Degree students to reduce distractions and cost. The university is also advised to minimize upward review of fees since most students from the catchments area are from average socio-economic backgrounds.**

**Keywords:** Cost, Education, Part-time, Weekend, Expenditure profile, Gender.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Educational costs keep rising while many state budgets to the sector stagnate or shrinking in real terms. A university education is an investment that pays off overtime. There are strident calls for more enrollment into tertiary institutions in order to promote the production of middle level manpower managers. Some have argued that for increase in enrollment to occur institutions of higher learning would have to lower what it costs to produce their students.

In Nigeria, higher education enrolls a very modest 4% of the relevant age cohort. This compares poorly with economic competitors such as South Africa (17%), India (7%), Indonesia (11%) and Brazil (12%) (Task Force, 2000).

Hartnett (2000) found that while the value of government allocation for higher education declined by precipitous fall in the quality of university education and

research as implied by the drop in the real value of recurrent expenditure per student during the same period. According to Oni (2000) there has been a downward pressure on staff salaries, deteriorating working conditions and political repressions on campuses which have generated a series of strikes by both academic and non-academic staff.

In May 2002, a set of legislative proposals designed to reform existing higher education laws and establish a permanent legal basis for these changes was approved by Federal Executive Council and forwarded to the National Assembly for deliberation. The proposals reportedly would give university councils the responsibility for setting institutional policies, hiring top management, and forwarding institutional budgets, give institutions control over their own student admissions, limit the role of the Nigerian Universities Commission (NUC) to quality assurance and system coordination, place curbs on the right of employees to strike, and legally delink the universities from the public service remuneration and benefits (Guardian, 2002).

27%, enrollment grew by 79%. The result has been the

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## **The Problem**

Any discussion of lowering the cost of education at the university level must start with a more fundamental question. What does it cost to earn a university degree under the Weekend Programme? Experience has shown that some students of the institution drop out of their desired programmes because of financial incapability. Some of the affected students dropped out or temporarily deferred studies even in their final year due to a combination of financial difficulty and academic deficiency. It is possible that many students do not have idea of the financial implication of acquiring a university degree at Delsu, Asaba

Consequently, this study seeks to determine the direct cost of acquiring a degree from Delsu Asaba so that prospective students can make more informed decision before seeking to avail themselves of the educational opportunities in the institution.

## **Objectives of the Study**

The general objective of this study is to determine the cost of acquiring a four-year degree at Delta State University, Asaba. Specific objectives of the study are:

- i. To determine the cost components of a university degree under the Weekend Programme;
- ii. To determine if gender affects cost of university education;
- iii. To determine if programme of study affects cost
- iv. Recommend strategies to guide policy makers in proposing fees for the university system.

## **Research Questions**

The following research questions seek to guide the study:

- i. What constitute the expenditure profile of Weekend Degree =students at Delsu, Asaba?
- ii. Does gender affect expenditure profile?
- iii. Does social class affect choice of admission to Delsu, Asaba?

## **Significance, Scope and Limitations of the study**

Since there is no evidence of a study that has highlighted the cost of education at Delsu, Asaba it is believed that the findings from the study will benefit prospective students/parents and the university administration about the average cost components for a degree. For the prospective students and their parents the findings will constitute a benchmark for forecasting their sources of income before a decision to enroll in the university. For Government and university administration information from the study will serve as a guide in the determination of the rate of fees to be charged.

The study covered only the Asaba Campus of Delta State University. It was specifically targeted at the students of the Faculty of Management Sciences (FMS) because the Faculty of Agriculture does not operate Part-time Programme. The study only focused on what constitute the cost components for acquiring a five-year Weekend degree. Consequently, the findings of this study, may not necessarily be replicated or applicable to other campuses of the university nor other degree awarding universities.

## **Literature Review**

Education is the greatest social leveler and most potent instrument for mental and social emancipation. Nations of the world, in recognition of this, seek to provide quality education for majority of their citizens in an equitable and accessible manner (Fafunwa, 1974). Knowledge has become the most important factor for economic development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. According to the World Bank (1999) higher education in particular are fundamental to the construction of a knowledge economy and society in all nations. Yet the potential of higher education systems in developing countries like Nigeria to fulfill this important responsibility continue to be thwarted by the problems of funding, equity, access and contradicting policies and poor governance.

With a population of approximately 140million and ample natural resources, Nigeria seems to be Africa's sleeping economic giant. Because of its many distorted policies it may be described as a deformed giant. While one-third of its population pursue a life style oriented in various degrees towards Europe and North America, the other two-thirds struggle to survive on less than one dollar per day (World Bank, 1996).

In recent years, the economic success of newly industrializing nations such as the "Asian tigers" has been linked to substantial prior investment in human resources. According to Nelson (1993) strategic investments together with particular institutional and policy choices concerning the university system, and the extent of intellectual property protection as well as collaboration between universities and government in research and development (R & D) have helped to promote what he calls "national innovation systems". Stern (2003) also argues that countries that increased their innovative capacities have invested heavily in science and engineering while promoting competition as a basis for innovation.

Does Nigeria possess the necessary elements to develop a national innovation system as argued above? Nigeria appear to have low investment in research which perhaps explains why the non-oil sector of the economy is sluggish. For example, Task Force (2003) noted that Nigeria's scientific publications for 1995 was 711 Compared to 3,413 for South Africa, 14,883 for India and 5,440 for Brazil. Nigeria's low research output probably

**Table 1.**students enrolment in Delsu, asaba

YEAR	FACULTY	
	Management Sciences	
2003/2004	.829	653
2004/2005	1035	708
2005/2006	1162	735
2006/2007	1300	810
2007/2008	1312	556
2009/2010	1380	972

Source. Delta State University, Registry Department, 2010

**Table 2.**Tuition fees

YEAR	FEES	PERCENT	YEAR 2-4	PERCENT	YEAR 5	PERCENT
2004/2005	31,300		26,300		28,800	
2005/2006	36,000	15.01	31,300	19.01	33,800	17.36
2006/2007	40,800	13.33	32,100	2.55	34,600	2.36
2007/2008	50,500	23.77	40,500	26.16	44,500	28.61
2008/2009	50,500	N/C	40,500	N/C	44,500	N/C
2009/2010	50,500	N/C	40,500	N/C	44,500	N/C
2010/2011	63,000	24.75	46,000	13.58	-	?

Source. Bursary Department, Delsu, Asaba

reflects the low priority accorded to research and the university systems in general.

Rising student numbers have generated an enrollment ratio of 340 per 100,000 persons (Asia averages 650, and South Africa 2500) and an average staff/student ratio of 1:21 for sciences, 1:22 engineering, 1:25 Law, and 1:37 for education. According to NUC (2002) the sciences recorded more growth in 2000 from 54% to 59% but with much of this expansion centered in the South-East part of Nigeria. Efforts to expand enrollment and improve educational quality have been severely constrained by growing shortages of qualified academic staff. Ekenna (2009) found that while there are 27,394 academics on the university system an additional 19,548 will be required. Based on the above figures the Nigerian university system has only 58% of its required staffing needs while it suffers a shortfalls of 42%. NUC (2002b) estimated the shortfalls as follows; 73% on engineering, 62% on medicine, 58% in administration and 53% in the sciences.

## Background to the Study

Delta State University, Asaba Campus is one of the three campuses of Delta State University, Abraka. Although the main campus at Abraka was a mini-campus of the former Bendel State University, Ekpoma, it was not until 1991 when Delta State was carved out of the then Bendel State that it became a full fledged university. For political exigency and the need to bring higher education closer to the people, Delta State University gave birth to three campuses, one in each senatorial district.

Since this study focuses on Delta State Asaba Campus, it is necessary to give a brief background information about the campus. The Asaba Campus was established in 1995/1996 with only two faculties – Management Sciences and Agriculture. Under the Faculty of Management Sciences are the departments of Business Administration and Marketing, Accounting, Banking and Finance. On the other hand the Faculty of Agriculture is comprised of the departments of Agronomy, Fisheries, Animal Science, Forestry and Wildlife, and Agricultural Economics and Extension services. Student enrollment in the Weekend Degree Programme of the Faculty of Management Sciences at the Asaba is presented in table 1. The table shows that student enrolment has been increasing annually.

Being a State university, there have always been discriminatory fees between in-state (indigene) and out-state (non-indigene) as shown in table 2.

Using N31,500 as the base tuition charged for Faculty of Management Sciences in the period under study, Table 2 shows that tuition fees have increased 106.3 percent for freshmen in the faculty. On the other hand the increase for Year 2-4 rose approximately 75% percent and 55 percent for final year students.

## Brief History of Higher Education in Nigeria

The higher education system in Nigeria is composed of universities, polytechnics/monotechnics, institutions of technology, colleges of education and professional, specialized institutions (IAU, 2000). They can be further categorized as state or federal universities, and as first,

second or third generation universities (Harnett, 2006). According to the Association for the Development of Education on Africa (2008) there are 117 universities including federal state and private universities. To gain admission into the first level of university education, prospective students must pass the competitive University Matriculation Examination (UME). Private universities and other tertiary institutions are a recent phenomenon, and mostly located in the southern part of Nigeria.

The Nigerian higher education system, inspite of being Africa's largest higher education system with about 400,000 students, is unable to admit all qualified applicants every year (ADEA, 2000; Ajayi and Alani, (1996). Numerous clauses are applied in admission to some disciplines determined by the National Universities Commission (NUC) and conditioned by the availability of instructional facilities at the institution.

The participation rate on higher education is 395 per 100,000 persons and according Harnett (2000) women accounted for 34 percent of total enrollment in 1998/1999 academic year.

The Federal Government controls universities and other higher institutions through the following organs: Federal Ministry of Education (FME), the National Universities Commission (NUC) which among other things allocates funds to federal universities and prescribes the spending formular; the committee of Vice Chancellors of Federal and state universities, which act as a coordinating body and offers advice to government and university governing councils on matters of general and specific concern to higher education. Each university is administered by a Council and Senate, and is headed by an appointed Vice Chancellor who is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) safeguards the interest of the academic staff in the Nigerian university system.

### University Funding

The cost of running the federal university system totaled \$210 million in 1999 (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2001). However, because of enrollment growth and currency devaluation, recurrent allocation per university student in the federal university system fell from \$610 to \$360 between 1990 and 1999. This will obviously have implications for quality.

Federal university revenues come from the federal government (84%), internally generated revenues (7%) and various student fees (9%) even though no undergraduate tuition fees are charged, unlike in state and private owned universities. Federal universities are made to adhere strictly to a budgeting and expenditure formular stipulated by the Nigerian Universities Commission (NUC) as follows: 60 percent for academic, 39 percent for administrative support, and 1 percent for

pension and benefits. Direct teaching expenditure per student differed considerably among institutions. For example, in 1997/98 Hartnett (2000) found that direct teaching cost ranged from ₦137 (\$2) per student in Sokoto to ₦1,683 (\$21) in Maiduguri. Although tertiary education receives a larger share of the education budget. The portion for education in the federal budget has continued to diminish. For example, while Callaway and Musone (1965) formed that the budget for education represented 3.5% of GDP and 15.2% of total government expenditure, Hinchliffe (2002) estimated expenditure on the sector as equal 2.4% of GDP and 14.3% of government expenditure. World Education Report (2002) indicates that 19 other countries of sub-sahara Africa allocate an average of 5.1% of GDP and 19.6% of total budget to education, while Nigeria's funding is less than half even though tertiary education receives a much higher share than secondary and primary levels.

It can be concluded that the federal government is not giving priority to education judging by the level of funding, and if state owned universities charge fees for obvious reasons, it means anybody aspiring to acquire a university education must be prepared to pay for it.

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study sought to determine the cost of obtaining a degree after five years in the Faculty of Management Sciences (FMS) At the time of this study, the Weekend degree student population was 3245. The target population for the study comprised all Weekend and Extension (returning) students. A total sample of 400 students were randomly selected for the study. Of the 400 questionnaire administered only 320 (80%) were found useable.

#### Data Analysis

The questionnaire containing twenty-four items were retrieved and vetted for correctness after which only 320 were deemed correct and usable for collation and analysis. The data were analyzed using relative frequencies and simple percentages due to the nature of the study. The analysis that follows is done under three broad sections: Demographic, socio-economic background of parents/sponsors, and the expenditure profile of respondents.

#### Demographic Data

Only 320 of the returned questionnaires were used for the analysis of data. Of this number the male respondents were 128(40%) while the female were 192 (60%). Based on the above the female respondents

**Table 3.** Sex distribution

FMS	Respondents	Percentage
Male	128	40
Female	192	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>320</b>	

**Table 4.** Age distribution

FMS			Percentage
	Male	Female	
17-20 years	18	24	13.12
21-25 years	42	76	36.87
26-30 years	50	84	41.87
Over 30 years	18	8	8.12
<b>Total</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 5.** State distribution

FMS State	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
Delta	56	92	140	43.75
Edo	12	19	31	9.68
Anambra	34	61	95	29.68
Others	26	20	46	14.75
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>100</b>

were in the majority (see Table 3). With respect to the age of the respondents majority of them fall within the 26-30 year age bracket. There were more female respondents within this age bracket. For example, while there were 50 (15.6%) male respondents, the female respondents within that age bracket were 84(26.2%). This means that there were more mature female respondents in the study sample (See table 4).

Since Delta State University, Asaba is a state owned university, this study also sought to determine the extent to which it meets the educational needs of other states of the federation.

Based on the data collected a total of 140 (43.75%) of the respondents were Delta State indigenes. Next were the students from Anambra state who constituted 95(29.68%) followed by students from other states with 46 or (14.75%) of the respondents (see Table 5). All the respondents live off-campus.

### Socio-Economic Background of Respondents

Based on the data collected approximately 204(63.75%) of the respondents come from families with combined income of between ₦200,000-₦500,000 (Two Hundred and Five Hundred Thousand Naira). These were followed by respondents whose family income is below ₦200,000 while those from families with income over ₦1,000,000 (one million naira) constituted only 10(3.12%) of the

respondents. It can be concluded that majority of the students of Delta State University Asaba are from average socio-economic background (Table 6).

Of the 320 respondents approximately 136(42.5%) are being sponsored by a combination of their parents and self, while only 12(3.75%) are on one form of scholarship or the other. Those under the sponsorship of relations were 62(14.37%) while 110(34.72%) were self-sponsored. It can be concluded that majority of the Weekend degree students at Delsu, Asaba are being co-sponsored by their parents (Table 7). A further analysis shows that majority of the female respondents, 90(28.1%) fall in this category.

The study also determined the amount of financial support students receive for their education, beside tuition fees per semester. The study showed the 110(34.37%) receive below ₦20,000 (Twenty Thousand Naira) per semester. Approximately 131(40.93%) of the respondents receive between ₦21,000 – ₦25,000 in financial support, while only 28(8.75%) of the respondents receive over ₦30,000 per semester. A further analysis shows that more female respondents, 24(7.5%) claim to receive over ₦30,000 in financial support per semester (See Table 8).

### Expenditure Profile

This study sought to determine the expenditure profile of the average Weekend degree student at Delsu, Asaba.

**Table 6.**Income of parents respondents

<b>FMS INCOME (Per Annum)</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Below N200,000	36	30	66	20.62
N200,000 – N500,000	72	132	204	63.75
N600,000- N1,000,000	16	24	40	12.50
Above N1million	4	6	10	3.12
<b>Total</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>100</b>

Source. Field Survey, 2010

**Table 7.**Sponsorship respondents

<b>FMS Sponsor</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Self	48	62	110	34.37
Parents/Self Relations	46	90	136	42.50
Scholarship	28	34	62	19.37
	6	6	12	3.75
<b>Total</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>100</b>

Source. Field Survey, 2010.

**Table 8.** Financial support respondents

<b>FMS INCOME</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Below N20,000	62	48	110	34.37
N21,000 – N25,000	44	87	131	40.93
N26,000- N30,000	18	33	51	15.93
Over N30,000	4	24	28	8.75
<b>Total</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>100</b>

Source. Field Survey 2010

Investigation revealed that the cost component cover feeding, transportation, accommodation, telephone recharge cards, textbook and lecture handouts. A breakdown of students' expenditure profile is presented in table 9.

Analysis of the table show that 120(37.5%) of the respondents spend below ₦12,000 on accommodation per semester while only 58(18.12%) spend over ₦21,000. Approximately 142(44.37%) respondents fall in the category of those who spend between N13,000 and N20,000 on accommodation per semester. A further analysis show that while more female respondents 64(20%) spend below ₦12,000, they also constituted the majority of 80(25%) respondents in the category of those who spend between ₦13,000 – 20,000 as well as those who spend over ₦21,000 on accommodation.

With respect to feeding, the table shows that approximately 154(48.12%) respondents spend over ₦8,000 per semester. A further analysis show that 70(21.8%) of the respondents who spend between ₦5,000-₦8,000 were females. There were however, more male respondents 26(8.1%) in the category of those who spend below ₦5,000 on feeding per semester.

Transportation, like feeding is necessary for students.

Based on the data collected approximately 154(48.1%) of the respondents spend between ₦6,000-₦10,000 per semester while 76(33.75%) spend below ₦2,000. In the category that spend between ₦6,000 – ₦10,000, 96(30%) respondents were females compared to 58(18.1%) males. Furthermore, the table shows that 62(19.3%) female respondents spend over ₦10,000 per semester while only 28(8.7%) of their male counterparts fall in that category.

With respect to purchase of textbooks 140(43.7%) of the respondents spend below ₦3,000 per semester on books while 120(37.5%) spend between ₦3,000 – ₦5,000 compared to 60(18.7%) who spend over ₦6,000. A further analysis show that more male respondents 72(28.8%) constitute the majority of respondents who spend below ₦3,000 while more females 72(22.5%) spend between ₦3,000 – ₦5,000 per semester. Only 8(2.5%) male respondents believe they spend over ₦6,000 on textbooks per semester compared to 52(16.2%) of the female respondents who fall into that category. It can be concluded that majority of the students spend between ₦2,000 – ₦5,000 on textbooks per semester.

The study also sought to determine what the

respondents spend on recharging their phones per semester. A total of 118(36.8%) recharge their phones once per week while 170(53.1%) recharge twice per week. Of the number who recharge once per week, 70(21.8%) were female while 42(13.1%) were male. In the category of respondents who recharge their phones twice per week, 74(23.1%) were males compared to 96(30%) female. Among the respondents who do not recharge their phones 6(1.8%) were females while 2(0.006%) were males. It can be concluded that the majority of the respondents recharge their phones at least twice per week.

## DISCUSSION

This study has sought to determine the financial implications of acquiring a Bachelors degree from Delta State University, Asaba Campus under the Weekend Degree Programme. At the time of this study, the campus had only two functional faculties: Faculty of Management Sciences (FMS) and the Faculty of Agriculture (FAG). Student population in FMS was 3245 from which a sample of 400 respondents were randomly selected among the final year students. A structured questionnaire with twenty four items was administered, collated and analyzed using simple percentage frequencies.

Based on the data analyzed, the following conclusions are evident;

- i. Female respondents who comprised approximately 61.4% were in the 21-30 years age cohort and mostly Delta State indigenes.
- iii. Majority of the respondents come from average socio-economic background.
- iii. Expenditure profile is generally higher among the female respondents.
- iv. Typical cost component for students include accommodation, feeding, transportation, textbook/handout and telephone recharge.

Table 9 presents a summary of expenditure profile of students at Delsu, Asaba.

Total cost implication was arrived at by finding the average between the lowest and the highest of each cost component. A Weekend degree programme in FMS takes five years while it is four years for regular Full-time Programme. Consequently, the total cost of acquiring a degree in FMS for a female will be N1,050,000 (N210,000 x 5 years) while its is N845,000 (N169,000 x 5 years) for males. Conversely, it will cost a student on Extension N1,014,000 (169,000 x 6 years for male and N1,200,000 (N210,000 x 6) for female students respectively.

Based on the data on table 7, it is evident that the expenditure profile is higher among the female students. This finding agrees with a similar study on cost of

education by Salami and Olannye (2010). Expenditure is high on tuition fees, accommodation, feeding, transportation, financial support from sponsors and telephone recharge cards. The expenditure profile which is higher among the female students does not come a surprise because of what may be considered a cultural history. The girl-child have traditionally enjoyed more parental protection than their male siblings. Part of this protection is translated in form of bigger allowances in favour of the girl-child. Other forms of protection include personally driving the girl-child to school (while the male-child can ride in other forms of public transportation). It has also been observed that parents prefer to send the male child on errands even when the girl-child is available. One explanation may be the perception that the girl-child is not fully capable of self-defence as would the male child. This observation agrees with Hari (2010) and Offorma (2009) who argued that because girls and women in general are considered physically weaker and less capable than men, they are often overtly protected and supervised to keep them from what is considered threatening to their safety such as sexual harassment, mental and emotional safety. Where schools are situated long distance away, parents also worried about their daughter's safety while traveling to and from school. Hari (2010) noted that this factor is the reason why many parents were reported to be reluctant to allow their daughters to attend extra-mural lessons after school since in most cases the teachers involved are men and these sessions are usually held in the evening. It is also known that parents are reluctant to allow their daughters travel late.

The Weekend Degree Programme is non-residential which means that all students are required to attend lectures from home. Because it is a Part-Time Programme there is no discrimination in fees between indigenes and non-indigenes unlike in the Full-Time Programme where non-indigenes are discriminated against.

That majority (60%) of the students who are enrolled in the Weekend Degree Programme are females does not come as a surprise because they are more likely to enjoy sympathy for financial support for their educational careers due to what some perceive as their vulnerability. Such support may either come from their husbands or relations (Table 7).

The data revealed that there are more female respondents in the category of those who spend below N12,000 and over N21,000 per semester on accommodation. This is because most of the students who are either single or married are females. The average cost of a one-room apartment is N3,000 while that of a 3-bedroom apartment is N7,000 per month (for the single and married respectively).

Transportation constitute a major cost component of acquiring a Weekend Degree due to the non-residential nature of the programme. Some of the students inter-

**Table 9.**Expenditure Profile of Respondents Respondents

<b>Expenses</b>	<b>FMS</b>		<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage %</b>
<b>Accommodation</b>				
Below N12,000	56	64	120	37.5
N13,000-20,000	63	80	142	44.37
Over N21,000	10	48	58	18.12
<b>Feeding</b>				
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>		
Below N5000	26	14	40	12.5
N5,000-8,000	56	70	126	39.37
Over N8,000	46	108	154	48.12
<b>Textbooks</b>				
Below N3000	72	68	140	43.75
N3,000-5,000	48	72	120	37.5
Over N6,000	8	52	60	18.75
<b>Lecture Handouts</b>				
Handout	60	33	93	29.06
Below N1,000				
N2,000-4,000	43	84	127	39.68
Over N4,000	25	75	100	31.25
<b>Transportation</b>				
Below N6,000	42	34	76	23.75
N6,000-10,000	58	96	154	48.12
Over N10,000	28	62	90	28.12
<b>Rate for Phone Recharge Card</b>				
Once per week	42	70	118	36.87
Twice per week	74	96	170	53.12
Once per semester	10	20	30	9.37
Don't recharge	2	6	8	2.5

**Table 9.** Cost components at Delsu, Asaba

<b>COST COMPONENTS</b>		<b>FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES</b>	
		<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
		<b>₦</b>	<b>₦</b>
1.	Accommodation	11,500	13,000
2.	Financial support	20,000	25,000
*3.	Tuition fees	50,000	50,000
4.	Transportation	10,000	16,000
5.	Textbooks	5,000	8,000
6.	Lecture Handouts	2,000	5,000
7.	Feeding	8,000	10,000
8.	Telephone recharge	3,000	3,000
		59,500 x 2 = 119,000	80,000 x 2 = 160,000
		+ 50,000	+ 50,000
		169,000	210,000
		<u>x 5</u>	<u>x 5</u>
		= 845,000 fee per session	= 1,050,000
<b>Total expenses</b>			

**Source.**Data collected \* Paid only once a year

viewed claim to spend between 2 to 4 hours of travel time to attend lectures every Friday and Saturday per semester. Majority of the students (65%) shuttle by taxi or bus while the remaining come in their private transportation. Approximately 80% of those who

commute by private transportation are females who either come in their personal cars or their husband's. Some stakeholders in the education sector were interviewed to provide more insight into the study. The interviews revealed that while students and parents/sponsors



complained about the general upward spiral in tuition fees (Table 2) at Delsu, the University management and officials of the State Ministry of Higher Education argued that although the fees are not economically viable they had to be sustained for political exigency. When compared to the fees charged in other universities offering similar programmes in major cities such as Lagos or Abuja, the Federal Capital where fees are two or three times higher, the cost of Weekend Degree Programme at Delsu is low. This perhaps explains one of the reasons why the authorities are not motivated to review fees downwards.

The data further revealed that women spend more money on books/lecture handouts than their male counterparts. This perhaps explains one reason why female students generally achieve more academically than their male counterparts. This argument agrees with (Rau and Durand, 2000; Smith and Pino, 2003) who argued that women tend to exhibit more ethical behaviours than men in educational matters.

## CONCLUSION

This study has sought to determine what it will cost to acquire a Weekend Degree at Delta State University, Asaba Campus. The study was motivated by the large number of students who are forced to temporarily withdraw from academic activities due to financial constraints. The cost components were determined by finding the average between the highest and lowest of each cost component. The

Major cost components include tuition fees, accommodation, transportation, feeding, textbooks/lecture handouts, and telephone recharge cards. Data was collated and analyzed using simple percentages. The major conclusion from the study is that it costs more to educate a female student under the Weekend Degree Programme at Delta State University, Asaba.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study it is obvious that higher education will continue to be co-financed between the governments and parents. The present global economic recession provides a good platform to advance arguments to promote cost sharing. The following recommendations are proposed:

- i. Male students should be encouraged to live in campus hostels like their female counterparts to reduce distractions and cost.
- ii. The University authorities are advised to provide more hostels with full complements of security to encourage male students to live on campus.
- iii. Although tertiary education is not a right, the University authorities are advised to minimize where

possible, frequent upward review of tuition and sundry fee since most students from the catchments area are from average socio-economic backgrounds.

iv. the overall security on the University campus should be increased and staffed with professionals to reduce cases of robbery; and

v. Efforts should be made by the University authorities and State Government to vigorously pursue the provision of infrastructure and facilities to promote effective teaching and learning,

vi. Based on the findings of the study parents and sponsors would need to become aware of the implication of acquiring a five-year in order to minimize incidence of either dropout or deferment on financial grounds.

vii. Hostel accommodation should be provided for Weekend Degree students to reduce the stress of travel for those who come from out of State.

## Suggestions for Further Studies

Since the average cost implication for acquiring a university degree by a Weekend Degree student at Delta State University, Asaba Campus has been determined, it is suggested that a similar study should be extended to cover other campuses at Oleh and Abraka. It is also suggested that a similar study to determine the cost implication for the programmes such as The Continuing Education Programme (CEP) should be investigated.

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