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Off-Campus Residency and Academic Engagement: Examining the Mediating Role of Administrative Effectiveness in the University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study investigated the relationship between off-campus residency and academic involvement of students from the University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria who reside in the off-campus residences with administrative effectiveness as a mediating variable. This study was prompted by the concern around the growing numbers of off-campus students and how these experiences and institutional support systems might impact the academic engagement of students. A quantitative descriptive correlational research design was adopted for the study. The population comprised undergraduate students that lived off campus in the University of Ibadan, and 250 respondents was selected using purposive stratified sampling technique. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data and included the three scales: Off-Campus Residency, Administrative Effectiveness, and Academic Engagement. The instruments were highly reliable with the correlation coefficient of 0.78, 0.84 and 0.81 respectively. Descriptive data was used to describe the data, Pearson Product Moment correlation was applied to determine the correlation between the data, and mediation analysis was performed using Hayes' PROCESS Macro Model 4 at 0.05 significance level. The results indicated that there was a strong positive correlation between off-campus residence and academic involvement ($r = .966$, $p < 0.05$). The correlation coefficient was relatively high, but off-campus residency was not treated as a residential category but instead as a multidimensional experiential construct that captures students' residential conditions, commuting experiences, issues of access and living environment. In addition, the study revealed a very high positive correlation between academic engagement and administrative effectiveness ($r = .741$, $p < 0.05$). A

mediation analysis also showed that the relationship between off-campus residency and academic engagement was partially mediated by administrative effectiveness (Effect = .0863; BootLLCI = .0523; BootULCI = .1178). The study found that residential status off campus and administrative effectiveness are important factors linked with academic engagement for off-campus students, and that administrative effectiveness partly explains how off-campus residency is linked to academic engagement. Based on the findings of this study, the university administration is recommended to consolidate the administration support system and institutional welfare system to off-campus students in order to improve the academic engagement of the students in the university.

Keywords: Off-Campus Housing, Academic Engagement, Administrative Effectiveness, Mediation Analysis, Higher Education Ecology, Student Personnel Services.

Introduction

Academic engagement is a key concept in the study of higher education since it is an indicator of the degree to which students are actively involved in their education and various aspects of life in a given institution. It explains how much the students put their effort, concentration, and feelings into the academic activities. Academic engagement is commonly described as a multidimensional construct by scholars, which covers behavioral, emotional, and cognitive aspects (Fredricks et al., 2004). Behavioral engagement refers to observable actions, such as attending lectures, participating in class, and completing assignments. Emotional engagement entails students' interest, sense of belonging, and motivation to learn. Cognitive engagement entails greater mental activity, including critical thinking, problem-solving, and self-regulated learning. All these dimensions are interrelated, and learners who are emotionally engaged with the learning environment have a higher chance of being actively engaged and investing their cognitive resources in learning.

Academic engagement in the Nigerian higher education context has received increasing interest, attributed to the current structural and institutional issues. Issues such as overcrowded classrooms, inadequate facilities, and financial constraints continue to shape students' learning experiences. According to empirical research, the rates of engagement are usually moderate among Nigerian students, but closely connected with academic success and development in general (Magaji, 2025).

Other studies note the role of psychological outcomes (resilience, motivation, and self-efficacy) in maintaining engagement (Anierobi et al., 2024; Owolabi and Owolabi, 2024). Access to learning resources, technological support, and quality of student services are also institutional factors that greatly influence the extent to which students become engaged in their academic work (Abubakar et al., 2024; Osiesi, 2024). These

results place academic engagement as a consequence of institutional situations and a predictor of student achievement.

Among the factors that affect academic engagement, the mode of living of the students, especially off-campus, has been looked at lightly. Off-campus residency is the concept where students are not housed in university-provided accommodation but live in privately owned housing. This type of accommodation has been on the increase in Nigerian universities owing to the increasing student numbers and a reduction in on-campus accommodation facilities. Though off-campus can be a way to gain independence and flexibility, it poses certain challenges that can have an impact on the academic life of students. Among them are long commuting, transportation problems, financial issues, and differences in housing standards. These can have an impact on time management, attendance, and participation of students in academic activities (Turley and Wodtke, 2010).

There are conflicting empirical results about off-campus residency. According to some studies, students residing off campus are capable of being successful academically, provided that they live in stable and conducive conditions. Focus and productivity in such situations could be boosted by access to a favorable study environment and a dependable infrastructure. Nevertheless, numerous studies in the Nigerian context have documented that off-campus students are usually subjected to poor housing facilities, excessive rental prices, and an unreliable mode of transport. Such issues may result in decreased academic activity, diminished engagement, and poor academic performance (Shillingi and Kamugisha, 2025; Itopa et al., 2025). According to other findings, the effects of off-campus residency are conditional on moderating factors, which include campus proximity, socioeconomic status, and personal discipline (Maina, 2025; Ogunyemi, 2022). This implies that off-campus residency does not live in a vacuum, but is influenced by the wider environmental and institutional influences.

In this scenario, administrative effectiveness can be seen as a decisive element that can define the impact of off-campus residency on academic engagement. Administrative effectiveness is the capacity of the university management to plan, coordinate, and provide services that facilitate student learning and welfare. It encompasses aspects like student responsiveness, process efficiency, communication mechanisms, and support services. Effective administration in higher education is important in ensuring that there is an enabling environment for teaching and learning. It makes sure that the systems within the institutions run well and that the students access the resources and support they require to excel (Heck et al., 2000).

Administrative gaps have a significant impact on the amount of challenge students experience and the level of student engagement it has on their academic engagement. Digital learning platforms that are not efficient can negatively impact students' ability to access lecture materials, assignments, and academic information in a timely manner. Also, unflexible teaching and examination timetables that do not take into consideration the challenges of

commuting to and from school also lead to absenteeism and lower attendance in learning activities. Students who are out of campus have no formal welfare monitoring or welfare supporting system, which further weakens their engagement with institutional resources and supports. Consequently, there are potential logistical issues with off-campus residence which can result in lower behavioural engagement, emotional disengagement, and cognitive disengagement from academic activities (Heck et al., 2000). These problems may have a direct impact on students, especially students not living on campus who heavily depend on institutional support of information, services, and becoming part of the academic community. The administrative systems can be effective in minimizing the adverse consequences of living off-campus through better communication, ease of access to services, and responding to the concerns of the students promptly.

Although academic engagement, off-campus residency, and administrative effectiveness have been studied extensively, the empirical research that combines these factors in one analytical system in the Nigerian context is still limited. In particular, the role of administrative effectiveness as the process by which off-campus residency affects academic engagement is underexplored. This relationship is significant to understand so that policies and interventions can be developed to enhance student outcomes.

This paper thus looks at the correlation between off-campus housing and academic participation, with the mediating factor of administrative effectiveness between students of the University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria. In this way, the study gains an insight into the way in which institutional processes can influence student experiences and outcomes, especially in settings where housing issues and resource limitations are prevalent.

Statement of the Problem

Today, students' off-campus residence in Nigerian public universities has become an emerging issue because of its impact on the academic involvement and general educational experiences of these students. At the University of Ibadan, there has been a high increase in enrolments and poor hostel facilities which has forced many students to live outside the campus. While living off campus may give students more independence and flexibility, there are also several issues to consider: transportation, high cost of housing, substandard conditions, unreliable utilities, lack of access to campus academic facilities. Students' attendance, participation in learning activities, emotional connection with the educational institution and mental engagement in learning process can be impacted by these challenges.

Previous research has focused on the issue of the impact of off-campus living on the academic achievement of students, and there are widespread findings that living in poor residential conditions and commuting stress can negatively affect student's academic participation and engagement. Other research has also revealed that institutional and psychological factors like self-efficacy, motivation, and learning resources have significant impact on academic engagement. Few studies, however, have looked at the influence of the institutional administration on how off-campus living influences student engagement with their studies.

The problem is not just being away from campus, but that many universities do not have strong administrative systems to deal with the realities of the off-campus lifestyle. Off-campus students rely on institutional administrative structures to a large extent to receive timely communication, gain access to online learning platforms, coordinate academic work, receive health and welfare support, and receive other services required for being actively involved in academic activities. Poor communication infrastructure, poor digital learning platforms, inflexible lecture timetables and lack of planned welfare support can make off-campus boarding more difficult and less effective, and can affect the effectiveness of engagement in learning.

Despite the existence of some studies on academic engagement, off-campus residence and administrative effectiveness as separate variables, there is a limited number of studies that bring these variables together within a unified framework in the Nigerian context. Most importantly, the possible mediating effect of administrative effectiveness in the relationship between off-campus residency and academic engagement has been under-explored. This study therefore focuses on the association between off-campus residence with academic involvement of undergraduate students of the University of Ibadan with a focus on the mediating effect of administrative effectiveness.

Purpose of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine off-campus residency and academic engagement focusing on the mediating role of academic effectiveness among the undergraduate students in The University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. Examine the significant relationship between off-campus residency and academic engagement among undergraduate students in the University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria.
2. Investigate the relationship between academic engagement and administrative effectiveness among undergraduate students in University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria.
3. Determine the mediating role of administrative effectiveness in the relationship between off-campus residency and academic engagement among undergraduate students in the University of Ibadan. Ibadan, Nigeria.

This study seeks to provide empirical evidence on how off-campus residency relates to students' level of academic engagement and how administrative effectiveness may influence this relationship among undergraduate students.

Research Questions

The following research questions would be formulated to guide the conduct of this study:

1. Is there any significant relationship between off-campus residency and academic engagement among undergraduate students in the University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria?

2. What is the relationship between academic engagement and administrative effectiveness among undergraduate students in University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria?
3. Does administrative effectiveness mediate the relationship between off-campus residency and academic engagement among undergraduate students in the University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria?

Literature Review

One aspect of student life in Nigerian universities which has become common is off-campus residence, largely due to the disproportion between the growing number of students in the universities and the inadequate housing facilities provided on campus. The growing number of students at many universities does not have enough hostel facilities, forcing a significant number of students to look for accommodation in private houses outside the university environment. This problem has been associated with inadequate infrastructure, budget constraints, and the growth of higher education institutions without proper development of infrastructure facilities (Zaki et al., 2024). Consequently, a significant proportion of learners live in homes that are overcrowded, have inadequate infrastructure, poor housing conditions and are often rented at inflated prices, which can impact their ability to access learning activities and their educational experiences.

Results from empirical studies examining the impact of off-campus living on students' academic experiences are contradictory. Several studies highlight the negative impacts of off-campus living, such as transportation issues, lack of access to campus facilities, security problems, and the time spent commuting, which can decrease students' academic engagement (Itopa et al., 2025). Off-campus learners in Nigeria still face financial strain, unreliable electricity and water supply, and security issues which can potentially affect their motivation and focus on learning activities (Shillingi and Kamugisha, 2025).

Yet there are other views that question whether off-campus living offers significant developmental and academic opportunities for students as well. Living off-campus can foster opportunities for independence and personal responsibility, thereby enhancing personal study skills and the development of mature self-regulation skills. Off-campus student housing can be a highly individualized experience that can enhance students' concentration and productivity by minimizing distractions that can be found in the hostel setting (Innes, 2014). Furthermore, off-campus living often promotes the development of peer groups and collaborative learning groups in the residential community. Such informal support systems may reinforce motivation, accountability and greater cognitive involvement in learning activities (Carlson, 2023; Wode, 2018).

Likewise, research reports that students living in supportive and stable off-campus environments may develop more effective time-management skills and more effective self-directed learning skills that can have a positive impact on their future success in school (Innes, 2014). Other studies also indicate that off-campus housing coupled with good exchange and

institutional circumstances promotes independent learning culture and personal discipline (Ogunyemi, 2022; Maina, 2025).

The benefits of these positive outcomes, however, can vary depending on other variables like the housing environment, location on campus, family income, self-discipline, and campus support systems. This suggests that an outcome of living off campus on academic engagement must be understood as a multi-faceted phenomenon, with positive and negative aspects that may be determined by the context of the environment and of the institution.

Academic engagement, per se, is generally known as one of the determinants of student achievement in higher education. It is also defined as the degree to which students actively participate in their learning processes in terms of behavioral, emotional, and cognitive aspects (Fredricks et al., 2004). Behavioral engagement incorporates activities like attendance at lectures, news discussion in classes, whereas emotional engagement deals with the interest and belonging of students. There is more serious mental work, such as critical thinking and self-regulated learning, which is referred to as cognitive engagement. Nigerian university studies report consistent moderate levels of student engagement, with studies showing that the levels are strong predictors of academic performance (Magaji, 2025). This is an indication that effective engagement may result in improved academic performance.

Academic engagement in Nigeria is affected by several factors. Motivation, resilience, and self-efficacy have also been found to be psychological factors that significantly influence the continuity of students' activities in academic work (Anierobi et al., 2024; Owolabi and Owolabi, 2024). The levels of engagement are also influenced by institutional factors such as the availability of learning resources, the quality of teaching, and the presence of technological tools (Abubakar et al., 2024). Nevertheless, there are structural issues like big classes, poor facilities and economic factors that tend to hinder the full participation of students in their studies. Specifically, off-campus students can be more vulnerable to other impediments, including commuting-associated stress and decreased opportunities to utilize academic support networks that add to their engagement levels, as well.

Another factor that significantly influences students' experiences and academic outcomes is administrative effectiveness. This refers to the capacity of university administrators to manage resources efficiently, deliver services promptly, and create a supportive learning environment. Characteristics of effective administration include clear communication, responsiveness, and the provision of services that meet students' needs (Heck et al., 2000). However, challenges such as insufficient funding, bureaucratic delays, and inadequate infrastructure often affect administrative effectiveness in Nigerian universities. Research shows that while administrators may perform well in some areas, such as academic coordination, they often face difficulties in others, including financial management and service delivery (Isabu, 2024; Abiona and Sodeinde, 2022).

Studies also indicate that several strategies can enhance administrative effectiveness. These include the use of information and communication technology, well-developed communication systems, professional development, and quality assurance practices (Edho et

al., 2025; Ayo-Ogunlusi, 2025). Effective administrative systems can improve service delivery, student satisfaction, and the overall learning environment. In contrast, ineffective administrative procedures may lead to delays, poor communication, and limited access to essential services, which can negatively affect students' academic engagement.

Administrative effectiveness and academic engagement have growing evidence of having a relationship. Proper administrative systems offer the support systems required to ensure that students are able to engage in academic activities. These are the availability of learning materials, prompt information, and support services. Weak administrative systems, on the other hand, can pose barriers that diminish the participation and motivation of the students. As an illustration, administrative delays, ineffective communication, and the absence of support services may deter students from participating in their academic activities.

Although several studies have been done on off-campus residency, academic engagement, and administrative effectiveness, few studies have been conducted to combine these variables into a single framework. Most of the studies consider these factors separately, without investigating the interactive effect of these factors on the student outcomes. Specifically, the impact of administrative effectiveness as one of the mechanisms by which off-campus residency influences academic engagement has not been sufficiently explored. This is a major gap in the literature.

In summary, the literature indicates that off campus residence, academic involvement and administrative effectiveness are related and important variables that greatly influence students' life experience in Nigerian universities. Off-campus residency has become a viable solution to the ongoing lack of on-campus housing, but the results of other studies have been mixed. Some research highlights potential obstacles with off-campus residing such as transportation issues, less access to campus resources, financial stress, and decreased involvement in academic pursuits, which can negatively impact students' involvement and academic efforts. Conversely, alternative perspectives suggest that off-campus residency can have welfare-oriented and academic advantages, including increased independence, greater maturity in self-control, improved personal study skills, and peer-driven study groups which increase motivation and cognitive engagement.

The literature also emphasizes the crucial role of effective administrative systems in helping students and controlling the impact of off-campus residence. Having responsive administrative systems, easy access to support services, effective communication systems, and institutional coordination is important for assisting students in the realities of off-campus living and maintaining academic engagement. Although there are are growing literature on these variables, not much empirical work has been done about the relationship of administrative effectiveness to the off-campus residency-academic engagement relationship, especially in the Nigerian university setting. It is this identified gap that necessitates the present study which examine the mediating role of administrative effectiveness between off-campus residency and academic engagement of undergraduate students in the University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

The study is based on three complementary theoretical viewpoints that offer a holistic interpretation of the interrelationship among off-campus residency, academic engagement, and administrative effectiveness in the university setting. All these frameworks describe the interplay of the environment in which students live, their degree of engagement in academic activities, and the operation of institutional systems that affect learning outcomes.

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory is the first theoretical viewpoint used in this study. This theory clarifies that human development occurs within a system of interdependent environmental systems that influence behavior and outcomes. The microsystem is the student's immediate environment, such as living conditions, peer involvement, family support, and daily activities like commuting. Within the framework of this research, off-campus residency is a major component of this environment that affects the quality of housing, access to study areas, and exposure to social and physical environmental factors that affect learning. The mesosystem encompasses the interaction of various elements of the environment in which the student lives, such as the relationship between residential conditions and involvement in academic activities. The ecosystem encompasses external factors that have an indirect impact on the student, including institutional policies, transportation, and housing policies. The macrosystem is the broader socio-economic and cultural environment, such as economic conditions, national education policies, and societal expectations (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The theory applies to the study as it describes the interaction between off-campus residency, as an aspect of the student's environment, and institutional and societal factors that influence academic engagement.

Student Involvement Theory is the second theory that will be used in this research. This theory focuses on student effort and involvement in determining learning outcomes. It describes that the level of learning and development is directly proportional to the amount of physical and mental energy the students put into their academic work (Astin, 1984). Student engagement encompasses lecture attendance, discussion, doing assignments, staying interested, and being motivated to learn. In the case of living off campus, the students of the Nigerian university can encounter difficulties that would decrease their engagement. These issues are long commuting, financial issues, inaccessibility of academic facilities, and decreased contact with peers and lecturers. Consequently, their behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement can be impacted. The theory also emphasizes that institutions are very important in facilitating student engagement through the provision of supportive environments and resources that facilitate active engagement. This renders administrative efficacy as a significant element in maintaining academic interest among students, especially those who do not reside on campus.

The third theory that will inform this study is the Systems Theory. This theory perceives the university as a system that is organised and constitutes interrelated components that work in unison to accomplish institutional objectives. These units are administrative units, academic departments, and support services. In this view, organisational effectiveness is based on the extent to which these components are coordinated in terms of inputs, processes, outputs, and

feedback (von Bertalanffy, 1968). Resources like funding, personnel, and infrastructure are considered as inputs. Some activities that are included in processes are planning, communication, decision-making, and service delivery. The results of outputs include the levels of student satisfaction, academic performance, and institutional performance. The system enables feedback mechanisms through which it can evaluate its effectiveness and implement the required changes. In this paper, the administrative effectiveness is conceived as the capability to integrate these processes in the university system in an efficient way to assist students. In the case of ineffective administrative systems, the students, especially those who do not live on campus, might encounter a problem with accessing services and resources, which can lower their academic involvement. On the other hand, good administrative systems may improve communication, service delivery, and provide a conducive environment that facilitates learning and engagement.

These three theories are combined to give a clear outline of the study. The environmental context in which the students are subjected to is explained by the Ecological Systems Theory, investment of effort in their academic activities is explained by Student Involvement Theory, and processes in the institution that affect the experience and outcomes of students are explained by Systems Theory. Collectively, they emphasize interdependence of off-campus residence, administration performance, and academic participation. This cohesive framework forms a solid foundation upon which the study of ways in which institutional support systems can mitigate the difficulties that accompany off-campus living and increase the level of academic activity among students in the university environment can be conducted.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative, descriptive, and correlational research design to explore the relationship between off-campus residency, administrative effectiveness, and academic engagement among undergraduate students living off campus at the University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria. This design was deemed appropriate as it allowed the study to describe the status quo and statistically test relationships and mediation among variables without disturbing the natural environment. This is in line with current research trends in educational and behavioural sciences, where naturally occurring variables are studied using survey techniques in institutional settings.

Study Area

The research was carried out at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. This setting is appropriate for exploring issues of off-campus residency, administrative effectiveness, and academic engagement because of the large number of undergraduate students, the variety of academic programs, and the growing demand for student accommodation. As a pioneer public university in Nigeria, the institution provides a suitable environment to examine the interaction between

students' off-campus residential experiences and the support systems provided by the university in relation to their participation in academic activities.

Population of the Study

Undergraduate students living in off-campus residences at the University of Ibadan, regardless of year of study and faculty, constituted the population of the study. This group was considered suitable because of their direct experiences of off-campus living, administrative processes, and academic activities, which are the focus of this study. Their experiences are important for exploring the relationships among the research variables.

Sampling Technique and Sample Size

Purposive stratified sampling technique was used for the study because the aim was to focus specifically on undergraduate students living in off campus residency in the University of Ibadan. The purposive approach ensured that only students with relevant off-campus residential experiences participated in the study while stratification across faculties and levels of study justified representation. A total of 250 undergraduate students were sampled. The sample size was considered sufficient for correlation analysis and for testing mediation using regression-based mediation analysis with the PROCESS macro.

Data Collection Instrument

The data collection instrument was a questionnaire in four sections with three scales developed according to the variables under investigation. Section A collected students' demographic data, including gender and year of study. Section B assessed off-campus living and contained items related to housing environment, proximity, residential problems, and living experiences with off-campus accommodation. Section C elicited student perceptions of the institutional responsiveness, support services, communication, and administrative efficiency, and characterised institutional effectiveness. Section D assessed academic engagement and included items relating to students' levels of behavioural, emotional, and cognitive engagement in academic activities.

Each item was measured with a five-point Likert scale (from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree). The instrument was modified to suit the situation in Nigerian universities and the objectives of the study.

Validity of the Instrument

The validity of the instrument was assessed for face and content by experts in the fields of educational psychology, educational administration, and measurement and evaluation. Their feedback led to adjustments in language, content, and alignment of the items with the measured constructs. Pre-testing of the instrument with a sample of students outside the study sample further enhanced its suitability.

Reliability

The Cronbach alpha coefficient was used to assess the internal consistency of the scales in the instrument. The Off-Campus Residency Scale had a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.78, indicating a good level of internal consistency. The Administrative Effectiveness Scale had a coefficient of 0.84, demonstrating high reliability, while the Academic Engagement Scale had a coefficient of 0.81, which is also considered good. These values exceed the acceptable threshold of 0.70, suggesting that the scales are reliable and appropriate for measuring the study variables and for statistical analysis. In this study, off-campus residency was defined as a multi-dimensional continuous variable instead of a binary residential category. The scale assessed students' experiences related to off-campus living, including transportation barriers, housing conditions, availability of campus facilities, availability of utilities, study environment and residential stressors. Items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. Composite scores were calculated by summing up responses to the items, so that they could be treated as continuous for analysis by Pearson Product Moment Correlation and regression-based mediation analyses.

Data Collection Procedure

Appropriate permission was obtained for data collection. Questionnaires were distributed to respondents within the study area. The objectives of the study were explained to the respondents, and participation was voluntary. Anonymity and confidentiality were guaranteed, and the questionnaires were checked for completeness before analysis.

Data Analysis

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (IBM SPSS Statistics) was used to analyses the data. Descriptive analysis (frequencies, means, and standard deviations) was conducted on demographic variables and the key variables in the study. Bivariate associations of off-campus residency, administrative effectiveness, and academic engagement were tested using Pearson Product-Moment Correlation.

Mediation analysis was conducted to examine the effect of administrative effectiveness on the relationship between off-campus residency and academic engagement using the PROCESS macro for SPSS (Model 4). Bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples was used to test the significance of the indirect effect. A significance level of 0.05 was adopted for all hypotheses and statistical tests.

Ethical Considerations

Principles that guide research with human participants were followed. There was no coercion to participate in the study, and respondents were made aware of their right to withdraw from the study at any time. Consent was sought before data collection. No personal information was gathered and confidentiality of responses was ensured. The information collected was used for academic purposes only, and confidentiality was ensured.

Results

Table 1. Gender Distribution

Gender	Frequency	Percent
MALE	79	31.6
FEMALE	171	68.4
Total	250	100.0

Table 2. Class Level Distribution

Class Level	Frequency	Percent
100	100	40
200	100	40
300	50	20
Total	250	100

Research Question 1: Is there any significant relationship between off-campus residency and academic engagement among undergraduate learners in the University of Ibadan?

Table 3: Summary of correlation matrix showing the relationship between off-campus residency and academic engagement

Variables	Mean $\bar{x}$	SD	1	2
Off-campus residency	18.17	4.46	1.000	.966**
Academic engagement	17.81	4.83	.966**	1.000

Table 3 reveals that there is a significant positive correlation between Off-campus residency and academic engagement (r =.966, p <.05); residential experiences in off-campus residency is significantly related to academic engagement. In the descriptive statistics, off-campus residency (M = 18.17, SD = 4.46) and academic engagement (M = 17.81, SD = 4.83) reveal variability among the respondents, suggesting that they vary in residential situations and academic engagement. This suggests that off-campus residency is related with academic engagement among undergraduates in the University of Ibadan.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between academic engagement and administrative effectiveness among undergraduate students in University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria?

Table 4: Summary of correlation matrix showing the relationship between administrative effectiveness and academic engagement

Variables	Mean $\bar{x}$	SD	1	2
Administrative Effectiveness	18.56	5.19	1.000	.741**
Academic engagement	17.81	4.83	.741**	1.000

Table 4 reveals that there is a positive association between academic engagement and administrative effectiveness ($r = .741$, $p < .05$), meaning that students who believe that their university has high administrative effectiveness are more likely to be academically engaged. The descriptive statistics show that academic engagement ($M = 17.81$, $SD = 4.83$) and administrative effectiveness ($M = 18.56$, $SD = 5.19$) have variability, implying variations in students' perceptions of institutional support. This suggests that administrative effectiveness influences the academic engagement of undergraduate students.

Research Question 3: Does administrative effectiveness mediate the relationship between off-campus residency and academic engagement among undergraduate students in the University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria?

A mediation analysis was conducted using PROCESS Model 4 with 5,000 bootstrap samples.

Model 4

Y: ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT

X: OFF-CAMPUS RESIDENCY

Z: ADMINISTRATIVE EFFECTIVENESS

Sample: 247

Outcome Variable: Administrative Effectiveness

Table 5: Model Summary

R	R Square	MSE	F	P	Df	Df2
0.7101	0.5043	12.7470	249.2506	.0000	1	245
Model	**Coefficient**	**Standard Error**	**t**		**LLCI**	**ULCI**
Constant	4.0522	.9550	4.2432	.0000	2.1712	5.9332
Off-Campus Residency	.8058	.0510	15.7877	.0000	.7052	.9063

Table 5 shows that off-campus residency was a significant predictor of administrative effectiveness ($B = .8058$, $p < .05$) and the first stage of the mediation path was met.

Outcome Variable: Academic engagement

Table 6: Model Summary

R	R Square	MSE	F	P	Df	Df2
.9688	.9387	1.4414	1866.6052	.0000	2	244
Model	**Coefficient**	**Standard Error**	**t**	**p**	**LLCI**	**ULCI**
Constant	-1.6225	.3327	-4.8765	.0000	-2.2779	-.9672
Off-campus residency	0.9588	.0244	39.3350	.0000	.9108	1.0069
Administrative Effectiveness	.1071	.0215	4.9844	.0000	.0648	.1494

Table 6 reveals that administrative effectiveness was a significant predictor of academic engagement (B = .1071, p < .05), but that living off campus was also directly related to academic engagement (B = .9588, p < .05).

Direct and Indirect Effect of Off-Campus Residency on Academic Engagement

Table 7: Indirect Effect(s) of Off-Campus Residency on Academic engagement

	Effect	Bootstrap Standard Error	BootstrapLLCI	BootstrapULCI
Administrative Effectiveness	.0863	.0166	.0523	.1178

This finding indicates that off-campus residency significantly predicted administrative effectiveness, thus confirming the first step of the mediation process, and administrative effectiveness significantly predicted academic engagement (B = .1071, SE = .0215, t = 4.9844, p =.0000). When administrative effectiveness was added to the model, off-campus residency continued to be a significant predictor of academic engagement (B = .9588, SE = .0244, t = 39.3350, p = .0000), suggesting a direct effect.

The bootstrapped indirect effect was significant (Effect = .0863, BootSE = .0166, 95% CI = .0523 to .1178) because zero did not fall within the confidence interval. This result suggests that administrative effectiveness is a mediator of the effect of off-campus residency on academic engagement.

The finding further suggests that partial mediation indicating that administrative effectiveness partially mediates the relationship between off-campus residency and academic engagement. This suggests that students' off-campus residency influences academic engagement both directly through the residential experiences of students and indirectly through the effectiveness of the institutional administration.

Discussion of Findings

The study investigated the association between off-campus residency and academic engagement of undergraduate students residing in off-campus residences at the University of Ibadan, Ibadan, in Nigeria, focusing on the mediating influence of administrative efficiency. This study produced important insights into the relationship between student residency, administrative effectiveness, and academic engagement.

First, there was a significant positive association between off-campus residency and academic engagement. This indicates that students' experiences of off-campus residency are related to participation in academic activities. This suggests that living conditions, study space, distance from campus, transport, and other living experiences beyond the university campus contribute to students' engagement in learning activities. This finding affirms the proposition that student accommodation is not just a welfare issue but an educational issue that may affect student outcomes. This finding is in line with the propositions of Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems

Theory, which suggests that students' educational and developmental outcomes are a product of interactions between students and their environmental conditions (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). It is also consistent with the assumption of Student Involvement Theory that environmental factors can affect students' capacity to commit energy and time to their studies (Astin, 1984).

This finding supports previous research that has suggested that student accommodation may have an impact on their academic participation and performance. The studies have found that quality of accommodation, commuting distance, and housing instability are associated with engagement and performance (Ogunyemi, 2022; Itopa et al., 2025). It also supports studies that off-campus accommodation may affect students' engagement in learning through access to learning resources and facilities, study environment, and social integration (Maina, 2025; Shillingi & Kamugisha, 2025). The finding implies that the challenges associated with off-campus living for undergraduate students in the University of Ibadan affect their academic experiences in important ways.

Second, a significant positive association was found between academic engagement and administrative effectiveness. This suggests students who report a supportive, responsive and effective university administration are more likely to be academically engaged. This highlights the role of institutional processes and support arrangements in students' academic experiences. Good communication, access to services, responsiveness to students, and supportive administrative practices seem to play a positive role in students' engagement.

This finding supports Systems Theory, which considers institutions as systems that interact to influence outcomes within the system (von Bertalanffy, 1968). In this case, the administrative structures serve as support structures that can enhance or limit student engagement. This finding also supports empirical work that has demonstrated the relationship between institutional support and service efficiency and positive student engagement (Isabu, 2024; Abiona & Sodeinde, 2022). It also echoes research which has shown that effective administration and service delivery enhance student satisfaction and academic engagement (Edho et al., 2025; Ayo-Ogunlusi, 2025). This implies that administrative effectiveness is an important institutional resource that should be taken into account when promoting academic engagement among undergraduate students.

The third finding was that administrative effectiveness mediated the association between off-campus residency and academic engagement. This finding indicates that administrative effectiveness is a mechanism by which off-campus residency affects students' academic engagement. This partial mediation suggests that while off-campus residency affects academic engagement, it also does so through its impact on administrative effectiveness.

This further builds on the earlier findings of relationships by demonstrating that administrative effectiveness not only relates to academic engagement but is also the process through which residential experiences may influence academic engagement. This suggests the challenges or benefits of off-campus residency may be mediated or moderated by the effectiveness of the administrative structures. For example, if the administrative system is effective, then some of the off-campus challenges may be managed, which in turn enhances engagement.

This result supports the integration of Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), Student Involvement Theory (Astin, 1984) and Systems Theory (von Bertalanffy, 1968) as the theoretical framework of the study. These models combined indicate that students' environmental factors, their involvement and the institutions' systems work together to influence academic performance. This mediation finding lends empirical support to this approach.

The result also extends previous research by contributing to the limited knowledge about the relationship between student housing, administrative processes and academic engagement. Although previous studies have shown relationships between these variables (Fredricks et al., 2004; Magaji, 2025), our study advances knowledge by showing the mediating effect of administrative effectiveness in explaining these relationships.

In summary, the study shows that the residential experiences and administrative support for students living off campus are jointly associated with academic engagement. The role of administrative effectiveness as a mediator highlights the need to consider off-campus residency not just as a student welfare issue but also as a condition that interacts with institutional practices to shape educational experiences. Hence, the study has implications for student welfare, university administration, and strategies to enhance student engagement in higher education.

Conclusion

This study investigated the association between off-campus residency and academic engagement among undergraduate students living off campus at the University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria, with emphasis on the role of administrative effectiveness in this relationship. The research was guided by the notion that students' living conditions and institutional support experiences are important aspects of their engagement in academic activities.

The study found that off-campus residency was significantly related to academic engagement, suggesting that students' residential experiences and accommodation outside the university campus are related to their academic engagement. This supports the view that student accommodation is a variable associated with educational outcomes. The study also found a significant positive relationship between academic engagement and administrative effectiveness, implying that effective administrative practices are important factors influencing students' active participation in academic activities. This highlights the role of effective institutional support structures and services in promoting students' academic engagement.

Moreover, the study established that administrative effectiveness significantly mediated the relationship between off-campus residency and academic engagement. This indicates that the effect of off-campus residency on students' engagement is partly explained by administrative effectiveness. It further suggests that while residential experiences have a direct impact on students' engagement, effective administrative support can enhance or influence this impact.

In summary, the study found that off-campus residency and administrative effectiveness are important factors influencing students' academic engagement among those living off campus at the University of Ibadan. The mediating role of administrative effectiveness also underscores the importance of integrating student welfare with institutional support structures in promoting academic engagement. This study, therefore, contributes to the body of knowledge on student accommodation, institutional effectiveness, and engagement in higher education.

Recommendations

This study makes the following recommendations:

i. The university administration should establish and strengthen policies and services targeted at off-campus students, particularly in areas such as transportation, safety, adequate study spaces, and student welfare. Improving off-campus living conditions may have a positive impact on students' academic engagement.
ii. The university management should continue to improve administrative effectiveness through responsiveness to students, effective communication, and support systems that address both academic and welfare needs. This may, in turn, enhance students' academic engagement.
iii. The university should implement institutional measures specifically designed to support off-campus students. These may include engagement activities, welfare services, and collaborations with landlords and local communities to improve student accommodation.
iv. Student affairs units should develop strategies to enhance both the academic and social engagement of off-campus students. These strategies should address challenges associated with off-campus living and encourage active participation in learning.
v. The findings on administrative effectiveness suggest that administrators should not view student support services as merely administrative functions, but as critical components that can enhance student engagement. Therefore, institutional initiatives aimed at improving administrative effectiveness may positively influence student learning outcomes.
vi. Finally, higher education policymakers should consider student accommodation and institutional support systems together in university planning, especially in the context of increasing student populations and growing demand for accommodation.

Limitations of the Study

There were some limitations to this study.

The study adopted a cross-sectional survey design, which involved data collection at a single point in time. Therefore, it is limited in its ability to establish causal relationships among variables.

The data collected were based on self-reports using questionnaires, which may be subject to response bias and participants' perceptions, potentially affecting the accuracy of the responses. The study focused only on students at the University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria, who live in off-campus residences. This may limit the generalizability of the findings to students in other universities with different contexts.

Furthermore, the study examined only off-campus students and did not include students living in university hostels. This may have limited comparisons between different residential categories and constrained a broader understanding of the impact of residential patterns on academic engagement.

Lastly, while the study focused on administrative effectiveness as a mediating variable, other factors such as peer support, financial stress, commuting challenges, and study environment were not examined but may also influence the relationship between off-campus residency and academic engagement. These variables could be explored in future research.

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