

Full Length Research

Perception of Users' Satisfaction with Circulation Policy on Library Opening Hours in University Libraries in Nigeria

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This study is to investigate users' of satisfaction with circulation policy on library opening hours in university libraries in Nigeria. A descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The population comprised all the undergraduate registered users of the university libraries in the zone. The stratified random sampling technique was used to draw a sample of 600 registered library users for the study from four university libraries. A total of two research questions were raised and two hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. A questionnaire entitled: "Perception of Users' Satisfaction with Circulation Policy on University Libraries Opening Hours Questionnaire (PUSCPULOHQ)" was the instrument used for data collection. The data were collected and analysed by using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions, while z-test statistical technique was used to test the formulated hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that Federal universities had moderate mean in the perception of user's satisfaction with circulation policy on library opening hours in university libraries; the study also revealed that male library users had a high mean in the perception of user's satisfaction with circulation policy on university library opening hours on week days. There was significant difference between federal and state owned universities in perception of user's satisfaction with circulation policy on university library opening hours. Finally, it was recommended that university libraries in Nigeria should extend their opening hours on Sundays to make the users more satisfied with opening hours on that day.

Keywords: Users' of satisfaction, library opening hours, university libraries, undergraduates, library users

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INTRODUCTION

Libraries all over the world are faced with daunting challenges in the course of their operations. Among those challenges is finding the right number of hours during which the library is available to users. Steele (2001) notes that consumers have different values to which we must respond: convenience, timeliness, cost effectiveness, and speed. For libraries, customer values are expressed in demands for hours that meet individual needs for timely, and indeed, non-traditional access to

facilities and services. As a result, university libraries are studying library hours more regularly and closely than they have in the past to determine where changes need to be made to meet demands, (SPEC 2001).

Sharma (2001) carried out a survey designed to provide a description of how libraries were responding to demands for greater hours of access and service. Survey responses indicate what hours of access and service libraries are providing and for what parts of the year. He also answered questions about staffing, security, which specific library areas were opened, additional hours,

partnerships, and special funding that supports extended hours. Steele (2001) describes how libraries are evaluating extended library hours and what libraries plan in the future.

Standard Performance Evaluation Corporation (SPEC) (2001) in their executive summary, note that sixty-three of the 121 Association of Research Libraries (ARL) member libraries of Tuba City Public Library respondents (83%) have some form of extended library hours. While one library reports beginning extended hours in the 1970s, majority (69%) have implemented this service within the last seven years. The interpretation of extended hours varies from being open twenty-four hours per day, seven days per week, for most days of the year. However defined, it is clear that in the latter part of the last decade libraries began to respond to new demands/opportunities and established library hours beyond the traditional schedule. Examples are Fridays, Saturdays, and during break periods.

Most of the ARL responding libraries extend hours between Sunday and Thursday night in the academic year, choosing to provide more traditional hours Fridays, Saturdays, and during break periods. Examination periods are other popular times to extend hours. There is great variation in the combination of hours, days and times of the year- all pointing to the creative attention being directed to establishing library hours that meet local demands. Those libraries able to provide access in all parts of the library still are in the minority.

Udumoh and Okoro (2007) carried out a study on the effect of library policies on overdue materials in university libraries in the South-South zone, in Nigeria and revealed that University of Uyo and University of Calabar libraries open Monday to Friday from 8.30a.m to 6.00p.m during the semester and from 8.00a.m to 6.00p.m respectively during vacation. On Saturdays, Universities of Uyo and Calabar libraries open from 8.00a.m to 6.00p.m and remain closed on Sundays. The University of Port Harcourt library opens Monday to Friday from 8.30a.m to 9.00p.m during the semester and vacation, and opens on Saturdays from 8.30a.m to 6.00pm. It remains closed on Sundays. None of the Universities of Uyo, Calabar and Port Harcourt libraries opens on Sundays. These findings suggest that it is difficult to provide staffing on Sundays, and the anticipated use is not seen as great enough to justify opening of the library on this day. This study revealed that users were not satisfied with libraries' remained closed on Sundays.

Senevirante's (2006) study of Institute of Medicine Branch Library also reveals that the hours seem to satisfy majority of the users on week days. Some users; however, requested for longer hours on Saturdays and some have suggested keeping the library open on Sundays. They have observed that the use of the library is restricted to working hours and prefer to use the library on non-working hours. There were requests to recruit

more staff to organize and function on Sundays as it is more convenient for many of the doctors. Edoa (2000) states that convenient hours are a crucial factor in making library services available. He agreed that library hours should be extended and be opened sufficiently during weekdays, Saturdays and Sundays. Udumoh and Okoro (2007) agree that the length of time that libraries are open determines whether library materials may or may not be used, and thus indirectly determine the degree of physical accessibility to materials. It therefore follows that a user may not return library materials on time because the hours of the library are not convenient.

According to Aguolu and Aguolu (2002), these typical library hours are unsatisfactory, because libraries are heavily used in the evenings and weekends by students. It is thus wrong to assume that library users will have no need of the university library on Sundays. Reference and circulation should be opened to users during all the hours the library is open. This would eliminate physical and administrative barriers to library use.

Significance of the study

This study has presented information on users' satisfaction towards library policy on opening hours. It is hoped that the study will be of benefit to the library services, librarian profession, and serve as a contribution to the body of knowledge in the area of user satisfaction on libraries' contribution and their services to users. More specially, the study will help both staff and users (undergraduate) to understand how library policy is being used to improve on library opening hours.

Research Questions

The study sought answers to the following research questions:

- i) What is the level of library users' satisfaction in federal and state universities regarding circulation policy on library opening hours?
- ii) What is the level of male and female library users' satisfaction regarding circulation policy on opening hours?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested in the study:

- i) There is no significant difference between federal and state universities in the library users' levels of satisfaction with circulation policy on library opening hours?
- ii) There is no significant difference between male and female library users' levels of satisfaction with circulation policy on opening hours?

Purpose of the Study

Determine the level of satisfaction of the users with circulation policy on library opening hours.

Method of Data Collection

A total of 600 copies of questionnaire were administered to the student users of the various public university libraries under study, out of which, 562 were retrieved from the users who were in the libraries to use their services. The questionnaire was administered and retrieved within one month.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results are presented in tables based on each of the research questions and research hypotheses.

Research Question One

What is the level of library users' satisfaction in federal and state universities regarding circulation policy on library opening hours?

The data in Table 1. are used to answer this research question.

Table 1. Mean and Standard Deviation of User's Satisfaction with Library Opening Hours in Federal and State Universities

SN	Items	Type of Institution	N	\bar{X}	SD	Satisfaction level
1.	Weekly Opening hours	Federal	336	3.33	.65	Moderate
		State	226	3.25	.66	Moderate
2.	Saturday opening hours	Federal	336	3.22	.75	Moderate
		State	226	3.07	.79	Moderate
3.	Sunday opening hours	Federal	336	2.87	.86	Moderate
		State	226	2.89	.83	Moderate
4.	Public holiday opening hours	Federal	336	3.00	.88	Moderate
		State	226	2.66	.80	Moderate
5.	Examination period opening hours	Federal	336	3.07	.79	Moderate
		State	226	3.03	.81	Moderate
6.	Vacation period opening hours	Federal	336	3.14	.79	Moderate
		State	226	3.06	.77	Moderate

Table 1. reveals the users' level of satisfaction with library opening hours. From the table, library opening hours on week days (Monday-Friday) attracted the moderate mean for federal ($X= 3.33$; $SD=.65$) and state ($X=3.25$; $SD=.66$) Universities – with .8 mean difference in favour of the former. On week days (Monday-Friday) University Libraries in the North Central Zone of Nigeria operate from 8.00am to 10.00pm. The opening hours are satisfactory to the student users of the federal and state university libraries survey. This finding corroborates that by Seneviratne (2006) in which the majority of the users of the Postgraduate Institute of Medicine Branch Library, at Peradeniya were satisfied with the opening hours on week days.

Respondents' level of satisfaction with opening hours on Saturday had a moderate mean of 3.25 for federal and 3.07 state universities. This shows that the majority of the respondents are satisfied with the Saturday hours of opening. Edoaka (2000) has noted that convenient hours are a crucial factor in making library services available. The finding on users' satisfaction with opening hours on Saturday corroborates that by Seneviratne (2006) whose respondents were satisfied with the opening hours of that day. However, respondents from federal universities were also moderate with library opening hours on Sunday ($x = 2.87$). The opening hour on Sunday attracted a moderate mean (2.89) from the users in state universities. The library opening hour on public holiday had the moderate mean (2.66) for the respondents from state universities and a moderate mean (3.00) from federal universities. These respondents are least satisfied with the opening hours on Sunday and public holidays. The university libraries surveyed in the North Central Zone of Nigeria open between 3.00 – 6.00 p m on Sundays (UNIJOS Student handbook 2004; FUT Library handbook 1992; BSU Library handbook 1992 and KSU bulletin 2002). This opening is not very satisfactory to some respondents.

The data in Table 2 indicates that the students' library users are generally satisfied with library circulation policy.

Research Question Two

What is the level of male and female library users' satisfaction regarding circulation policy on library opening hours?

Table 2. Mean and Standard Deviation of Users' Satisfaction with Library Opening Hours by Gender

Component	S/N	Items	Gender	N	\bar{X}	SD	Satisfaction Level
Opening Hours	1.	Weekly Opening hours	Male	368	3.30	.67	Moderate
			Female	194	3.31	.66	Moderate
	2.	Saturday opening hours	Male	368	3.14	.77	Moderate
			Female	194	3.21	.77	Moderate
	3.	Sunday opening hours	Male	368	2.86	.86	Moderate
			Female	194	2.92	.84	Moderate
	4.	Public holiday opening hours	Male	368	2.96	.87	Moderate
			Female	194	2.94	.82	Moderate
	5.	Examination period opening hours	Male	368	3.07	.78	Moderate
			Female	194	3.04	.85	Moderate
	6.	Vacation period opening hours	Male	368	3.14	.79	Moderate
			Female	194	3.08	.77	Moderate

Table 2. reveals the mean and standard deviation level of male and female users' satisfaction with circulation policy on library opening hours. The Table reveals moderate mean for male (2.86) and female (2.92) for satisfaction with opening hours on Sundays. This shows that respondents were satisfied with the opening hours of the university libraries.

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant difference between federal and state universities in the library users' level of satisfaction with circulation policy on library opening hours.

The data in Table 3 are used to answer this research hypothesis two.

Table 3. z-test analysis of users' level of satisfaction with library opening hours in federal and state universities

Institution	N	\bar{X}	SD	Df	z calculated value	z critical value	Level of significance	Remark
Federal universities	336	18.67	2.45	560	-2.15	1.96	0.05	Reject null hypothesis
State universities	226	18.20	2.58					

The result presented in Table 3. shows that the calculated z-value is -2.15 and the critical z-value is 1.96 at df of 560. The calculated z-value is greater than the critical z-value. Therefore, the hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference between the users' level of satisfaction with library openings hours in federal and state universities is rejected. There is a significant difference between the federal and state universities users' level of satisfaction with opening hours in university library. The mean score for the federal universities is 18.67 and that of the state universities is 18.20. The result reveals that federal universities had a higher level of users' satisfaction with library opening hours than the State owned Universities. This finding is in line with Sharma (1994) who conducted a survey of users to know their views about library collection, timings, rules and regulations and services of Delhi Public Library Karp, Bagh. She concluded that a majority of users were satisfied with opening hours of the library.

Hypothesis Three

There is no significant difference between male and female library users' levels of satisfaction with circulation policy on library opening hours.

The data in Table 4. are used to answer this research hypothesis Six

Table 4. z-test analysis of male and female users' level of satisfaction with library opening hours

Components	Gender	N	\bar{X}	SD	Df	z calculate d value	z critical value	Level of significance	Remark
Opening Hours	Male	368	18.47	2.53	560	-1.7	1.96	0.05	Not significant
	Female	194	18.51	2.48					

The result presented in Table 4. shows that the calculated z-value is -.17 and z-critical is 1.96 at df of 560. The calculated z-value is lesser than the critical z-value. Therefore, the hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference between male and female users' level of satisfaction with library opening hours is retained. This implies that there is no significant difference between male and female users' satisfaction with the library opening hours. These findings disagree with Hiller (2001) which male respondents dissatisfied with opening hours against the female.

CONCLUSION

The study showed that there was a significant difference between federal and state universities in users' level of satisfaction with library opening hours in university libraries.

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