African Research Review

Effects of Characteristics of Nigerian Students on Perceived Satisfaction of Academic Facilities in Private Universities in Ogun State, Nigeria

Oluwunmi, A. O.
Department of Estate Management,
Covenant University, Ota,
Ogun State, Nigeria
Tel: +2348034743392
E-mail: funke.oluwunmi@covenantuniversity.edu.ng

&

Ajayi, C. A.
Department of Estate Management,
Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile Ife,
Osun State, Nigeria
Tel: +2347068827412
E-mail: ydlajayi@yahoo.com

Abstract

Students' retention amongst the competitive private Universities in Nigeria leads to issues of students' satisfaction which is relatively sparse in literature. This study thereby examined the relationship between selected students' characteristics (sex, age, year of study and type of sponsorship) on the students' satisfaction in three (3) private Universities in Ado - Odo Local Government Council, Ogun State, Nigeria. A total of four hundred and thirty two (432) questionnaires, representing 76% of the sample size, were used for analysis. The result of the analysis using cross-tabulation, Mann-whitney U Test and Krustal Wallis showed that there is no close relationship

between sex, age, year of study and type of sponsorship and satisfaction with academic facilities in the Universities. However, this result is not totally conclusive, particularly for Covenant University, as further analysis revealed that mode of sponsorship is significant. Further research is thereby advocated.

Key words: Students' Characteristics, Satisfaction, Academic, Facilities, Private Universities, Nigeria

Introduction

The academic environment nowadays has become highly competitive since students are open to several options. It is therefore crucial for educational institutions, particularly private Universities that are presumed to be profit-oriented, to carry out studies that can help to attract and retain students. It is not surprising that these private Universities are always on their toes to woo as many students as possible, bearing in mind that they are not open to any financial assistance from the government (Teo, 2001; Ilias & Hasan, 2008). As a result, private Universities are now examining factors that affect student retention. One of such factors is students' level of satisfaction. Hence, student satisfaction is of great interest to educational institutions as they seek to continually improve the learning environment for students (Moro-Egido and Panadés, 2008; Russell and Lehman 2008; Ilias, Hasan, Rahman & Yasoa, 2008; Schreiner, 2009; Tessema, Ready and Malone, 2012).

Studies conducted on the relationship between users' satisfaction and socio-economic characteristics reveal two distinct schools of thought. The first group of authors found that there is no significant correlation between socio-economic characteristics and users' satisfaction (Corts, Lounsbury, Saudargas and Tatum, 2000; Rosenthal, Folse, Alleman, Bourdreaux, Soper and Bergen, 2000; *Carey, Cambiano and De Vore,* 2002; Ham and Hayduk, 2003; Ilias et al., (2008). For instance, the study of Corts, Lounsbury, Saudargas and Tatum (2000) assessed undergraduate satisfaction with the Psychology Department at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee, US. Out of 289 students that completed questionnaires, 209 (71%) were women and 80 (27%) were men. The analysis with one-way ANOVAS and a t-test revealed no significant differences between students' satisfaction with their academic department based on year in school, sex, and cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA). A similar study in Malaysia by Ilias and Hasan (2008) examined the differences between the effects of selected demographic factors (gender, race and semester of study) on the students' satisfaction and perception of service quality. Out of the 230 questionnaires that were administered, 200 (87%) were completed and returned. From the 200 respondents in the study, 95 (47.5%) were male and 105 (52.5%) were female. The calculated mean age of the respondents is 23 years old with the majority of the students being 22 years old (33%). Most of the respondents were in the fourth semester of their study (28%), followed by fifth semester and above (27%), second

semester (20%), third semester (14.5%) and first semester (10.5%). And majority were Malay (72%), Chinese and Indian (25%) and other ethnicities contributing about 3%. The results of the T-test and ANOVA showed that there was no significant difference between male and female students in their satisfaction and perception of service quality.

Another study i*n the US conducted by Carey, Cambiano and De Vore* (2002) compared campus satisfaction levels between students and faculty as measured by the Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) and the Institutional Priorities Survey (IPS). The student sample consisted of 692 (397 females and 295 males) from a Midwestern State University. The faculty sample consisted of 174 full-time professors and instructors (66 females, 100 males, and 8 did not indicate gender). Both student and faculty respondents rated all items on a 7-point Likert scale with respect to their expectation and satisfaction with student services. Results of the t-test (t=.49; .62) indicated that there was no significant difference in satisfaction between sexes, age groups and ethnicities. Ham and Hayduk (2003) also agree to the fact that gender has no significant relationship with perceived service quality even though males seem to be more satisfied than females.

However, the other group of studies suggested otherwise (Soutar and McNeil, 1996; Oldfield and Baron, 2000; Umbach and Porter, 2002; Perry, Sekelsy and Skarsten, 2003; Tessema, Ready and Malone, 2012). Specifically, the study by Soutar and McNeil (1996) found that there was a significant relationship between gender and satisfaction with service quality as males are more satisfied than females. Umbach and Porter (2002) and Perry et al., (2003) likewise shared the same view. The results of another study by Oldfield and Baron (2000) to evaluate students' perception of service over time revealed that the mean score for the final year students was lower than those of the first year students. This suggests that as students become more experienced in the higher educational settings, they tend to be more critical in their perceptions of the service quality. Yusoff (2011) identified and evaluated the drivers that influence business student satisfaction in the Malaysian private educational environment. The study adopted a positivist approach whereby 1,200 questionnaires were distributed to undergraduate business students at four private educational institutions in Malaysia. A total of 823 responses were found to be usable for analysis giving a response rate of 69%. The result revealed that significant differences exist between the demographic factors and five factors (student support facilities, class sizes, classroom environment, business procedures and relationship with the teaching staff). Tessema, Ready and Malone (2012) in the US replicated and extended the research on the effect of gender on different college outcomes such as students' satisfaction, ACT scores, and GPA at a mid-sized Midwestern public University. Selected demographic and attitudinal data were collected between 2001 and 2009 from a sample of 5,223 senior students representing five colleges at the University

(Business, Education, Liberal Arts, Nursing/Health Sciences and Science/Engineering). Findings showed that gender has a significant effect on student's satisfaction, ACT scores, and GPA. However, the effect of gender on satisfaction and ACT scores was minimal. Judging from the review above, studies on the influence of socio-economic characteristics on users' satisfaction are quite relevant. Hence, this study examined the effect of students' characteristics on students' satisfaction levels.

Research Methods

This study employed the statistical formula by Asika (2004) to determine suitable sample size for students in the selected private Universities. The sample size is shown in Table I. Simple random sampling technique was used in sample selection. From the sample size, a total 432 (representing 76%), of the questionnaires were found useful in the three (3) private Universities. The variables used in the study to measure students' characteristics are: sex, age, year of study and type of sponsorship (independent variables) while students' satisfaction served as the dependent variable. Data was analysed using frequency distribution, percentages, cross-tabulation, Mann-Whtney U Test and Kruskal Wallis.

Results

Students' characteristics

The characteristics of students were described in terms of sex, age, year of study and type of sponsorship. Responses are as presented in Table II using frequency distributions and percentages.

From the 432 students in this study across the selected Universities, a higher proportion of male respondents (56% and 52%) are from CU and Bells respectively, while CRA recorded highest female respondents (62%). On the whole, female respondents accounted for 51% as against 49% male respondents. From the study, majority (97%) of the respondents were between 16 and 25 years of age. However, CRA had greater percentages (73%) of respondents between ages 16 and 20 as against CU with 76% of respondents within ages 21 and 25 years of age. Bells had an even spread of respondents between age bracket 16 and 20 as well as 21 and 25.

Data available on year of study of respondents in the Universities revealed that the highest percentage of the respondents across the Universities was 300-level students (34%). Majority of the respondents in 300-level were from Bells and CRA (52% and 40%) as against CU with 47% and 39% of its respondents in 400-level and 500-level respectively. This study showed that 81% of the respondents were in 200-level, 300-level and 400-level. On the average, 3%, 21%, 34%, 26% and 16% of students across the private Universities were in 100 level, 200 level, 300 level, 400 level and 500 level respectively. Majority of the respondents were sponsored by their parents (82

%,) with CU (84%) having the highest level of parent sponsorship while 18% was sponsored by guardians with the remainder (0.3%) on self-sponsorship. This therefore revealed that most of the respondents depend on their parents for sponsorship. This is anticipated considering the fact that most of the respondents (97%) were aged between 16 and 25 years.

Relationship between satisfaction and students' characteristics

In order to establish if there is any relationship between overall satisfaction and students' characteristics, the researchers adopted the cross-tabulation method. The analysis is presented in Tables III - VI.

Table III reveals that the relationship between sex and satisfaction of students in the three private Universities are weak (CU = .126; Bells = .129 and CRA = .038). From the analysis in Table IV, it is seen that there exists a weak relationship between year of study and level of satisfaction in CU (.189) and CRA (.085). However, there is a moderate relationship in Bells (.330). The relationship between type of sponsorship and students' satisfaction in Table V shows that a weak relationship exists between type of sponsorship and satisfaction in the three private Universities [CU (.117), Bells (.145) and CRA (.059)]. Finally, analysis in Table VI reveals that there is a weak relationship between students' age and their level of satisfaction in the Universities (CU = -.025; Bells = -.027; and CRA = .068). However, CU and Bells have a weak negative relationship.

Comparison of level of satisfaction with students' characteristics

To further establish if there is any difference in the mean of the different groups under the students' characteristics, the researchers adopted Mann Whitney U Test and Kruskal Wallis to compare the mean of the different groups. The analysis is shown in Tables VII - VIII.

Table VII indicates the group with the highest overall mean satisfaction using Mann-Whitney U Test. From data relating to sex of the students, it can be concluded that there is no significant difference in the mean of both groups in the three (3) Universi*t*es (CU - U = 2953.5, P = .299 > 0.05; Bells - U = 1547.5, P = .453 > 0.05 a*n*d CRA - U = 2749.5, P = .838 > 0.05).

Using Mann- Whitney U Test and Kruskal Wallis test to compare the age of students, the analysis revealed that in CU ($U = 2359.5$, $P = .869 > 0.05$), Bells (H(2) = 0.169, P = .919 > 0.05) and CRA (H(2) = 1.084, P = .781 > 0.05), there is no significant difference in the satisfaction of the age groups.

The analysis on the difference in means satisfaction according to type of sponsorship shows that there is no significant difference in the groups in CU (H(2) = 0.501, P =

.778 > 0.05), in Bells ($U = 909.5$, $P = .705 > 0.05$) and in CRA ($U = 1930$, $P = .761 > 0.05$).

Table VIII was used to analyse the difference in mean of year of study of the students in the Universities reveals that there is no significance difference in Bells (H (2) = 1.301, P = .861 > 0.05) and CRA (H (2) = 0.244, P = .885 < 0.05). However in CU (H (2) = 10.494, P = .015 < 0.05), the difference is highly significant.

Conclusion and recommendations

From the results, it is obvious that the selected characteristics (sex, age, level of study and type of sponsorship) do not have any important role in determining students' satisfaction. Thus, it confirms the findings of some authors like *Cambiano and De Vore* (2002), Ham and Hayduk (2003) and Ilias et al., (2008). It therefore implies that management of educational institutions, particularly private institutions, need not consider those variables while granting admission to students. However caution has to be observed in the holistic interpretation of results particularly for Covenant University where mode of sponsorship appeared significant after further analysis. There is therefore an advocacy for further research in determining factors that do affect the satisfaction of students so as to assist institutions of higher learning to increase levels of student patronage and retention.

References

Carey, K., Cambiano, R. L. & De Vore, J. B. (2002). Student to Faculty satisfaction at a Mid-western University in the United States, HERDSA, 93-97.

Corts, D. P., Lounsbury, J. W. Saudargas, R. A. & Tatum, H. E. (2000). Assessing Undergraduate Satisfaction With An Academic Department: A Method And Case Study. *College Student Journal.* 34(3), 399-410.

Ham, L. & Hayduk, S. (2003). Gaining Competitive Advantages in Higher Education: Analyzing the Gap between Expectations and Perceptions of Service Quality. *International Journal of Value-Based Management,* 16(3), 223-242.

Ilias, A., Hasan, H. F. A., Rahman, R. A. and Yasoa, M. R. B. (2008) Student Satisfaction and Service Quality: Any Differences in Demographic Factors?, *International Business Research*, 1(4), 131- 143.

Moro-Egido, A. I. and J. Panades (2010). An Analysis of Student Satisfaction: Full-Time versus Part-Time Students. *Social Indicators Research*, 96(2), 363-378.

Oldfield, B. M. & Baron, S. (2000). Student Perceptions of Service Quality in a UK University Business and Management Faculty. *Quality Assurance in Education*, 8(2), 85-95.

Perry, M. J., Sekelsy, M. J., & Skarsten, F. (2003). University of Michigan-Flint Student Satisfaction Surveys Results, Available at http://www.vca.umlint.edu/.

Rosenthal, G. T., Folse, E. J., Alleman, N. W., Bourdreaux, D., Soper, B., & Von Bergen, C. (2000). The One-to One Survey: Traditional Versus Non-Traditional Student Satisfaction with Professors during One-to-One Contacts. *College Student Journal, 34(2),* 315-320.

Russell, M. and Lehman, A. (2008). Predicting Student Satisfaction with Academic Advising. The Mentor: *An Academic Advising Journal*, 10(1) (January–March, 2008).

Schreiner, L.A. (2009). Linking Student Satisfaction and Retention. Available @ http://www.uncfsu.edu/uts/reports/LinkingStudentSatis0809.pdf.

Soutar, G., and McNeil, M., (1996). Measuring service quality in a tertiary institution. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 34(1), 72-82

Teo, C. L. (2001). Realities of private institution. New Strait Time, 4.

Tessema, M., Ready, K., and Malone, C. (2012). Effect of Gender on College Students' Satisfaction and Achievement: The Case of a Midsized Midwestern Public University. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, 3(10), 1-11.

Umbach, P. D. & Porter, S.R., (2002). How do Academic Departments Impact Student Satisfaction? Understanding the Contextual Effects of Departments. *Research in Higher Education*, 43 (2), 209-234.

Yusoff, M. (2011). Evaluating Business Student Satisfaction in the Malaysian Educational Environment (Unpublished Professional PhD Thesis) University of Northumbria, Newcastle.

Table I Sample Size for the Selected Private Universities

S/N	Name of Institution	Sample Size
1	Covenant University (CU)	199
2	Bells University (Bells)	187
3	Crawford University (CRA)	184
	Total	**570**

Table II: Comparison of Students' Characteristics across the three Private Universities

S/N	Characteristics /Statistics	Sub-headings	CU F (%)	Bells F (%)	CRA F (%)	Mean %
1	**Sex**	Male	90 (56)	60 (52)	59 (38)	49
		Female	72 (44)	56 (48)	92 (62)	51
2	**Age**	<16 yrs	0 (0)	0 (0)	6 (4)	1.3
		16-20 yrs	39 (24)	53 (46)	112 (73)	48
		21-25 yrs	123 (76)	59 (51)	30 (19)	49
		26-30 yrs	0 (0)	4 (3)	6 (4)	2
3	**Year of Study**	100-Level	0 (0)	9 (8)	0 (0)	3
		200-Level	6 (4)	14 (12)	74 (48)	21
		300-Level	17 (10)	61 (52)	61 (40)	34
		400-Level	76 (47)	23 (20)	19 (12)	26
		500-Level	63 (39)	9 (8)	0 (0)	16
4	**Type of Sponsorship**	Self	2 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0.3
		Parent	136 (84)	96 (83)	121 (79)	82
		Guardian	24 (15)	20 (17)	33 (21)	18

(Note: The Figures in brackets are percentages of responses)

Table III: Relationship between Sex and Satisfaction

University	Symmetric Measures	Value	Approx. Sig
CU	Phil	.126	.464
	Cramer's V	.126	
Bells	Phil	.129	.746
	Cramer's V	.129	
CRA	Phil	.038	.974
	Cramer's V	.038	

* .01 – 2.9 (Weak Relationship)*   * .30 – 4.9 (Moderate Relationship) *
* .50 – 1.0 (Strong Relationship) *

Table IV: Relationship between Year of Study and Satisfaction

University	Symmetric Measures	Value	Approx. Sig
CU	Phil	.327	.043
	Cramer's V	.189	
Bells	Phil	.330	.698
	Cramer's V	.165	
CRA	Phil	.131	.898
	Cramer's V	.085	

Table V: Relationship between Type of Sponsorship and Satisfaction

University	Symmetric Measures	Value	Approx. Sig
CU	Phil	.165	.621
	Cramer's V	.117	
Bells	Phil	.145	.653
	Cramer's V	.145	
CRA	Phil	.059	.910
	Cramer's V	.059	

Table VI   Relationship between Age and Satisfaction

University	Method	Value	Asymp. Std	Approx. T	Approx.Sig
CU	Gamma	-.025	.157	-.160	.873
Bells	Gamma	-.027	.127	-.212	.832
CRA	Gamma	.068	.126	.537	.592

Table VII   **Compare Means Satisfaction of Two Groups of Variables (Mann-Whitney U Test)**

University	Group	Variable	N	Mean Rank	Sum Rank	U	Z	P
CU	Sex	Male	90	78.32	7048.50	2953.500	-1.039	.299
		Female	72	85.48	6154.50			
	Age	16 – 20 yrs	39	82.50	3217.50	2359.500	- .164	.869
		21 – 25 yrs	123	81.18	9985.50			
Bells	Sex	Male	60	60.71	3642.50	1547.500	-.751	.453
		Female	56	56.13	3143.50			
	Type of Sponsorship	Parent	96	57.97	5565.50	909.500	-.379	.705
		Guardian	20	61.03	1220.50			
CRA	Sex	Male	59	76.60	4519.50	2749.500	-.204	.838
		Female	95	78.06	7415.50			
	Type of Sponsorship	Parent	121	78.05	9444.00	1930.000	-.304	.761
		Guardian	33	75.48	2491.00			

* The difference is significant if *P* < 0.05 *

* The difference is insignificant if *P* > 0.05 *

Table VIII: Compare Means Satisfaction of more than Two Groups of Variables (Kruskal Wallis)

University	Group	Variable	N	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	P
CU	Type of Sponsorship	Self Sponsorship	2	63.00	.501	.778
		Parent	136	82.26		
		Guardian	24	78.71		
	Year of Study	200 level	6	95.50	10.494	.015
		300 level	17	98.56		
		400 level	76	87.55		
		500 level	63	68.27		
Bells	Age	16 – 20yrs	53	59.38	.169	.919
		21 – 25yrs	59	57.42		
		26 – 30 yrs	4	62.75		
	Year of Study	100 level	61	61.67	1.301	.861
		200 level	9	54.06		
		300 level	14	55.21		
		400 level	23	56.22		
		500 level	9	52.39		
CRA	Age	> 16yrs	6	64.00	1.084	.781
		16 – 20yrs	112	77.75		
		21 – 25yrs	30	76.83		
		26 – 30yrs	6	89.67		
	Year of Study	200 level	74	76.32	.244	.885
		300 level	61	79.58		
		400 level	19	75.39		