

UNDERGRADUATES' AWARENESS AND COMPLIANCE WITH CIRCULATION RULES IN UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN DELTA STATE, NIGERIA

By

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Abstract

This study investigates undergraduates' awareness of circulation rules and their level of compliance in university libraries in Delta State. It aimed to determine students' awareness of circulation rules, the extent of such awareness, and the degree of compliance with the rules in their libraries. A descriptive survey design was adopted, with a study population of 5,495 registered undergraduates across federal and state universities in Delta State during the 2023/2024 academic session. Using simple random sampling, a sample size of 549 respondents was selected. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire and analysed using simple percentages, frequency counts, and weighted mean. Findings revealed that undergraduates are generally aware of most rules guiding circulation services, with overall awareness rated high. However, despite this high awareness, compliance with circulation rules was found to be low. Factors contributing to compliance level include short loan periods, late book returns, restrictions on the number of items borrowed at a time, weak enforcement of overdue fines, minimal penalty fees, and favouritism or leniency by librarians in applying circulation policies. The findings highlight the need for stricter enforcement and user-friendly adjustments in university libraries. This study is significant as it has adequately highlighted that addressing short loan periods, borrowing limits, weak fines, and favouritism will improve compliance, ensure fair access to resources, reduce circulation issues, and strengthen libraries' role in supporting students' academic success.

Keywords: Library management, User behaviour, Loan policies, Information access, Rule enforcement, Academic success.

Introduction

Academic libraries, such as the library attached to universities, are created to meet the teaching, learning, and research needs of their clientele in the academic community by catering to the demands of their parent institution. Due to the widespread belief that these libraries are the foundation of universities, the calibre of the information they house is determined by the services they provide to the academic community (Samuel, 2018). Every university library's main goal is to serve its users by providing pertinent materials that meet their needs. To this end, they choose, acquire, arrange, and store the information materials that users request (Tom-George, 2022). Consequently, university libraries offer students the resources, services, collections, and guidance necessary for them to be successful in their academic pursuits (Banda and Chew, 2021). The university library's circulation section is crucial to the fulfilment of these responsibilities (Kang et al., 2017).

According to the Enugu State University of Technology (ESUT) (2024), the circulation section of a university library is in charge of lending and retrieving books to patrons who express interest. It also arranges volumes for readers to peruse on the shelves. In addition, they oversee the reshelving and shelf-reading of used books, in addition to offering other services

like interlibrary loans and user registration. They also assist library patrons with reading areas, chairs, tables, and other amenities for a comfortable library experience, as well as readers' advisory services (ESUT, 2024). The management of the university library creates policies, rules, and guidelines to direct the day-to-day operations of the circulation unit and control user behaviour. According to Banda and Chew (2021), university libraries all over the world create circulation rules and procedures to guarantee that library resources are used efficiently, consistently, and productively. The purpose of these guidelines is to control behaviour among university library patrons, most of whom are undergraduate students. According to Kang et al. (2017), circulation rules, which cover, among other things, the length of checkout, loan quotas, late fees, renewals, recalls, and loss or damage of library materials, are the essential policies that are used to regulate the usage of the circulation unit.

It is important to highlight that there is still some degree of non-compliance with library/circulation laws by students, even with the several rules and regulations put in place by librarians to curb the defiant attitude of the users (Omosekejimi et al., 2015; Owolabi et al., 2015). In addition, Omosekejimi et al. (2015) suggested that, in addition to book stealing, mutilation, hiding, and other defiant or non-compliance attitudes on the part of the students, there is also the problem of the students' ignorance of the library's policies and procedures, which has hampered the students' ability to use the library effectively. Undergraduate students who are unaware of and break the circulation policies of the library may cause disruptions to services, misplace or break library materials, and make it more difficult for other students to make productive use of the resources available to them. The library may have to pay more as a

result since it will have to replace or fix any damaged materials. Over the past few decades, a large number of research studies have been undertaken on users' complaints regarding academic library fines and circulation policies, as well as laws and regulations (Omosekejimi et al., 2015; Owolabi et al., 2015; Reed et al., 2014; Sung & Tolppanen, 2013; Wilson et al., 2015). Nonetheless, scant studies have been conducted on Nigerian university libraries' (particularly those in Delta State) students' adherence to circulation policies. This indicates a knowledge gap that the current study aims to close. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to ascertain undergraduates' knowledge of and adherence to Delta State University libraries' circulation policies.

Statement of the Problem

Although Delta State University's libraries are essential to helping undergraduates pursue their academic goals, there is rising concern over undergraduates' knowledge of and adherence to the library's circulation policies. The researcher has seen clear cases of non-compliance and misuse of library materials, indicating a lack of awareness among undergraduates regarding these rules, which could result in the loss, theft, or mutilation of library resources. This is in spite of the existence of established circulation policies and guidelines intended to ensure orderly access to library resources. This lack of awareness and

compliance presents a serious obstacle to university libraries' ability to operate effectively and could prevent all students from having equal access to resources.

This discovery has raised major concerns in the mind of the researcher. Could it be that undergraduates in university libraries in Delta State are not aware of the circulation rules that are in existence in their library? Could it also be that the student's level of compliance with library circulation rules is low? It is on this premise that this study seeks to examine undergraduates' awareness and compliance with circulation rules in university libraries in Delta State.

Research Questions

The following research questions will guide this study.

1. What are the different rules that guide circulation units in university libraries in Delta State?
2. What is the level of awareness of circulation rules among undergraduates in university libraries in Delta State?
3. To what extent do undergraduates comply with circulation rules in university libraries in Delta State?
4. What are the factors responsible for compliance level with circulation rules in university libraries in Delta State?

Literature Review

In this section, the key concepts of the study were defined, and theoretical and empirical literature were also reviewed in line with the research questions guiding the study.

Concept of Awareness

According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2025), awareness is the quality or state of being aware, i.e., knowledge and understanding that something is happening or exists. Vocabulary.com (2025) defined awareness as the state of knowing something, such as the awareness that the sun comes up every morning. In the library, awareness is having the knowledge of the existence of all the resources, rules and regulations of the library. Awareness helps users plan better and improves library usage (Bello & Yusuf, 2019). Knowing the rules of borrowing helps library users make better use of available resources. When users know how many books they can borrow, for how long, and what happens if they return books late, they are more likely to use the library properly. On the other hand, poor knowledge of these rules can lead to underutilization or misuse of library materials (Ukaegbu et al., 2025).

Concept of Circulation Service

Circulation services, according to Khan (n.d.), refer to the set of operations involved in lending library materials to users, maintaining user records, managing library collections in terms of availability, and ensuring the return of borrowed materials. It includes the issuing, returning, and renewing of library items, and handling of overdue items, reservations, holds, fines, and user registration. Also, LIS Academy (2024) defined circulation services in libraries as the processes that manage the borrowing, returning, and tracking of library materials. These

services are designed to ensure that patrons have access to resources while maintaining the library's collection in good condition. Essentially, circulation services are responsible for managing the flow of materials in and out of the library, ensuring that everything is accounted for and easily accessible (LIS Academy, 2024). According to Danesh and Ghavidel (2023), the lending of library materials, such as books, serials, sound recordings, moving images, cartographic materials, and other non-reference materials owned by a library, to its users is one of the functions of the circulation unit of the library. LIS Academy (2024) also noted that the role of circulation services extends far beyond simply checking out books. They also deal with various administrative tasks like registering new patrons, updating records, handling overdue items, processing returns, and making sure the library operates smoothly for users and staff alike. Without an efficient circulation system, libraries would struggle to provide their essential services, as resources would be easily misplaced, and user experience would deteriorate.

Concept of Library Circulation Rules

Library circulation rules, which are mostly used interchangeably with circulation policies, are the rules that govern borrowing and renewing materials and the penalties for overdue, lost, or damaged items in the library (Banda & Chew, 2021). Circulation policies/rules are necessary, including rules on the length of checkout, loan quotas, overdue fines, renewals, recalls, and loss or damage of library materials, based on user group and material type. According to Banda and Chew (2021), circulation rules stipulate who is eligible to borrow books and how many books may be borrowed at a time and for what duration. Circulation policies/rules help manage how materials are loaned, who can borrow them, how

long they can be kept, and what happens if they are returned late or lost (Ukaegbu et al., 2025). When users are aware of these policies and follow them, library materials are shared fairly among all users. But when users do not know or understand these rules, it can lead to problems like overdue books, limited access for others, and poor use of the library's collection.

Rules Guiding Circulation Units in University Libraries

Scholarly libraries exist primarily to serve university courses as well as the scholarly endeavours of faculty, staff, students, and other researchers. The circulation unit at university libraries assumes the role of offering a variety of services to their users to promote equitable access to information resources by all users (Omohwovo et al., 2023). Every university library's circulation department follows policies that include guidelines for services and activities related to circulation in order to efficiently deliver these services. The circulation policy also lays out the guidelines for returning and borrowing materials, as well as how lost, damaged, or overdue library materials are to be handled (Kang et al., 2019). Among other things, library circulation policies dictate who can check out books, how many books can be checked out at once, and how long you can keep a borrowed item (Nina-Okpousung, 2011).

Banda and Chew (2021) commented on the guidelines that govern the circulation of library resources in university libraries. They listed guidelines based on user group and material type, including rules for the length of checkout, loan quotas, overdue fines, renewals, recalls, and loss or damage of library materials. According to Tyonum et al. (2015), circulation rules and regulations define who can check out books, how many can be checked out at once, how long they can be checked out for, and how much of a fee is charged if a book is not returned by

the due date. To ensure that all library customers are aware of what can be checked out, by whom, and for how long, it is necessary to not only set clear circulation policies but also to exhibit them prominently throughout the library. Moreover, Omohwovo et al. (2023) claimed that the circulation policies of the library control how users may check out, check out, and return items (books, DVDs, etc.). While noting that different libraries have different circulation policies based on their size, kind, and resources (public, academic, school, etc.). Furthermore, the library's circulation department levies fines for misplaced, damaged, or stolen works as well as for holding onto borrowed materials past their expiration dates. In addition to bringing in money for the libraries, these fines are intended to discourage patrons who disregard the rules of the library (Samuel, 2018).

Samuel (2018) used the Walton Whaley Library of Valley View University (VVU), Ghana, as a case study for his investigation into student adherence to library rules and regulations regarding policies in university libraries. The purpose of the study was to ascertain whether Valley View University (VVU) students complied with library policies and procedures. A straightforward random sample procedure and a descriptive survey design were used in the investigation. At the time this study was conducted, there were 2,273 students enrolled in total. A sample of one hundred and twenty-six (126) students was used in the research. A questionnaire was employed as the data collection tool. The results showed that, regarding the policies and guidelines in the library, 67 (58.77%) of the respondents agreed that patrons must be registered, 61 (53.51%) agreed that bags are not permitted in the reading area, and 64 (56.14%) agreed that using a mobile phone while in the library interferes with learning. The

group discussion in the library was strongly disagreed with by 55 (48.25%) of the respondents. The study's conclusions make it clear that while patrons are aware of some key library regulations, others, like those about the library's circulation unit's charging and discharging policies, were left out.

Level of Awareness of Circulation Rules Among Undergraduates in University Libraries

University libraries are dynamic spaces, and circulation policies are essential to helping students efficiently access resources. It is imperative to ascertain the degree of awareness among undergraduates regarding these regulations to optimise library services and foster academic achievement. A thorough grasp of undergraduates' knowledge of circulation policies can help shape library management practices and improve students' overall educational experience. Numerous research studies have been carried out about the awareness of library rules by patrons. A study on awareness and opinions of library systems and services was carried out by Aravind (2019). The purpose of the study is to find out how well-informed students are about the policies and procedures of the library at Madurai Kamaraj University, how compliant they are, and what they think about the services and systems offered by the library. The research used in the study was a descriptive survey. The Madurai Kamaraj University undergraduate library users made up the study's population. For the study, 96 people made up the sample. The tool for gathering data was the questionnaire. Excel was used to examine the data through frequency counts and percentages. The study found that the level of awareness of library rules and regulations among students is 92% which is concluded to be a high level of library rules awareness.

Samuel (2018) investigated student adherence to library rules and regulations using the Walton Whaley Library of Valley View University (VVU), Ghana, as a case study in order to further explore the extent of knowledge regarding these matters in university libraries. The purpose of the study was to ascertain whether Valley View University (VVU) students complied with library policies and procedures. A straightforward random sample procedure and a descriptive survey design were used in the investigation. At the time this study was conducted, there were 2,273 students enrolled in total. A sample of one hundred and twenty-six (126) students was used in the research. A questionnaire was employed as the data collection tool. The results showed that of the 114, 96 (84.21%) said they knew the library's policies and procedures, 7 (6.14%) said they didn't know, and 11 (9.55%) said they weren't sure. The results suggest that most respondents are aware of the policies and procedures of the library, indicating a high degree of user awareness of these policies and procedures.

Additionally, Owolabi et al. (2015) studied undergraduate students' awareness of and adherence to library policies and procedures at two university libraries in Southwest Nigeria. The study set out to determine undergraduates' awareness of the rules and regulations in university libraries, as well as the categories of rules and regulations, undergraduates' level of compliance with these regulations, the effects of these regulations on library usage, and the consequences of breaking these regulations. The research employed a descriptive survey approach, and 150 respondents were chosen at random from university libraries using a random sample technique. The data was analysed using descriptive statistics after being collected via the questionnaire. The study's conclusions showed that the majority of respondents—81, or

98.8%—agreed that they knew that patrons had to register, 74, or 90.2%—that they knew that silence was maintained in the library, 46, or 56.1%—that they knew that group discussions are not permitted in the library, and 51, or 62.2%—that they knew that using mobile phones in the library is prohibited. In addition, 33(40.2%) were aware of non-reservation of seats for friends, 77(93.9%) agreed that food items are not always allowed in the library, 37(45.1%) knew that users should not fight with other library users, few respondents 28(34.1%) knew that consulted books are to be left on the reading table, while 49(59.8%) were aware of proper handling of library materials. Other rules in the library as found by the study include the use of library cards to gain entrance into the library which was agreed upon by 79(96.3%) respondents, bags were not allowed in the reading area which was also agreed upon by 68(82.9%) and only 19(23.2%) respondents were aware of payment of overdue fines in the library.

In a similar spirit, Omosekejimi et al. (2015) examined undergraduate students' knowledge of and adherence to Federal University of Petroleum Resources Effurun's library policies. The study's goals were to determine undergraduates' awareness of and sensitivity to the rules and regulations in university libraries, as well as the categories of rules and regulations, undergraduates' degree of compliance with current regulations, the impact of regulations on library usage, and the consequences of breaking library rules and regulations. The study used a descriptive survey approach, and two hundred and twenty respondents were chosen at random from the FUPRE university library. The questionnaire was used for data collection, while descriptive statistics were used in analysing the data. Findings from the study revealed that most of the respondents 242(96.8%) agreed that they were aware that users must

be registered in the library, 242(96.8%) agreed that they knew about the use of library borrowers' cards to gain access to the library, 221(88.4%) knew about maintenance of silence in the library, 179(78.8%) respondents also indicated that they were aware that group discussion is not allowed in the library, while 168(67.2%) agreed that use of mobile phones is not allowed in the general reading area of the library. Additionally, 159 respondents (63.6%) knew that using flash drives in the FUPRE E-library is prohibited. Another 164 respondents (65.6%) knew that connecting mobile phones to FUPRE E-library computers via USB is prohibited. 173 respondents (69.2%) knew that food items are not permitted in the library. 201 respondents (80.4%) knew that patrons should not fight with one another in the library. Not all respondents—101 (40.4%)—knew that consult books should be left on the reading table. 167 respondents (66.8%) knew that bags are not permitted in the reading area and the E-library. Finally, only 33 respondents (13.2%) knew that overdue fines must be paid in the library. These results suggest that while undergraduate users of the FUPRE library were aware of the majority of the policies and procedures governing their library, most of them were not aware of some of the fundamental guidelines governing the circulation unit, as evidenced by the study's finding that only 33 respondents, or 13.2%, knew that overdue fines had to be paid in the library.

Extent of Undergraduates' Compliance with Circulation Rules in University Libraries

Circulation policies are necessary at university libraries to maintain order and ensure that all undergraduate students have equal access to resources (Samuel, 2018). Circulation laws define the terms and conditions that govern the lending, renewal, and return of works. These policies also help to foster a mutually beneficial relationship between library users and the

library. However, more scholarly study and practical implementation are required to determine the extent to which undergraduates adhere to these recommendations. The complicated topic of undergraduates adhering to circulation regulations is influenced by many different factors, such as individual attitudes, institutional norms, and the efficiency of enforcement strategies. In order to determine the extent to which undergraduate students adhere to library rules and regulations, Aravind (2019) carried out a study on awareness and opinions regarding library systems and services. The study's findings indicated that 82% of students adhere to library rules and regulations, which is considered to be a high level of compliance.

Samuel (2018) carried out a study on student compliance with library rules and regulations by using the Walton Whaley Library of Valley View University (VVU), Ghana, as a case study in order to better discuss the extent of compliance with these policies in university libraries. The purpose of the study was to ascertain whether Valley View University (VVU) students complied with library policies and procedures. A straightforward random sample procedure and a descriptive survey design were used in the investigation. At the time this study was conducted, there were 2,273 students enrolled in total. A sample of one hundred and twenty-six (126) students was used in the research. A questionnaire was employed as the data collection tool. The results showed that 79 (69.29%) of the respondents answered "always" to the question on how often they complied with library rules and regulations, while 23 (20.18%) answered "sometimes." Twelve (10.53%) of the respondents were unsure. This suggests that the majority of responders abide by the guidelines set forth by the library. This data indicates that

students at Valley View University (VVU), in Ghana's Walton Whaley Library, adhere to the rules and regulations of the library to a high degree.

Furthermore, Owolabi et al. (2015) found that 48 (58.3%) of the respondents said they follow library rules and regulations very often, 27 (32.9%) said they always follow library rules and regulations, and 7 (8.5%) said they occasionally follow library rules and regulations. This study examined undergraduate students' awareness of and compliance with library rules and regulations in two university libraries in the Southwest, Nigeria. This suggests that undergraduate students generally pay attention to and abide by the library's policies and procedures to an acceptable degree. This study's findings indicate that there is a high degree of adherence to library policies and procedures.

Similar to this, the results of the study by Omosekejimi et al. (2015), which was carried out to determine undergraduates' awareness of and alertness to the rules and regulations in university libraries, the categories of rules and regulations, undergraduate students' compliance level with the existing rules and regulations, the effects of the rules and regulations on library usage, as well as the consequences for breaking the rules and regulations, revealed that 208 respondents, or 83.2%, indicated that they follow the rules and regulations very often, 102 respondents (40.8%) said they always comply with the library rules and regulations, and only 32 respondents (or 12.8%) indicated that they do so occasionally. This suggests that FUPRE undergraduate students generally observe and abide by the library's policies and procedures to a decent degree. This study concludes that undergraduate students at the FUPRE library exhibit a high degree of compliance with the rules and regulations.

Factors Responsible for Compliance Level with Circulation Rules in University Libraries

The circulation of materials is the most fundamental function of a library. Circulation policies for libraries define who can check out books, how many books can be checked out at once, and how long you can keep a borrowed item (Nina-Okpousung, 2011). Furthermore, the circulation regulations include the guidelines for material renewal and loan, as well as the protocols for managing lost, damaged, or past-due library materials (Kang et al., 2019). However, a significant obstacle facing libraries has been enforcing circulation policies effectively and getting complete user compliance. Anyira (2021) confirmed this state of affairs when he stated in his study that there is inadequate management of the implementation of the library circulation policy. He cited a lack of trained human resources, resistance from important stakeholders, and inadequate operational guidelines as implementation impediments. Furthermore, Adomi (2008), referenced in Omohwovo et al. (2023), concurs, stating that librarians and library employees utilise their positions to waive or minimise fines that conflict with circulation policies.

Furthermore, according to Banda and Chewe (2021), some students are unable to complete their work within the allotted time due to the short loan periods in some parts, since they either have a lot of material to extract from the book or there aren't enough copies available. Because of this, these pupils are forced to utilise the book until their homework is finished. When students aren't allowed to access specific library collections, they may develop the unwanted habit of hiding or hoarding certain pertinent books when they do get the chance. Since they will not be able to renew those books again, other students who have reached their

maximum renewals instead choose to keep their books for as long as they like. Additionally, Anyira (2021) came to the conclusion that while circulation policy is one of the library's policies, its implementation is badly managed. She cited a lack of operational standards, resistance from important stakeholders, and a shortage of qualified human resources as implementation impediments.

Banda and Chew (2021) used the University of Zambia Library as a case study for their investigation of circulation rules and how they affect users' returns of books. The population of the study consisted of full-time University of Zambia students, and the study employed a survey method. Using a random sample technique, each full-time student had an equal chance of being chosen as soon as they entered the library. A sample of ninety respondents was asked to complete a semi-structured questionnaire that included both closed- and open-ended questions in order to gather both quantitative and qualitative data. Excel was used to code and analyse the qualitative data into themes, while the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to examine the quantitative data that was gathered. A period of two weeks was allocated for gathering data. Data was gathered in 2020 between November 2 and November 15. The results of the study showed that students return library materials after hours due to the University Library's circulation policies, which include public library opening hours, short loan periods that are perceived as such, a cap on the number of items a borrower may check out at once, restricted access to specific library collections, low fines, and the library's lax enforcement of these policies.

Additionally, a study on the knowledge and application of circulation policies and procedures at the Lagos Business School library was carried out by Omohwovo et al. in 2023. Data for the study were gathered through the use of a questionnaire and a survey research design. For the study, 150 respondents were chosen through purposeful sampling. The data that was gathered was analysed using percentages and a frequency distribution table. The study's conclusions showed that the main obstacles to the circulation policy's implementation were partiality on the part of certain library employees and a rise in late book returns, as agreed upon by 71.0% of respondents.

METHODOLOGY

The descriptive survey research was adopted for the study. Descriptive survey research is appropriate for this study because it allows for the systematic collection and analysis of data to describe characteristics, behaviours, or opinions within a specific population. In this case, conducting a descriptive survey can provide insights into the current state of undergraduates' awareness of circulation rules and gather respondents' opinions on the level of compliance with the circulation rules in university libraries in Delta State. The population of the study is 5,495 undergraduates who were registered users of all federal and state university libraries in Delta State in the 2023/2024 academic session. At the time of this study, there were 3 federal and 4 state universities across Delta State. Because of the large population size of this study, the use of a sample becomes necessary.

According to Ekeh (2003), a researcher is unable to use every person of a big community as a subject due to restrictions in time, money, effort, and scope. Therefore, Krejcie

and Morgan (1970) claimed that the necessity for an effective technique to ascertain the sample size required to be representative of a given population has arisen due to the ever-increasing need for research. Thus, the minimal sample size for a study with a population of up to 10,000 or less should be at least 370, according to Krejcie and Morgan (1970). In light of this, the researcher used a basic random sample technique to select 10% of the total number of registered library users in each of the university libraries under examination, resulting in a total of 549 students. Thus, 549 respondents in all were selected as the sample size from the entire population. Data for the study were gathered using a standardised questionnaire. The researcher created the questionnaire, which was utilised to get accurate data from the participants for the investigation. After 549 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the participants, 485 of them were correctly completed and deemed functional. The response rate was 88% as a result. Weighted mean analysis, along with basic percentage and frequency counts, was used to examine the data gathered for the study.

Table 1: Population Table

S/N	University	Ownership	No of Population	Number of Samples
1	Federal University of Petroleum Resources, Effurun	Federal	786	79
2	Federal Maritime University, Okerenkoko.	Federal	549	55
3	Admiralty University of Nigeria, Ibuzor.	Federal	521	52
4	Delta State University, Abraka	State	1,210	121
5	University of Delta, Agbor.	State	763	76
6	Dennis Osadebay University, Asaba.	State	774	77

7	Delta State University of State Science and Technology, Ozoro.	892	89
	Total	5,495	549

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question 1: What are the different rules that guide circulation units in university libraries in Delta State?

Data in Table 2 provides answers to the question

Table 2: Rules Guiding Circulation Units in University Libraries

S/N	The following circulation rules exist in my university library	A	%	D	%
1	Library Etiquettes: Rules governing user behaviours in the circulation unit, such as no discussion, no drinking, no eating, no loitering, no keeping of space for friends, etc.	485	100	--	--
2	Loan Period: Specifies the duration for which materials can be borrowed by patrons.	478	99	7	1
3	Renewals: Guidelines for extending the loan period of borrowed materials, including the maximum number of renewals permitted and any associated restrictions.	429	88	56	12
4	Holds/Reservations: Procedures for placing holds or reservations on materials that are currently checked out by other patrons, including notification processes and pickup deadlines.	356	73	129	27
5	Fines and Fees: Policies regarding overdue fines, replacement fees for lost or damaged materials, and any associated payment procedures.	485	100	--	--
6	Borrowing Limits: Limits on the number of materials that patrons can borrow simultaneously, as well as any restrictions	485	100	--	--

	on specific types of materials.				
7	Recalls: Processes for recalling borrowed materials before the end of their loan period, typically for high-demand items.	218	45	267	55
8	Interlibrary Loan (ILL): Guidelines for requesting materials from other libraries through interlibrary loan services, including eligibility criteria and borrowing limits.	247	51	238	49
9	Access Restrictions: Rules governing access to specialised collections, restricted materials, or items with limited circulation.	299	62	186	38
10	Returns: Instructions for returning borrowed materials, including designated return locations, hours of operation, and any associated penalties for late returns.	485	100	--	--
11	Suspension of Privileges: Circumstances under which patrons may have borrowing privileges suspended, such as accumulating excessive fines or failing to return materials.	267	55	218	45

Table 2 revealed that 485(100) representing all the respondents unanimously agreed that they are aware of the library etiquette, fines and fees, borrowing limits, and returns rules guiding the circulation unit of their university library. This was followed closely by 478(99%) representing the majority of them who agreed to be aware of the loan period rule, while 7(1%) of the respondents were not aware of it. 429(88%) representing the majority are aware of renewal rule while 56(12%) are not aware of it. 356(73%) representing the majority of them also agreed that they are aware of the holds/reservation rule of their library, while 129(27%) are not aware of the rule. Also, 299(62%) of the respondents agreed that they are aware of the access restriction rule of their library's circulation unit while 186(38%) of them are not, and only 276(55%) of the respondents are aware of the suspension of privileges of their library while 218(45%) of them are not aware of it. Only 247(51%) representing a little above half of

the respondents agreed that they are aware of the interlibrary loan rule of their library, while 238(49%) are not aware. Only 218(45%) of the respondents agreed that they are aware of the recall rule of their library, while 267(55%) representing the majority of the respondents are not aware of that rule.

This means that all the respondents are aware of the library etiquettes, fines and fees, borrowing limits, and returns rules guiding the circulation unit of their university library while the majority of the respondents are aware of the loan period, renewal, holds/reservation, access restriction, suspension of privileges, and interlibrary loan rules guiding the circulation unit of their university library. However, the respondents are not aware of the recall rule (the process for recalling borrowed materials before the end of their loan period) operational in their library's circulation unit. This finding agrees with Samuel (2018), who found that while patrons are aware that they need to register, that bags are not permitted in the reading area, that using a phone while in the library hinders learning, and that group discussions are not permitted, they are not aware of the fundamental guidelines for the library's circulation unit, which include charging and discharging. This implies that although most respondents understand key circulation rules, their unawareness of the recall rule highlights a communication gap requiring improved user education on complete library circulation policies.

Research Question 2: What is the level of awareness of circulation rules among undergraduates in university libraries in Delta State?

Data in Table 3 provides answers to the question.

Table 3: Level of awareness of circulation rules among undergraduate students in university libraries.

S/N	I am aware of the existence of the following rules in my university library:	VHL	HL	LL	VLL	Weighted Mean
1	Library Etiquettes	129	261	78	17	3.0
2	Loan Period	102	286	66	31	3.0
3	Renewals	57	97	132	199	2.1
4	Holds/Reservations	21	156	263	45	2.3
5	Fines and Fees	143	254	63	25	3.1
6	Borrowing Limits	156	199	78	52	2.9
7	Recalls	12	34	289	150	1.8
8	Interlibrary Loan (ILL)	33	69	201	182	1.9
9	Access Restrictions	123	171	103	88	2.7
10	Returns	167	218	69	31	2.8
11	Suspension of Privileges	135	193	88	69	2.8
	Weighted Mean					2.60
	Criterion Mean					2.50

Table 3 revealed a weighted mean of 2.6, which is greater than the Criterion Mean of 2.50. It can be concluded that the general level of awareness of circulation rules among undergraduate students in university libraries in Delta State is high. It can be deduced from the table that the level of undergraduate students' awareness of circulation rules, such as library etiquette, loan periods, and fines/fees, is very high; borrowing limits, access restrictions, returns, and suspension of privileges are high; renewals and holds/reservations are low, while that of recall and interlibrary loan is very low. This finding is in line with the one by Owolabi et al. (2015), who found that undergraduate students' university libraries in Southwest, Nigeria, are aware of almost all the rules and regulations guiding the use of their libraries. This finding implies that undergraduate students in Delta State universities possess a generally high awareness of circulation rules, though awareness of renewal, recall, holds, and interlibrary loan remains low, indicating the need for improved user orientation to enhance understanding of all circulation policies and procedures.

Research Question 3: To what extent do undergraduates comply with circulation rules in university libraries in Delta State?

Data in Table 4 provides answers to the question.

Table 4: Extent of undergraduates' compliance with circulation rules in university libraries.

S/N	I comply with the following circulation rules of my university library:	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Weighted Mean
1	Library Etiquettes	123	177	122	63	2.7
2	Loan Period	57	71	281	76	2.2
3	Renewals	34	83	257	111	2.1
4	Holds/Reservations	21	67	243	154	1.9
5	Fines and Fees	45	93	223	124	2.1
6	Borrowing Limits	157	278	34	16	3.2
7	Recalls	68	99	231	87	2.3
8	Interlibrary Loan (ILL)	71	126	204	84	2.4
9	Access Restrictions	118	189	107	71	2.7
10	Returns	34	93	271	87	2.0
11	Suspension of Privileges	57	98	208	122	2.2
	Weighted Mean					2.34
	Criterion Mean					2.50

Table 4 revealed a weighted mean of 2.34, which is lower than the Criterion Mean of 2.50. It can be concluded that the extent of undergraduates' compliance with circulation rules in university libraries in Delta State is low. It can be deduced from the table that the extent of undergraduate students' compliance to borrowing rules in circulation units in university libraries in Delta State is very high; the level of compliance with library etiquettes and access restrictions is high; the level of compliance with loan period, renewals, fines, and fees, recalls, interlibrary loan, returns, and suspension of privileges is low while the extent of compliance with holds/reservation rule (procedures for placing holds or reservations on materials that are currently checked out by other patrons, including notification processes and pickup deadlines) among undergraduate in university libraries in Delta State is very low. This finding is in sharp

contrast to the ones by Samuel (2018), Aravind (2019), and Omosekejimi et al. (2015), who all found that the level of undergraduate students' compliance with circulation rules in university libraries is high. This implies that despite awareness of circulation rules, undergraduate students in Delta State universities demonstrate low compliance, particularly with renewals, returns, and reservations. This suggests inadequate enforcement, user motivation, or a lack of awareness-to-practice translation, highlighting the need for stricter monitoring and enhanced library user education to improve compliance levels.

Research Question 4: What are the factors responsible for compliance level with circulation rules in university libraries in Delta State?

Data in Table 5 provides answers to the question.

Table 5: Factors Responsible for Compliance Level with Circulation Rules in University Libraries

S/N	The following are responsible for the compliance level with the circulation rules of my university library:	A	%	D	%
1	Lack of awareness of circulation rules.	--	--	485	100
2	Inadequate information resources in the library	57	12	428	88
3	Late returns of library books	418	86	67	14
4	Short loan periods	485	100	--	--
5	A limited number of items that a person is allowed to borrow at a time	398	82	87	18
6	Lack of strictness in overdue fine collection	352	73	133	27
7	Minimal penalty fees	318	66	167	34
8	Favouritism and failure of librarians to enforce circulation rules strictly	277	57	208	43

Table 5 revealed that 485(100%) representing all the respondents and 428(88%) representing the majority of the respondents respectively disagreed with the lack of awareness of circulation rules and inadequate information resources in the library as factors responsible

for the compliance level in university libraries. However, 485(100%) representing all the respondents unanimously agreed with short loan periods, this was closely followed by 418(86%) of the respondents who agreed with late returns of library books, 398(82%) agreed with the limited number of items that a person is allowed to borrow at a time, 352(73%) agreed with lack of strictness with the overdue fine collection, 318(66%) of them agreed with minimal penalty fees and 277(57%) of the respondents agreed with favoritism and failure of librarians to enforce circulation rules strictly as the factors responsible for compliance level with circulation rules in university libraries in Delta State. This means that the factors responsible for compliance level with circulation rules among undergraduate students in university libraries in Delta State are short loan periods, late returns of library books, the limited number of items that a person is allowed to borrow at a time, lack of strictness with the overdue fine collection, minimal penalty fees and favoritism/ failure of librarians to enforce circulation rules strictly. This finding agrees with the one by Banda and Chew (2021) who found that some of the challenges facing implementation of circulation policies are that students return library materials late because of the circulation regulations set out by the University Library such as library opening times to the public, perceived short loan periods, a limited number of items that a person is allowed to borrow at a time, restricted access to certain library collections, and minimal penalty fees and failure by the library to adhere to the regulations strictly.

Recommendations

In light of these study findings, the researcher recommends that:

1. The library management must ensure that librarians and other library staff enforce all rules guiding the circulation unit without sentiment or favour to allow for total compliance on the part of the students.
2. The library management must ensure that commensurate penalties/punishment are meted out on students who are caught violating the circulation rules, as this will serve as a deterrent to others.
3. University libraries operating on short loan periods should review the loan period to allow students to borrow library books for a longer period. This is to allow the students to derive maximum satisfaction from using the book they borrowed before the due date.
4. The number of books a student can borrow at a time should also be reviewed upward to allow for more, as this will allow students to access a variety of books on loan and avoid the temptation of over-reliance on one particular book, leading to failure to meet with due date.

Conclusion

This study clearly shows that undergraduate students at Delta State universities are aware of the majority of the regulations governing the circulation unit in their university library and that there is a high general level of awareness of these regulations, i.e., undergraduates are aware that the regulations governing the circulation unit of their university library exist. Furthermore, it is reasonable to conclude from this study that undergraduates in Delta State University libraries generally have a good understanding of circulation laws, but their compliance with them is generally low. This indicates that Delta State undergraduates

frequently disregard the guidelines that govern the university libraries' circulation departments. This study also shows that short loan terms, late returns of library books, the number of items a borrower is permitted to check out at a time, lax enforcement of late fine collection, low penalty fees, and partiality or a failure on the part of librarians to strictly enforce circulation rules are the main causes of low compliance with these policies among undergraduate students at Delta State universities.

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