



BUSINESS LOCATION AND STUDENTS' PATRONAGE OF COPY-AND-PRINT SHOPS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF CALABAR

Eyo Emmanuel Essien¹ and Edim Eka James²

^{1,2}Department of Marketing, University of Calabar, Nigeria

Email: ecubed@unical.edu.ng (For correspondence)

Phone: +234(0)8033206386

ABSTRACT

The physical location of a business firm can improve or undermine its marketing potential in today's competitive environment. While a well-located business can attract customers through visibility and easy accessibility, a poorly-located business can result in low customer visibility, which may inhibit patronage. This study examined business location and students' patronage of copy-and-print shops in the University of Calabar. It specifically sought to examine the effects of location visibility, accessibility and proximity on students' patronage of copy-and-print shops in the University of Calabar. Cross-sectional survey research design was adopted for the study. Primary data were obtained from 323 undergraduate students of the University of Calabar using a structured questionnaire. The hypotheses proposed for this study were tested using multiple regression analysis technique. The findings of the study revealed that location accessibility, location visibility and location proximity had significant positive effects on students' patronage of copy-and-print shops in the University of Calabar. Therefore, the following recommendations were made among others: copy-and-print shops operating in educational institutions should intensify the use of physical signages, and exterior store aesthetics to enhance the visibility of their stores in order to attract students' patronage; and to enhance student patronage, university campus copy-and-print shops should prioritize accessibility by implementing measures like user-friendly layouts, online ordering, and printing options for visually impaired students.

Keywords: Business location, Customer patronage, Location visibility, Location accessibility, Location proximity

INTRODUCTION

Customer patronage is essential for the survival of any business, particularly within a competitive marketing environment. According to Ismail and Al Bulushi (2018), the key imperative of consistent customer patronage is that it leads to revenue growth, because repeat customers are more likely to buy high-end or premium products and services, leading to higher revenue for businesses. Also, businesses with loyal customers have a competitive advantage over their competitors (Ghembi, 2022), because a loyal customer base helps them create a stream of sales revenue that comes in regularly. Similarly, Ameer and Naser (2019) maintained that sustaining loyal and consistent customer patronage also greatly reduces customer acquisition costs, which have the potential to eat up a considerable portion of a company's revenue. Loyal customers help businesses to bypass extensive advertising campaigns that cost time and money, and any other promotional activities that may consume valuable resources. As a result, a company with loyal customers stands a better chance of succeeding in a highly competitive environment (Al-Mamun & Velasquez, 2017).

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In recognition of the imperatives of consistent customer patronage to competitive performance, business organizations are exploring several marketing strategies to position themselves visibly to attract customer patronage effectively. Extant research has revealed that business location is one of these competitive marketing strategies (Dunmade, 2022; Omodero & Eriabie, 2021; Asare & Bosompem, 2019; Abubakar & Abubakar, 2019). According to Adjei and Mensah (2020), business location is the physical or geographic site where a business organization conducts its operations, establishes its facilities, and interacts with customers, suppliers, and other stakeholders. It is a critical decision that can greatly impact a company's success, as the choice of location can influence various aspects of the business, such as accessibility, visibility, customer reach, operating costs, and overall competitiveness (Ali & Rashid, 2018).

The foregoing viewpoint suggests that business location encompasses several characteristics; however, this study centers on location visibility, accessibility and proximity. Using these characteristics, business organizations have attempted to locate their operations in geographic areas most likely to attract customer patronage. In Nigeria, the campuses of tertiary institutions have served as a highly preferred business location for copy-and-print shops for decades (Eze et al., 2015). Across several university campuses, these businesses have occupied strategic locations with high student traffic with the intention of projecting themselves to students in need of their services. The operations of these businesses are also sustained by the continuous need for copy-and-print services by students and staff of tertiary institutions. As a consequence, the tertiary institution environment is deemed as an attractive location for prospective businesses specializing in copy-and-print services. However, it is unclear how location characteristics have impacted customers' patronage of these businesses as they operate in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. This is because of inadequate extant studies relevant to this business model in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

In fact, a close review of extant literature suggests that the influence of location characteristics on customer patronage of copy-and-print business in Nigeria has not been adequately studied. This implies that although copy-and-print businesses have proliferated rapidly into every educational institution in Nigeria, such as the University of Calabar, there is inadequate research to explain how their location characteristics could impact patronage. This is because the vast majority of relevant studies in Nigeria were restricted to the effect of business location on customer patronage of banks (Adiele et al., 2015; Aliero et al., 2018; Omodero & Eriabie, 2021), hotels (Faajira & Nyagba, 2022); and eatery firms (Dunmade, 2022). However, one study (Eze et al., 2015) was closely relevant to the present study as it centered on copy-and-print outlets in the University of Calabar, but its limitation is that it only studied proximity as a variable of business location in this context. From these extant studies, a knowledge gap has been observed in the literature regarding the effect of location characteristics (such as accessibility, visibility and proximity) on customer patronage of copy-and-print businesses in Nigeria. There is therefore need for new empirical evidence that demonstrates the causality between these business location characteristics and customer patronage of this business model in Nigeria. This is because such evidence would provide practical insights to guide operators of copy-and-print businesses to make effective decisions regarding the siting and location design of their businesses to maximize customer patronage. Against this backdrop, this study was conducted to examine the effect of business location on students' patronage of copy-and-print shops operating on campus of the University of Calabar, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

- i. determine the effect of location visibility on students' patronage of copy-and-print shops in the University of Calabar;



- ii. assess the effect of location accessibility on students' patronage of copy-and-print shops in the University of Calabar;
- iii. ascertain the effect of location proximity on students' patronage of copy-and-print shops in the University of Calabar.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Business Location

Business location is the physical position where a business is situated. This can be in the form of a building, a, or an office (Anim & Arkorful, 2021). The location of a business is an essential factor in determining its success or failure in the market. The importance of location cannot be understated in business operations (Orhan & Arikan, 2021). Choosing the right location for a business can make a huge difference in the success it will achieve. A proper business location can help businesses attract more customers and generate higher sales. A good location also makes it easier for businesses to access the market they intend to serve. Additionally, the location of a business can help minimize costs and enhance profits (Abdelmonem & Al-Dahash, 2022). The first factor to consider when choosing a business location is accessibility. A location that is easy to reach and with good transportation options will always be preferred by consumers. Businesses that are situated in areas with high traffic flow e.g., near busy streets or major transportation hubs, are more likely to attract a higher number of customers (Bhatti & Siddiqi, 2022). Accessibility can be a significant factor in determining the success of a business, especially in the retail and hospitality industries.

Another critical factor that businesses should consider when choosing a suitable location is competition (Mengistu & Kasahun, 2023). A business must find a location that will enable it to compete effectively with other businesses with similar products or services. A location with too much competition may not be suitable since it could lead to reduced sales and a lower profit margin. Conversely, a location with no competition may indicate a lack of demand for the product or services offered by the business. Similarly, Kifle and Tassie (2021) maintained that consideration of demographics is also essential when choosing a business location. Businesses should locate themselves in areas where the target customer segment is abundant. Demographics such as class, age, and income range should be considered when selecting a location. Finally, the cost of the location is another factor to consider (Khan & Jamshed, 2019). Different locations come with varying rental and leasing costs. A low-cost location may seem attractive, but it may not provide significant returns, while more expensive locations may not be affordable and may not translate to better profitability.

Customer Patronage of Copy-and-print Businesses

Customer patronage is the ongoing support and repeat business that a customer provides to a particular brand, product, or service (Adeleke & Erwee, 2021). It signifies a situation where a customer makes purchases or engage with the brand over time by paying money to use it. This patronage frequently stems from elements like customers' overall satisfaction, brand reputation, customer service, and product quality (Arifi et al., 2019). Customer patronage is a crucial aspect of



a successful business as it can lead to higher sales, increased profitability, and positive word-of-mouth referrals, ultimately contributing to the growth and sustainability of the brand. According to Atabek and Yildiz (2020), customer patronage is a measure of the customer's satisfaction and trust in a business. Establishing a strong relationship between a business and its customers poses significant challenges, especially within the current competitive market landscape. Thus, fostering sustained customer patronage becomes indispensable for businesses striving for enduring success (Demir & Yilmaz, 2018).

Furthermore, Endrias and Gebreslassie (2019) maintained that customer patronage is essential to business performance because it brings in long-term revenue streams. As customers become loyal to a brand, they tend to buy repeatedly from that brand. They also tend to recommend the brand to others, thereby bringing in new customers. Customer patronage can lead to cost savings as well since it is typically less expensive to retain an existing customer than it is to acquire a new one (Mohamed, 2021). Moreover, customer patronage leads to increased customer value (Njuguna & Kigunda, 2020). Business can increase its revenue through customer patronage by developing strategies to provide superior quality products and services that address customers' needs and preferences. The loyalty of customers also creates an opportunity for businesses to offer premium products and services, which in turn enhances the customer's experience and loyalty. In addition, Omar (2021) observed that customer patronage leads to increased customer feedback, which is essential to business improvement. With customer feedback, businesses get information about what customers liked and didn't like about their products or services. This information helps businesses make the necessary adjustments to meet the ever-changing requirements of customers. By listening to the feedback of customers, businesses can develop products that meet their needs and preferences (Tan & Goh, 2021).

Location Visibility and Customer Patronage

Business location visibility refers to how easily customers can find the business, either by driving, walking, or commuting, and it also includes the signage and other visual cues that make the business more visible to potential customers (Agyemang & Dwamena, 2017). Another way of understanding business location visibility is by looking at how a business is perceived in the eyes of its customers. It includes the brand reputation, customer reviews, and the overall image of the business (Yilmaz & Bozkurt, 2018). According to Al-Ansari and Alkhatib (2019), business location visibility is an essential factor that determines the customers' patronage of a particular business organization. It refers to the ability of a business to be easily noticed by potential customers, and it also involves the extent to which a business can attract customers through the location in which it is situated. In other words, business location visibility determines how quickly a potential customer can locate a business and how visible a business is to its target customers. In addition, (Khan & Jamshed, 2019) observed that business location visibility facilitates customer patronage of business organizations by offering easy accessibility and convenience of the business to its target customers.

This is because when a business is located in a central location where it is easily accessible, it is more likely to attract more customers. Customers are likely to patronize a business that is easier to find than a business that is hidden or difficult to locate. Furthermore, Girma and Wogayehu (2020) maintained that business location visibility promotes brand recognition and creates a strong brand image, which can help increase customer patronage. Customers are more likely to patronize a business that has a strong brand image and reputation. A strong brand image can be created through the use of attractive signage, visual displays, and other marketing strategies that showcase the



business's products or services. The foregoing viewpoint suggests that visibility is an essential business location characteristic capable of substantially influencing customers' patronage of business enterprises in a competitive marketplace. This viewpoint is supported by research conducted by Yasa and Indiani (2018), which demonstrated that the visibility of a business location greatly influences customer patronage of SMEs in Bali, Indonesia. Similarly, Asare and Bosompem (2019) found evidence supporting the idea that the visibility of a business location positively affects customer patronage of small and medium-sized enterprises in Ghana. Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

H₁: Location visibility has a significant effect on students' patronage of copy-and-print shops in the University of Calabar.

Location Accessibility and Customer Patronage

Business location accessibility refers to the level of convenience and ease with which members of the public can approach and reach a particular business location through various means of transportation and communication (Agyapong & Antwi, 2020). This accessibility can be measured on several levels, including physical accessibility and informational accessibility. In the views of Oztekin and Kabadayi (2020), physical accessibility refers to the ease and convenience with which potential customers can access a business location by means of various modes of transportation. Ideally, a business should be located in a place that is well-served by a variety of transportation options, such as buses, trains, taxis, and private cars. Furthermore, it should be easy for people with disabilities to access the business location, with wheelchair ramps, adequate parking spaces, and other provisions to facilitate access. Informational accessibility, on the other hand, refers to the ease with which potential customers can obtain information about a business location, including its products and services, opening hours, and location (Al-Zaharna & Almekhlafi, 2020). In today's era of mobile internet and smartphones, having clear and easily accessible information about a business is essential for customer patronage (Hameed & Iqbal, 2020). To put in perspective, a business website that provides clear and comprehensive information about its products and services, as well as location and opening hours, can immensely influence customer patronage (Kifle & Tassie, 2021). Furthermore, Wu and Wang (2022) maintained that business location accessibility is essential for facilitating customer patronage of business organizations. This is because customers are more likely to patronize businesses that are easily accessible and convenient to reach. In this way, accessibility can help to increase the number of potential customers who are able and willing to visit a particular business location.

Similarly, business location accessibility can positively affect customer satisfaction and loyalty (Olalekan-Asikhia & Oseji, 2019). A business location that is easily accessible and convenient to reach can help to create a positive reputation for the business, which in turn can help to attract more customers and retain existing ones. The foregoing viewpoint suggests that accessibility is an essential business location characteristic capable of substantially influencing customers' patronage of business enterprises in a competitive marketplace. This foregoing assertion is corroborated by Yasa and Indiani's (2018) research, demonstrating that the accessibility of business locations markedly enhances customer patronage for SMEs in Bali, Indonesia. This assertion finds further support in Asare and Bosompem's (2019) investigation, indicating that the accessibility of locations significantly boosts customer patronage for small and medium-sized enterprises in Ghana. Similarly, Faajira and Nyagba's (2022) study underscores the considerable influence of location accessibility on customer patronage within Benue State, Nigeria's hotel industry. This observation



parallels Dunmade's (2022) findings, which highlight the positive impact of convenient eatery accessibility on customer patronage in Ilorin Metropolis. Additionally, Suardika et al. (2019) affirm the importance of location accessibility in enhancing customer patronage for retail outlets in Indonesia. Similarly, Husnain and Rehaman's (2018) study underscores the significant impact of location accessibility on customer patronage for hotels in Pakistan. Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

H₂: Location accessibility has a significant effect on students' patronage of copy-and-print shops in the University of Calabar.

Location Proximity and Customer Patronage

Business location proximity refers to the physical distance between a business organization and its customers or potential customers (Musa & Balarabe, 2021). It is an essential aspect of the success of a business, because it determines the level of customer patronage a business can attract. The proximity of a business location is essential to customer patronage as it affects customers' willingness to visit and patronize the business (Ntshalintshali & Ndhlovu, 2017). Customers are more likely to patronize businesses located near them, as it saves them time and money. Additionally, they are more likely to be familiar with the area, making it easier for them to locate the business. This familiarity results in a sense of trust, which encourages them to patronize the business. In the views of Moriah and Nkwoka (2018), business location proximity also facilitates customer patronage by providing easy access to the business. This means that customers can easily travel to the location, making it convenient for them to make purchases. The convenience afforded by proximity results in increased customer satisfaction, making them more likely to return to the business.

Furthermore, the convenience of proximity encourages customers to make impulsive purchases, which can increase sales and revenue for the business (Lin & Chang, 2019). The foregoing viewpoint suggests that proximity is an essential business location characteristic capable of substantially influencing customers' patronage of business enterprises in a competitive marketplace. This foregoing assertion is corroborated by research conducted by Eze et al. (2015), indicating that the proximity of business locations positively influences customer patronage and repeat visits to photocopying services at the University of Calabar. Similarly, Dunmade's study (2022) found a significant positive correlation between location proximity and customer patronage of eateries in Ilorin Metropolis. Furthermore, Asare and Bosompem (2019) demonstrated a similar trend, revealing that proximity significantly influences customer patronage of small and medium-sized businesses in Ghana. This assertion is consistent with findings from Suardika et al. (2019), illustrating the positive impact of location proximity on customer patronage of retail outlets in Indonesia. Likewise, Husnain and Rehaman (2018) observed a significant influence of location proximity on customer patronage of hotels in Pakistan. Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

H₃: Location proximity has a significant effect on students' patronage of copy-and-print shops in the University of Calabar.

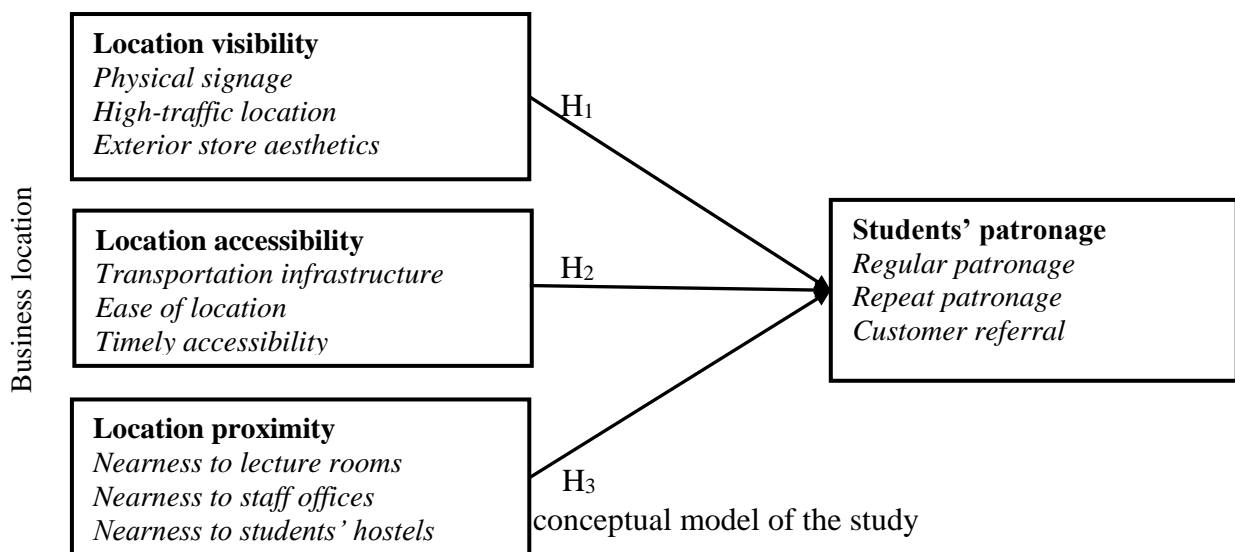
Research Model Conceptualization

This study examined business location and students' patronage of copy-and-print shops in the University of Calabar. It sought to unravel the relationship between the independent variable

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(business location) and the dependent variable (students' patronage) within the context of copy-and-print shops in the University of Calabar. Informed by a review of existing relevant literature in the previous sections, this study adopted visibility, accessibility and proximity as the relevant measures of business location, the independent variable (Yasa & Indiani, 2018; Asare & Bosompem, 2019; Suardika *et al.*, 2019; Husnain & Rehaman, 2018). The dependent variable (students' patronage) was measured using conventional customer patronage parameters, namely: regular patronage, repeat patronage, and customer referral (Dokcen *et al.*, 2021). On the basis of extant empirical evidence by previous researchers, this study hypothesized that business location characteristics (accessibility, visibility and proximity) have some sort of relationship with students' patronage of copy-and-print shops in the University of Calabar as depicted in FIG. 1.



Source: Parameters of independent variable adapted from Yasa and Indiani (2018); Asare and Bosompem (2019); Suardika *et al.* (2019; Husnain and Rehaman (2018). Parameters of dependent variable adapted from Dokcen *et al.* (2021)

Theoretical Framework

This research was grounded in the theory of reasoned action (TRA), a social psychological framework initially formulated by Martin Fishbein and Icek Ajzen in 1975. The TRA asserts that human conduct is predominantly guided by one's intentions, which are influenced by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. According to this theory, an individual's intention to execute a specific action serves as the primary determinant of whether the action will materialize. Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) elaborate that attitudes toward an action stem from an individual's beliefs concerning the anticipated outcomes or ramifications of engaging in said action. These attitudes are shaped by the individual's evaluations of these outcomes, which can range from positive to negative, and the perceived social pressure regarding the decision (subjective norm). Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) define subjective norms as an individual's perception of societal expectations or influence regarding the adoption or rejection of a particular behavior. This perception is molded by beliefs about whether significant others (such as friends, family, or peers) endorse or disapprove of the behavior, and the individual's inclination to conform to these views. Essentially, subjective norms reflect the perceived societal anticipations concerning the behavior.

The theory of reasoned action holds tangible relevance for the present study. It suggests that a



student's perception of the convenience, accessibility, and overall appeal of a copy-and-print shop's location will influence their likelihood of using it. For instance, if a shop is strategically located near lecture halls, libraries, or student hostels, it is more likely to be patronized due to its convenience. Similarly, it can be implied from the theory that a student's decision to use a particular copy-and-print shop could be influenced by the opinions or behaviors of their peers, professors, or university staff. For example, if there is a widely shared belief that a certain shop offers high-quality services, it may significantly impact a student's intention to patronize it. In addition, the theory suggests that the intentions of students to use copy-and-print shops can be considered a strong indicator of their actual patronage behavior. This implies that by understanding the factors influencing intention (i.e., attitude and subjective norm), more accurate predictions can be made about students' actual patronage patterns based on location considerations.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study utilized a cross-sectional survey approach, employing a structured questionnaire to gather information from undergraduate students enrolled at the University of Calabar, located in Cross River State. This methodology involved a one-time data collection process, conducted within a brief timeframe, which helped reduce the time and effort required for gathering data. This also ensured that the data collected in this cross-sectional survey were readily available for analysis once the survey was completed, thereby enabling us to promptly carry out analysis and arrive at cogent findings.

Population and Sample Size

The target population of this study comprised all undergraduate students of the University of Calabar, Nigeria. According to information from Independent Nigeria, the University of Calabar has 43,500 undergraduate students in the 2021/2022 academic year (Yusuf, 2023). The study chose to target students of the University of Calabar because the purpose of the study was to determine the effect of business location on students' patronage of copy-and-print shops in the University of Calabar. Having identified the numerical size of the population, we adopted the Taro Yamane procedure to arrive at a sample size as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where:

n	=	Sample size required
N	=	Finite population (43,500)
I	=	Constant
e	=	Margin of Error (5%)

By simple substitution,

$$\begin{aligned} n &= \frac{43,500}{1+43,500(0.05)^2} \\ &= \frac{43,500}{1+43,500(0.0025)} \\ &= \frac{43,500}{1+108.75} \end{aligned}$$



$$= \frac{43,500}{109.75}$$

$$= 396.35$$

∴ n = 396 students approximately

Subsequently, we utilized both stratified random and convenience sampling methods to choose elements from the sample to take part in our questionnaire survey. Consequently, the study population, consisting of students from the University of Calabar, was segmented into five distinct and non-overlapping strata: the Faculty of Management Sciences, Faculty of Law, Faculty of Arts, Faculty of Social Sciences, and Faculty of Basic Medical Sciences. Using convenience sampling, the researcher selected 2 departments each from the 5 faculties from which undergraduate students were selected as shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Sampling procedure

Faculties	Departments Selected	Students surveyed
Management Sciences	Marketing	66
	Banking & Finance	30
Arts	English	30
	History & International Studies	30
Law	Commercial & Industrial Law	30
	Public Law	30
Social Sciences	Economics	45
	Sociology	45
Basic Medical Sciences	Pharmacology	45
	Human Anatomy	45
		396

Source: Field survey (2024)

Source and Methods of Data Collection

The research utilized original data gathered from students enrolled at the University of Calabar, Nigeria, employing a questionnaire structured on a 5-point Likert scale. Data collection was overseen by a team of five enumerators to ensure the secure distribution and retrieval of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into two sections: Section A focused on gathering demographic information such as age, gender, and faculty affiliation, while Section B incorporated statements drawn from previous research to assess the study's variables. On the questionnaire, the parameters measuring business location (visibility, accessibility and proximity) were adapted from Yasa and Indiani (2018); Asare and Bosompem (2019); Suardika et al. (2019); Husnain and Rehaman (2018). Similarly, the parameters measuring students' patronage (regular patronage, repeat patronage and customer referral) were adapted from Dokcen et al. (2021). The questionnaire was administered to respondents in print form and respondents had the options of returning them on the spot or scanning them to send to the enumerators via email or WhatsApp. This was done to provide greater latitude of convenience to respondents and to provide the enough space to rationally respond to the questionnaire statements without undue pressure from enumerators.

Questionnaire Reliability and Data Analytical Method

The study's instrument underwent confirmation for reliability using the Cronbach alpha reliability



procedure. Prior to the actual survey, a pilot study was conducted by distributing preliminary versions of the questionnaire to 30 randomly selected students from the Business Management Department, which was intentionally excluded from the main survey. This step aimed to mitigate potential biases among respondents resulting from exposure to questionnaire elements beforehand. The participants chosen received guidance on providing accurate responses to the questionnaire statements to minimize errors. Following this, the collected data underwent coding and entry into Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 23) for reliability analysis. The questionnaire demonstrated reliability and was thus adopted for the study, as evidenced by all measurement scales yielding Cronbach’s alpha coefficients equal to or greater than the 0.7 benchmark (Refer to Table 2).

Table 2: Summary of reliability results

SN	Variables	No. of items	Alpha coefficients
1	Location visibility	3	.882
2	Location accessibility	3	.737
3	Location proximity	3	.811
4	Students’ patronage	3	.763
		12	

Source: Researcher’s Computation using SPSS-26 (2024)

Having confirmed the questionnaire to be reliable statistically, it was adopted for field administration, leading to the collection of primary data for the study. The data collected underwent analysis through descriptive statistics, while the study's hypotheses were examined using a multiple linear regression model as presented thus:

$$\text{STUDPAT} = a + \beta_1\text{LOCVIS} + \beta_2\text{LOCACC} + \beta_3\text{LOCPROX} + e$$

Where:

- STUDPAT = Students’ patronage
- a = The intercept (or constant)
- $\beta_1\text{LOCVIS}$ = Coefficient of location visibility
- $\beta_2\text{LOCACC}$ = Coefficient of location accessibility
- $\beta_3\text{LOCPROX}$ = Coefficient of location proximity
- e = Error margin (5 percent)

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Throughout the survey process, 396 questionnaire copies were distributed among undergraduate students at the University of Calabar, situated in Calabar. Of these, 81.6 percent, or 323 copies, were effectively collected, while the remaining 18.4 percent, totaling 73 copies, were not returned. Consequently, our analysis relies on data obtained from 323 respondents, constituting 81.6 percent of the original sample size.

Hypothesis one



Ho: Location visibility has no significant effect on students' patronage of copy-and-print shops in the University of Calabar.

Hypothesis two

Ho: Location accessibility has no significant effect on students' patronage of copy-and-print shops in the University of Calabar.

Hypothesis three

Ho: Location proximity has no significant effect on students' patronage of copy-and-print shops in the University of Calabar.

Decision criteria: If the probability (P) is less than 0.05, we accept the alternative hypothesis; otherwise, we reject the null hypothesis.

Table 3: Model summary of the effect of business location on students' patronage of copy-and-print shops in the University of Calabar

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.828 ^a	.686	.682	.62308

a. Predictors: (Constant), Location visibility, location accessibility and location proximity
 Source: Researcher's Computation using SPSS-26 (2024)

Table 4: ANOVA^a of the effect of business location on students' patronage of copy-and-print shops in the University of Calabar

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	269.951	4	67.488	173.837	.000 ^b
	Residual	123.455	318	.388		
	Total	393.406	322			

a. Dependent Variable: Students' patronage
 b. Predictors: (Constant), Location visibility, location accessibility and location proximity
 Source: Researcher's Computation using SPSS-26 (2024)

Table 5: Coefficients^a of the effect of business location on students' patronage of copy-and-print shops in the University of Calabar

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.	Tolerance VIF
1 (Constant)	.016	.147		9.109	.000	
Location visibility	.011	.054	.409	4.206	.007	.489 2.046



Location accessibility	.353	.073	.692	4.805	.000	.615	1.626
Location proximity	.255	.066	.190	3.865	.000	.410	2.440

a. Dependent Variable: Students' patronage

Source: Researcher's Computation using SPSS-26 (2024)

The findings presented in Tables 3 to 5 illustrate the effect of business location on student patronage of copy-and-print shops within the University of Calabar. Table 3 displays a correlation coefficient ($R = 0.828$), indicating a strong association between business location and students' utilization of copy-and-print services at the university. This suggests a robust relationship between these variables within the study's scope. Furthermore, the coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.686$) signifies that business location explains approximately 68.6 percent of the variability in student patronage of copy-and-print shops at the University of Calabar. In essence, holding other factors constant, business location can influence student patronage by up to 68.6 percent. Additionally, the statistical analysis presented in Table 4, with an F-value of 173.837 and p-value of 0.000, confirms the significant impact of business location on student patronage of copy-and-print services at the University of Calabar.

Moreover, the collinearity analysis presented in Table 5 suggests that the variables examined (location visibility, accessibility, and proximity) did not exhibit multicollinearity, as indicated by tolerance values exceeding 0.1 and Variance Inflation Factors (VIF) below 5. This indicates that the regression analysis meets the multicollinearity assumption (Ringle et al., 2015). Additionally, examining the standardized coefficients in Table 5 reveals that location accessibility made the most substantial contribution to the regression model, with a beta coefficient of 0.692 or 69.2 percent. Following closely, location visibility contributed 0.409 or 40.9 percent, while location proximity had the smallest impact, with a beta coefficient of 0.190 or 19.0 percent. Furthermore, Table 5 illustrates that the p-values for all variables were below the 0.05 threshold, with positive t-test values [(location visibility: p-value = 0.007, $t = 4.206$); (location accessibility: p-value = 0.000, $t = 4.805$); and (location proximity: p-value = 0.000, $t = 3.865$)]. Therefore, all the null hypotheses were rejected in favour of the corresponding alternative hypotheses, which implies that location visibility, accessibility and proximity had significant positive effects on students' patronage of copy-and-print shops in the University of Calabar, Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

From the test of hypothesis one, it was revealed that location visibility has a significant positive effect on students' patronage of copy-and-print shops in the University of Calabar. This finding aligns with the research conducted by Yasa and Indiani (2018), indicating a notable positive influence of business location visibility on customer patronage of SMEs in Bali, Indonesia. Additionally, Asare and Bosompem's (2019) study further corroborates this, demonstrating a similar positive impact of business location visibility on customer patronage of small and medium-sized businesses in Ghana. The implication of this finding is that location visibility plays a pivotal role in influencing students' patronage of copy-and-print shops at the University of Calabar. This finding suggests that businesses operating in this university should prioritize their physical visibility and accessibility within the campus, as a well-situated location can substantially boost their patronage among students. Additionally, this underscores the importance of strategic placement for service-oriented businesses targeting a specific customer base, such as academic institutions, in order to maximize their market presence and



profitability.

From the test of hypothesis two, it was revealed that location accessibility has a significant positive effect on students' patronage of copy-and-print shops in the University of Calabar. This finding is backed by the study of Yasa and Indiani (2018), which revealed that business location accessibility had a significant positive effect on customer patronage of SMEs in Bali, Indonesia. The finding is also supported by the study of Asare and Bosompem (2019), which revealed that location accessibility had a significant positive impact on customer patronage of small and medium-sized businesses in Ghana. The implication of this finding is that strategically locating copy-and-print shops in convenient and easily accessible areas within the university campus can substantially increase their usage. This insight could be invaluable for administrators and entrepreneurs looking to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of such services on campus, ultimately benefiting both students and the university community as a whole. Additionally, it underscores the importance of considering location as a critical factor in the planning and management of services catering to the student population.

In addition, the test of hypothesis three revealed that location proximity has a significant positive effect on students' patronage of copy-and-print shops in the University of Calabar. This finding is supported by the research conducted by Eze et al. (2015), demonstrating that the proximity of business locations had a notable, positive impact on both initial patronage and repeat patronage among photocopying operators at the University of Calabar. Similarly, Dunmade's (2022) study affirmed this correlation, showing that proximity to locations significantly increased customer patronage for eateries within the Ilorin Metropolis. The implication of this finding is that the significant positive effect of location proximity on students' patronage of copy-and-print shops underscores the pivotal role of convenience in shaping their preferences. This suggests that strategically positioning these services in close proximity to academic and high-traffic areas within the university campus can substantially boost their patronage.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The location of business has been identified as a major consideration for the performance of business organizations in marketing literature. This is particularly pertinent for service-oriented businesses that require easy accessibility for improved performance. We undertook this study to determine the effect of business location on students' patronage of copy-and-print shops in the University of Calabar, Nigeria. The study specifically sought to investigate the influences of location visibility, accessibility and proximity on students' patronage of copy-and-print shops in the University of Calabar. Through a structured questionnaire survey comprising undergraduate students of the university, primary data were obtained for the study. Using descriptive and inferential statistics, the data obtained from respondents were analyzed and interpreted accordingly. The findings of the study revealed that in order of relative influence, location accessibility, location visibility and location proximity had significant positive effects on students' patronage of copy-and-print shops in the University of Calabar. Therefore, the study concludes that business location is an essential component necessary for the success of copy-and-print shops in Nigeria.

The findings made in this study have led to the presentation of the following suggestions for potential implementation:

Business location and students' patronage of copy-and-print shops in the University of Calabar



- i. Copy-and-print shops operating in educational institutions should intensify the use of physical signages, and exterior store aesthetics to enhance the visibility of their stores in order to attract students' patronage. This proactive approach can substantially elevate the visibility of these establishments, ensuring they stand out amidst the academic hustle and bustle. This heightened visibility is crucial in attracting the attention of students, who constitute a significant portion of the customer base.
- ii. To enhance student patronage, university campus copy-and-print shops should prioritize accessibility by implementing measures like user-friendly layouts, online ordering, and printing options for visually impaired students. By prioritizing accessibility through these measures, university campus copy-and-print shops can significantly enhance students' patronage, fostering a more inclusive and convenient environment for all.
- iii. It is imperative for copy-and-print shops in educational institutions to strategically locate their businesses near to lecture rooms, students' hostels and staff offices in order to effectively attract patronage and enhance their performance. Strategically locating their business near these sites is crucial for maximizing convenience, thus fostering increased patronage and ultimately boosting overall business performance.

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