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Availability and Utilisation of Library Information Resources by Students in Selected Secondary Schools in Ondo West Local Government Area, Ondo State, Nigeria

Abstract

School libraries are established to compliment classroom instructions through the utilisation of their information resources. However, previous studies have shown decline in the utilisation of information resources in school libraries. Thus, the study focuses investigation on availability and utilisation of library information resources by students in selected secondary schools in Ondo West Local Government Area, Ondo State. Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprises of 400 students randomly selected from four secondary schools. Questionnaire was the instrument used for gathering data. The data collected were analysed using frequency and mean distribution. A total of 400 questionnaires were administered, however, 320 copies were duly filled and returned giving 80% response rate. Findings of the study revealed that the level of information resources availability was generally low. However, specifically, textbooks and reference materials were moderately available. It was also found that information resources such as textbooks, newspapers, photographs, government publications had a low level of utilisation, albeit charts had a moderate level of utilisation. Furthermore, information resources were used for the purpose of assignment, class work, general studies, personal development, relaxation, to form notes and examination preparation; however, current awareness and research were not. It was therefore, recommended that relevant stakeholders in the educational sector should ensure that every secondary school should have a functional library that is equipped with relevant information resources and a professional librarian that would manage and promote the library and their information resources utilisation.

Keywords: Availability, School library, Library Information Resources, Library Information Resources Utilisation

Introduction

In Nigeria, secondary school education prepares students for higher education. A student who is determined to genuinely meet the Ordinary Level certificate minimum requirement for

entry into institutions of higher learning, such as university, colleges or polytechnic, would require the use of study materials otherwise known as information resources. Information resources in this regard include: textbooks, reference materials, charts, e-books, computer systems, and internet access and so on. These information resources; if available would be able to complement lessons that students receive in the classroom. However, it is impossible for a student to personally have in his/her possession the numerous information resources that would be supportive to classroom instruction. Hence, school libraries are established in secondary schools to make available to students, these information resources.

School libraries according to Collins English Dictionary (2020) are libraries established in primary, secondary and technical schools where students and staff have access to varieties of resources such as books and non-book materials. The school library is an important aspect of the secondary school education system which supports education in general. The primary goal of libraries as opined by Okiki (2013) is to provide information to the students and staff of the community. It plays an important role in the teaching and learning process by ensuring that all members of the school community have equitable access to books and other information resources in all formats.

School libraries are necessary in every secondary school setting; this is because their collections when applied in teaching make learning easier and understandable to students. The Encyclopedia Americana (2006) described a library as a body of recorded information brought together for a specific purpose, organized for use and made available to users. It is an important intellectual resource of the school community which helps to fulfill the curriculum requirements and promotes teaching and learning and research. The library is a vital facility for enhancing learning and teaching. As a hub of all academic activities, it is established for provoking intellectual excellence. It can be regarded as the academic nerve center of the school, and as such it has wealth of information resources in diverse format at its disposal for students and other library users to explore and exploit (Chalukya, 2015).

Information resources according to Popoola and Haliso (2009) are those information-bearing materials that are both in printed and electronic formats, such as textbooks, journals, abstracts, newspapers, indexes, CD-ROM databases, video tapes, computers and so on. The print materials such as textbooks and journals do not require electronic device before they can be accessed or used. Unlike the print resources, the electronic resources according to Emwanta and

Nwalo (2013) are those information resources that can only be accessed by the use of computers and other Information Communication Technology (ICT) devices. Electronic resources include: electronic books, CD-ROM, electronic index, Internet among others. Library information resources are usually tailored towards the objectives of the library's parent body. Thus, school library information resources must be of use to the students and staff of the school, who are apparently the users of the library. For information resources to be of valuable, they must be utilized.

Utilisation of library information resources simply means using library information resources. Ntui and Udah (2015) described library information resources utilization as the practical use of library information resources identified and acquired by users for the purpose of solving a problem. A person who makes use of something or someplace to accomplish his/her purpose is a user. In this regard, one can conclude that the person who uses library information resources is considered a user or utilizer. Therefore, secondary students constitute utilisers of library information resources in this study. However, for library information resources to be utilized by secondary school students, such resources must be available for use. Availability was defined by Cambridge Dictionary (2020) as "the fact that something can be bought, used, or reached, or how much it can be". Therefore, in the context of this study, availability of library information resources will refer to information resources that have been acquired for use, can be used or reached and the quantity of these resources in the school library.

The location of this study is Ondo West Local Government Area, Ondo State, Nigeria. The target population of this study; are students in secondary schools. The students are the primary users for which school libraries are established. They are expected to utilize the library information resources and these resources must be available for use. Thus this study focused investigation on availability and utilization of information resources by students in some selected secondary schools in Ondo West Local Government Area of Ondo State, Nigeria.

Statement of the problem

The National Policy on Education, 2013, mandated the Nigerian government to establish school libraries in secondary schools (Nigerian Research and Development Council (NERDC), 2013). School libraries are established to support teaching and learning activities in the school community. The school libraries provide this support through the provision of information

resources that are relevant to accomplishing the objectives of the library's parent body which is the school. The information resources include; textbooks, reference books, journals, newspapers, charts, computers, Internet access, CD-ROM database and so on. The schools under study are doing their best to stock their libraries with relevant information resources and to make them available for use. However, observation has shown that the library information resources are underutilized. These could be as a result of non-availability of the information resources that are relevant in supporting the teaching and learning activities of the schools. In light of this, this study focused investigation on availability and utilization of information resources by students in some selected secondary schools in Ondo West Local Government Area of Ondo State, Nigeria.

Objectives of the study

The main objective of this study was to investigate the availability and utilisation of library information resources by students in some selected secondary schools in Ondo West Local Government Area of Ondo State, Nigeria. While the specific objectives were to:

1. determine the level of availability of library information resources in the selected secondary schools in Ondo West Local Government Area of Ondo State, Nigeria.
2. ascertain the extent of library information resources utilization by students in the secondary schools
3. investigate the purpose of library information resources utilization by students in the secondary schools.

Research questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. What is the level of availability of library information resources in the selected secondary schools in Ondo West Local Government Area of Ondo State, Nigeria?
2. What is the extent of library information resources utilization by students in the secondary schools?
3. What are the purposes of library information resources utilization by students in the secondary schools?

Significance of the Study

The utilization of library information resources is necessary in supporting the teaching and learning activities in secondary schools. The findings of this study reveal the level of availability, the extent and purpose of utilizing library information resources. The will enable secondary school management and educational policy makers in Nigeria to have clue on the status of school library information resources with respect to availability, extent and purpose of utilization. With this understanding, secondary school management would have a basis on which they can pressurize the government to wade into school library related issues with a view to enhancing the chances of fulfilling the mandate for which school libraries were established. The findings of this study will be of benefits to school librarians, school library administrators, library schools and researchers, as this will add to the body of literature on availability and utilization of library information resources.

Review of literatures

Many users of the library see it as a place where books and other materials are kept and made available for use. According to Ochogwu (2010) library is defined as professionally organized collection of graphic and non-graphic materials for exploitation. Library was described by Islam (2004) as a learning institution equipped with treasures of knowledge, maintained, organized and managed by trained personnel to educate the children, men and women continuously and assist in their self-improvement through an effective and prompt dissemination of information embodied in the resources. It is generally seen as an institution responsible for the acquisition, organization and storage of recorded knowledge in various media for study, research and consultation. Libraries located in primary schools, secondary schools and technical colleges are referred to as school libraries.

According to Iroeze Chima-James, Nneka, and Opara (2018), a school library is an organized collection of books and other learning materials placed in a school for use by teachers and pupils. It is a room or building in a school where information resources such as; books, magazines, journals, periodicals, cassettes, computers among others are kept for students use. Oduagwu and Oduagwu (2013) opined that an excellent educational program cannot be developed without the support of a well-stocked library, as books are essential in the life and development of a child. This therefore implies that availability of information resources in libraries would translate into a well-stocked library, and consequently, the utilization of these information resources.

Eiriemiokhale and Ibeun (2017) stated that the objectives of school libraries in educational development are to support the learning programs of the school, to further the general intellectual development of the students and to help the students to develop skills in the use of books and libraries. Similarly, Adefarati (2002) cited in Ternenge and Agipu (2019) noted that the objectives of school libraries are to encourage the development of reading skills and intellectual appreciation, support school curriculum and to inculcate intellectual development.

Laddunuri (2012) stated that it is essential for school library resources to be made available and utilized by users so that learning can take place for the overall development of the country. Ternenge and Agipu (2019), conducted a study to investigate the “availability and utilisation of school library resources in selected secondary schools in Makurdi Metropolis”. They found that the library information resources such as reference materials, newspapers, maps, and textbooks were moderately available, however, e-books, computer-assisted instructional materials, internet facilities, visual and audio visual resources were unavailable. It was also found in a study conducted by Adamu, Kolo, Adebisi and Abubakar (2017) to investigate “availability, sufficiency and use of school library resources by students: a case study of Police Secondary School Library, Minna, Niger State, Nigeria”, the findings revealed that computer assisted instructional resources were not available and as such could not determine whether or not only few students makes use of the school library.

Istifanus, Yohanna and Usman (2019) conducted an investigation on “availability, accessibility and utilization of information resources in school libraries in Maiduguri and Damaturu Metropolis, Nigeria” and found that textbooks were the major information resources found in school libraries. Owate and Iroha (2013) in a study on “the availability and utilization of school library resources in some selected secondary schools in Rivers State” found that information resources in the libraries were not only scanty but poorly organized. This is to say that there is a low level availability of information resources in the school libraries studied.

According to Ukpanah, Ebong & Enang (2018), utilization of library resources stimulates excitement and instills confidence in the users to develop their talents, potentials and capabilities both academically and socially. They further added that utilization of library resources by students with visual impairment enhances their frontier of knowledge and help them to make discovery on their own. Moruf (2015) investigated “students’ utilization of secondary schools libraries in

Akinyele Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria” and found that school libraries were not utilized effectively by students due to inadequate information resources

Chukwuji, Nwankwo, Gandanga, Sule and Yusuf (2017) observed that there is low use of the library by secondary school students which can be attributed to the expressed unavailability of the desired facilities in the school library, also that there is frustration among students as a result of their inability to use library materials such as textbooks, reference materials, computers etc. that suit their ways of learning. Oduagwu and Oduagwu (2013) noted that the characteristics of library information resources utilized by learners include in house memo and a personal contact of government documents, newspapers and magazines. The authors further added that there is progressive increase in the number of books borrowed and consulted from session by session. This implies that there is a subsequent increase in the use of library information resources. Adeoye and Popoola (2011) assert that libraries provide resources for knowledge acquisition, recreation, personal interest and inter-personal relationship for all categories of users. Ternege and Agipu (2019) found that library information resources are used for the purpose of information, study and educational value.

From the foregoing literature, it was revealed that there is a low availability level of information resources in most school libraries and there was consequently a low level of utilization of the library information resources. It is noteworthy that none of the literature reviewed discussed availability and utilization of library and information resources by students in some selected secondary schools in Ondo West Local Government Area of Ondo State, Nigeria. It is this gap that this study intends to fill.

Research methodology

Descriptive survey was adopted for this study. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 400 students in four secondary schools in Ondo West local Government Area in Ondo State, Nigeria. The respondents were senior students in the selected secondary schools. The selected secondary schools were: Saint Joseph Grammar School, Ondo, Saint Monica’s Grammar School, Ondo, Jubilee Community Grammar School, Ondo and Independence Grammar School, Ondo. Questionnaire was the instrument for data collection. A total of 400 copies of the questionnaire were administered to the respondents. However, 320 copies of the questionnaire

were duly filled and returned constituting 80% response rate. The research questions were analysed using frequency and mean.

Questionnaire administration and response rate

A total number of four hundred (400) copies of the questionnaire were administered to respondents in four secondary schools. However, only three hundred and twenty (320) copies of the questionnaire were duly filled and returned with useful responses by the respondents giving 80% response rate. The questionnaire administration and response rate is presented in Table 1

Table 1: Questionnaire administration and response rate

Names of Schools	Numbers of Questionnaire Administered	No. of Questionnaire Returned	Percentage Response
Saint Joseph Grammar School, Ondo	100	78	78%
Saint Monica’s Grammar School, Ondo	100	83	83%
Jubilee Community Grammar School, Ondo	100	75	75%
Independence Grammar school, Ondo	100	84	84%
Total	400	320	80%

Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Descriptive statistics of frequency and percentages were used for the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The results are presented in the Table 2 below.

Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

	Items	Frequency	Percentage
Sex	Male	167	52.20%
	Female	153	47.81%
	Total	320	100.00%
Class	SS1	111	34.69%
	SS2	108	33.75%
	SS3	101	31.56%
	Total	320	100.00%

Table 2 revealed that most of respondents are male 167(52.2%), while female is 153(47.81%). It was also revealed in Table 2 that the class with most of the respondents is SS1 111(34.69%) followed by SS2 108(33.75%) and SS3 101(31.56%). It can be inferred from Table

2 that there was a fair distribution of the sex and class demography of the respondents. Therefore, the sex and class distribution of the respondents would have a balance influence on the utilization of the library information resources.

Data Analysis and Discussion

Research question 1: What is the level of availability of library information resources in the selected secondary schools in Ondo West Local Government Area of Ondo State, Nigeria?

Table 3: Availability of library information resources

Items	Highly Available	Available	Fairly Available	Not Available	Mean
Textbook	200	86	20	14	3.48
Reference materials	89	101	91	19	2.69
Charts	17	58	180	65	2.08
Photographs	22	40	80	178	1.71
Government publications	12	33	61	214	1.51
Newspapers	10	25	58	237	1.46
Journal	10	5	105	200	1.45
Computers	0	0	6	314	1.02
Electronic database	0	0	4	316	1.01
N= 320, Criterion mean =2.5, Calculated mean=1.82					

The utilization of information resources can only be established if they are available, hence, Table 3 presents data on the availability of information resources in selected secondary schools in Ondo West Local Government Area of Ondo State, Nigeria. The result in Table 3 showed a calculated mean of 1.82 which is lesser than the criterion mean of 2.5. This implies that on a general note, there was a low level of library information resource availability in the schools studied. This was revealed specifically by the responses of the respondents, were information resources such as charts, photographs, government publications, newspapers, journals, computers and electronic databases had a mean lesser than 2.5, which was an indication that the information resources were fairly/not available in the school libraries studied. This is in line with the study conducted by Ternege and Agipu (2019) which found that the library information resources such as e-books, computer-assisted instructional materials, internet facilities, visual and audio visual resources were unavailable. However, other than the information resources with low availability

in this study, Table 3 showed that textbooks and reference materials had a high availability, given that they had a mean response greater than 2.5. This was affirmed by Istifanus, Yohanna and Usman (2019) who found that textbooks were the major information resources found in school libraries. It was also confirmed by the findings of Tofi (2019) which revealed that textbooks, were the common library resources found in school libraries.

In a nutshell, apart from textbooks and reference materials that had a high availability, other information resources such as charts, photographs, government publications, newspapers, journals, computers and electronic databases were either fairly or not available in the schools studied. Thus, there was a low level of information resources availability in the school studied.

Research question 2: What is the extent of library information resources utilization by students in the secondary schools?

Table 4: Level of use of library information resources

Items	Very Highly Used	Highly Used	Fairly Used	Never Used	Mean
Charts	50	80	170	20	2.50
Textbook	50	80	100	90	2.28
Photographs	20	100	120	100	2.25
Reference materials	5	25	40	250	1.33
Journal	0	1	90	229	1.29
Newspapers	1	1	50	268	1.17
Computers	1	10	30	279	1.17
Government publications	1	1	2	317	1.03
Electronic database	0	0	0	0	0.00
N=320, Criterion mean =2.5, Calculated mean=1.45					

The extent to which information resources are utilized will justify if their availability, hence, Table 4 presents data on extent of library information resources utilization by students in selected secondary schools in Ondo West Local Government Area of Ondo State, Nigeria. The result in Table 4 showed a calculated mean of 1.45 which is lesser than the criterion mean of 2.5. This implies that on a general note, there was a low level of information resource utilisation in the schools studied. For instance, Table 4 showed that apart from chart that had a moderate utilization,

all other information resources such as textbooks, photographs, reference materials, journals, newspapers, computers, government publications and electronic databases had a low or were never utilized by the respondents in the schools studied. This is in line with the study conducted by Chukwuji, Nwankwo, Gandanga, Sule and Yusuf (2017) which revealed that there was low use of the library by secondary school students which can be attributed to the expressed unavailability of the desired facilities such as information resources in the school library. This was also corroborated by the findings of Moruf (2015) that school libraries were not utilized effectively by students due to inadequate information resources.

From the interpretation of results in Table 4, there was a low level of information resources such as textbooks, photographs, reference materials, journals, newspapers, computers, government publications and electronic databases utilization by students in the selected secondary schools studied.

Research question 3: What are the purposes of library information resources utilization by students in the secondary schools?

Table 5: Purpose of library information resources utilisation by the respondents

Purpose	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean
For assignment	220	90	5	5	3.64
For class work	200	110	7	3	3.58
general study	210	90	15	5	3.58
For personal development	200	100	15	5	3.55
For relaxation	180	120	10	10	3.47
To form note	160	150	8	2	3.46
Examination preparation	150	160	5	5	3.42
For current awareness	30	10	200	80	1.97
For research	5	15	200	100	1.77
N=320					

The purpose for which library information resources are utilized will reveal how valuable they are to the users, hence, Table 5 presents data on the purpose of library information resources utilization by students in selected secondary schools in Ondo West Local Government Area of Ondo State, Nigeria. From the result in Table 5; that apart from the purpose of current awareness

and research, most of the respondents utilize information resources for the purpose of assignment, class work, general study, personal development, relaxation, formulation of notes and preparation for examination (this is true as the mean responses of the respondents in Table 5 ranges from 3.42 to 3.64). This was supported by the findings of Agyekummr and Filson (2012) that most students used the library information resources to complement their classroom notes, assignment and helped them with examination preparation. This was also in line with the findings of Tofi (2019) that students utilise the library resources for the purpose of examination, information and study. It was further corroborated by Ternege and Agipu (2019) findings that library information resources were utilised for the purpose of information, study and educational value. It was also in line with Adeoye and Popoola (2011) assertion that libraries provide resources for knowledge acquisition, recreation, personal interest and inter-personal relationship for all categories of users.

From Table 5 it can be concluded that library information resources are utilized for the purpose of assignment, class work, general studies, personal development and for examination. However, most of the students do not utilize the library information resources for the purpose of research and current awareness.

Conclusion and Recommendations

School library is critical to supporting teaching and learning in secondary schools. The purpose for using school libraries include; general studies, for classwork and assignment, for personal development and to prepare for examination. The information resource available in the library will contribute in enhancing the purpose for which the library is utilized. Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that library information resources are in short supplies in libraries in secondary schools in Ondo West Local Government Area, Ondo. Also, modern library information resources like electronic gadgets such as computer systems are not available. Thus, the purpose of establishing libraries in secondary schools have not been achieved, hence the following recommendations were made:

- i) It is necessary for stakeholders in the educational sector to ensure that libraries are established in secondary school.
- ii) In view of the importance of library to the overall objectives of the school curriculum, school management should fund the school library by procuring relevant information resources for the present generation of students.

- iii) Professional librarians should be employed to manage the school libraries
- iv) The state government should give emphasis to library development through construction and equipping of good and functional school libraries in secondary schools.
- v) Electronic information resources should be given priority attention due to the new dawn of information communication technology and its incorporation in library services.
- vi) Students should be taught the importance of library information resources to their academic success.

Practical Implication of the Study

School libraries have a mandate to support teaching and learning activities through the selection, acquisition, organization, preservation and dissemination of information resources to their users (staff and students). This mandate can only be fulfilled when the libraries are stocked with relevant information resources that would support the teaching curriculum and learning activities of the school and consequently enhancing the academic performance of their students. In order to support this mandate, school administrators and relevant stakeholders should ensure that they make their school libraries viable through the provision of relevant information resources such as textbooks, reference materials, computer systems, internet services, magazines, charts among others, and making them available for use, so that students will be motivated; knowing that the information resources can be used for purposes like: assignment, class work, general study, personal development, relaxation, current awareness, formulation of notes, preparation for examination and for research.

Just as the establishment of functional libraries are taken seriously in institutions of higher learning in Nigeria, policy makers in Nigerian educational sector, should ensure that the policy (“government shall provide the following educational services for the basic educational level: school libraries” (Nigerian Research and Development Council (NERDC), 2013, p.10)), that mandates all secondary schools to own a viable and functional library should not only be on paper but in practice, through the provisions of school library buildings, planning and the implementation of budget for the acquisition of information resources to meet up with current information needs of secondary schools staff and students. It is also important that professionals (teacher/school librarian) are employed to manage the human and information resources in their libraries and to

serve as an adviser to the school administrators on issue pertaining to their libraries. This will in the long run, increase the availability and utilization of library information resources by students in secondary schools in Nigeria.

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