Library Resources Use and Effectiveness by Secondary School Students at Oyemekun Grammar School, Akure, Ondo State

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Abstract

The study examined the effective use of library resources among secondary school students particularly those in senior secondary levels in Oyemekun Grammar School in Akure, Ondo State. It also identified the various information resources used by the students, especially when they visited the library. The study adopted the descriptive survey design and randomly sampled the opinions of 50 senior secondary students. The study revealed that the majority of the respondents (90%) visit the library. However, only 24% of them use its resources on daily basis. Results from the study showed that 35% of the respondents visit the library to read their personal textbooks only while some others preferred consulting non-text materials (49%) as most of the library resources were reportedly obsolete (67.4%). As solutions to the challenges encountered by senior secondary students, which included inadequate reading materials (15.2%) and unfriendly attitude of library personnel (15.2%) The study recommended the provision of current library resources and regular training sessions for school library personnel to improve their skills, redefine the library and its objectives and encourage high patronage of school library resources by students in secondary schools.

Keywords: *secondary schools, students, school library, school library resources.*

1.1 Introduction

The provision of information resources is a major catalyst for learning. In spite of basic infrastructure including furniture, equipment, machinery and manpower in any learning space, effective learning may be crippled by the non-existence of materials carrying information with the sole capacity to impart knowledge. This is applicable to the library. When a library lacks the requisite amount of information resources, the purpose for its existence becomes defeated. The library refers to any designated location where information laden materials are acquired, processed and organised to meet specific needs of its patrons. In secondary schools, information resources domiciled therein are collected and organised to meet the information needs of students, teachers and other stakeholders within the school system.

Oyemekun Grammar School, formerly known as Oyemekun Anglican Grammar School is non-coeducational school that was founded in 1953 with the admission of thirty

students after the first entrance examination which was written in 1952. Right from the school's inception till date, Oyemekun Grammar School has admitted only male students. Among the facilities provided by the school authorities is the school library which was established in 1954. Up till present, staff members and students of Oyemekun Grammar School have been known to extol academic excellence. This may be attributed to the early establishment of the library whose first collections were acquired from Britain through donation.

The provision of school library resources is sine qua non for school library development, especially in secondary schools where fundamental understanding of all subjects offered is a major prerequisite for receiving tertiary education. The effective use of school library resources is an integral part in the education of school learners. However, poor provision of information resources in school libraries may undermine the overall objective of the school system. This therefore strengthens the need for the establishment and proper equipping of school libraries as a means of solidifying the educational foundation of a child's tomorrow.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Excellent academic performance among secondary school students is contingent on a developed rate of academic resourcefulness which stems from a considerable measure of exposure to knowledge. With adequate access to relevant information resources, this may be possible. However, this is not always the case. Over time, some literature has shown a decline in the academic performance of secondary school students. Reasons attributed to this may be unavailability, inadequacy and obsolescence of information resources in school libraries. Other causative factors can include unqualified school library personnel, paucity of funds and poor reading facilities. While some studies indicate growing

prospects in the provision of school library resources and facilities for students' use (Benson, Okorafor & Anyalebechi, 2017; Collins & Doll, 2012), the challenge of poor delivery of school library services still persists. To many stakeholders in the school system, effective use of school library resources remains a figment of the imagination. "Why is there still a decline in the effective use of school library resources by secondary school students?" is the question this study attempts to answer.

1.3 Research Questions
1) How often do secondary school students use school library resources?
2) What are the information resources used by secondary school students?
3) What is the purpose for the use of school library resources by secondary school students?
4) What are the challenges that hinder the effective use of library resources by secondary school students?

2.1 Review of Related Literature

School libraries are expected to be very resourceful media that enhance the quality of teaching given by teachers in classrooms (Ogundeji, 2012). School libraries are more than just collections of books (Ogunniyi, Lawal & Sheji, 2018), they are also useful tools in the creation and execution of positive social change especially in any society in need of social reforms. A more detailed definition of a school library may be found in the words of Fayose (1995) who defined the library as: 'that part of the school where a collection of books, periodicals, magazines and newspapers, films and filmstrips, videotapes, recording of all types, slides, computers, study kits, media and other information bearing resources are housed for use by teachers and pupils for learning, recreational activities, personal interests and inter-personal relationships of children in a school'.

Establishing functional school libraries is necessary to facilitate and enhance the educational, mental, emotional and social development of children and youth in vicinities especially where qualitative, educational and corrective facilities are absent or in short supply. Among many reasons, Oyewusi (2016) gave the following as rationales for the establishment of school libraries:

- Assisting teachers in the planning, implementation and evaluation of learning programmes.

- Providing opportunities for the development of information skills among pupils and students

- Enriching learners' experiences through the effective use of information resources

- Promoting the social and recreational development of learners.

The mandate of libraries in secondary schools rests on their ability to collect and organise information resources to meet information needs of students, teachers and other kinds of patrons within the school system. With adequate support from appropriate authorities, the school library program has the potentials to improve on the teaching and learning activities of major stakeholders in the school environment (Pickett and Combs, 2016). Findings from some studies support this fact but reported certain evidences that squelch the possibility of such a prospect. In an investigation into students' utilization of school libraries in Akinyele local government area of Oyo State, Nigeria, it was discovered that though most schools had libraries, they were ill-equipped and non-functional (Moruf, 2015). This finding was replicated in studies conducted by Omah and Oghenetega (2016) and Ogunniyi

et al (2018). Both studies revealed paucity of relevant information resources in school libraries and their poor use by patrons.

A major determinant of a school library's functionality is the richness of its collections and its ability to meet the information needs of its users. Therefore, a poorly equipped school library will reduce the effective use of library resources by clienteles. However, what may be more damaging is the condition of having little or no space for the school library and its resources. This anomaly was reported in the studies of Ogunniyi et al (2018) and Arua and Chinaka (2011). Findings from both studies revealed that the accommodation for school libraries was small. Reading spaces for clienteles were inadequate which subsequently reduced the rate of consultation of library resources by patrons. Dulle (2014) and Oky (2006) believed that if there were clearly defined policies on the establishment and management of school libraries, the condition of libraries in schools will have improved. They held this opinion because findings from their studies showed a lack of national policy on the adequate provision and management of school libraries which consequently generated some of the problems facing school libraries up till today.

The formulation of feasible policies on school library mangement is very necessary if the expected functions of the school libaray is to be achieved. School library functions as described by Todd, Gordon and Lu (2010) should be informational; providing information and technology, transformational; providing instructions and formational; focusing on students' outcomes. Ideally, any school library with these functionalities has the assurance of fulfilling its goals. However, apart from policies that school libraries need to function, effective administration and execution of laid down regulations will be needed to ensure its workability. It therefore behooves the leaders to get this done. On their part, aside from

requisite academic qualifications, a major requirement will be the possession of a solid understanding of the school library's objectives, activities and responsibilities.

In developing a school library collection, the school librarian or administrator must understand what an ideal school library collection should contain and evaluate existing collections including their weaknesses and strengths to determine if they can ultimately meet users' information needs (Collins and Doll, 2012).

Where these resources are lacking, they are to provide learning resources and design learning experiences that will be compatible with the needs, interests and abilities of their users (Moruf, 2015). Leaders in school library management should know what an effective library looks like and how they can make it work with collaborative efforts from school librarians and teachers in the school system. However, present conditions in certain climes are a far cry from the ideal. According to the findings of Pickett and Combs (2016), many school administrators are ignorant of the role of the library in a school setting and have consequently invested little in the development of the school library. In other studies, most school libraries lack qualified personnel. Workers without appropriate professional qualifications manage them (Ogunniyi et al, 2018 & Moruf, 2015).

In a study on the availability and use of school library resources in post primary schools in Gusau local government area of Zamfara State, Nigeria, the highest academic qualification of most library workers manning school libraries was the certificate of Senior Secondary Certification Examination (SSCE). These reports show a dearth in the school library workforce and a lack of adequate formal training in school librarianship. The school library is 'the heart of the school system' (Moruf, 2015). Like the heart in the human body, it must function right for the entire school system to achieve its goals, which has led to the investigation into the effective use of library resources by secondary school students at Oyemekun Grammar School, Ondo State.

3.1 Methodology

The descriptive survey design was adopted in the study. This design helps to determine the range and distribution of certain social characteristics and to discover how these characteristics relate to certain behaviour patterns in a target population (Marilyn Zurmuehlen Working papers in Art Education, 1981). The survey research method was used to collect data from a sample of respondents from a target population. The target population for the study comprised male secondary school students in Oyemekun Grammar School, Akure, Ondo State. A total of 50 students were sampled from a population of 2,107 students.

A total of 50 questionnaires were distributed among senior secondary school students during their visits to the library. All of them were returned and found useable. The questionnaire comprised eleven questions which include questions on respondents' personal information, use of school library resources in the school library and challenges encountered during the use of information resources in the school library. The questionnaires returned were verified and edited to ensure that they were correctly filled. Data collected during the study was analysed and organised using frequency counts and percentages.

4.1 Result and Discussion of Findings
Table 1: Reasons for Non-Use of School Library

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
I am too busy to go the library	2	40
Library is boring	1	20
My class is far from the library	1	20
Most textbooks in the library are old	1	20
Total	5	100

In table 1, reasons for non-use of the school library were highlighted. Only five students responded to the query. 2(40%) of the 5 respondents claimed to be too busy to go to the library. The rest of the respondents stated that the library was boring (1 or 20%), far from their classrooms (1 or 20%) and contained obsolete books (1 or 20%), respectively.

Table 2: Respondents' Visits to the School Library

Number of visits	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Everyday	11	24
2-3 times a week	12	26
Twice in a month	11	24
Once in a while	12	26
Total	46	100

Research Question 1 - *how often do senior secondary school students use school library resources?*

In table 2, frequency of respondents' visit to the library was highlighted. Out of 46 students who responded to the query, 24% (11) of the respondents visit the library daily to meet their information needs. 26%(12) of them consult the library twice or thrice in a week. 24%(11) visit the library once in a month while 26%(12) are not keen in using school library materials as they visit the library once in a while. The result showed a considerable level of patronage of school library resources by senior secondary school students.

Table 3: Resources Consulted by Respondents in the School Library

Library resources	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Textbooks	29	60.4
Encyclopaedias	14	29.2
Novels	5	10.4
Total	48	100

Research Question 2 - *what are the information resources used by secondary school students?*

Table 3 showed the information resources used by respondents in the school library. Majority of the respondents (29 or 60.4%) utilise textbooks. Next in ranking are respondents who consult encyclopedias when they visit the library (14 or 29.2%). Very few of the respondents (5 or 10.4%) patronise the library to get novels. The result implies that most students of Oyemekun Grammar School patronise the library to consult materials relevant for their school work.

Table 4:Respondents' Purpose for School Library Use

Purpose	Frequency	Percentage (%)
To read my textbooks only	17	35
To read other books in order to increase my knowledge	24	49
To study for exams	4	8
To read novels during free periods	4	8
Total	49	100

Research Question 3 - *what is the purpose for the use of school library resources by secondary school students*?

Students' response on the purpose for the use of school library resources is reflected in table 4. Out of 49 respondents, 8%(4) each of the respondents visit the library to study for examinations and to read novels during free class periods. 35%(17) of them make use of the school library space to read only their textbooks while majority of the respondents (49% or 24) read other kinds of library materials for the purpose of broadening their knowledge. This result interestingly indicates that in spite of inadequate information resources in school libraries as some literature has reported (Ogunniyi et al, 2018; Omah and Oghenetega, 2016), there still exists among students, a hunger for knowledge beyond classroom use.

Table 5:Challenges Encountered During Use of School Library Resources

Challenges	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Inadequate reading materials	7	15.2
Obsolete books	31	67.4
Poor ventilation	1	2.2
Unfriendly reception from library personnel	7	15.2
Total	**46**	**100**

Research Question 4 - *what are the challenges that hinder the effective use of library resources by secondary school students?*

Table 5 highlighted challenges that inhibit the effective use of school library resources. Out 46 respondents who responded to the query, 31(67.4%) of them stated that most of the information resources in the school library are obsolete. Only 1(2.2%) respondent claimed that the school library is poorly ventilated and 7(15.2%) respondents each indicated existence of inadequate reading materials and unfriendly reception of library personnel, respectively. The result is in congruence with the findings of Omah and Oghenetega (2016) and Arua and Chinaka (2011) who reported shortage of information materials and unconducive reading space for school library patrons, respectively.

5.1 Suggested Solutions
Suggestions on improving the delivery of school library services were proffered. They include the following:
- Acquisition of current, up-to-date reading materials in the school library
- ICT resources supply
- Provision of more infrastructure including reading space and furniture
- Well ventilated reading spaces for school library patrons

Conclusion

Effective use of information and information resources is very germane to the intellectual development of the growing child. Therefore, institutions of learning with expected capacities to positively influence the growth of children's formative years should be properly equipped to achieve this goal. School libraries in particular need to be furnished with facilities required to enhance learning in children and youth. However, in the study, senior secondary school students reportedly grappled with the use of school library resources owing to insufficiency and obsolescence of school library materials. The challenge of poor infrastructure and lack of ICT resources was identified. Information materials including electronic resources relevant for school work and personal development should be provided. Furthermore, better infrastructure that befits learning in a school environment should be provided to enhance learning skills among students in secondary schools.

Recommendations

To ensure the effective use of school library resources among students in secondary schools particularly in Oyemekun Grammar school, the study recommends the following:

- Provision of current information resources in school libraries should be given top most priority. Designated authorities in the school library system should acquire relevant and updated information materials for students' use.
- Electronic resources including internet facilities should be provided in school libraries to facilitate learning and help students compete with their counterparts intellectually in more developed climes.
- The issue of infrastructure should be addressed. Well ventilated and spacious environments conducive for reading should be created to encourage students to utilise school library resources.
- Regular training for school library personnel should be done to improve their professional skills and to create the right impression of the school library and its services on the minds on young learners. This will encourage them to visit the school library and to use school library resources to their advantage.

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Exploring the Practice of Infopreneurship Among Librarians in Bauchi State, Nigeria

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