Students' Utilization of Secondary School Libraries in Akinyele Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria

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Abstract: *Utilization of Secondary school libraries by Students in Akinyele Local Government Area of Oyo State is presented. The study was carried out in four selected secondary schools and colleges with a total population of seven hundred and sixty students and ten librarians using random sampling method. Questionnaire was the instrument used to collect the data from respondents. The data was analyzed using statistical package for the social science and presented in tables with frequency counts and percentage. The study revealed that school libraries were not utilized effectively by students due to inadequate resources, poor funding and lack of adequate provision for school library development.*

Keywords: *Education, Examination, Knowledge, Resources, School libraries.*

I.   Introduction

Library and education are two vital institutions of socialization and perpetuation of the human race. The two cannot be separated in an all-round development of a child. Education as a result of knowledge imparted develops abilities, attitudes, behaviour and technical know-how, and the agency responsible for acquiring, disseminating and imparting this knowledge is the library. The provision of library services is therefore crucial and indispensable to both the primary and secondary education system.

Libraries are established to advance the course of education. Library objectives are interwoven with that of education – they both aim at producing intellectually developed and complete individuals in the society. Thus, libraries exist to promote and complement education.

The school library has been described as the heart of the school system. It is the school learning resources centre, the laboratory of laboratories. What vital role does the school library play in education that it warrants such description?

First it must be noted that in spite of the claim that the library is the heart of the school, or laboratory of laboratories, school libraries are a relatively new concept. Few schools had libraries before the 20th century. Those early school libraries had two principal objectives, both of which are still important today; to provide materials to support the curriculum and to promote reading.

The school library concept gained momentum as a result of changing ideas about education. In the early years of the 20th century, the progressive education movement in the United States espoused ideas that stimulated the growth of school libraries in many countries of the world. However, widespread and systematic development of school libraries dates from the decades following World War, especially the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. This development coincided with a number of factors, including continuing evolution of ideas for educational reform.

The role and development of school libraries have always been inextricably tied to educational reform. Certain ideas in education have moved libraries from the periphery to the heart of the school and made them central to teaching and learning.

These ideas are as follows:

The progressive education movement mentioned above advocated many ideas that enhanced the role of school libraries. In the early 1900s, the educator John Dewey coined the famous phrase, "we learn what we do". This epitomizes key ideas emerging at the time, that learning is an active process which takes place through direct interaction with resources in the environment, through "hands-on-learning", children need more than recitation and drill in the traditional teacher-directed classroom; they need opportunities to interact directly with resources and learn on their own in the art room, science laboratory, garden, and the library.

Progressive education movement also stressed the importance of motivation and relevance, asserting that children learn better when they are interested in what they are learning and can see its importance to their lives. Educators of the time stressed the need to consider the characteristics and needs of children in general and of individual children in developing appropriate content and methods. Education, they said, should be child-centered, or learner-centered. It should also be learner-directed, making room for individual initiative

participatory learning through group work. Such opportunities abound in the school library, where learners, individually or group interact with a variety of resources in solving learning tasks.

According to Moruf (2010), School libraries are libraries attached to pre-primary, primary and secondary schools. School libraries serve as vital tools for measuring and enhancing the standard of education in Nigeria. It is due to this fact that school libraries have been defined in various ways based on its perspectives and contribution to national development.

II. Literature Review

• **Role of Library in School System**

It is incontrovertible that libraries form a vital part of the world's system of education. Libraries provide through books, films, computers or internet, recording microforms, CD-ROMs and other media knowledge that have been accumulated through the ages. Every school therefore needs a library, even if a good public library is nearby. Throughout the day, teachers and students need to use the library materials in the teaching and learning process.

Fayose (1983) wrote that "the library is rendered essential for every intellectual institution, it is really essential and necessary for the primary school, since it constitutes a big and rare treasure". He proceeded and quoted Jean Mace as saying that the "supplement of the primary school is the constitution of libraries. The first one is the key but the second one is the residence".

It has also been stated that "the library is a basic element that leads to education and to the spiritual culture of students" (Onadiran, 1997).

The Federal Government of Nigeria acknowledges the importance of school libraries when it states in its National Policy on Education (1981) that "libraries are one of the most important education services. Every State Ministry of Education needs to provide funds for the establishment of libraries in all educational institutions and to train librarians and library assistants for this service".

As enunciated by Nicholson and Barlett (1962), the main purposes of a school library are to;
1. Encourage the reading habits of the learner
2. Develop in pupils the ability to learn from books without teachers.
3. Breakdown the rigid divisions which the school timetable often creates   between different subjects.
4. Give social training

The school library has a teaching role in the education programme of the school. The teaching role comes up in the areas of imparting the library skills, study skills including planning with the subject teachers, class projects and its involvement in curriculum or lesson planning. This view is supported by Apotiade (2002) who identified the educational role of school library as encouragement of reading habit, development of student's ability to learn from books. He further elucidated that school libraries are; "to provide books and other information materials that will assist student in their study, instruct students in the use of library resources and encourage recreational reading by providing newspapers, magazines, books on sports, adventure, hobbies, folklores and fiction".

Nyam and Guraj (1999) described the role of school library as the provision of information for educational research, planning and recreational purposes. He also viewed school library as essential to the establishment of school itself which should be seen as an integral part of the educational process and not just as an outside agency. Furthermore, he described the means through which school library contributes to spread education, complement teacher's work, and provide education to those without teachers. These are through;
i. Provision of primary school children with learning resources such as educational facilities, both in print and non-print, which they can use at the end of the school day and during vacations.
ii. Provision of secondary school children with information assistance in homework and this may include children's encyclopedia, journals, magazines, tapes, records and cassettes.
iii. Provision of specialized resources for governmental activities through creation of a "special document" section in the library and;
iv. Provision of recreational and continuing educational facilities such as games, films and filmstrips, slides, tapes records, and cassettes, fiction and non-fiction books.

Wherever it is, the school library is established to achieve educational objectives of the primary and secondary education as stated in the National Policy on Education (1981)

Kolade (2001) further stressed while stating the educational role of the School Library Media Centre that "the resource centre should be unique in enhancing personal study and make teachers realize that all learning does not take place in the classroom alone but that the school library is a complete learning centre. In her own study, Fayose (1983) posited that "school library is a social instrument, designed to form a link in the communication system that is essential for quality education in any nation or culture".

The school library assists teaching by storing instructional materials such as textbooks, audio-visual materials, magazines, newspapers, journals and reference materials. It is the function of the library to support the school curriculum by providing up-to-date information to keep teachers and students abreast of new developments. The library also promotes the development of reading skills and encourages long-term learning habits through reading, listening to and viewing a variety of materials. The library is the powerhouse of the school and it is an integral part of the school system. In spite of the value of libraries in schools, it is an acceptable fact that there are very few schools with libraries.

- **Library Services to Students**
    Among these services are that, the school librarian has the professional obligation to deal realistically but humanely with each student, to provide learning resource, and to design learning experiences which will be compatible with the needs, interests and abilities, goals, concerns and learning styles of each student. The school librarian must be accessible, approachable, and responsive; must establish a climate conducive to maximum learning a happily invitation place where the student may taste success and his disabilities are not on public display. The school librarian must personalize the services of the library media centre therefore, hold and demonstrate authentic concern for the intellectual, moral, spiritual, social and cultural wellbeing of each student no matter how rich or poor, how brilliant. He must consistently build his knowledge of the student as he works with him as mentor, counselor and friend. After the school librarian has introduced the students to variety of learning resources, he needs to teach study skills required to use the learning resources in the library. In a study on secondary school library services in Oyo state conducted by Opeke (1980) she collected data from one hundred and seventy five schools. The report of the study revealed that the resources were inadequate as virtually all the schools libraries lacked audio-visual materials. She affirmed that teachers and students make minimum use of the school library and this may be attributed to the present poor library stock. In addition to these, it was discovered that services rendered by the libraries to staff and students were mostly reading or borrowing books.

III.   Statement Of The Problem

For Nigeria to excel academically and have her educational sector developed there is need for the reform of our educational system through adequate provisions of functional libraries as well as effective and sophisticated library system in various primary and post-primary schools.

History and research have shown that average Nigerians attend schools with the aim to graduate in order to acquire certificate to qualify them as working class for earning a living without imbibing the moral and cultural value that will make them a complete individual that can compete in the society through their education and library is the only agency responsible for inculcating the right morals and cultural values in individual person.

Another problem area for carrying out this research, which is a major concern among teachers and indeed the general public is the issue of mass failure of students in both internal and external examinations most especially the Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE). This situation is also aggravated with the high rate of indecent anti-social and unethical behaviour being exhibited by primary and post-primary level students.

Also, one other major problem area in this study is the lack of provision of school libraries in our elementary institutions especially government owned schools, where they are present, they are ill-equipped and are not well managed. They are mostly bookstores which are seldom opened to students for use. It is against this background that this study investigates the use of school libraries by students in Akinyele Local Government Area of Oyo state, Nigeria.

IV.   Significance Of The Study

The results of the study will create awareness on the effective use of school library by students, as well as expose and sensitize students on the use of school library resources, to enable them have right perception and recognition of the importance of library in education.

The results of the study will also enable proprietors of both primary and secondary schools in Akinyele Local Government Area of Oyo State, and the general public appreciates the position and importance of school library provision and to take proper steps to support school library development through their moral support as well as financial contributions.

V.   Objectives Of The Study

The general objective of the research is to investigate the use of school library by students in Akinyele Local Goverement Area. The specific objectives of the study are to:
1   Find out whether there are libraries in schools in Akinyele L.G.A of Oyo State.
2   Find out whether school libraries are well-stocked to meet the information needs of the students.

3   Examine the source of funding of school libraries in Akinyele L.G.A of Oyo State.
4   Determine the type of services provided in school libraries and ascertain the use of school library servicesby students in Akinyele L.G.A of Oyo state.
5   Find out the problems confronting use of school libraries in Akinyele L.G.A of Oyo State.

VI.   Research Questions

The study is to address the following research questions:
1   How many schools have libraries in AkinyeleL.G.A of Oyo State?
2   How well-stocked are the school libraries in Akinyele L.G.A of Oyo State?
3   What type of library services are provided by the school libraries in AkinyeleL.G.A?
4   What are the sources of funding the school libraries in Akinyele L.G.A of Oyo state?
5   What are the constraints to the effective use of school libraries by students in AkinyeleL.G.A of Oyo State?
6   How often do students use the Library?
7   What are the roles of government, organizations, parents and the society in school library development?

VII.   Scope Of Study

The study covers selected secondary schools in Akinyele Local Government Area including both private and public schools.In order to manage the study effectively, only students in Junior secondary school three (JSS 3) and Senior secondary school three (SSS 3) classes and the librarians ineach school were used, in other words, the result obtained will be used to generalize the whole population of each school visited.

The schools that were chosen for the study include two private schools; Posit College, ArulogunOjo and Yinbol College, Orogun. The two public schools are; Command-Day Secondary School, Odogbo and Army-Day secondary school, Odogbo Barracks, out of which random selections were made from the population. The junior secondary school three and senior secondary school three classes were chosen as the target population. This is because; the population appreciates the use of library better than others as a result of their preparation for external examinations such as National Examination Council (NECO) and Junior secondary school certificate.

VIII.   Methodology

Simple random sampling was used in each of the four schools using percentage distribution. The data were collected using questionnaire in all the selected schools and colleges. To ensure true information and high return of questionnaires, the questionnaire was administered to the respondents through their class teachers. In addition, oral interview with the school library staff in these schools was conducted. Direct observation on the school library activities, collection and condition was not left undone. The data were analyzed using Statistical package for the social sciences and presented in tableswith frequency counts and percentage.

IX.   Result

The summary of data analysis is presented under two sub-headings:
I.   Demographic variables
Demographic data analysis involves the analyses based on level of educational study of students and librarians.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents based on level of study

Level of study	Frequency	Percentage
JSS3	30	25%
SSS3	90	75%
Total	**120**	**100%**

Table 1shows that SS 3 students were 90 (75%) while JSS 3 students were 30 (25%). It implies that the Senior Secondary School has higher percentage responses.

Table 2: Distribution of Librarian Respondents based on Designation

Librarian Designation	Frequency	Percentage
Teacher librarian	1	10%
School librarian	4	40%
Library Assistants/Attendants	5	50%
TOTAL	**10**	**100%**

Table 2 shows the librarian designation to be: Teacher librarian 1 (10%), school librarians 4 (40%) and Assistant librarian 5 (50%). It implies that most of the librarians are Assistant librarians or Library attendants

Table 3: Educational Qualification of Respondents

Librarian Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
P.hD	1	10%
Master	1	10%
First Degree	5	50%
NCE	3	30%
TOTAL	**10**	**100%**

Table 3 shows the educational qualifications of school librarians with Ph.D 1 (10%), Master 1 (10%), First Degree 5 (50%) and NCE 3 (30%) respectively. This indicates that most school librarians possess First Degree.

ii.   Research Questions

Question One: How many schools have libraries in Akinyele Local Government Area?

Table 4: Number of schools with libraries

Type of School	Frequency	Percent
Public Schools	50	41.7%
Private Schools	70	58.3%
Total	**120**	**100%**

Table 4reveals that 70 (58.3%) of private schools have libraries while 50 (41.7%) of public schools have libraries

Question two: How well stocked are the school libraries?

Table 5: Stock of materials in the libraries

Materials	Available	Not Available
Textbooks	4 (40%)	6 (60%)
Reference materials	4 (40%)	6 (60%)
Newspapers/Magazines	3 (30%)	7 (70%)
Computers	1 (10%)	9 (90%)
Audio-visual materials	0	0
Total	**30%**	**70%**

Table 5 reveals that textbooks and reference books or materials constituted the large volume of materials present in the libraries while other library materials constituted small volume of their collection.

Question three: What type of library services are provided by school libraries in Akinyele Local Government Area?

Table 6: Types of services provided

Services Provided	Frequency	Percentage
Guidance on using library	52	43.4%
Lending and borrowing	22	18.3%
Assistance to secure materials	46	38.3%
TOTAL	**120**	**100%**

Table 6 reveals that 52 (43.4%) of respondents enjoyed the service of guidance on using materials, 22 (18.3%) said lending and borrowing and 46 (38.3%) said, assistance on securing materials. This implies that, there are three types of services provided, but the level of enjoyment and satisfaction to students varied.

Question four: What are the sources of funding for the school libraries in Akinyele Local Government Area?

Table 7: Sources of Funding for libraries

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Government allocation	3	30%
Student levy	7	70%
TOTAL	**10**	**100%**

Table 7 reveals that 7 (70%) of the respondents (school librarians) claimed that student levy constituted the sources of funding for school library while the rest 3 (30%) confirmed government allocation to be the sources of funding.

Question five: What are the constraints to the effective use of school libraries by students in Akinyele Local Government Area?

Table 8: Problems Encountered

Problems	Frequency	percentage
Problems encountered in using library: Materials not to up to date	5	50%
Limited space for users	3	30%
Materials not well organized	2	20%
Problems of school library:		
Problems of funding	7	70%
Problems of staffing	2	20%
Problems of infrastructure	1	10%
Total	**10**	**100%**

Table 8reveals that the problems affecting the use of school libraries are; materials not up to date, limited space, materials not well-organized, problems of staffing and infrastructure. It reveals that 70% claimed funding as one of the problems affecting the use of school libraries. Therefore, problems of funding constituted the major problem.

Question Six: How often do students use the Library?

Table 9: Frequency of using the school libraries by Students**.**

	Mean
How often do you read in school library?	2.02
How frequently do you visit the school library to update your knowledge?	2.20
How frequently do you borrow materials from the library?	2.38
How many times do you visit the school library for assignment?	1.90
How often do you utilize library materials in preparation for Examination?	2.47

In table 9, the result of the data analyzed shows that students do not patronize the school library. Thequestions on students' use of available resources in the school library reveal that the means is below the cut-off point of 2.50. The lower responses in general, negate the idea of effective use of library resources by students in AkinyeleLocal Government Area of Oyo State.This is confirmed by the mean that is less than 2.50 accepted as being high enough to be satisfactory variable.

Question Seven: What are the roles of government, organizations, parents and the society in school library development?

The findings of analysis revealed that, over the years, the development of school libraries in Akinyele Local Government Area has been the sole responsibility of the school proprietors and other stakeholders in the provision of functional school libraries, without direct government financial assistance and non-challant attitudes of other agencies in school library development.

X.   Discussion Of Findings

The findings of the study revealed that there are functional libraries in some schools especially private schools, while there are libraries in most public schools but they are non-functional libraries. This is confirmed by Odusanyan and Amusa (2002) which stated that "functional school libraries are virtually non-existence in our public secondary schools and students do not see school library as beneficial to education. It then showed that there are libraries in schools in Akinyele Local Government Area, most of which are not up to standard. This is in conformity with the finding by Sturges and Neill (1998) that "majority of schools possess no library and where some semblance of a school library does exists, it is often no more than a few shelves of outdated and worn out materials, inadequately staffed and thus marginal to the teaching learning process.

However, the school libraries are not properly utilized in public schools because of inadequate provision of library resources and non-exposure of students by teachers to use library materials for assignments and other class works that will improve or arouse their interest in using library as affirmed by Sharr (1994) stating the reasons for non-usage of school library as "the absence of library knowledge among teachers regarding good school library programme, lack of time by teachers to read due to multifarious activities in their personal lives and non-exposure of teachers to good library services, lack of reading culture".

The sources of funding school libraries in Akinyele Local Government Area are mainly through students levy. It then showed that the level of government intervention in funding school libraries in Oyo State is low. This was confirmed by Rosenberg (1998) that "In a number of school libraries, donations, either in cash or kind provide between 90% and 100% of all acquisitions". This confirmation is also affirmed by Dike (1993) "The present state of school library development is a direct result of the level of government intervention and especially financial support" This might be responsible for non-functional of some libraries and inadequate library stock which results to ineffective use of these libraries by students, therefore, render the roles of library in schools system to be insignificant.

The study also revealed the problem of staffing as part of the constraints to effective use of school libraries in Akinyele Local Government as there are more library assistants/attendants than professional school librarians. This finding therefore, envisage that, for school libraries in Akinyele Local Government Area to move forward, attain international standard and serve as a means for achieving educational excellence all hands must be on deck.

XI.   Conclusion

The results of past studies which had been carried out on the use of school libraries did not show much difference when compare to this study. The result has shown that the school library is still beset with a myriad of problems, the prominent among which are lack of funds and unqualified staff. Though all the schools studies have libraries but the quality of their resources and facilities was poor.

It can be concluded that, if school library is given due recognition by way of providing separate and adequate accommodation like other areas of knowledge like science and home-economics which have their laboratories and buildings accommodated in separate buildings, adequate provision of equipment facilities and other school library resources, qualified and professionally trained staff for effective running of the library and formulation of standards for school libraries will help school to produce a more educated citizenry in Nigeria.

Finally, this paper concludes that there is the need to revitalize the role and functions of school libraries and to enhance its status through co-operation and assistance by the society at large. There is no doubt that well stocked school libraries manned by qualified school librarians and offering variety of library services would contribute enormously not only towards raising the standard of education in the country but, also instilling the habit of self-directed independent learning which is antecedent to life-long education.

XII.   Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on the findings of this research:
1. Since the library is an integral part of the school programme, it must be ready to function as the day classes commence either in a new school or the ones in existence.
2. The school library should be provided with adequate funds to implement its programmes by government and non-government agencies, school administrators should encourage the community for participation in school library development.
3. Competent and effective staff should be employed to run various libraries.
4. The school principal should encourage wide and effective use of the library by the students.
5. Human resources development programme like seminars, and in-service training should be put in place to promote the issue of library use education among librarians.
6. Both the state and local governments should endeavour to set up libraries in their domains.
7. Stakeholders in school library development should improve on their contribution and assistance towards school library development.
8. Formulation of school library standards will also help improve the status of school libraries.

Acknowledgement

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