Examination of the Resources Utilization in School Library by the Students in Government Girls Secondary School Library Kontagora, Niger State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study examined the resources utilization in Government Girls' Secondary School Kontagora, Niger State. Three (3) research questions were used to guide the study: What types of library resources are available for students to uses in the school library of Government Girls Secondary School Kontagora? What are the purposes/reasons the students use the school library? What are the constraints to the effective utilization of the school library resources? The populations of this study consisted of eighty (80) students of SS1 and SS2. Census sample was adopted because the population was small. Survey research designed was used for the study. The questionnaire was used as an instrument for data collection, and frequency count and percentage distribution was used to analyze the data collected. The study showed that there are many information resources such as texts books, journals, dictionaries, encyclopedia, globes and atlas, charts and graphs and newspapers in the school library of GGSS Kontagora. The finding also revealed that secondary school students used the library in preparation for the examination and reading newspapers for leisure. The results furthered revealed that there are many constraints to the effective utilization of library resources in government girls' secondary school Kontagora which include inadequate funding, lack of power supply. Others are lack of official library hour on the time table, lack of professional staff, lack of relevant materials and mutilation of library resources which are negatively affecting the library services. The study recommended that school management should improve on the library resources; students should be encouraged by the school management to use the library other than reading only in preparation for the examination.

Keywords: Girls Secondary School, Information Resources, School libraries, Utilization

Introduction

Libraries are as important to children as education itself. Library resources imply both availability and accessibility of library materials to the users and the willingness of readers to use the resources effectively and efficiently. Information is power and access, and utilization of information is indispensable to individual advancement and development. According to Owate and Iroha (2013), the school library is a collection of different resources that are housed and organized by professional librarians to support students and teachers in their educational

program. Waite in Benard (2014) also viewed a school library as a collection of a wide range of learning and teaching materials which are housed in a place and centrally organized by librarians and indexed to serve users. School children need the library for effective learning among children in our various secondary schools to live meaningful and fulfilling lives and contribute to the development of society. Children utilizing school library derive maximum social, economic and cultural benefits from the society and discharge their civic responsibilities in their various communities. According to IFLA (2015), the school library is a physical and digital learning space where reading, enquiry, research, thinking, imagination and creativity are central to students' information to knowledge growth.

Therefore, the use of the library by secondary students is a culture that needs to be developed and encouraged in our youths through a well-planned library education program in our various secondary schools. To ensure that library use becomes a life long habit, it should be inculcated in the educational life of children. It is, therefore, essential for every school library to be improved for literacy, education, social, and cultural development. Obajemu (2012) also agreed that school libraries are established to support the educational curriculum of schools, and this according to him can only be achieved through various means such as the provision of relevant library information resources which are in line with the school curriculum.

The purpose of the school library is to help students get access to information. Traditionally, this has meant bringing resources into the library, where students can use them. Nevertheless, more and more, the library is going to its users. The library is a crucial centre in the educational development of any community, particularly in any academic pursuit. According to Emasealu (2013) who stated that library resources are precious for information they contain, the resources stocked are meant to be a source of knowledge, pleasure and assistance for the generation to come. Accordingly, IFLA (2012) asserted that library and information services are key actors in the provision of unhindered access to essential resources for economic and cultural advance. In doing so, they contribute effectively to the development and maintenance of intellectual freedom, safeguarding democratic values and universal civil rights. They encourage social inclusion, by striving to serve all those in their user communities regardless of age, gender, economic or employment status, literacy or technical skills, cultural or ethnic origin, religious or political beliefs, sexual orientation, and physical or mental ability. The communities they serve may be geographically based or increasingly, linked only by technology and shared interests.

The primary objectives of secondary school libraries are to implement, enrich, and support the educational program of the school because the library is the heart or nerve centre of educational life in any community. In the areas of materials selection, school libraries must provide a wide range of materials on various levels with consideration for diversity and different subject areas (Abdulhamid, 2016). Therefore, school libraries should provide materials that will enrich and support the curriculum by collaborating with instructional stakeholders relevant in the educational sector. Provide resources for students and teachers based on their needs that will encourage the growth in knowledge. Provide resources which reflect the broad ideas and benefits of religious, social, political, historical, and ethnic groups and their contribution to the local, national, world heritages and cultures. The provision will provide for resources by the school

libraries enabling students to develop intellectual integrity in forming sound judgements and provide a variety of print and non-print formats to support needs-based student learning (Ode, 2014). School libraries are therefore very fundamental because they are often hinged on the school curriculum. The availability of a wide range of learning resources in all school libraries allows the students to cultivate good reading habits and enable them to meet their varying information needs.

Problem Statement

Secondary school libraries in Nigeria, especially the public schools, seem to have been grossly neglected. Even those schools that do have libraries frequently keep their books in locked cases in dark corridors, thereby restricting students to these information resources, which hurts students in terms of their academic performance. Some allow students to use the resources only on a limited time and specified periods. It was, however, observed that most students in secondary schools use the library more often when preparing for examinations and searching for information for school assignments.

It is in the light of the above that this study investigated the utilization of resources in the school library in Government Girls' Secondary School Kontagora, Niger State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1- What types of resources are available for students to use in the school library of Government Girls Secondary School Kontagora?
2- What are the purposes/reasons the students use the school library?
3- What are the constraints to the effective utilization of the school library resources?

Literature Review

According to Saka and Bitagi (2010), a school library can be defined as a place designed for the provision of all kinds of learning resources. Petters and Ottong (2012) described a school library as a learning laboratory that provides opportunities for pupils to develop information skill. Augustine, Abdulhamid (2016) defined school library as the part of the school where a collection of books, periodicals, magazines, and newspapers, films, filmstrip, videotapes, recording of all kinds and the like are housed for use by the students. School library supports the school curriculum by providing up-to-date information resources and services to keep staff and students abreast of new development. Materials in school libraries are made up of print and non-print media. These are all information carriers. There cannot be a functional school library without an adequate stock of relevant and current information resources. These include textbook fictions, newspapers, films, film projector, radio, television, maps, charts, tape recorders, reference items and other educational materials. Abdulhamid (2016) highlighted that the school library resources include books, periodicals, newspapers, pamphlets, brochures, handbills, and short notices. Others are audio materials (disc, phonographic records, audio-tapes on reels and cassettes), film materials (slides, film-strips, motion picture films as well as other forms of

photographic film), graphics, video materials (videotapes on reels, cassettes and cartridges as well as video disc), microforms (microfilm, microfiche and micro-card).

Odeh (2014) also revealed that other school library resources include Information and Communication Technology (ICT) facilities such as computers, computer diskettes, computer programmes, and multi-media collection. Others are teleconferencing, videoconferencing, audio, graphic communications, Broadcast TV/Radio + audio-teleconferencing and Interactive Multimedia. Information seeking is a human activity. No institution in society is more deeply and intimately involved in information than is the library. According to Aramide and Elaturati (2013), school libraries are the primary sources of knowledge and information, whether the knowledge or information comes in the form of books, journals, newspapers, video cassettes, radio cassettes, and other various forms of non-electronic visual aids, or computer databases. Identifying the factors that determine how library resources are used to support and contribute to the curriculum are essential in distinguishing their importance to secondary school children. It is up to individual schools to assess their use of library materials and ensure that methods are in place to get the best possible use out of curriculum support resources. As discussed earlier, some barriers are faced in providing such resources, and these should be considered in the exploration into their eventual use (Petters and Ottong, 2012).

· According to Saka and Bitagi (2010), students' attitudes to libraries can often determine their levels of utilization not only outside school time but also how effectively they use library resources to contribute to the curriculum. It is a clear fact that parents and teachers are the prominent influencers on children's perceptions of libraries. Unless a positive image is given to children, their utilization of library resources will below. Evidence of this was given by school librarians who commented that children used to a "learning ethos" are none likely to have a positive image of libraries instilled in them, directly affecting their willingness to use library resources not only for education, but also for pleasure (Odenigbo, and Tongs, 2014).

Owate and Iroha (2013) noted that in Nigeria, no adequate attention had been given to the provision of libraries in both primary and secondary schools. Only a few secondary schools can boast of libraries, even when this exists, they are managed by unqualified staff instead of experienced and qualified librarians. Abdulhamid (2016) summarized the issues raised by participants in a sub-regional workshop on school libraries in Africa. He noted that lack of policy, financial constraints and scarcity of trained human resources are significant barriers to adequate school library development. Notably, school libraries compete for financial resources with other school needs.

Several impediments to school libraries have been identified by Abdulhamid (2016) to include the

- Low esteem accorded librarians.
- Underfunding of libraries and information services
- Insufficient infrastructure and services
- Poor and inadequate telecommunications facilities
- Low level of computer literacy even within the school community

- Inadequate level of awareness of internet facilities among policymakers, government officials and the ruling class in general
- Time commitment required to develop new subjects.

Ahmed and Nwalo (2013) declared that the underfunding of libraries and information services has led to a continuous decline in the performances of students in secondary schools. Due to numerous factors, including school library opening hours or the total lack of a school library at all, the only sources available to children and young people to help with home works is the public library. All these issues provide a basis for investigating the utilization of information resources in secondary school libraries (IFLA, 2012).

Methodology

The study adopted a survey research design. According to Ekere et al. (2016), the survey research design was described as one of which a large group which can easily be used to generalize without touching each individual, but just a representative sample of the population. The populations of this study consisted of eighty students namely: Twenty (20) SS1A students, twenty (20) SS1B students, twenty (20) SS2A students, and twenty (20) SS2B giving a total number of 80 population size. Questionnaire and observation were the data collection instruments. The target respondents consisted of senior secondary students because they are believed to be in the best position to give best responses to the items on the research questions due to their level of understanding when compared to their counterparts in the junior secondary classes.

Descriptive statistical tools such as simple percentages, tables and charts were used to analyze the data. Out of the 80 (100%) respondents, 75 (94%) of the respondents were duly filled and returned.

Findings and Discussion

Table 1: Types of Information Resources Available to Students of Government Girls Secondary School Kontagora.

Information materials	Freq.	Percentages (%)
Subject Textbooks	40	53.3%
Journals	8	10.7%
Dictionary	10	13.3%
Encyclopedia	5	6.7%
Globes and atlas	5	6.7%
Charts and graphs	4	5.3%
Newspapers	3	4%
Total	75	100

Table 4 revealed that 40(53.3%) of the total respondents revealed that textbooks are the most available information materials in the library. However, 8(10.7%) of the respondents

agreed that journals are the most readily available information material in the library studied. Meanwhile, 10 (13.3%) of the respondents stated that dictionaries are the most available information resource in the library, 5 (6.7%) of the respondents responded that encyclopedias are the most available information resource in the library. Also, 5(6.7) of the respondents indicated that globes and atlas are the most available information resources in the library. 4(5.3%) of the respondents stated that charts and graphs are the most available information resources in the library. In comparison, 3(4%) of the population attested that only a few Newspapers are available in the library. These findings corroborate to that of Abdulhamid (2016) who confirmed that most of the information resources available in staff school libraries in Niger State are subject books, display or chalkboards, charts, graphs, pictures, maps, tape cassettes and computers.

Table 2: The Purposes/Reasons why Students use Library in Government Girls Secondary School Kontagora

Option	Freq.	Percentages (%)
Reading for examination	60	80%
For studying and research	3	4%
Assignment/Homework	5	6.7%
Read newspapers/magazines	5	6.7%
For leisure reading	2	2.6%
Total	75	100

Respondents in Table 2 were asked to identify the purposes/reasons for using the school library. Majority of the respondents 60(80%) indicated that they use the school library to read in preparation for examination 3(4%) of respondents use the library for study and research. Assignment/ homework accounted for 5(6.7%). Also,5(6.7%) of the respondents indicated that they use the library to seek for information from newspapers/magazines and reading for leisure had the least score 2(2.6%) suggesting that very few students read for leisure as reading is mostly in the area of their study. These findings affirmed the submission made by Suleiman (2019) who studied the availability and use of public secondary school libraries in Minna, Niger State. They confirmed that the majority of the students in secondary schools used the library in preparation for the examination.

Table 3: Constraints to Effective Utilization of School Library in Government Girls Secondary School Kontagora.

Problems	Freq.	Percentages (%)
Inadequate funding	35	47%
Lack of power supply	11	15%
There is no Library hour on the time table	10	13%
Lack of professional staff	10	13%
Lack of relevant materials	4	5%
Mutilation	5	7%
Total	75	100

Table 3 revealed that the highest number of the respondents 35(47%) strongly agreed that inadequate funding was the most typical challenge faced by school library in Government Girls Secondary school, Kontagora. This is followed by 11(15%) of the respondents who admitted that inadequate power supply is a challenge faced in using the school library. In comparison, 10(13%) of the same respondents attested to the fact that absence of library using hours in their timetable is another challenge affecting the School library in Government Girls Secondary School, Kontagora. Lack of professional staff in the library is also a problem affecting the services of the library in government secondary school, Kontagora which has 10 (13%) of the respondents and 4(5%) of the respondents admitted that lack of relevant materials is another challenge faced by the school library. In comparison, 5(7%) of the respondents admitted that the mutilation of library materials is also a challenge faced while using the school library. These findings imply that the Government Girls Secondary school Kontagora library is faced with many challenges that are preventing it from supporting the teaching and learning in the school system. These findings corroborate that of Abdulhamid (2016) who confirmed that most of the challenges affecting staff school libraries are inadequate funding, lack of relevant information resources, lack of professional staff, erratic power supply, mutilation and lack of library hour on the time table.

Conclusion

The school library is an instrument that enhances the teaching and learning of secondary students if adequately used. It is essential to learning and plays a vital role as a 'learning environment for encouraging inquiry, research, thinking, imagination and creativity. School library, therefore, function as a centre that acquires and provides information needs of students and staff in different formats of the school community. The study concluded that Government secondary school Kontagora has a library with facilities and information resources that are being used by the students. However, most of the students use the library for examination purposes in order to pass their examination very well. Many challenges are facing Government Girls Secondary school, Kontagora libraries such as inadequate funding, lack of professional librarians to manage the library, and lack of official library visitation hours on their timetable. Others are lack of power supply, lack of relevant materials and mutilation of information resources which is affecting it from providing effective library services for students.

Recommendations

The study recommended that:
1. Government Girls Secondary School Kontagora should make every effort to improve their library facilities and information resource.
2. School authorities should encourage their students to visit the library and use the materials for their research and information needs. Students should not wait until during examination.

3. Niger State Government, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, should provide adequate fund and power supply to Government Girls Secondary School Kontagora for effective library services in the School.

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