

Utilization of School Library as Determinant of Reading Habit of Senior Secondary School Students in Abuja Metropolis

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doi: <https://doi.org/10.37745/ijliss.15/vol9n51827>

Published June 20, 2023

Citation: Jaja C.A. and Udumukwu I.J. (2023) Utilization of School Library as Determinant of Reading Habit of Senior Secondary School Students in Abuja Metropolis, *International Journal of Library and Information Science Studies*, Vol.9, No.5, pp.18-27

ABSTRACT: *This study was conducted to determine the utilization of school library as determinant of reading habit of senior secondary school students in Abuja Metropolis. Two research questions and one hypothesis were formulated to guide the study. Descriptive survey research design was used for the study. The population of the study was all 16362 students in public secondary schools in Abuja Metropolis. A sample of 579 students was selected to take part in the study using simple random sampling technique. An instrument entitled "Utilization of Public School Library as determinants of reading habits questionnaire (UPSLDRQ)" was used in collecting data for the study. The instrument was validated by three experts and test re-test reliability was conducted for the instrument. A reliability coefficient of .83 was obtained for the instrument using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. Data collected for the study were analysed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions and independent t-test to test the hypothesis. The findings of the study indicated that there is a significant influence of library utilization on the reading habit of students. It was recommended among others that government should provide all secondary schools in Abuja metropolis with modern and functional libraries.*

KEYWORDS: utilization, school library, reading habit, senior secondary school, students, Abuja metropolis

INTRODUCTION

Education in the world over is seen as a veritable instrument for individual and national development. It is a lifelong process of learning, growth and empowerment. Education generally is the process of acquisition of knowledge and a critical human need which nourishes and flourishes human capital development that is vital for the production of well-informed citizenry .The twenty first century brought with it an age that is knowledge-based and information-driven which compels individuals and nations to rethink the education process

towards broad-based and self-directed learning which can only be acquired in an information rich environment like the library.

Over the years, there have been reports of dwindling poor performance of students in WAEC and NECO. Even previous WAEC and NECO results have shown a decline in the academic performance of students (Ogunbadejo, 2015), in recent times the trend has become worrisome as a major national concern. However, scholars like Apeji, and Zakari in Williams (2011) had argued at different for a, that one of the ways to sustain and improve on the general education standard in the country is to ensure the provision of learning and library resources in all educational institutions in Nigeria.

Ajidahun (2011) remarks that the library is unarguably one of the intellectual wonders of life and one of the greatest and remarkable innovations and inventions that have proved, indisputably, man's creative audacity. He adjudges the library also to be a splendid educational masterpiece, a redemptive global phenomenon with robust capacity and ecumenical power and capability to bring the desired and the unimaginable transformation and positive changes to the society; the results which are immeasurably eternal. The library, irrespective of its form, status, typology or classification has profound potency in bringing cultural, political and socio-economic empowerment to the society. Saleh and Lasisi (2011) opine that libraries in general and school libraries in particular, play an important role in all aspects of societal development. School library are libraries established in pre-primary, primary and secondary schools. They are central to the learning and teaching process in schools below the tertiary institutions. School libraries exist to support the education programme by making available the needed resources, the exploitation of which makes teaching more interesting and learning pleasurable.

The modern school library media centre has a professionally trained school library media specialist (Librarian) who manages a central collection of diverse learning resources to support a school's curriculum, meet individual students' needs and interests, and ensure that young people develop information literacy skills within the school's curriculum. This concept of a learning resource centre is both a social development of the twentieth century and an evolution of information exchange. IFLA (2000) Manifesto viewed a school library as a school's physical and digital learning space where reading, inquiry, research, thinking, imagination and creativity are central to students' information-to-knowledge journey and to their personal, social and cultural growth.

It is in recognition of the importance of school library to the education process that the National Policy on education (2004) states that the library is at the heart of the education enterprise, all proprietors of schools shall Establish a functional library in accordance with established standard, they are also to provide for the training of librarian or library officer for the services. In spite of this policy pronouncement, most schools in Nigeria have no standard library, the few that have a semblance of a library are in a sorry state exhibiting poor and obsolete teaching and learning resources. The policy further recommends that school libraries be stocked with appropriate media resources meant to promote sound teaching and learning activities, boost students reading habits and motivate students to come up with desired academic achievement.

Mhlauli (2014) is of the view that poor performance by students could be traced to declining educational inputs, including obsolete learning resources, ill equipped or outright unavailability of laboratories and standard school libraries. Although there has been a number of empirical research on school library and the development of reading habit Danladi and Yohana (2018) in Jos, Chiegonu, Idoko and Chioma (2020) in Enugu state, yet, there is hardly any empirical study to relate school library utilization with reading habits and academic achievement of students in the urban areas of Nigeria. It is against this background that this research titled utilization of school's library as determinant of reading habits and academic achievement of students is embarked upon, using students in government owned senior secondary schools in Abuja metropolis as focal point.

Statement of the Problem

School libraries are seen generally as vital if student are to inculcate sound reading habits and improve on their academic performance in public examinations. Research works by Mutsupkui and Owusa-Ansah (2017) in Ghana and Oduagwu and Oduagwu (2018) in Owerri Metropolis Imo State, amongst others, have confirmed that school libraries have the capacity to facilitate good reading habits and academic achievement of students. Although these research works have been carried out in Africa and many other parts of Nigeria, but from available literature there is no research on utilization of school libraries as it concerns reading habits and academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Abuja Metropolis. There is therefore unexplained relationship between utilization of school libraries and academic achievement of students in Abuja metropolis, which may create room for guess work, rumors and speculations. This is what the researcher saw and is moved to investigate it using Abuja public schools as focal point.

Purpose of The Study

The main purpose of this study is to determine the utilization of school library as determinant of reading habit of senior secondary school students in Abuja Metropolis. The specific objectives are to:

- i. determine the type of resources, facilities and services in the selected secondary school libraries in Abuja Metropolis;
- ii. find out how the utilization of school libraries influences the reading habit of the students.

Significance of the Study

This study will be useful to government, school administrators, school principals, teacher - librarians, students and other stake holders in education. From the findings of this research, the government and school administrators will be able to know the level of reading habits of students in Abuja metropolis. The school administrators will be in a better position to know and provide those information resources that will attract the students to the library and thus make more provision for acquisition of appropriate library resources. For the government, it will expose the government to appreciate the usefulness of school libraries in teaching and learning, so that school libraries will be established in all schools and better funding assured.

Research Questions

This research is set out to provide answers to the following research questions:

- i. What are the type of library resources, facilities and services available in the selected public schools in Abuja metropolis?
- ii. How does the utilization of school libraries influence reading habit?

Hypotheses

One null hypothesis was formulated to guide the study.

H₀₁: There is no significant influence of the utilization of school libraries on reading habit of students.

RESEARCH METHODS

The ex-post facto design was used for this study. It involves collection of standardized information from a sample of the population. The researcher finds the ex-post facto design more applicable here than other research designs because the variable under study that is availability, utilization, reading habit and academic achievement have already occurred. The study was conducted in public secondary schools in Abuja metropolis. The population of this study comprised 16362 Senior Secondary Three students from 12 selected secondary schools in Abuja Metropolis. The sample of the study was 579 senior secondary three students in Abuja Metropolis. Simple random techniques was used to select the sample for the study. A researcher made instrument entitled: “Utilization of Public School Library as determinants of reading habits questionnaire (UPSLDRQ)” was used in collecting relevant data. The instrument was divided into sections; A, B and C. Section A focused on the respondents Bio-data with 3 items, section B dealt with reading habits of students, while section C dealt with utilization of library resources. The instrument was scored using a four-point scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) which will be scored 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The instrument was subjected to face validity by three lecturers in the faculty of Education, University of Abuja in the field of test and measurement. Three items were amended in the questionnaire based on the views and observations of the supervisor and the other two lecturers. The researcher ensured that the items in the instrument covered all the variables involved in the study.

Test re-test reliability was conducted for the instrument. To obtain this, the instrument was administered to 30 respondents who were selected from the population of the study but were not included in the study sample. After two weeks, the instrument was re-administer to the same group of students. The scores obtained from the respondents were subjected to Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics. The reliability coefficient obtained for the instrument was .83. The instrument was therefore regarded as reliable and good for the study since the coefficient was high. Mean was used to answer the research questions and independent t-test statistics was used in testing null hypotheses. All hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha level for test of significant difference. If the calculated t-test is greater than the critical t-test value at .05 significant level, the null hypotheses were rejected but otherwise accepted. Score of 12.5 and

above was regarded as agreeing to each variable in the questionnaire but less than 12.5 was regarded as disagreeing. This was used to arrange the scores of the dependent variables corresponding to respondent who agreed to the items from those who did not. This was used as a measure of influence.

RESULT

Research Question 1

What are the type of library resources, facilities and services available in the selected public schools in Abuja metropolis?

The breakdown of library resources, facilities and services is shown on Table 1.

Table 1: Types of library Resources, Facilities and Services

S/N	Information Resources	Response from schools	Mean	Remarks
1	Textbooks	6	0.50	Available
2	Reference Materials	6	0.50	Available
3	Audio-Visuals	5	0.42	Available fairly
4	Journals	6	0.50	Available
5	Newspaper/ Magazine	5	0.42	Available fairly
6	Novels	6	0.50	Available
7	Government Publications	6	0.50	Available
Grand Mean			0.48	

S/N	Facilities	Response from	Mean	Remarks
1	Reading Tables	6	0.50	Available
2	Reading Chairs	6	0.50	Available
3	Computers	3	0.25	Poorly Available
4	Projectors	2	0.17	Very Poor
5	Television	3	0.25	Poor
6	DVDs/Audio Books	3	0.33	Fairly Available
7	White Board	4	0.32	Fairly Available
Grand Mean			0.32	

S/N	Services	Response from schools	Mean	Remarks
1	Internet	1	0.08	Very poorly available
2	Reference services	6	0.50	Available
3	User Counselling	6	0.50	Available
4	Reading	6	0.50	Available
5	User Education	4	0.42	Available
6	User Advocacy	4	0.42	Available
7	Referral Services	5	0.48	Available
Significant Mean			0.40	

To gather information on the availability of the facilities, resources and services, the Check List was administered to the managers (head) of the six schools that had libraries. Apart from this, the researcher also visited the libraries to see things by himself. Six of the schools confirmed availability of textbooks in the core arts and sciences, reference materials such as dictionaries, encyclopedias, maps, geographical globe, and yearbooks. Nigeria school journals, novels of all types and government publications such as Abuja Area Council Bye-laws, newsletters and bulletins.

On library facilities, there were reading tables and chairs in all the six schools, television and DVDs/Audio books in their libraries while only four had white board and maker in the library, used for demonstrations only.

The Check List also identified the various services that are provided to the students by the six schools that had libraries. The services included but not limited to reference services, user orientation and counseling, user advocacy, especially on how to behave while in the library and the rules and modalities for registration and borrowing of books. Other services were user education, career choice advice, arrangement of books on the selves, search advice and how to make use of online library facilities. The researcher also personally visited the libraries to confirm the veracity or otherwise of the details of the Checklist. The researcher found out that the libraries contained current textbooks and reference materials, although some of the libraries contained a good number of old textbooks and reference materials. The libraries were neatly arranged and clean, with fairly good environment and ventilation. The staff who manage the libraries were library officers, while two has Bachelor of Education with library science combination.

On the interview conducted on the libraries on how their schools acquire the information resources found in their reading rooms, the librarians of GGSS Abaji, GDSS Karu, GGSS Dutse and GSS Garki, revealed that they acquire their library resources through four main sources: donation from graduating students. Each graduating students is required to donate one textbook in any subject area; donations from the Federal Ministry of Education (although done sparingly), donations from the Parents-Teachers Association (also once in a while), from cooperate and business organizations like NNPC, Shell, the Nigerian Library Association,

Abuja branch (also once in a while) and purchase by the school management through the library levy introduced annually (although the amount is usually small).

However, some of the schools that have no library facilities revealed that the schools did not buy books but received book donations from the government and private sectors. The books are kept in the offices of the principals and not consulted by the students because there is no facility to make use of them. The books donated also cut across many subjects both in the arts, science and social sciences including religious text books.

Research Question 2

How does the utilization of school libraries influence reading habit of the students?

Table 4.2: Influence of utilization of school library on the reading habits of students.

S/N	Reading	SA	A	SD	D	Total	Mean	Decision
1	Read once a day	94	18 3	252	50	579	2.55	Significant
2	Read twice a day	76	47	164	292	579	2.84	Significant
3	Read as many times as possible in a day	11 7	20 2	153	107	579	2.56	Significant
4	Read once a week	14 1	20 5	209	24	579	2.56	Significant
5	Read more than once in a week	16 9	15 6	227	27	579	2.79	Significant
6	I do not go to the library to read	12 2	87	228	142	579	1.84	Not Significant
7	I rarely read	18 7	15 8	187	47	579	2.33	Not Significant
Significant Mean 2.49								

At a significant mean value of 2.49, availability of school library in the schools has positively influenced the reading habits of the students in a variety of ways. For instance, many of them now read as many times as possible in a day ($x=2.56$); some read once a day ($x=2.56$), while some read once a week ($x=2.79$), a good number of them now read more than once a week ($x=2.84$). Some of them fairly use the library twice a day ($x=1.84$).

However, the presence of school library did not positively enhance the reading habits of some of the students as some of them did not go to the library to read at all ($x=2.33$) even as others rarely visited the library to read ($x=1.84$). The revelation here is that some students seen not to appreciate the service of library in the school and so not bothered about its existence. And as such, their reading habits may be impaired.

During the interview, the librarians of GDSS Gwagwalada, GGSS Tunga and FGSS Gwarinpa confirmed that most of their students especially those in the senior secondary levels showed remarkable desire for reading and frequency in their use of the library. The remarkable change

in their reading habits came from the system the managements adopted in allocating one hour each lesson time for use of the library. This has increased their love of the library. In addition, overall library cleanliness has also improved following the approval of the Government for the schools to employ more house-keepers and gardeners. However, there are also truancy by some students who subtly sneak into the classes instead of going to the library. But the schools' management are making concerted efforts to enforce compliance.

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant influence of the utilization of school libraries on reading habit of students.

Table 3: Independent t-test analysis of the Influence of Library Utilization on Reading Habit of Students

Utilization of Library	N	Mean	SD	t-cal.	df	p-value
Utilize Library	311	24.78	2.59	7.39	577	.000
Not Utilize Library	268	23.28	2.26			

The result in Table 3 indicated that the calculated t-value of 7.39 for the influence of utilization of school libraries on reading habit of students in Abuja metropolis is significant at .05 levels of significance and 577 degrees of freedom. Therefore, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant influence of utilization of school libraries on reading habit of students in Abuja metropolis is rejected. Hence, there is significant influence of utilization of school libraries on reading habit of students in Abuja metropolis.

DISCUSSION

The finding of this study in the availability of library resources and facilities indicated that many schools lack library resources and facilities. The reason for the finding could be that some schools have dilapidated structures with outdated materials in the name of a school library. It could also be that many schools do not even have where they can point at in the name of a school library. Some with good structures have few facilities and mostly lack in ICT facilities. The finding of this study is similar to that of Bawa (2003) observed that in South Africa, the provision of school library was unequal for the different population groups and others having nothing that can be vaguely called a library.

The finding of the study on utilization of school library and reading habit of students indicated that there is significant influence of utilization of school library on reading habit of students in Abuja metropolis. The mean reading habit of students who utilize the library on a regular basis was greater than that of students who were irregular in library utilization. The reason for the finding could be that students who utilize the library on a regular basis are likely to develop plan for their reading. This will help them to allocated time to various study materials and do well to complete each of them in the allotted time, thus, creating extra time for reading materials outside their subject areas. On the other hand, students who do not utilize the library regularly might find it hard to cover the study materials in their subject areas, thus, making it difficult

for them to go outside of it. It could also be that such students do not reading plan or find it difficult to stick to it if they have any. The finding of this study is similar to that of Jato et al. (2014) who reported that poor utilization of school library by students resulted in poor reading habit among students in Ondo state.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that many secondary schools in Abuja metropolis do not have functional libraries. It can also be concluded from the study that the utilization of school libraries has significant influence on the reading habit of students in Abuja metropolis.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study;

- i. The Government should provide all secondary schools in Abuja metropolis with modern and functional libraries. This is because the availability and utilization of libraries have positive influence on the reading habit of students.
- ii. Students who have functional libraries in their school should make the best use of it in order to develop their reading habits.

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