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Yunusa Anate Adejimoh

Federal University of Agriculture, Makurdi, Nigeria, adejimohyunusa@gmail.com

Hajaratu Mafo Ilo

Federal University of Agriculture, Makurdi, Nigeria, hjrtilo@gmail.com

Benedict Ifeanyi Okike

Federal University of Agriculture, Makurdi, Nigeria, ben16server@gmail.com

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**Availability and Utilization of library Facilities and Information Resources in University of
Agriculture Makurdi Demonstration Secondary School**

By

ADEJIMOH Yunusa Anate

ILO Hajaratu Mafo

OKIKE Benedict Ifeanyi

Abstract

This study was designed to examine the availability and utilization of library facilities and information resources in University of Agriculture Makurdi Demonstration Secondary School. Four objectives were achieved and four research questions answered. Population for this study was 136 subjects comprising of Senior Secondary School 1 and 2 students and was used as sample for the study. Instrument for data collection was the researcher's constructed questionnaire. Data was collected and analysed using mean and standard deviation. Findings of this study revealed that library facilities and information resources are available in University of Agriculture Makurdi Demonstration Secondary School. It was found that the extent students utilize library facilities and information resources are very low. The study also found that there are problems associated with the utilization of library facilities and information resources. The study concludes by enumerating strategies that could be adopted to improve the use of library facilities and information resources by students in University of Agriculture Makurdi Demonstration Secondary School. It was recommended that the University should make provision for adequate funds for acquisition of information resources in Demonstration Secondary school library. University management should ensure that relevant materials to current curricula and teacher/student interests are supplied and the school administration should encourage the study to improve on the utilization of library information resources.

Key Words: Availability, Utilization, Library Facilities, Information Resources and Secondary Schools

Introduction

Despite the fact that literacy levels remain the priority for the education sector, one would still observe that fewer than half of 8 to 14-year-olds have read a book in the last one month and

about 31% of members of staff responsible for school libraries in secondary schools have no specialist knowledge of children's literature. The school library as the powerhouse of reading within the school seems to be failing to play a full and active part in raising literacy levels and creating an innate love of reading (Fanafa, Audu and Ilo, 2019).

Access to information is increasingly ubiquitous. Technology promotes access to information for every purpose and in every setting. In this digital age; information skills paired with literacy skills are vital. The renegotiation of the role of the state and the moves towards a Big Society will increase the significance of information skills, as it becomes more essential for people of all ages to be able to access and make sense of the information they need in order to help themselves (Uzuegbu and Ibiyemi, 2013).

Information literacy defines levels of educational success and the ability to participate economically and socially in society. As the hub of information flows within the school, the school library needs to be a central player in making students information literate. School libraries would seem to have an indisputable place in the work of the school, something recognized by staff and students. When asked if there was somewhere else that could perform the same role, one young person replied: "*There's nowhere*", statement which sums up the majority of the responses.

However, evidence suggests that provision is patchy in the primary sector the concept of the school library as a vital element of teaching and learning is neither widespread nor embedded in school planning; in the secondary sector provision varies from the excellent to the invisible. Having schools library services local authorities and agencies to improve school library provision are in sharp decline. School libraries are underutilized facilities, often perceived by head teachers to be a low priority. What should be a vital ingredient of our schools' system is

marginalized and seems not to be connected with the acknowledged educational priorities of literacy and information skills supporting knowledge acquisition, which are their core business (Tella and Akande, 2007).

The school library is a building or room in a school where textbooks, dictionaries, newspapers, magazines, journals, special documents, computers, internet services, cassettes, among others are put in place for students' use. In other words, it is the central laboratory of the whole school, where all prints in all subject areas taught in the school and electronic materials/services are stocked for accessibility and utilization by students. IFLA (2015) sees school library as an idea that manifested from dream to reality. The author explored evolution of school library as centralized facilities with instructional responsibilities anchored on professionally created guidelines and standards. The objective of the school library is to serve the school's need and to make possible; the purpose and methods of education which the school undertakes. The school library enables the students to look into new ways of learning, and with its' facilities and information resources can play a role which would have ordinarily been impossible if learning were restricted to the use of direct teaching and textbooks alone without the use of other school library facilities and information resources (Owate and Iroha, 2013) and (Oji and Habibu, 2011).

School library facilities and information resources refer to the equipment and other instructional and study materials in the school library meant for teaching and learning. Odeh (2013), Arua and Chidaka (2011), Aina, Okusaga, Taiwo and Ogundipe, (2011) stated that school library facilities and information resources are seen as all inputs which are utilized in the library in order to provide good learning environment for students and teachers so as to be able to achieve educational goals. The school library in addition to doing its vital work of individual

reading, guidance and development of school curriculum, it serves the school as a centre for instructional materials. Instructional materials include books - the literature for children, young people and adults-other printed materials, films, recordings and other latest media developed to aid learning. The function of an instructional materials centre is to locate, gather, provide and coordinate school's materials for learning and the equipment required for use of these materials.

Objective of the study

1. Ascertain the level of availability of school library facilities and information resources in University of Agriculture Makurdi secondary school.
2. Determine the extent to which students utilize these available school library facilities and information resources in University of Agriculture Makurdi secondary school.
3. Identify the problems associated with the utilization of the school library facilities and information resources by secondary school students in University of Agriculture Makurdi secondary school.
4. Find out strategies that could be adopted to improve the use of school library facilities and information resources by students in secondary schools in University of Agriculture Makurdi secondary school.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised and answered by the study.

1. What is the level of availability of library facilities and information resources in University of Agriculture Makurdi secondary school?
2. To what extent to students utilize the available library facilities and information resources in University of Agriculture Makurdi secondary school?

3. What are the problems associated with the utilization of library facilities and information resources by students in University of Agriculture Makurdi secondary school?
4. What are the strategies that could be adopted to improve the use of library facilities and information resources by students in University of Agriculture Makurdi secondary school?

METHODOLOGY

Area of Study

The area of the study is Benue State. Benue state is in the mid-belt region of Nigeria with a population of about 4, 253, 641 (2006 Census). Tiv and Idoma are spoken predominantly. There are other ethnic groups, such as Igede, Etulo and Abakwa, Jukun, Hausa, Akweya and Nyifon among others. With its capital at Makurdi, Benue State is a rich agricultural region; some of the crops grown in the state include potatoes, cassava, soya bean, guinea corn, flax, yams, sesame, rice, and groundnuts. The state has 23 Local Government Areas. The study was conducted in Federal University of Agriculture Makurdi Demonstration Secondary School.

Design of the Study

This study employed a survey research design. This design is suitable because the researcher collected and described the characteristics or facts about the population under study.

3.3 Population of the Study

The population for this study is 136 subjects comprising of Senior Secondary School 1 and 2 students of Federal University of Agriculture Makurdi Demonstration Secondary School.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

There was no sampling for the study. The entire population of 136 comprising of Senior Secondary School 1 and 2 students was used in the study as sample because the population size could be handled effectively by the researcher.

Instrument for Data Collection

The instrument for the study is a structured questionnaire titled ‘Availability and Utilization of Library Facilities and Information Resources Questionnaire (AULFIRQ)’. The instrument was developed by the researcher using the literatures reviewed and information from extension agents.

Validation of Instrument

The items of the questionnaire were validated by 2 experts; two from the Department of Educational Foundations and General Studies, University of Agriculture Makurdi. Both content and face validation of the instrument were done.

Reliability of the Instrument

In order to ascertain the reliability of the instrument, it was trial-tested among 10 students from Special Science Secondary School who were not part of the main study but shared similar characteristics with the subjects under study. Cronbach Alpha (α) coefficient formula was used to determine the internal consistency of the questionnaire items and a coefficient of 0.90 was obtained which implies that the instrument was reliable.

Data Collection Techniques

The data for this study was collected by the researcher who administered the printed copies of the questionnaire to students and collected the completed copies at the spot.

Method of Data Analysis

The data collected was analysed using descriptive statistics, precisely mean. The bench mark for this item was 2.50 ($4+3+2+1=10/4=2.50$). Any item with a mean value of 2.50 or above was considered valid while any item with a mean value of less than 2.50 was regarded as invalid.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Research Question

What is the level of availability of library facilities and information resources in University of Agriculture Makurdi Demonstration Secondary School?

Data for answering question 1 is presented in table 1.

Table 1: Level of availability of library facilities and information resources

S/N	Availability	Mean	Std Dev	Remarks
1	Journal Articles	1.56	0.76	Not Available
2	Magazine Articles	2.91	0.93	Available
3	Newspaper Articles	2.76	0.82	Available
4	Monographs (Scholarly Books)	1.50	0.72	Not Available
5	Nonfiction Books	2.82	0.87	Available
6	Reference Resources	2.80	0.81	Available
7	Textbooks	2.70	0.90	Available
Grand Mean		2.44	0.83	

Source: Field study, 2019

Result in Table 1 shows that out of 7 items, 5 had their mean values of ranging from 2.56 to 2.91 and were above the bench mark of 2.50. This implies that the respondents agreed that the level of availability of library facilities and information resources in University of Agriculture Makurdi Demonstration Secondary School.

Research Question 2

To what extent do students utilize the available library facilities and information resources in University of Agriculture Makurdi Demonstration Secondary School?

Data for answering question 2 is presented in table 2.

Table 2: Extent of utilization of the available library facilities and information resources

S/N	Utilization	Mean	Std Dev	Remarks
1	Gray Literature	1.66	0.80	Very Low
3	Daily	1.62	0.82	Very Low
4	Weekly	1.64	0.82	Very Low
5	Fortnightly	2.86	0.71	High
6	Monthly	1.57	0.77	Very Low
Grand Mean		1.87	0.78	

Source: Field study, 2019

Result in Table 2 shows that out of 6 items, only 1 had their mean value of 2.86 that is above the bench mark of 2.50. This implies that the extent to which students utilize library facilities and information resources in University of Agriculture Makurdi Demonstration Secondary School is very low.

Research Question 3

What are the problems associated with the utilization of library facilities and information resources by students in University of Agriculture Makurdi Demonstration Secondary School?

Data for answering question 3 is presented in table 3.

Table 3: Problems associated with the utilization of library facilities and information resources by students

S/N	Problems	Mean	Std Dev	Remarks
1	Lack of a national policy	2.47	0.94	Agree

2	Restrictions on numbers of books and reference materials	2.67	0.66	Agree
3	Lack of computers and internet connectivity	2.87	0.97	Agree
4	Inadequate funding	2.71	0.86	Agree
5	Lack of sufficient library premises	2.95	0.84	Agree
6	Insufficient space, shelving, furniture, equipment	2.61	1.50	Agree
7	Lack of money to undertake regular maintenance	2.65	1.66	Agree
8	Untrained school librarians	3.06	1.56	Agree
9	Poor library management systems	2.86	1.62	Agree
Grand Mean		2.76	1.18	

Source: Field study, 2019

Result in Table 3 shows that out of 9 items, only 8 items had their mean values ranged from 2.61 to 3.05 above the bench mark of 2.50. This implies that the 8 items are problems associated with the utilization of library facilities and information resources by students in University of Agriculture Makurdi Demonstration Secondary School.

Research Question 4

What are the strategies that could be adopted to improve the use of library facilities and information resources by students in University of Agriculture Makurdi Demonstration Secondary School?

Data for answering question 4 is presented in table 4.

Table 4: Strategies that could be adopted to improve the use of library facilities and information resources

S/N	Strategies	Mean	Std Dev	Remarks
1	The government should put more priority on adequate provision of fund necessary for the provision of current and up to date information resources	3.16	1.65	Agree
2	Employment of qualified and trained teacher-librarian	2.97	0.87	Agree
3	Regular training of library staff which will provide guidelines to regulate and lay down modes of usage of library resources	2.91	0.80	Agree

4	The government in collaboration with other stakeholders should upgrade or build new school libraries in secondary schools in the country and equip them with all necessary library facilities and information resources	2.84	0.81	Agree
5	There is the need for collective action by individuals, Non-Government Organizations, and government to rescue the development of school libraries in the country	2.69	0.93	Agree
Grand Mean		2.91	1.01	

Source: Field study, 2019

Result in Table 4 shows that all 5 items had their mean values ranged from 2.69 to 3.16 above the bench mark of 2.50. This implies that the 5 items there are strategies that could be adopted to improve the use of library facilities and information resources by students in University of Agriculture Makurdi secondary school.

Discussion of Findings

Research question 1 was on the level of availability of library facilities and information resources in University of Agriculture Makurdi Demonstration Secondary School. Findings revealed that magazine articles, newspaper articles, newspaper articles, nonfiction books, reference resources and textbooks were the available library facilities and information resources in University of Agriculture Makurdi Demonstration Secondary School.

Research Question 2 was on the extent to which students utilize the available library facilities and information resources in University of Agriculture Makurdi Demonstration Secondary School. Findings revealed that students utilize library resources only fortnightly.

Research question 3 was on the problems associated with the utilization of library facilities and information resources by students in University of Agriculture Makurdi Demonstration Secondary School. Findings revealed that restrictions on number of books and reference materials, lack of computers and internet connectivity, inadequate funding, lack of sufficient

library premises, insufficient space, shelving, furniture, equipment, lack of money to undertake regular maintenance, untrained school librarians and poor library management systems were problems associated with the utilization of library facilities and information resources by students in University of Agriculture Makurdi Demonstration Secondary School.

Research question 4 was on the strategies that could be adopted to improve the use of library facilities and information resources by students in University of Agriculture Makurdi secondary school. Findings revealed that the government should prioritize adequate provision of funds necessary for the provision of current and up to date information resources, employment of qualified and trained teacher-librarian, regular training of library staff which will provide guidelines to regulate and lay down modes of usage of library resources, the government in collaboration with other stakeholders can upgrade or build new school libraries in secondary schools in the country and equip them with all necessary library facilities and information resources which calls for collective action by individuals, non-government organizations and government to rescue the development of school libraries in the country

Conclusion

Library facilities and information resources are considered relevant in educational institutions including secondary schools. This study has examined the availability and utilization of library facilities and information resources in University of Agriculture Makurdi Demonstration Secondary School when it was found out that library information and resources are available in the school. However, students have not been making effective use of these resources. There are problems associated with the use of library information and resources and prominent among them include: lack of computers and internet connectivity, inadequate funding, lack of sufficient library premises and insufficient space. The study concludes that there are strategies that could

be adopted to improve the use of library facilities and information resources by students in University of Agriculture Makurdi Demonstration Secondary School when it suggested that there ought be employment of qualified and trained teacher-librarian, regular training of library staff which will provide guidelines to regulate and lay down modes of usage of library resources and the government in collaboration with other stakeholders can upgrade or build new libraries in secondary schools in the country and equip them with all necessary library facilities and information resources.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. The University should make provision for adequate funds for acquisition of library facilities and information resources in Demonstration Secondary school library
2. University management should ensure that relevant materials to current curricula and teacher/student interests are supplied in the library
3. University management should embark on regular review and supply of new arrivals in the library
4. University management should ensure tight security guards to prevent theft and loss of library information and resources
5. University management should create proper awareness on the role of library facilities information and resources on regular basis so as to aid utilization
6. Government and other relevant stakeholders should individually and collaboratively upgrade existing libraries and build new ones where there is none.

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