Management of School Libraries and Utilization of Library Resources by Secondary School Students in Rivers State

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Abstract

This study aimed at examining the management of school libraries and utilization of library resources by secondary school students in Rivers State. The researchers adopted survey design for the study. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. The population of the study is 12210 comprising 12200 students and 10 teacher librarians from 10 selected secondary schools in Rivers State. A sample of 387 was drawn from the entire population using Taro Yamene statistics while proportionate sampling technique was used to determine the number of instruments that will be distributed in each of the schools. The instruments for data collection were two rating scales modified on four-point Likert scale of measurement. Reliability coefficients of 0.81 and 0.86 were obtained for Students' Utilization of Library Resources Scale (SULRS) and Management of School Library Scale (MSLS) respectively using Cronbach alpha technique. Mean and standard deviations were used to answer the research questions while, t-test of significance were used to test the hypotheses. Findings showed that, the management of school libraries in the schools studied is not significantly done above average rating; and the measure of students' utilization of school library resources in the schools studied is not also significantly above average rating. The researchers therefore recommended an improved application of planning strategies and engagement of qualified staff to man school libraries, so as to ensure availability of adequate information resources and enhanced use of school library.

Keyword: School Library, Library resources, Management, Use of information resources

Introduction

The school library is an organised collection of book materials and non-book resources appropriately housed, for students and teachers use. Umar (2013), defines the school library as the part of the school where a collection of books, periodicals, magazines, records of all types, computers etc. are housed for use by teachers and students for learning, recreational activities, personal interests and interpersonal relationship. It is also referred to as school library media centre, because it has metamorphosed from the school library of only books to media centre which now stocks multi-media resources. Israel (2020) citing Ogunniyi, Lawal and Sheji, asserts

that the school library is more than just collections of books as they are useful tools in the creation and execution of positive social change especially in any society in need of social reforms. These resources are meant to be utilized to achieve the educational objectives of the school.

A good school library is expected to promote the development of reading skills and talents and encourage independent and long-term reading interest and habits. It should offer learning services, books and resources that enable all members of the school community to become critical thinkers and effective users of information in all formats and media (Centerwall & Nolin, 2019 citing IFLA). Akanwa and Udo-Anyanwu (2016) opine that the school library is an integral part of the school, and serves as a laboratory where activities and experiments geared towards the development of the child and the nation are carried out. It can serve as a resource centre, learning laboratory, teaching agency and center for recreational reading, viewing and listening. Easley and Yelvington, and O'Connell; Bales and Mitchell cited in Batool and Webber (2017) further assert that its role has transformed from developing reading habits among children to building information (searching, organizing, using) and critical skills (thinking, evaluating). The modern school child is taught to explore the world of knowledge through the use of the school library. Libraries are therefore fundamental to students study. The high cost of textbooks has made it impossible for many students to afford them, they therefore rely on the school library and its resources.

School library resources are in information materials used in rendering services in the school library. They include the print and non print resources, physical facilities and equipment as well as the human resources. While the print resources are the fiction and non-fiction books and reference materials, the audio visuals constitute the non print resources of the school library. Printers and computer sets, atlases, maps, printers, reference materials, globe, documentaries, interactive boards, television, social media tools, educative films, 2/2 slide, video player, realia, audio player, and CD-ROM although rarely used are also made available in some school libraries. Others are library equipment alongside the physical facilities like reading chairs, tables, catalogue cabinets, shelves etc. The teacher librarian, library assistants, library prefects and sometimes cleaners are the human resources of the library. According to International Association of School Library as cited in Batool and Webber (2017) school library resources comprise both print and non-print, including electronic media, and access to data which

promotes an awareness of the child's own cultural heritage, and provides the basis for an understanding of the diversity of other cultures. The resources in the school library must be largely relevant to the school's curriculum including anticipated and special needs of the school. They also need to be effectively managed to sustain their relevance and also encourage their optimal usage.

The utilization of library resources by both teachers and students is of great concern in providing library services however, results of earlier studies show different levels of utilization of the resources. While in some schools minimal use of school library resources was the order of the day, in some others, non use and even lack of awareness of the resources were reported. Specifically, Anyanwu's (2011) study on how long the students make use of school libraries, revealed that students use the library few hours per day and show non-familiarity with the use of the catalogue and other facilities of the library. On the contrary, Chukwuji, Nwankwo, Gadanga, Sule and Yusuf's (2017) study revealed that text books were found to be mostly used on daily basis; Akawu, Ndakotsu, Abubakar and Barde (2017) ascertained the use of library resources which include dictionaries, handbooks, manuals and textbooks in preparation for examination in public secondary school libraries in Minna, Niger State while Saleh and Lasisi (2011) and Ogbuiyi and Okpe (2013) also found out that library resources were being utilized by the students in the schools they studied. Most public and private primary and secondary schools have libraries designed to support the school's curriculum. They supplement both teaching and learning materials that students and teachers need for their academic work while the school librarians are to manage the library and equip the students with the required skills that they need to effectively and efficiently utilize the library collection (Aboyade & Aboyade, 2017).

Today, the need for prudent management has increased as modern business organizations and enterprises become more complex. Management is responsible for organizing, directing, staffing and planning the progress of work, setting standard of attainment, and measuring different courses of action. It is essential in enabling an organisation to craft plans to achieve desired goals and organize physical, human and financial resources needed to carry out the planned activities (Daft, 2016). According to Gunda (2018: 1) "management is a creative as well as a systematic flow of knowledge that can be used to attain organisational goals by making use of various resources, both tangible and intangible, in an effective way". Kaehler and Grundei (2019) see it is a steering influence on market, production and/or resource operations in an

organization and its units that may address both people and non-people issues and is exerted by multiple organizational actors through either anticipatory norm-setting or situational intervention with the aim of achieving the unit's objectives. It is also the process of utilizing material and human resources to accomplish designated objectives which involves the organization, direction, coordination and evaluation of people to achieve organizational goals (Afolayan, 2021 citing Sethi & Slaria). Therefore, a school library also needs management to achieve its goal of helping improve the quality of students' and teachers' knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes in improving their self-quality (Rakhmayanti & Karwanto, 2019). This will go a long way to encouraging the use of its resources and invariably enhance the academic performance of the students.

Empirically, findings show varying levels and degrees of school library management and utilization of its resources. Among such results include Akanwa and Mbagwu's (2009) study on constraints to effective management of selected secondary school libraries in Owerri Municipal Council where a gross under utilization of libraries by staff and students due to poor management of library resources was found. Also, Emenyonu (2015) ascertained that: inadequate provision of information resources, insufficient personnel, inadequate provision of accommodation, lack of proper organization of information resources, and inadequate funding were the challenges facing management and utilization of information resources in secondary school libraries.

Effective management of school libraries in this research work is used to refer to all necessary strategies, measures and steps invested into making sure that resources of school libraries are adequately utilized. Rakhmayanti and Karwanto (2019) citing Hartono, states that it is what and how things can be done, both through theory and practice, so that libraries, documentation, and information can be managed efficiently and effectively. When library resources, such as staff, information materials, funds, accommodation, furniture and equipment are adequately provided in a school library, it becomes a credit to the school management and the teacher librarian as well as a force that can change the attitude of the child towards the use of library resources. Efficient and effective libraries are sine-qua-non to improvement in education thus, the school library should be the centre of the learning process and the hub of the curriculum. Interest in school library services in our contemporary society is basically propelled by the role the library plays in the educational development and academic achievement of

students. Based on the foregoing, the realities of today's modern society calls for librarians who possess administrative skills not just in discharging their duties for efficient service-delivery as professionals, but also who are resourceful managers in the modern library organization.

This clarion call notwithstanding, students' poor performance/achievements in most subjects in SSCEs including English language, Literature in English and other subjects that do not involve practical's in the strict sense of it has become a recurring phenomenon. In the universities, students find it hard to write or express themselves in "good" English. These situations are very much appalling. A number of factors including English language teachers may be blamable. But if we recall or go down memory lane, we note that many Nigerians obtained ordinary and/or advanced level certificates based on correspondence courses/programmes which mainly involved individuals reading print materials. It means the teacher factor should not be very much blamed. Could the blame be on students not agreeing to read especially where reading materials are provided in the libraries? If it is that they do not want to read or make use of the libraries, could it be because the library resources are not well managed? These situations are indeed problems that need to be addressed. It is against this background that the researchers deem it necessary to carry out an investigation on management of school libraries and utilization of library resources by secondary school students in Rivers State.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to examine the management of school libraries, and utilization of library resources by secondary school students in Rivers State. Specifically, the researchers aimed at ascertaining the:

1. measure of management of school libraries;
2. measure of students' utilization of the school library resources;

Research Questions

The following are posed to guide the study:

1. What is the mean score measures of management variables in the school libraries studied?
2. What is the mean score measure of students' utilization of the library resources in the school libraries studied?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses stated in the null form were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Ho_1:   The mean score measures of each of management variables in the school libraries studied is not significantly greater than the criterion mean of 15;

Ho_2:   The mean score measure of students' utilization of the library resources in the school libraries studied is not significantly greater than the criterion mean of 62.5.

Methods

The researchers adopted a descriptive survey and simple linear and multiple correlational research designs. The population of the study is 12210 comprising 12200 students and 10 teacher librarians from 10 selected secondary schools in Rivers State. A sample of 387 was drawn from the entire population using Taro Yamene statistics while proportionate sampling technique was used to determine the number of instruments that will be distributed in each of the schools. Two rating scales each of 4-point response options for students and relevant staff were used to collect data. The instrument for the first research question was answered by the teacher librarians, while the second instrument was addressed by both the teacher librarians and the students. Data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics to obtain means and coefficient of correlation for answering research questions. The t-test and ANOVA statistics for were applied in testing hypothesis.

Results

Research Question One: What is the measure of management of school libraries in the schools studied?

Table 1

Descriptive analysis on the measure of management of school libraries in the schools studied

Variables	N	$\sum X$	$\overline{X}$	S	Remarks
Planning	10	165	16.50	.972	Agree
Organizing	10	141	14.10	2.079	Disagree
Staffing	10	125	12.50	1.509	Disagree
Supervising	10	90	9.00	.943	Disagree
Controlling	10	87	8.70	1.059	Disagree

Key: Sample Size (n), Summation ($\sum X$), Mean ($\overline{X}$), Standard Deviation (S), and Remarks

Table 1 shows mean scores on the measure of management variables in the school libraries studied. With regard to the cluster criterion mean, the result indicated that the majority agreed to planning while others, organizing, staffing, supervising and controlling were considered to be disagree since the mean scores were below the criterion mean of 15. The values of standard deviations compared to the various values of the means are small, which indicates that rating scores are homogeneous through skewed. The result here is that management of school libraries in the schools studied is below average.

Hypothesis 1: The mean score measures of each of the management of school libraries in the schools studied is not significantly greater than the criterion mean of 15.

Table 2

Inferential statistics on the management of school libraries in the school studied

N	$\overline{X}$	μ	S	S.E	Df	t_{cal}	$t_{tab.}$	Decision
10	16.50	15	.972	.307	9	**4.881**	**1.645**	Reject Ho_1
10	14.10	15	2.079	.657	9	**-1.369**	**1.645**	Accept Ho_1
10	12.50	15	1.509	.477	9	**-5.238**	**1.645**	Accept Ho_1
10	9.00	15	.943	.298	9	**-20.125**	**1.645**	Accept Ho_1
10	8.70	15	1.059	.335	9	**-18.806**	**1.645**	Accept Ho_1

Key: Sample Size (n), Mean ($\overline{X}$), Standard Deviation (S), Standard Error (SE), degree of freedom (df), one sample t-test statistics and Decision

In Table 2, the test of hypothesis indicated that the t-calculated values are less than the t-tabulated value of 1.645 except for that of planning which was greater than the tabulated value. Hence, accepting the null hypothesis, entailing that the mean score measures of each of the management of school libraries in the school studied is not significantly greater than the criterion mean of 15. This indicates that the management of school libraries in the schools studied is not significantly done above average rating.

Research Question Two: What is the measure of students' utilization of the library resources in the school libraries studied?

Table 3

Descriptive analysis on the measure of students' utilization of the library resources in the school libraries studied.

Variable	N	$\sum X$	$\overline{X}$	S	Remarks
Utilization	**387**	21158	54.67	6.715	Disagree

Key: Sample Size (n), Summation ($\sum X$), Mean ($\overline{X}$), Standard Deviation (S), and Remarks

Table 3 shows mean scores on the measure of students' utilization of the library resources in the school libraries studied. With regard to the cluster criterion mean, the result indicated that the cluster was considered to be disagreed since the mean score of 54.67 is below the criterion mean of 62.5. The values of standard deviations compared to the various values of the means are small, which indicates that the rating score is homogeneous through skewed. The result here is that measure of students' utilization of the library resources in the school libraries studied is below average.

Hypothesis 2: The mean score measure of students' utilization of the library resources in the school libraries studied is not significantly greater than the criterion mean of 62.5.

Table 4

Inferential statistics on the measure of students' utilization of the library resources in the school libraries studied

N	$\overline{\overline{X}}$	μ	S	S.E	Df	t_{cal}	$t_{tab.}$	Decision
387	54.67	62.5	6.715	0.341	386	**-22.933**	**1.645**	Accept Ho_2

Key: Sample Size (n), Mean ($\overline{X}$), Standard Deviation (S), Standard Error (SE), degree of freedom (df), one sample t-test statistics and Decision

In Table 4, the test of hypothesis indicated that the t-calculated value of -22.933 is less than the t-tabulated value of 1.645. Hence, accepting the null hypothesis, entailing that the mean score measures of each of measure of students' utilization of the library resources in the school

libraries studied is not significantly greater than the criterion mean of 62.5. This indicates that the measure of students' utilization of the library resources in the school libraries studied is not significantly above average rating.

Discussion of Findings

Management of school Libraries in the School Studied

The study revealed that the management of school libraries in the schools studied is not significantly done above average rating. This finding indicates that management of libraries is not done up to average and thus may affect the utilization of its resources. This finding is in agreement with Akanwa and Mbagwu (2016) finding which showed that there is gross under utilization of these libraries by staff and students due to poor management of library resources. It is also in tandem with the result of Emenyonu (2015) study where inadequate provision of information resources; insufficient personnel; inadequate provision of accommodation; lack of proper organization of information resources and inadequate funding were found to be the challenges facing management and utilization of information resources in secondary school libraries.

Utilization of Library Resources in Secondary School Libraries by Students

The responses for the items indicate that the students disagree that they utilize the stated library resources in the school libraries. This finding shows that the measure of students' utilization of the school library resources in the school libraries studied is not significantly above average rating. This poor result is in consonance with Anyanwu's (2011) report that students show non-familiarity with the use of the catalogue and other areas of the library. It is however not in line with the findings of Saleh and Lasisi (2011) and Ogbuiyi and Okpe (2013) who found out that library resources are being utilized by the students in the schools they studied. It also contradicts Chukwuji, Nwankwo, Gadanga, Sule and Yusuf's (2017) study which revealed that text books were found to be mostly used on daily basis as well as Barde's (2017) finding which stated that library resources which include dictionaries, textbooks, manuals and textbooks were used by students in preparation for examination.

Conclusion

Management, users and the nature of majority of the information resources over time are gradually eroding the image of the library physical plant, a basis for the question posed by many on the relevance of the school library when they are not functional. Although it may not be possible to predict or change the elements and forces of management, there is need to observe their influences on the user's so as to plan on strategies to encourage the use of information resources. The result of the study shows that that the management of school libraries in the schools studied is not significantly done above average rating and the measure of students' utilization of the library resources in the school libraries studied is not significantly above average rating.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study the researchers' made some recommendations that:

1. Since the planning, organizing and controlling of libraries correlates significantly with students' use of library resources, the school authority in collaboration with the school management board should ensure adequate management of the school libraries to encourage proper utilization of the resources by the students,

2. Governments at all levels should ensure proper staffing of the secondary school libraries so as to improve students' utilization of the library resources; the school administrators (principals and inspectors) should ensure adequate supervision of the libraries and the librarians to that the library can adequately provide for improved students' use of the library resources.

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