

**SCHOOL LIBRARY AND UTILISATION IN THE IJEBU
NORTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF OGUN STATE,
NIGERIA.**

By

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Abstract

The study is a survey of school libraries and usage in Ijebu North local Government Area of Ogun State. Twelve secondary schools were selected for the study, five teachers and thirty students were further selected from each school for questionnaire administration. The study concluded that the establishment of the school libraries in the area is not given the desired priority, and the provision of the library services is inadequate. The study identified some problems, which include inadequate funding and dearth of trained personnel.

In conclusion, the study recommended collective approach to school library development, active involvement of the Nigerian Library Association and inclusion of School Library Management as a compulsory course in the teacher education curriculum in Nigeria among others.

Introduction

Libraries are central to the academic and personal development of individuals. School libraries remain the pivot on which other services relies for effective performance. They form an integral part of the education system; Daniel (2004)

sees an education institution without a library as a motorcar without an engine or a body without a soul. Supporting Daniel's (2004) submission, Oguntuase (2004) posits that the school library is an essential part of the school. Oguntimehin & Adeyemi (2004) also identify school libraries as one of the six supportive services necessary for realizing the objective of basic education. It is therefore the responsibility of all to provide it at all levels of our educational endeavour and of course maintain and sustain the required standard.

School libraries are learning resource centres attached to individual schools to support teaching and learning. Dike (2004) submits that school libraries are the nerve centre of the educational programme of the school which supports the curriculum. In the same vein, Attama (2004) writes that school libraries are indispensable organs that provide all the resources for the child's proper educational growth. They are indeed central to the development of individual student.

School libraries are attached to pre-tertiary and pre-secondary schools. Media centre, learning resource centre, are other terms that have been variously used in the field of librarianship to refer to libraries in schools. Fayose (1995) defines school library as a collection of books, recordings of all types, slides, computers, study kits, realia and other information bearing resources housed for use by teacher and students for learning, recreational activities and personal development. The modern day school library is an integral part of the teaching and learning process. Elaturoti (1990) described the school library as a vital instrument in the educational process. Dike (2001) supports Elaturoti's submission when he avers that the library is a teaching and learning environment, which provide resources and learning opportunities for the realization of the objectives of its parent organ. Kumar (1991) agrees with the submission and even submits that the performance of students could be improved considerably if they use the library regularly.

The importance of libraries cannot be overemphasized.

Ezenwa (1989) submits that school libraries have an important role to play, both in the context of the educational system and in preparing the future generation of library users. Within the school system, they provide the environment where students can discover and develop their abilities and talents and where teachers can improve their skills and locate a wide range of learning resources. Odusanya and Amusa (2002) discussing the importance of libraries to education posit that libraries and education are two vital institutions which cannot be separated in an all round development of a child. The absence of adequate and efficient library services will subsequently have negative effects on the products of the educational process. This assertion is reinforced by Nwafor's (1977) submission that the absence of libraries in our schools inevitably means that people who pass through such schools cannot be expected to be library conscious, and this situation has had conspicuous adverse effects on our educational system. He concludes that our libraries rather than prepare people for life only prepare them for examinations.

Though, the development of school libraries in Nigeria can be traced to the first Nigerian School Library Association conference held in 1964 and subsequently the establishment of the Abadina Media Resource Centre in 1972 by the department of Library studies, University of Ibadan; the development of school libraries four decades after, is nothing to write home about. Gojeh (2004) in a survey carried out on secondary school library provision in Kaduna state found inadequate library collections and staffing in schools sampled; as some do not have libraries at all. Only 24.5% of the schools surveyed have functional or purpose school libraries. Earlier studies by Odusanya and Amusa (2002), Fayose (1983) to mention a few confirms Gojeh's findings.

Problem Statement

Ogun state is noted to be a front runner in manpower development, as evidenced in her having the highest number of universities in Nigeria, but the State seems not to be doing

well in terms of Library services provision. Until recently, when the present administration picked some interest in the state's Simeon Adebayo library, public library service in the state was at its lowest ebb. (Omagbemi et al, 2005). Public school libraries in the state were not better either (Odusanya and Amusa 2002).

Ijebu North which is one of the largest Local Government Area in the state is endowed with an appreciable number of public secondary schools which were twenty three as at 1992 (Odumosu, 1992); a technical college, a state polytechnic and a university. It is expected that the prevalence of tertiary institutions in the local government will influence the pre-tertiary schools education system. It is therefore the problem of this study to investigate school library provision and utilization in the secondary school in the local government.

Objectives of the Study

A survey research method was used to conduct a study on school library utilization in Ijebu North, Ogun State. The study is designed to:

- determine the availability of libraries in secondary schools in the local government
- determine the adequacy or otherwise of the libraries and the material resources.
- determine the availability or otherwise of qualified library personnel in the schools.
- determine the level of significance of the library materials to educational needs of the schools.
- identify the sources of funding of the school libraries in the local government.
- identify the problems facing school libraries in the local government

Research Questions

The following research questions have been answered in the study report: are there libraries in the secondary schools in Ijebu North Local Government?

- How adequate or otherwise are the school libraries?

- What is the professional qualification or otherwise of the staff in charge of the school libraries?
- What type of library resources are available in the school libraries?
- Are the library resources being used by the students and staff?
- What are the sources of funding for the school libraries?
- What are the problems facing the development of school libraries in the Ijebu North Local Government?

Scope of the Study

The scope of this study is the Ijebu North Local Government of Ogun State with its headquarters in Ijebu Igbo. The Local Government was described as one of the largest in the state (Odumosu, 1992). Apart from this, the local government has a fair share of pre-tertiary schools and even tertiary institutions – the Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye and the Gateway Polytechnic, Ijebu-Igbo. The Local Government is therefore considered a fair representative of other local governments in the state, in terms of educational institution. The findings are expected to be of use to the supervisory organs of secondary education in the local government in particular and Ogun State in general.

Research Methodology

In obtaining relevant data for the study, the interview, questionnaire and observation methods were used. The questionnaire used were of two types, format A and B. format A was designed to elicit relevant information from the teachers, while format B was administered on the students.

The sample population comprises of five (5) teachers and 30 senior secondary school students in each of the school surveyed. They were randomly selected. In all, 60 questionnaires were distributed to teachers, 53 questionnaires were response, while 338 copies of questionnaires were retrieved from the 360 administered. This represents a return rate of 88.3% and 93.9% respectively. The data collected from the questionnaires were analysed using simple percentage and conclusion derived from the findings.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1: Schools Surveyed

S/N	School	Year Established	Type	Library Rating
1.	Abusi Edumare Comprehensive High School, Ijebu-Igbo	1971	Public	B
2.	Achievers College, Ijebu-Igbo	2000	Private	C
3.	Ago-iwoye Secondary School, Ago-Iwoye	1954	Public	C
4.	Beje High School, Ijebu-Igbo	1980	Public	C
5.	Fowoseje Comprehensive High School, Ago-Iwoye	1981	Public	C
6.	Girls School, Ijebu-Igbo	1955	Public	C
7.	International School, Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye.	1996	Private	B
8.	Ita-merin Comprehensive High School, Ago-Iwoye	1978	Public	C
9.	Mercy Model Secondary School, Ijebu-Igbo	1999	Private	C
10.	Methodist Comprehensive High School, Ago-Iwoye	1979	Public	C
11.	Molusi College, Ijebu-Igbo	1949	Public	C
12.	Obanta Comprehensive High School, Awa		Public	C

Key: A – Adequate; B – Fairly Adequate; C - Inadequate

The survey took the researchers to thirty (30) secondary schools in the local government and the twelve (12) listed in the study are the ones that have libraries. This represent only 40% of the schools identified and visited. Table 1 reveals that majority of the schools surveyed are more than ten (10) years old and it is expected that schools that are more than ten years old should not only have functional libraries, but also qualified personnel. The table also revealed that four (4) of the schools surveyed are private. The researchers on visit to each of the schools, assessed the libraries in term of number and quality of resources, currency of the resources and quality of personnel; and as such rated the libraries as adequate, fairly adequate and inadequate. Only two (2) representing 16.7% got rated as fairly adequate while the rest 10 (83.3%) were found inadequate.

Table 2a: Students' use of the library

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	12	3.6
Twice a week	14	4.1
Thrice a week	21	6.2
Occasionally	267	79
Not at all	24	7.1
Total	338	100

Table 2b: Teachers' Use of the Library

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	-	-
Twice a week	-	-
Thrice a week	-	-
Occasionally	18	34
Not at all	35	66
Total	53	100

Tables 2a and 2b presented the students' and their teachers' frequency of library use. It is revealed that majority of the teachers (66%) do not use the library at all, while 34% use it occasionally. On the other hand, majority of the students (79%) use it occasionally, while 7.1% do not use it at all. Personal interaction with the teachers revealed that their low patronage of the library is caused by lack of useful and relevant materials in the Libraries.

Table 3: Respondents Specific Information Resources Needed

Desired Resources	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
<u>Print resources</u>			
Encyclopedia	321	95	3 rd
Dictionaries	335	99	2 nd
Fiction/Novel	218	64	5 th
Textbooks	338	100	1 st
Newspapers/Magazines	216	64	5 th
<u>Audiovisual Resources</u>			
Computer	203	60	7 th
Audio/Video Materials	35	10	10 th
Radio	20	6	11 th
Television	106	31	8 th
VCD/DVD	260	77	4 th
Games	77	23	9 th

Table 3 revealed respondents preference for print materials such as textbooks, encyclopedias, dictionaries etc. The low response rate for audiovisual and recreational materials suggests that they probably don't know the usefulness of these resources. Verbal interaction with some of the respondents reveal that majority of them are not aware that print resources like encyclopedias, dictionaries, books etc are also available in electronic sources.

Table 4: Respondents Use of available Library Resources

Resources	Frequency	Percentage
Textbooks	323	97.3
Fiction/Novel	85	25.6
Newspaper/Magazine	22	6.6
Dictionaries	96	28.9
Encyclopedia	42	12.7
Maps/Atlases	15	4.5

While table 3 was used to measure the respondents desired information resources, table 4 measures their use of the available resources in their libraries. The table reveals that textbooks are the most consulted as indicated by responses from 97% of the respondents. Dictionaries used by 28.9 follow this. Newspapers/Magazines and Maps/Atlases are used by 6.6% and 4.5% respectively.

Table 5: Purpose of Library Use by students

Purpose	Number	%	Rank
Read personal books/ lecture notes	296	94.3	1 st
Do assignments	190	60.5	2 nd
Study/read for examinations	66	21	3 rd
Use library materials	59	18.8	4 th
Relaxation	20	6.4	5 th

Table 5 revealed that majority of the respondents 296 (94.3%) visit the library to read personal books/lecture notes, 190 (60.5%) go to the library to do assignments while 66 (21%) visit the library to study for examinations. Only 59 (18.8%) actually visit the library to use the library resources. This probably is attributable to the quality and inadequacy of the available library materials.

Table 6: Purpose of Library use by Teachers

Purpose	Number	%	Rank
Read personal books/ lecture notes	15	83.3	1 st
Do assignments	08	44.4	2 nd
Study/read for examinations	07	38.9	3 rd
Use library materials	06	33.3	4 th
Relaxation	04		

For analysis in table 6, cognizance was taken of the teachers who use the library, see table 2b. Table 6 reveals that majority of the respondents 15 (83.3%) visit the library to read personal materials, 8 (44.4%) go there to prepare lesson notes, 7 (38.9%) use it for personal examination preparation while 33.3% and 22.2% use it for relaxation and library materials consultation respectively. It should be noted that the 18 teachers who use the library, do so occasionally (table 2b). This does not portray quality leadership in library use as teachers are suppose to mentor their wards (students) in such areas.

Table 7: Adequacy of Library Resources

Responses	Teachers	Students
Adequate	2 (11.1%)	97 (30.9%)
Inadequate	16 (88.9%)	217 (69.1%)

Table 7 revealed that available school library resources in the schools are inadequate. For the avoidance of doubt, the submissions of non-library users in the schools were not considered 69.1% and 88.9% of the students and teachers respectively found the library resources inadequate while 30.9% and 11.1% of the students and teachers respectively found the library resources adequate.

Table 8: Designations of Library Staff

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Teacher	4	33.3
Teacher/Librarian	1	8.3
Librarian/Library Officer	1	8.3
Library Prefect	2	16.7
Clerk	4	33.3
Total	12	100

Table 8 revealed that majority of the staff members in charge of school libraries are Teachers and Clerks who have no librarianship training. Only two of the schools surveyed have trained personnel managing them. Observations further revealed that where teachers are said to be in-charge, such teachers only use them as offices, while it is the Library Prefects that are actually in-charge.

Table 9: Challenges of the school libraries

Problems	Rank
Inadequate funding	1 st
Inadequate personnel	2 nd
Inadequate space/furniture	3 rd
Inadequate stock organization	4 th
Inadequate resources	5 th
Inadequate opening hours	6 th

To analyse the challenges facing school libraries in Ijebu North Local Government Area, respondents were allowed to comment freely on the problems facing the libraries and its use. The comments were re-defined and collated. The collated challenges were ranked according to the frequency of responses. Inadequate funding tops the problem chart, while inadequate opening hours came last.

Table 10: Sources of Library Funding

School Libraries	Source(s)					
	PR	PTA	LV	DN	OS	None
1. Abusi Edumare Comprehensive High School, Ijebu-Igbo.		✓		✓	✓	
2. Achievers College, Ijebu-Igbo.	✓	✓	✓			
3. Ago-Iwoye Secondary School, Ago-Iwoye.		✓			✓	
4. Beje High School, Ijebu-Igbo.						✓
5. Fowoseje Comprehensive High School, Ago-Iwoye.						✓
6. Girls School, Ijebu-Igbo.		✓			✓	✓
7. International School, Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye.	✓	✓		✓		
8. Ita-merin Comprehensive High School, Ago-Iwoye		✓			✓	
9. Mercy Model Secondary School, Ijebu-Igbo.	✓	✓		✓		
10. Methodist Comprehensive High School, Ago-Iwoye.						
11. Molusi College, Ijebu-Igbo.		✓		✓	✓	
12. Obanta Comprehensive High School, Awa.		✓				

Key: PR- Proprietor; PTA-Parent Teachers Association; LV- Levy; DN- Donation; OS- Old Students,

Table 10 revealed the source of funding and material donations the schools have enjoyed in the past five years. Majority of the schools enjoyed the support of their schools Parent Teachers Association. Three (25%) had zero funding or material donation. Five (41.7%) enjoyed the support of their graduating or old students; the private schools libraries are funded (though reportedly not accurate) by the proprietors, the Parent Teachers Association and donations; whereas the public schools do not enjoy any funding for their libraries from the Government.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This research reveals that functional libraries do not exist in the secondary schools of Ijebu North Local Government. Their establishment and development are not given the desired priority; hence the provision of sub-standard library services in the schools.

To arrest this unfortunate development, researcher wants to recommend the following:

- Proprietors of schools, which are basically the Government at various levels should separate library budget from that of the general education. This will ensure that funds meant for the establishment and development of school libraries are not diverted.
- There is no doubting the need to increase fund allocation to school libraries and education generally. There is therefore the need to involve the organized private sector, philanthropic individuals and agencies in this venture. A cue can be taken from the recent “Presidential” library embarked upon by President Olusegun Obasanjo. The Parents’ Teachers’ Association (PTA) should be made to play vital role in this.
- The Federal Government should as a matter of urgency create an intervention fund for school libraries. This can

be done by giving certain percentages of a particular tax to school libraries nation wide. For example, 50% of VAT proceeds can be used for a period of ten years for the development of school libraries nationwide. The ETF can also be restructured in such a way that school libraries will have part of it.

- Approval of licenses for private schools should be based on the ability of such proprietors to provide a functional library as part of considerations.
- School library management should be made a compulsory course integrated into the tertiary schools curriculum for education students. This will ensure a gap bridge in the absence of a trained school librarian. Individual should be encouraged to become Teacher-librarian by creating for them enhanced career position in the educational sector.
- Like guidance-counsellors, the Government should enforced the employment of trained library hands for each school.
- Clarion calls for 'library hour' on school timetable should be honoured. The Ministry of Education should please enforce this.
- Libraries should not be used as staff rooms. The presence of teachers not using the library facilities should be disallowed as this may scare intended users. Library buildings should be far from noise generating school ventures.
- The Nigerian Library Association in conjunction with Nigerian School Library Association (NSLA) should embark on an annual assessment visits to school libraries in each local government area of the federation. They should work hand-in-hand with functional local government libraries where existing to provide mobile library services for schools in the local government area.

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