

EVALUATION OF SCHOOL LIBRARY RESOURCES, SERVICES AND USAGE: A CASE STUDY OF INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL, UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN

By

S. O. AKANDE

*Librarian II, Kenneth Dike Library,
University of Ibadan.*

Abstract

The paper evaluates the library resources, services and usage in the International School, University of Ibadan. Data for the study was collected by means of questionnaires administered to students, staff, and the librarian of the school. Interviews were conducted and records were observed to support the data gathered. The study revealed that the International school, University of Ibadan, did not have enough resources to meet the standards recommended in manual for school libraries. The usage of the library was not high enough because of lack of facilities and equipment. The study recommends adequate funding, provision of prints and non-print materials, equipment, integration of library hour on the school timetable and use of computer to process and access information to improve the services and usage for the library.

Introduction

According to Freeman (1975), the school library is a place for quiet learning and enjoyment where pupils, students and teachers can become expert in using materials. The school library assists teaching by storing instructional materials such as textbooks, audio-visual materials, magazines, newspapers, journals, and reference materials. It is the function of the library to support the school curriculum by providing up-to-date information to keep staff and students abreast of new developments. The library also promotes the development of reading skills and encourages long-term learning habits through reading, listening to and viewing a variety of learning materials. The library is the powerhouse of the school and it is an integral part of the school system.

The International school, university of Ibadan, was founded on 14th October 1963. The idea of establishing the school was conceived by the late Dr. A. Taylor of the Institute of Education, University of Ibadan. The International school is a member of the International school Association and recruits its staff from different nations of the world. Enrolment of students into the school is also international and has a student's population of over one thousand.

The International school library was established in 1976 on the proposal of the wife of the late Headmaster, Mrs. Gillespie. The Library is housed in the same building with the administrative offices of the principals and vice-principal.

There have been many studies on school librarianship like Fayose (1982), Elaturoti (1982) and Opeke (1980). The studies were carried out to look into the state of school libraries more than two decades ago. Daniel (1998) is a recent study carried out in Abuja. The focus of these studies was on public schools alone and none extend its coverage to non-governmental and private schools. It is therefore necessary to carry out a study that will focus on the state of the library in the private schools. The International school, University of Ibadan is chosen as the study sample. This school is a secondary school owned by the university of Ibadan. It is the first of its kind in the nation and it is internationally recognised. The findings from the study will likely be a reflection of what quality of library service are provided in the internationally recognised private school and recommendations arrived at will likely have positive influence on development of library service in private schools. This study is therefore carried out to find out:

- The learning resources in the collection of International school library
- The facilities provided for the use of the resources
- The services provided by the school library to support the school curriculum.
- Students usage of the library services
- Teachers usage of the library services
- Identify areas for improvement in the library
- To what extent has the standard of library service meet the standards published for schools.

Literature review

Several studies have been conducted on the state of secondary school libraries in Nigeria. Fayose (1982) studied use of secondary school library resources in eight secondary schools. She reported in her findings that even though all the schools in the study have book collections and refer to a certain area of the school as the school library, these school libraries did not follow any set standard. Majority of the students, however, used the library as quiet placed to study their own textbooks and notebooks. Elaturoti (1982) in his survey of secondary schools libraries in Oyo, Ondo and Ogun states of Nigeria also found that the books collections of very many school libraries did not cover all subjects according to the Dewey Decimal Classification Scheme. According to him, this indicates a lack of the necessary guidelines for developing library collections in the schools. Another study on secondary school library services in Oyo state was conducted by Opeke (1980) She collected data from one hundred and seventy five schools. The report of the study revealed that the

resources of the libraries were inadequate as virtually all the schools libraries lacked audio-visual materials. She affirmed that teachers and students make minimum use of the school library and this may be attributed to the present poor library stock. In addition to these, it was discovered that services rendered by the libraries to staff and students were mostly reading or for borrowing books. Daniel (1998) surveyed the state of school library in the Federal Capital Territory and found that most school surveyed have no buildings that could pass for libraries, some have no enough chairs and tables for readers use and only two audio-visual materials, television and radio were found in just few libraries. She also reported that there were inadequate learning resources in the schools. It is glaring from the previous studies that the libraries in our secondary schools are in a deplorable state; as there are no enough learning resources, no standard accommodation, the services rendered are mainly traditional which involve charging and discharging of books.

Methodology

Data for this study was collected by means of questionnaires, interview, and observation of records. The questionnaires were well structured to elicit information from the librarian, the teachers and the students. The questionnaire sought information on their biodata, the learning resources in the library, services provided, purpose for which the library is used, problems encountered by users and suggestions for improved library services. Before the questionnaires were personally administered, information was gathered through interviews personally conducted with the present and past school librarians of the school. The information gathered from these interviews guided design of the questionnaires.

The questionnaire completed by forty teachers. These are the teachers available when the researcher went to the school to administer the questionnaire. This number represents more than 50 percent of the teachers in the school. Twenty-seven questionnaires of the forty returned were found usable.

Students in SS1-SS111 constitute the students sample population. Students in the senior secondary class have stayed for a relatively longer time in the school and have used the school library for a considerable length of time to be able to evaluate its service. They also have better knowledge of English language to be able to respond to the questionnaire appropriately. 100 students were randomly selected from these students (SS1 – SS3) to constitute the students' sample. This represents about 10% of the students' population. All the students' questionnaire returned were usable.

Research findings and discussion

The data collected from the study have been collated, and analysed and the findings are reported in this chapter.

Library collection

Table 1: Library resources collection

Types of collection	Volumes
Fiction	400
Non-Fiction	3,742
Encyclopaedias	120
Dictionaries	12
Atlases	20
Globe	1
Journal Titles	12
Magazine Titles	2
Newspapers Titles	2

The learning resources consist of about 5,000 volumes made up of reference materials, Fiction and non-fiction books, and periodicals the only non-print media is the world globe.

The volume of fiction books in the library collection was very small compared to the student's population of over 1000. The titles acquired are those used in literature classes and for recreational reading purpose. Some titles were not recent enough to justify their place on the shelves. Such titles need to be wedded and replaced by current ones which students can read outside the recommended titles as some students suggested in their completed questionnaire.

The ISI library was well stocked with relevant textbooks, which cover the whole spectrum of subject taught in the school. The books were recent and carefully selected to meet the changes in the school curriculum. The number of non-fiction in the library calculated per student population is three books per student.

Dictionaries form part of the reference materials in the library. This includes titles like: *Chamber dictionary*, *Oxford dictionary* and *Subject dictionaries*. The dictionaries, which are current and recently published, totalled 12. Most of these dictionaries have hard cover, which make them to withstand wear and tear as they are heavily used by large population of the school.

The Encyclopaedias in the collection were both general and subject oriented. The titles of encyclopaedias in the collection include: *Encyclopaedia Americana*, *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, *Funk and Wagnals Encyclopaedia*, *Young Scientist Encyclopaedias* and *Colliers Encyclopaedias*. Other reference materials in the library were the *World Book Atlas* and *Thesaurus*. It seems that the reference collection were adequate and current except the 1954 edition of *Colliers Encyclopaedias* which need to be placed with recent editions.

The serials section of the collection was not well developed. The journals on the shelves were scanty and only few were subject oriented while the rest were not of any specific value to the students.

The popular national magazines subscribed to on weekly basis were two copies of both *Tell* and *African Today*. Two copies of *Guardian Newspapers* were also purchased on weekdays.

In quantity, the total collection did not meet the standard of 6,000 titles, which is the minimum basic collection recommended for all secondary schools Ogunshye (1978).

Audio-visual materials are virtually non-existent in the collection of ISI library. The library has only one world globe. According to the Manual for Nigerian school libraries, audio-visual materials such as slides, films, picture, record disks, projectors, should form part of the resources in the library and in a situation whereby the school is poor to purchase the materials, arrangement should be made with local nearby schools or the state's ministry of education for borrowing. The finding of lack of audio-visual materials in the library corroborate that of Opeke (1980) when she commented that the minimum use made of the school library by teachers and students may be attributed to the present poor library stock, especially of audio-visual materials and equipment.

Library facilities

Reading space: The library shares building with the principal and vice-principal offices. It has space that is up to two classrooms. It is not big enough to contain a large number of students at a time. It is so small that it can only sit 120 students conveniently at a time. This number is low if the standard in the manual for Nigerian school libraries on space is considered. The manual stipulates the standard accommodation to be a building, which can contain 10 percent of the school population. The ISI student population is over 1000 and going by this figure, the building should be able to sit more than 120 students conveniently at a time besides spaces for teachers to sit and workrooms for library staff to do their jobs.

Library Furniture: The ISI library has long tables and benches, which were arranged too closely together thus, giving an impression of over crowdedness. Other furniture available in the library were glass with glass shorter cupboards, open cupboards, a catalogue cabinet, and bookshelves, which were all of library standard. There was no circulation desk but a provision was made for a table on which the register, which keeps records of books, borrowed or returned is kept.

Services provided by the school library

From the data gathered, there are four types of services provided by the school library in support of the school curriculum. Services like provision of teaching materials for teachers, charging and discharging books to students and teachers were very popular and performed regularly. Planning class assignment with

teachers, teaching use of the library to staff and students were done occasionally and when there is opportunity to do so. As at the time of study, there was no library periods on the school's time table to teach library use skills to students as stipulated in existing published standards, (Ogunsheye, 1978). The implication of this is that most students and staff will not know how to use the library nor be acquainted with its holdings. This will indirectly affect their usage of the library. Saunders (1975) supported the teaching of library use skills by saying that teaching students how to use the library is an important part of the library services, and entirely separate from the orientation needed by new students.

Students' purpose of library use

As shown in Table 2, the students used the library for various purposes.

Table 2: Students Purpose of Library Use

Purposes	Frequency (N = 100)	% of respondents
To read	97	97
To make reference to learning resources	71	71
To borrows books	68	68
To relax	51	51

The table above revealed that 97 percent of the students go to the library to read. 71 percent visit the library to make reference. 68 percent visit the library to borrow books while 51 percent visit the library to relax.

The data showed that the students patronise the library for reading than for any other purpose. This finding confirms the report of Fayose (1982) in her study of student's use of library resources. Students do not indicate that they visit the library to do homework assignments and projects. The teachers and the library staff can help the students to improve the library usage pattern in these areas by working as a team in planning projects and class assignments which will urge the students to consult the library collections-print and non-print. Such assignments and projects should be given on a regular basis and students should be directed to seek more information in the school library. the direct implication for this is that, the audio-visual collections should be rich enough to meet the needs of the students and the teachers.

Table 3: Students problem in use of Library resources

Problem-	Frequency N = 100	% of respondents
No seating space.	85	85
Books not always available.	65	65
Material are outdated	38	38
Books not well organized.	27	27
Library staff does not co-operate.	20	20

The data in table 3 above revealed the problems students encounter in their bid to use the library. A glance at the table shows that the students were confronted with three major problems to which more than one-third of the students indicated. These were: no seating space indicated by 85 percent of the students; books not always available indicated by 65 percent of the students; and materials are outdated indicated by 38 percent of the student respondents. This finding corroborates similar findings of Elaturoti (1982) and Opeke (1980) where it was found that lack of adequate accommodation, outdated and inadequate collection, were among the problems besetting school library development.

Teacher's usage of the library services

Table 4: Purpose of Staff Usage of the Library

Purposes	Frequency N = 27	% of respondents
To borrow teaching materials	25	92.6
To read newspaper and Magazines	21	77.8
To make references to materials	12	44.4
To glance at professional journals	8	29.6
To prepare class work	6	22.2
To study.	2	7.4

Table 4 above indicated the purpose for which the teachers use the library. According to the table, the most common use of the school library by teachers is to borrow teaching materials as indicated by 92.6 percent of the respondents. This shows that the library is relevant in contributing to the academic pursuit of the school. Up to 77.8 percent of the teacher respondents use the library as

place to read newspapers and magazines. Other purpose indicated by the respondents for use of the library are: to make references, 44.4 percent, to glance at professional journals, 29.6 percent, to prepare classwork, 22.2 percent, and to study 7.4% percent of respondents. The low percentages of respondents to the last four purposes as indicated above may not be unconnected with the problem of space for staff to sit in the library and the non-availability of audio-visual materials for teaching.

Table 5: Problems encountered by teachers in use of library resources

Problems	Frequency (N = 27)	% of Respondents
Audio visual materials not available for use	26	96.3
No seating space for teachers	24	88.9
No enough ventilation	19	70.4
Lack of professional journals	18	66.7
Noise making in the library	13	48.1
Recent textbooks not available	9	33.3

In table 5, the most popular problem is the lack of audio-visual materials indicated by 96.3 percent of the teachers. Other problems such as: no seating space indicated by 88.9 percent of the teachers; no enough ventilation indicated by 70.4 percent, lack of professional journals indicated by 66.7 percent of the teachers were also found to be serious problems teachers face for use of library resources. Problems like: noise making in the library indicated by 48.1 percent of the teachers, recent textbooks not available indicated by 33.3 percent of the teachers were scored low by teachers as problems they encountered in use of library resources.

Users suggestion for improved library services

The staff and students were required to make suggestions that would improve the quality of library services in the school. The suggestions made are analysed below.

Table 6: Users suggestions for improved library services (Students & Teachers)

Suggestions	Frequency (N=127)	% of respondents
Provision of more recent materials	66	52
Provision of larger library building, and more chairs, tables and shelves.	32	25.2
Provision of audio-visuals materials	12	9.4
Provision of library period on the time-table	5	3.9
Maintaining silence in the library	5	3.9
Organisation of library collections	4	3.1
Improved lending services.	3	2.4

The table showed that more recent print materials would need to be supplied into the library to increase patronage by both staff and students as indicated by 52 percent of the total respondents. The provision of adequate accommodation with more seating space for staff and students was suggested by 25.2 percent of the users while the provision of audio-visual materials to enhance teaching-learning programmes in the school was suggested by 9.4 percent of the users. Other suggestions made for improved service which is worth noting include: creation of library period on the time-Table Indicated by 3.9 percent of respondents; maintaining silence in the library indicated by 3.9 percent of respondents. Organisation of library collections as suggested by 3.1 percent of the respondents while improved lending services was indicate by 2.4 percent of the total respondents,

Conclusions and recommendations

From the data collected, analysed and discussed in this study, it is obvious that the teachers and students of International school University of Ibadan, make use of the library. Their usage of the library would have however been higher than recorded if more resources like recent print and non-print materials, adequate accommodation and other facilities like chairs, tables, shelves are provided.

The inadequacies experienced in our school libraries can be removed or improved upon if the following recommendations are adopted by the various school authorities:

Recommendations

- i. Library hour should be integrated in the school time-table to ensure a formal teaching of library skills and the use of materials in the library.
- ii. The school librarians should be more vigorous in their approach to marketing the library. Strategies like making decorations, using posters, display of new library materials, provision of well-designed guides; will make the library more attractive and appealing to the eyes of user and thereby promoting usage.
- iii. Acquisition of adequate library resource materials will improve usage of our school libraries. This can only be realised when enough funds are made available through the Federal or State Governments as well as Non-Governmental Organisation (NGOs).
- iv. This is an Information Age. The school library of the new millennium should be computerised. It must plan to apply maximum information technology to its activities to facilitate information accessing and retrieval.
- v. The published Manual for Nigerian school Libraries by the Abadina Media Resource Centre, University of Ibadan, should be adopted and strictly adhered to in schools when developing school libraries programmes. This should be the background against which evaluation of school library facilities and services be made.

References

- Freeman, P. (1975). *Pathfinder: An Operational Guide for the school Librarian*. New York: Harper & Row Publishers, N.Y.
- Fayose, P.O. (1982). Students use of secondary school library resources in Ibadan and Benin City. *Nigerian Journal of library and information Studies*. Vol. 1, No. 1, P. 40-51
- Elaturoti, D.F. (1982). A survey of secondary schools libraries in Oyo, Ondo, and Ogun State of Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Library and Information Studies*. Vol. 1, No. 1, P. 54-62.
- Opeke, R.O. (1980). Secondary School Library Services in Oyo State: an explorative study. M.L.S. project, University of Ibadan P. 37-43.
- Daniel, C.I (1998). Report of a survey on FCT School Library Paper presented at Annual National Conference and Annual General Meeting of the Nigerian Library Association Held at Abuja on June 25-30, 2000. P. 81.
- Ogunsheye, F.A. ed. (1978). *Manual for Nigerian School Libraries*. Ibadan, Abadina Media Resource Centre, University of Ibadan P.3-6.
- Saunders, H.E. (1975). *The Modern School Library*. Metuchen: Scarecrow Press. P. 162.