# ACCESS AND PREFERENCE TO MEDIA RESOURCES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN LAGOS STATE

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**Abstract**
*The article discussed access to and preference for media resources among secondary school students in Lagos State in relation to the achievement. The types of media resources available for use, location of access and frequency of accessibility of the media resources were discussed. The study concluded that access to and preference for adequate and relevant media resources is key for the achievement of sustainable development goals in Nigeria. The study recommended that due to the invaluable nature of media resources, school library media specialists in schools should acquire a good deal of efficiency in the collection, organisation and retrieval of media resources so that school library staff are able to assist students to obtain, retrieve and use the right media resources at the very right time in the right format. This could be achieved by organising and classifying media resources so that students are able to access required information easily and quickly for their research and personal benefits.*

**Keywords:** Access and preference for media resources, Sustainable development goals, Secondary school students.

## Introduction

Secondary education is a first step to opportunities and benefits of economic and social development. The mission of the secondary education can be said to be vital, and combines the policy peculiarities, which are both terminal and preparatory, compulsory and post compulsory, uniform and diverse, general and vocational. According to the World Bank Group (2013) secondary education has developed to the stage where it is being recognised as the foundation of educational systems in the 21st century. The difference between the lower and the upper secondary education is important in a global since some developing countries are able to provide some form of access to lower-secondary education, while the upper-secondary education is still beyond the national reach (UNESCO, 2012). Therefore, a qualitative education at the secondary level is pivotal to creating a clear future for persons and nations alike because it affords students the opportunity to identify their personal skills and future activities which they have to engage based to their talents and skills (Neny, 2009).

The secondary education bridges the gap between the primary and the tertiary education (Arikewuyo, 2009). The federal government posits that the secondary education is significant in preparing individuals for both or either of useful living

within the society and higher education (Ekundayo, 2010). The most fundamental issue is that quality secondary education should be made available to all those who can profit from it. To Omorege (2005), where the secondary education is not effectively managed, education cannot be a significant device for achieving national development. Erber (2012) in his own view described the secondary school education as a vital path through which young individuals obtain skills that advance opportunities for good jobs. Hence, a high-quality secondary education which provides the widest possible range of abilities, interests and backgrounds is fundamental to set young people on the lane to the world of work, and give countries the educated personnel which they require to compete in the technologically-driven world today.

Sustainable education given at the secondary level in any country is reliant on the availability and exploitation of appropriate media resources (Maliki and Uche, 2007). Media resources have important roles to play in secondary education. Such roles include the collection of prints (like books and journals), audio and video resources (such as books, tapes, compact disks, cassettes), electronic resources in numerous formats, visual resources such as posters, maps, microforms, and audio-visual resources (such as projectors, e-books, laptops, mobile phones, camera and the Internet) (Ogunjobi, 2014). Media resources plays a significant role in the lifes of secondary school students rapidly increasing and transforming their everyday living in profound ways. They are resources considered as essential resources in the school setting. They are essentially important in preparing teaching activities, lecture note, students' assignment and conducting research work, (Jamil, Tariq and Jamil, 2013). Thus, successful educational programmes depend exhaustively on the utilisation of media resources. According to Adeoye and Popoola (2011) media resources utilisation is necessary for effective learning process. According to them the media resources can be in both printed and electronic formats including textbooks, journals, indexes, abstracts, newspapers magazines and reports among others.

Moreover, Jamil et.al (2013) findings revealed the most frequently reported reasons for using the media resources was for enhancing knowledge. Onai (2009), in his study, noted that utilisation pattern of media resources by students amongst others is influenced by the attitude of library staff. Most times hostile attitude on the part of library staff drives students away from library use. Ajayi and Ogunyemi (2011), in their study of determinant of library use among students of agriculture in Lagos State Polytechnic reported a negative relationship between media resources utilisation and age but found educational attainment as positively related to education attainment.

Also, Popoola (2008) established an inverse relationship between age and media resources utilisation among students in secondary schools in Nigeria. Ajayi and Ogunyemi (2011) reported in their findings that media resources increase with level of study and age while also reporting textbooks and notes as media resources being mostly used by students. Guidance in the use of media resources was found to be necessary in helping students to effectively use these resources. This finding was reported by Sohail, Pandye and upadlyah (2012).

On the specific types of media resources being used by students, journals, magazines and notes were found to be the most popular media resources among secondary school students in India as reported by Saukai and Gohain (2006). Commenting further on the types of media resources being used by students, they affirmed textbook and newspaper as the most used media resources among the students. This finding is supported by Hameed and Osunnade (2010) who reported newspapers and magazines as the most regularly used media resources by the students. This, according to them, may be due to the ready availability of and accessibility to these media resources.

The importance of media resources to students cannot be over emphasized. Media resources are useful to students because of their ability to; help learner to improve reading and other skills, illustrate or reinforce skills, factors or ideas; relive anxiety, fears or boredom; simplify complex learning experience, stimulate learner's interest and facilitate students' drill and practice (Aboyade and Amusan, 2013). In addition, media resources utilisation improves concrete learning experience for learners and help in developing the reading, writing, arithmetic and aesthetic appreciation skills of the learners (Aremo, 2012). Media resources are, therefore, undoubtedly efficient and effective in teaching and learning activities as they reinforce certain learning experiences and tend to actively engage students in the overall learning process, as recommended by the Federal Government of Nigeria (National Policy on Education, 2004).

**Preference for Media resource by students**
Media resources for secondary school students comprise the various information carriers which the students consult and use in their day to day activities broadly categorized into print, non-print and electronic sources. However, the dawn of the 21st century has brought about the realisation in many countries the need for a new vision for their educational systems that will prepare their students and future citizens for life in an increasingly information and technology-rich society. These has also led to paradigm shift in the way students seek for information and the types of media resources they would like to relate with out of the abundance of media resources available, hence the reason why students demonstrated their preference for a particular media resource over others. Competing in a rapidly changing information-based economy often requires skills different from those more traditionally accepted as part of the educational process (Majid, Chaudhry, Foo and Logan, 2012). Creative problem solving, innovative thinking, information processing and assessment are only some of the skills deemed as necessary for active engagement of students in media preference in the 21st century global economy.

McCarron (2004) queried if Kuhlthau (1988) study on students' information seeking behaviour and media utilisation still stands up in light of the major technological changes because students of today are fundamentally different in the way they receive, process and choose media resources to relate with, hence media resources preference among the students is becoming more fundamental. According to Adeyoyin (2015), electronic media resources is becoming the preferred major information source by students due to obvious reasons such as proliferation of electronic media resources as

well as ease of access to these category of media resources. Earlier, Bastian (2008) search costs model explores the idea that female students view electronic based media resources as the most preferred media resources for reducing high information search costs. These models were tested using data collected among secondary school students in three southern New Jersey counties in the USA. Consistent with expectations, their findings showed electronic media resources as most preferred sources to meet the information needs of the students in favour of female students from high level background. The study concluded that students rely on the electronic media resources to supplement traditional sources and discussed the implications of their findings for policymakers.

Gray, Klein, Noyce, Sesselberg and Cantrill (2004) cited in Adeyoyion (2015)) reiterated that electronic media resources are the majorly available and preferred by students. They noted that young people have difficulties accessing the print and non-print media resources otherwise referred to as traditional media resources because of their confidentiality and convenience. But in theory, the electronic media resources actually offer students confidentiality and convenient access to an unprecedented level of information about a diverse range of subjects. This could redress the students state of relative poor access to relevant and adequate information.

Kišiček, Lauc and Golubić (2012) study investigated Simon's behavioural decision-making theories of bounded rationality and satisfying in relation to young people's decision making in the media resources preference, and considered the role of personal preferences. They employed a qualitative research methodology involving group interviews with 22 students. Data analysis revealed that the study participants did operate within the limits of bounded rationality. These limits took the form of time constraints, information overload, and physical constraints. Also Lauc. Bago and Kakai (2011), in their study which investigated the three ethnicity-specific patterns of media resources use by students remained relatively stable at different educational levels, implying that the effect of patients' ethnicity overrides their educational level in shaping their preference for media resources. The results of their study indicate the importance of recognising patients' culturally developed world views when understanding their health information-seeking behaviour. Another study by Agosto and Huges-Hassell (2005), presents preliminary findings on the everyday information-seeking behaviours of urban students which indicated that these students prefer to gather information from people. Personal preference was found to play a major role in media resources evaluation and use in the areas of graphic/multimedia and subject content preferences. This study has related implications for information needs and seeking behaviour of secondary school students.

Much of the research on the information-seeking behaviour of young people has examined either the degree to which they use particular media resources or the manner in which they exploit such sources or materials. Considerably less attention has focused on the identification of generic characteristics that relate to the use of a range of media resources but most qualitative researches on media resources preference by students pointed to that a variety of patterns appear to emerge even when sources of

different types are used but that preference for electronic media resources topped the list (Fernandes, Couto, Martins, Faria, Bastos and Costa, 2012). Many of the recurring features of user behaviour reflect attempts by the secondary school students to simplify the task of information seeking and reduce the effort expended.

Moreover, Todd (2013) provides an overview of the field of human information behaviour as it shapes and affects the provision of quality information services and products to students and subsequent utilisation. It is a diverse, dynamic, and complex field and one shaped by many situational, personal, social and organisational factors which refelect media resources preference as very fundamental. According to him information-seeking behaviour, motivation, critical thinking, and media preferences were explored and findings identify motivating factors behind students' preference for media resources as their information needs which revealed that only a very small percentage of the students prefer traditional media resources in form of print to electronic media resources. Weighing the importance of electronic media resources utilisation in meeting the information needs of students, Kur and Orhewere (2009) investigated the effectiveness of traditional media resources in their academic activities among students in urban and rural areas in a local government in Nigeria. Their study revealed that many students in rural areas are interested in traditional media resources because they consider the traditional sources as the as a dominant source of information. Their study concluded that traditional media resources should be promoted in rural and urban areas.

**Access to media resources by students**
With the development of media resources in various formats, access to relevant media resources has become a major factor in teaching and learning in schools with attendant improvement in performance of students. However, despite the availability of extensive amount of media resources in print, non-print and electronic formats, access to this resources is not always uniform and this has continue to be a source of concern to stakeholders in education because of its negative influence on students achievement. Avery (2010) affirmed that the fact that media resources are physically present does not necessarily mean it is accessible. This assertion was corroborated by Hanewald (2013) who stated, in discussing access to media resources that, access means more than physical distance but includes elements of familiarity and usability. According to him, there are various methods of access to media resources access but the two major sources of access provision are institutional and personal. This implies that media resources access can be from students or their parents in terms of purchase or by institution in terms of making provision in the school libraries or other designated places within the schools.

Moreover, Aramide and Elaturoti (2013) in their study of assessment of resources inputs and service delivery in school library media centers in Nigeria and implications for basic and post-basic using 157 participants, including teachers and school library media specialists, who attended the Nigerian School Library Association Conferences for year 2011 and 2012 reported school libraries as the major points of access to media resources by students. Okafor (2013) emphasised that since media resources is

increasingly recognised as vital to teaching and learning, the provision of access should be given priority by management of educational institution including secondary schools and further reiterated that the iconographic power of library expresses a purpose not just to collect, but also to organise, preserve, and make knowledge accessible for use. Hence, the library occupies a central position both in its placement and prominence in provision of access to educational resources. For instance, the principal role of school libraries is to enable its users to identify, locate, gain access to and use the information they require then, the library may be identified and characterised by a series of functions such as provision of tools which enables users to gain access to the information which they have identified as being of interest to students and provision of tools which enables students to discover the information content to which they have been given access.

Furthermore, Kolade and Olaojo (2008) emphasised that school libraries are embracing and giving access to digital collections so as to continue to offer both print and digital collections to students for many years to come. New purchases of journals, magazines, and abstracting and indexing services are heavily weighted towards digital, while digital books (e-books) are only beginning to become a presence in library collections. The efforts towards embracing digital collections by school libraries were anchored on the need to improve the level of access to media resources through provision of means of accessibility from various locations such as student's home, hostel whether or not the physical library is open, the library's ability to get use statistics that are not available for print collections and digital collections, space saving and relatively ease of use and maintenance. Equally, gradual shift from print collections to digital collections of media resources for students' use has an impact on library users and users' perception of the library.

**Conclusion**
The school library media centres convey its integral role in supporting basic and post-basic core mission of teaching, learning and creative activities therefore, secondary school education cannot exist alone in the absence of access to media resources, hence Sote, Aramide and Gbotoso (2011) in their evaluation of the state universal basic education board (SUBEB) libraries in selected states in south west, Nigeria reported poor level of access to media resources in these libraries due to lack of conducive environment. The study surveyed a total of 138 students and teachers spread across Oyo, Ogun and Osun states. A search through the literature on the means of accessing media resources by students revealed that students can access media resources through certain personal text possession, museums and libraries, it is not too much to say that, the school library media centre is the most outstanding of such means. Teachers, students and other library users can never alone impart education but rather each of them is dependent upon the school library being considered as a centre of wholesome education and the quencher of thirst for concrete, fathomless, ultimate knowledge and the place where the habit of life-long learning by the students.

In the interest of this research work and according to Adio and Olasina (2010), access to media resources can be provided to different students through school library media

centres that are collections in organised form both in print and electronic format or are available on CD-ROM. However, International Association of School Librarianship (IFLA) emphasised the potential of digital collection of media resources as having the potential to ensure unlimited access to document surrogates, and extend to digital artefacts that cannot be represented or distributed in printed formats. Digital collection of access to school library media resources is a very important meaningful source of access to electronic media resources in that, it exists solely in electronic form and not on paper. According to Gabiyako, Ikoja-Odongo and Okello-Obura (2013), the most effective way to ensure utilisation of access to media resources is through provision of ease of access to databases. Some of these databases are provided free of charge to school libraries in developing countries by their publishers or vendors while others require subscription fee. Gbotosho (2017) also reported that utilisation of media resources is a function of access. This infers that, for students to utilise the growing range of media resources, they must acquire and practice the skills necessary to explore them, develop the right attitude and visit the school libraries. It is therefore imperative that school libraries put infrastructures in place to ensure ease of accessibility.

In Nigeria today as in other parts of the developing world, to achieve desired educational results, school libraries must ensure provision of media resources and guarantee access to members of the school community (Ogunbote and Odunewu, 2008). A previous study by Oyelaran–Oyeyinka and Adeya (2004) expressed that 43.2% students in Kenya have access to media resources through their school libraries while only 13% of their counterparts in Nigeria had access to media resources through the same means. This confirms the findings of previous studies in Nigeria where other locations such as home and private libraries are major access points for majority of the students in both private and public secondary school (Adomi, Okiy and Ruteyan, 2003; Ajuwon, 2003; Elaturoti and Aramide, 2013) this is so because most schools do not provide access for their students. On the other hand, Omolase, Balarabe and Omolase (2010) reported that students who desired to use electronic media resources for quantitative and qualitative education in Nigeria should access the databases provision if available in the schools.

Students of today's can also get access to scholarly electronic publications through a variety of channels ranging from the websites of the producers or publishers of the electronic resources to a number of intermediaries, services providers, and search tools. Chowdhury (2005) in a study on access and use of media resources full text of e-journal and e-book, digital libraries–special collections, CD-ROM and online databases affirmed that to add impetus to students' access to knowledge and promote use and academic learning outcomes of students.

On the benefits of easy access to media resources, Brudie (2015) stated that, electronic media resources and course wares provides an improved access to the processes and outcomes of teaching and learning in schools. The ability to quickly access and read materials online remains one of the greatest benefits derivable from electronic media resources and ultimately improve teaching and learning processes. Hence, school authorities need to determine the approach of obtaining answers to their problems

either by using the traditional method of physical access to media resources in the library or by electronic access to the materials through consultation of databases. Whichever method is adopted and used by the schools, it must lead to access to media resources which if positively used could in turn lead to an increased academic accomplishment.

A number of factors affect access to media resources which are mostly cost and income (Fakomogbon, 2012). The authors emphasized that cost is a major barrier to media resource access in Africa. Viewing from another perspective, Oyelaran-Oyeyinka and Adeya (2004) are of the opinion that, income is a strong determinant of provision of access to media resources and that there exist disparities between rich and poor countries. The researchers quickly added that, the use of media resources in Africa is correlated to income and socio-economic status. This implies that, societies with more of low income earners tend to have difficulty in providing ease of access to media resources by the students. Therefore, acquisition of knowledge will be constrained by low income and low levels of education due to unequal access and more so because of unequal use of the technology. Lack of basic infrastructure is another major factor that can affects access to media resources.

**Recommendations**
1.  Sequel to the invaluable nature of media resources, school library media specialists in schools should acquire a good deal of efficiency in the collection, organisation and retrieval of media resources so that school library staff are able to assist students to obtain, retrieve and use the right media resources at the very right time in the right format. This will serve as performance indicator for school libraries and a parameter for academic excellence. This could be achieved by organising and classifying media resources so that students are able to access required information easily and quickly for their research and personal benefits. The management of the schools should provide funds, policies and quality personnel that will revise, improve and modify the core mission of post-basic education.
2.  Considering the relationship between media resources preference and access, libraries and their schools should provide physical environments that facilitate user privacy for accessing media resources. All libraries are encouraged to develop within the existing mission, collection development policy and selection criteria of the library. For instance, libraries should consider ensuring ease of access to media resources. Where resources are limited, school libraries should consider time, place and manner of restrictions.
3.  All school library media specialists should strive to help users cultivate a positive attitude to the use of electronic media resources by first of all developing themselves with a high technological infrastructure and build a solid collection of media resources to help students through provision of a high quality and efficient library services. Managers of school library media specialists should organise various teaching, learning, orientation and user education programmes, either general training or subject specific training to impart, develop and encourage education about all aspects of electronic media resources to its users. These would

allow students to use the new and emerging media resources that are currently the in-thing in scientific and technological education now. Thus, subject gateways, portals and data archives should be provided in libraries to provide access to back volumes of electronic media resources to know the past research done and to focus on present research trends in order to move towards a brighter and better future.

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