

**Investigating School Library Services in North-West Geo-Political Zone, Nigeria:
A Case Study of Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara States, Nigeria**

¹Bako Musa Katsayal; ²Sahabi Maidamma Jabo

^{1,2}University Library Federal University Birnin Kebbi, Kebbi State

Abstract

The study assessed the availability and services of school library in norther western geopolitical zone Nigeria with its main focus on Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara. The specific objectives are to; find out the availability of functional school libraries in public secondary schools in Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara States, examine the strength of collections and find out the effectiveness of the services provided. Thirty six public secondary schools were selected to form the sample for the study. The study use questionnaire for data collection and data were analysed using descriptive statistics using SPSS VERSION 16.0. The findings revealed that mmajority of the respondents indicate that there were school libraries in secondary schools in Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara State. However most of the libraries are improvised using classrooms. Few respondents are of the view that there were no purpose built library buildings in their secondary schools in Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara State. The result also indicated that most of the secondary schools libraries do not have enough resources in the libraries. The study recommended that government and stakeholder should collaborate and make sure that a standard and well stocked library buildings should be provided in each public secondary school, government should also employ professional librariansn to guide the operation and services of the schools libraries.

Keywords: *Schools Library, Library services, Northwest Geo-political zone Sokoto Kebbi and Zamfara State*

Introduction

Libraries are social institutions created to conserve knowledge, preserve cultural heritage and provide information for education and research purposes (Fakomogbon, Bada & Omiola 2012). Libraries are of different types including academic, public, special, research, national and school libraries. A school library is one of the libraries that has been established in primary or/and secondary school (Edoka, 2000). School libraries play a significant role in teaching and learning. Students and their teachers need library resources and the expertise of a librarian to succeed. School libraries help teachers teach children (Keith 2004). A school library is an academic library that supports school programmes as well as the teaching and learning process, and students by providing materials to meet their various information needs, and encourages reading and the use of libraries (Clark 1999). . Martin (2000) notes that research shows that the reading scores for students in schools that focus on improving their library programmes are, on average of eight to twenty one percent, higher than similar schools with no such development.

A number of researches vividly pointed out the importance of school libraries essentially, as it related to inculcation of reading habit in the school children. School

libraries are established fundamentally to provide wide range of resources that are closely connected to school curriculum. The School Library Service is dedicated to providing a range of resources and advice to secondary schools students and teachers that concern educational activities within the frame of school curriculum.

Statement of the Problem

School library is of great help in the fulfillment of staff and students educational and information needs. A well stock school library with good librarian can make a difference in terms of school educational achievement and performance (Mohammed, 2015). Northern part of Nigeria recorded lowest score in terms of educational achievement, and North West geo-political zone which comprises Kano, Katsina, Jigawa, Kaduna, Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara are the lowest among 19 northern states (Nigeria Education and Governance Scorecard/Factsheet, 2015). More so Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara recorded the lowest score among the seven states in the North West zone.

There is are mass failure in West Africa Examination Council (WAEC), National Examination Council (NECO) and Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB) among secondary school students in North West geo-political zone, Nigeria, particularly Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara. This asseion is confirm from the data sources, on 2016 WAEC result analysis by state in Nigeria. The analysis shows that five (5) state out of the seven (7) state in North-West geo-political zone are at rear position in 2016 May/June WAEC examination, they are Zamfara (36th), Jigawa (35th), Katsina (33rd), Kebbi (32nd), and Sokoto (30th) (Offor, 2016). While in the 2016 NECO examination analysis shows that Zamfara state has the lowest percentage (38.5%) score five credit and above, including mathematics and English language (NECO Results Analysis, 2016). So Also the JAMB statistics 2017 shows that 1,736,571 candidate registered, for the examination. Top three states registered are from the south which included Imo, Osun and Oyo states, as 101,868, 88,655 and 87,811 candidates registered respectively. While Kebbi, Zamfara and Sokoto have the lowest candidates' registration as it shows that 7,364; 5,713 and 5,664 candidates registered for JAMB 2017 respectively (JAMB 2017 Registration Analysis).

Over the past thirty years, an extensive body of evidence that were built up by researchers worldwide indicated that good school library programme are linked to high academic achievement in students (Chan, 2008). Thus Fakomogbon, et-al (2012) stated that lack of standard school library with relevant information resources which students could use for their studies could be one of the major cause for mass failure in the school. However little has been written on provision and services of school library in North-West zone Nigeria, particularly in Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara States. Therefore, it is against this background, that the researchers investigated the nature and provision of school libraries services, staff strength of the school libraries, availability of physical structure of library, and availability and usage of reading material in the school sampled in Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara State.

Justification

The National Policy on Education and the Minimum standards for School Library Services in Nigeria emphasized the need for functional school libraries and schools library services. The need for adequate provision of information materials, space, librarian, and infrastructure is essential for school library to perform its role effectively. School libraries are established to support the educational curriculum of schools, which could only be achieved through various means such as the provision of relevant library resources, which are relevant with the school curricula, provision of various information services ranging from technical to readers services (Markless and Streatfield 2004).

Significance of the Study

This study would help Ministry of Education to improve the condition of the school libraries in the states. The study also has enormous contribution towards understanding the nature and services of school libraries in Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara States, and motivates students so that they can use library services to improve their academic performance. To awaken the government as to ensure that all secondary especially public school have well equipped library services. The study will also add to body of existing knowledge.

Objectives

The study aimed at investigating the:

1. availability of school libraries building in the public secondary schools in Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara State, Nigeria.
2. strength of collection of school libraries in Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara State, Nigeria.
3. effectiveness of the services provided by the school libraries in Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara State, Nigeria.

Literature Review

School library is an organized collection of books, magazines, periodical, audio-visuals and other information materials in a school setting whose purpose is to enhance teaching, learning and recreational needs of students and teachers. School library has been appraised by different scholars as an inevitable segment of the educational system. The school library, therefore, is an important part of elementary, middle and high school programmes, without which students would not thrive academically and would find it most difficult to do research before they reach the college level (Isaac, 2011). According to Fayose (1995), a school library is that part of school where collection of books, periodical, magazines, and newspaper, films and filmstrips, videotape, recording of all types, slide, computers, study kit and other information resources are housed for use by teachers and student/pupils for learning, recreational activities, personal interest and inter personal relationships of children in school. Ibeto (1998) opine that school libraries an essential centre of the school that contain records, not only of the intellectual but also of cultural and social produce.

An ideal school library collection should not be limited to books and printed material but must include non-profit for teaching and learning. According to Zaid (2003), the committee set-up by the ministry of education and youth development in 1992 to deliberate on the minimum standard for school libraries collection in Imo state recommended that the educational resources material of any school library should consist books, pamphlets, paper cutting, especially newspaper cutting, gazettes, and other government publications, atlases, maps, chart, photo record players, cassette tape/cartridge, film strip, film projector, slide, picture, photographs, periodical including newspapers journal. However, Abdulkadir (1994) while assessing the importance of school libraries in Nigeria stresses that most of the school lack facilities/collection and the few that were available were in deplorable conditions. Equally Ologbolu (1994) observes that there are no library facilities in Nigerian primary schools. He also emphasized that in secondary schools, library materials are obsolete.

The school library objectives can be achieved through carrying out basic services. According to Ahanene (1990), the basic services in identification and collection of information materials, processing and organisation of materials, through cataloguing, classification and indexing, preserving and storage of material, retrieval and dissemination of information, training library users, circulation and lending of materials., provision of current awareness services, repair and maintenance of information material and inter-library lending services. School library also serve as a laboratory for it users to practice the skills of using indexes, abstracts, bibliographies, and catalogues (Eboro, 2007).

The staffing of school libraries will be guided by the effective school library programme. A certified school librarian is essential to an effective school library program, yet only few school libraries are staffed with certified school librarian (Davis, 2009). The American Association of school librarian support the position that every student in every school, including independent school and public school, should have access to updated school library with certified school librarian. The success of a school library programme, no matter how well designed, ultimately, depend on the quality and number of personnel responsible for managing the instructional programme and the library physical and visual resources. A certified school librarian, supported by technical and clerical staff, is crucial to an effective school library programme. The study analysed data from the Colorado Student Assessment Program to determine reading skills and involved students in grades three through ten. According to an article in *School Library Journal*, 45 percent of students who attended schools with librarians tended to increase their test scores over the course of a school year, compared to just 29 percent of students who had never had a school librarian on campus (Anna, 2012).

Many authors have discussed the various ways by which to measure the effectiveness of library resources and services. Ellis (1994) opines that every service provided by a library has an outcome that makes an impact on the users of that service, but

measuring the value of a library service is difficult because library service outcomes are not easy to quantify. Funding bodies want to know that the money they have spent is justified, so they demand evidence. Given that many impacts of libraries are intangible, librarians have always looked for ways to measure the worth of their services.

Research Methodology

For the purpose of this study, survey research design was adopted to assess the school libraries provision and services in public secondary schools in North West geopolitical zone Nigeria. Survey design has been defined by Akuezuilo (1993) as a design in which a random sample is taken from well-defined population, data collected from sample, a statistics is calculated from data and the statistics is used to estimate the true value (parameter) of the population. Survey research method was adopted, due to the fact that it is good to find out the view of people in a particular situation toward issues which interesting to the general populace in a given area (Adarenjo, 2001). The area of study is Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara State, Nigeria. The study covered all the public secondary schools within the three states. The population of the study comprises all the heads of school libraries and/or personnel in charge of school libraries in all the public secondary schools of Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara States. There are five hundred and fifty (550) public secondary schools all over the three states. Sokoto has 230; Kebbi has 166 and Zamfara 154 secondary schools. For the sake of convenience and thorough study thirty six (36) public secondary schools were selected using multistage random sampling technique, to choose sample size out of 58 Local Government Area (LGA) for all the states. Six LGAs were randomly selected from each state. Two secondary schools were then randomly selected from each of the LGAs selected for the study. The data collected was analysed using SPSS statistical software (22) package, particularly descriptive statistic.

Presentation and Interpretation of Results

Socio-Demographic information of the respondents

This section was designed to identify the respondents demographics, which included their age, gender and level of qualifications.

Table 1: Age Distribution of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percent
15-24	73	50.7
25-34	31	21.5
35-44	34	23.6
45 and above	6	4.2
Total	144	100.0

Source: Survey data (2019)

As shown in table 1, 50.7% of the respondents were within the age of 15-19 year followed by the category of 35-44 years which for 23.6%. 21.5% samples were under the category of 20-29 years and 4.2% are within 45- and above years. This implies that majority of the school library personnel surveyed were within the age range of 15 - 44 years.

Table 2: Gender Distribution of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	115	79.9
Female	29	20.1
Total	144	100.0

Source: field data (2019)

As it can be seen from table 2, 79.9% of the respondents were male and female were only 20.1%. It can be deduced from the results that there are more male school library personnel than female in the surveyed states of North-West geopolitical zone of Nigeria.

School Library Building in Secondary Schools in Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara State, Nigeria

The researcher sought to know if the secondary schools in the surveyed states had libraries. Different questions were asked to direct the collection of data intended from field.

Table 3: Availability of Libraries in Secondary Schools

	Frequency	Percent
Agree	116	80.6
Disagree	27	18.8
Not sure	1	.6
Total	144	100.0

Source: field data (2019)

The findings in table 4, indicated that 80.6% of the participants agreed that secondary schools had libraries while 18.8% disagreed, and 0.6% of the participants were not sure if the secondary schools have libraries. This may mean that that there are school libraries in the schools surveyed.

Many interviewers from the secondary schools visited in Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara States, when asked to comment on the availability of libraries in the secondary schools said

“Yes our schools had libraries as improvised one with resources.”

“Full equipped library helps students to widen their knowledge and hence to do better in their examination”.

They further elaborated that:

“students are responsible for their study whenever there is a library. And these bring morale and develop a culture of studying in library.”

Few respondents interviewed on the availability of libraries in secondary schools in Sokoto, Kebbi Zamfara state, said:

“Our school doesn’t have library, but most of our students are always do ask to have a library, they like to study in library during free period but we lack library” they also said that “the schools were established since 1970s, but no libraries.”

The researcher wanted to know if there were enough resources in secondary school libraries for students to read.

Table 4: Availability of Enough Resources in School Libraries

	Frequency	Percent
Agree	44	30.6
Disagree	93	64.6
Not sure	7	4.9
Total	144	100.0

Source: survey data (2019)

The results indicate that 30.6% agreed that, there were enough resources in the libraries, while 64.6% disagreed and 4.9% were not sure if there were enough resources in secondary schools libraries in Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara States, Nigeria. It can be deduced from the results that there were not adequate resources in school libraries in the states surveyed. This view was corroborated by one of the interviewees from one of the secondary schools visited, who said:

“Materials found in the library are irrelevant, this reduce morale for students to use library. But also there is no culture of reading in the library neither for teachers nor for students.”

Effectiveness of the Services Provided by the School Libraries in the States Surveyed

The researcher wanted to know if the library services and resources help students to score high in the SSCE

Table 5: Effectiveness of School Library Services and Resources

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	89	61.8
Agree	47	32.6
Disagree	6	4.2
Strongly disagree	2	1.4
Total	144	100.0

Source: field Data

The findings reveals that 61.8% and 32.6% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed that libraries service and resources resource help students to score high in SSCE respectively while 4.2 % and 1.4% of the respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively that libraries services resource help students to score high in SSCE respectively. It can, therefore, be inferred from the results that the services and resources provided by the school libraries in the states surveyed were efective in helping the students to perform well in SSCE examinations.

Conclusion

School libraries are very important facilities for effective and efficient teaching and learning in primary and secondary schools. It was concluded that unavailability of school library services would lead to poor performance by students and also schools aim and goal would not be achieved properly. Meanwhile, the study established the availability of school libraries, relevant services but inadequate resources in the school libraries in the States surveyed in North-West geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The services provided and resources were also effective enough to help the students in academic performance. This may mean that academic performance of the students is not connected with the provision of adequate library resources and services by the libraries.

Recommendations

The study recommended that government, schools management and stakeholders in education should work towards adequate provision of library resources and relevant services in schools to encourage the students to make use of the available library facilities through adequate orientation and user education. Also government and schools management should collaborate and make sure that a standard and well stock libraries building should be provided at each public secondary schools, government should also employ professional librarian to guide the operation and services of the schools libraries.

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