

PATTERN OF LIBRARY USE AMONG PRIMARY SIX PUPILS IN THREE COMMUNITIES IN NIGER STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study investigated the influence of school library policy and availability of reading materials on reading culture among primary six pupils in Bosso, Tudun Fulani and Rafin Yashi communities in Niger state Nigeria. Four research questions guided the study which centered on library, materials acquired and used, frequency of visit and reading clubs/ societies. The population of the study consisted of primary six pupils, teachers, heads of school libraries and head teachers /mistress in six selected primary schools in Bosso, Tudun Fulani and Rafin Yashi communities in Bosso Local Government of Niger State, Nigeria. Thirty staff and thirty primary school pupils were randomly selected for the study. Questionnaires and interview guides were the two research instruments used and data analysed using frequency counts and percentages, while responses from interview were analysed thematically to support the quantitative data. Results showed that school libraries do not exist in the two primary schools owned by Bosso Local Government, while primary schools owned by federal institutions and private organizations have libraries on average status. There were no laid down policies on school library collection and reading materials. The study further revealed that reading materials were not acquired on regular basis. Reading materials acquired include books on various subjects and story books; toys and see-saw were the playing materials. Pupils belong to debate, mathematics and dancing clubs and that none of the pupils cast news during

morning assembly. Majority of pupils do not visit school library to read. The study concluded that lack of laid down school library policy, inadequate reading materials and non-existence of reading clubs, discourage pupils to cultivate reading habit. The study recommended that: the proprietors / management of schools within the communities and the entire Bosso Local Government should design library policy that would take care of not only the establishment of school libraries, acquisition of reading and playing materials but also formation of reading club, constant visit to school libraries to read.

Keywords: School library, library Policy, Reading/Playing material, Collection: Clubs & Societies, Reading habits/culture, Primary schools Bosso, Nigeria

1. Introduction

The term culture refers ways by which people live or ways of life; they include dressing dancing, eating, ways of eating etc. Reading culture within the context of this paper is the habit formation in reading for pleasure and not only for research, relaxation and academic purpose. Reading habit or reading culture being habit formed in reading constantly in education sector is expected to commence at nursery and or primary school level couple with support of home-based habit formation in reading although according to Ahmed, Abdullahi, Mohammed and Bala, 2017, students of secondary schools practiced concentration and recreational type of reading. Parents are therefore charged with the responsibility of making available light reading materials (fiction books) for their wards. Making reading materials available for children at home encouraging children to read constantly (Eke, Oyedongham and Edem, 2016.)

In order to make reading materials available for primary school pupils, there is the need for functional libraries with current but relevant reading materials. These reading materials include but limited to textbooks on various subjects taught in primary schools. These subject Arithmetic, English, Social Studies, Nigerian Languages, Elementary Science, etc. The functional libraries at primary school level should contain fictions such as story books, on Nigerian and African culture, novels, newspapers, etc.

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The issue of making reading materials available for primary school pupils is a function of the availability of school libraries vis-à-vis school library policy. However, the reading culture among Nigeria children is on decline due to inadequate and/or absence of school library period and policy. Children tend to read wherever examination is approaching or in progress i.e children read for examination (Saka, Bitagi and Garba, 2012). Library policy can be viewed as a written down blue print containing the establishment of school library, types of reading materials to acquire; furniture, staff requirement, library period/hours etc. Unfortunately, there is complete absence of school library policy and this account for gross inadequate reading materials and reading habits among primary school pupils in Nigeria. The concepts of habit and culture are used interchangeably to mean constant reading for pleasure.

1.1 Statement of the Research Problem

There are primary, secondary and post-secondary schools in Nigeria. The primary schools are the foundation of all other educational institutions in Nigeria. If children are well equipped (education wise) they would stand a better chance to attain success at secondary and post-secondary schools. The intellectual development of pupils at primary school level is a function of their intellectual development which may not be far from establishing school libraries; equip them with relevant reading materials. These can further be enhanced by developing library policy that will contain frequency and type of collection to acquire, library periods, collection development committee, etc.

Preliminary investigation by the researchers revealed that there exist inadequate school libraries with few reading materials and users' patronage and where they exist, they are inadequate. One begins to wonder the factors responsible for the unfortunate situation. This study therefore, seek to find out whether or not there existed the influence of school library policy and reading materials on reading habit among primary school pupils in three communities in Bosso Local Government Area of Niger State, Nigeria.

1.2 Research Questions

The following questions guided the study:

1. What type of reading and playing materials are available in primary schools and school libraries?
2. What type of reading and playing materials are used by pupils in Primary schools and school libraries?
3. What is the frequency of visit to school libraries by pupils?
4. What type of clubs or societies exists in primary schools?

2. Review of Related Empirical Studies

Saka and Mohammed, 2009 in a study conducted to determine the availability of resources in senior post-primary school libraries in Minna metropolis Nigeria reported a total book stock of 69,392 managed by 57 library staff in 18 functional school libraries in Minna metropolis. The study further revealed that 39 out of 57 library staff have background qualification in librarianship. Study revealed inadequate in accommodation, collection and library personnel.

Saka, Bitagi and Garba, 2012 investigated reading culture among children in primary school libraries under federal government parastatals in Minna metropolis. The study aimed at investigating reasons and places for reading, problems militating reading and strategies to promoting reading culture among pupils. Descriptive survey methods were used with population of 3,295 children, 5 headmasters, 164 teachers and 3 teacher librarians. Self-designed structured questionnaire was designed and used in data collection. Simple descriptive statistics was used to analyses data. Results showed that pupil read so as to pass examination and that they read in classroom and respective homes.

Christopher, 2013 examined the effects of problems to acquisition of collections in university of Lagos and University of Ibadan main libraries. The study ascertained the extent of acquisition problem on collection, acquisition methods, causes of the acquisition problems and solutions. The study reported amongst that the investigated main university libraries has adhere to acquisition policy.

Egbe - Nwiyi, Chinyere and Eneh, 2017 investigated library services and users satisfaction in Enugu State Library Board. Five research questions guided the study which include amongst type of material resources being provided in Enugu State Library Board, Nigeria

and problems affecting users satisfaction. Population constituting 100 registered users between the year 2014 and 2015. Frequency counts, percentages, tabulation and mean were used to analyse data. Part of the results showed that textbooks, periodicals, fictions, magazines, pictures, posters, dictionaries and monographs were the materials available. Research materials such as technical report, thesis and dissertation were not available. Users were mostly satisfied with the provision of reader's services.

Ebere, Akpan and Frank, 2014 investigated reading culture among pupils and students in Enugu metropolitan city using a collaborative approach. Descriptive survey research was used with the study population of 80 teachers in six schools i.e. three primary and three secondary schools being owned by public, private and missionary. Questionnaire was used in data collection. On-the-spot-check of school libraries was used to gather information. Frequency counts and percentages were adapted to Analyse data. Results showed that only one has functional library and that there were no library periods. It was also discovered that poor educational system and inadequate reading materials were the major inhibiting factors to pupils/students reading culture.

Eke, Oyedongham and Edem, 2016 in a work on strategies that promote reading culture among undergraduate students in Nigeria, using Federal University of Technology Owerri and Niger Delta University Amusoma as study areas. The study reported that library advocacy; responsibilities of parents and lecturers were the strategies for promoting reading culture. Furfuri, 2017 examined provision and utilisation of school library collection in Zamfara State Nigeria with particular emphasis on challenges and strategies. It was reported that there was lack of education policies particularly in the area of school libraries in the state.

In a study conducted to determine the effect of the availability of library services on reading culture among secondary school students in Ilorin East Local Government Area of Kwara State, Nigeria, Akanbi-Ademolake, 2017 reported that most students do not use libraries regularly even though library services existed in their schools and that they patronized library at low level due to lack of adequate accommodation and quality books respectively.

In an examination of the role of public schools in educational development in Afikpo Local Government Area of Ebonyi State, Nigeria, Imaga, 2017 adopted case study method to select six schools. Random sampling technique was used to select 150 teachers from three primary

schools and 3 post primary schools within the local government area. Copies of questionnaire were administered on the respondents. Frequency counts and percentages were used to analyse data being collected through copies of questionnaire retrieved. Results showed that non-availability of libraries at primary schools while few existed at post primary schools. Inadequate funding was the major hindrance to school libraries in educational development of the local government area.

3. Methodology

Descriptive survey method was used as the study describes the variables of the study, collect and interpret data. The target population of the study consisted of primary six pupils, teachers-librarians, teachers/mistress and Headmasters/mistress in six primary schools in three communities (Bosso, Tudun Fulani and Rafin Yashi) in Bosso Local Government Area (LGA) of Niger State, Nigeria. Bosso LGA was chosen for this study owing to the fact that it is the only LGA in Niger State and among the 774 LGAs that harbour parastatals under Federal Ministries of Education, Science and Technology, Defence as well as Aviation and Water Resources thus, there are:

1. Federal University of Technology Minna
2. National Examination Council Headquarters Minna
3. Federal Government College Minna
4. Scientific Equipment and Development Institute, Minna
5. River Basin Development Authority, Minna
6. Federal Airport Authority, Maikunkele
7. Air force Base, Maikunkele

Table 1 showed the population of the study below.

Table 1: Population of the Study

S/No	Name of School	Ownership	Controlling body	Target population
1	Staff School FUT Minna	FUT Minna	FUT Minna	Primary School pupils, Teachers, H/M & Teacher-Librarians
2	Dr Yahahya Bawa Bosso Primary School	Bosso Local Government Education Authority	Bosso LGEA	Primary School pupils, Teachers, H/M & Teacher-Librarians

S/No	Name of School	Ownership	Controlling body	Target population
3	Jlkuchi UBE Primary School Rafin Yashi	Bosso LGEA	Bosso LGEA	Primary School pupils, Teachers, H/M & Teacher - Librarians
4	Staff School RBDA Tudun Fulani	Private Individual	Private Individual	Primary School pupils, Teachers, H/M & Teacher - Librarians
5	TOPAZ International School (Rafin Yashi)	Private Individual	Private Individual	Primary School pupils, Teachers, H/M & Teacher - Librarians
6	Abu Tura b Primary School Bosso	Private Individual	Private Individual	Primary School pupils, Teachers, H/M & Teacher - Librarians

Acronyms/Abbreviations used in Table 1

FUT	-	Federal University of Technology
H/M	-	Headmaster/Headmistress
LGEA	-	Local Government Education Authority
RBDA	-	River Basin Development Authority
UBE	-	Universal Basic Education

Thirty staff and thirty primary six school pupils in six primary schools were randomly selected for the study. Structured questionnaire containing seven items on types and frequencies of collection, library periods and clubs/societies and interview schedule were the data collection instruments used for the study.

Copies of questionnaire were administered on heads of primary schools, teachers and teacher-librarians while interview schedule was used to conduct interview sessions for the primary six pupils on types of reading and playing materials available in schools and school libraries, reasons for visiting school libraries types of reading clubs and membership of reading clubs/societies as well as casting of news in morning assembly.

Frequency counts and percentages were used to analyse the data collected from the administration of the copies of questionnaire while responses from interview conducted for primary six pupils were used to support the interpretation of data generated from the returned copies of the questionnaire.

4. Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 2: School Library Policy

S/No	Question items	YES		NO	
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%
1	School library acquire reading material once a year	6	5.52	23	19.82
2	School library acquire reading materials thrice a year	8	8.70	22	18.96
3	School library acquire different types of reading materials such as story books on different subjects	25	27.17	5	4.31
4	School library contains play materials such as toys	4	4.35	26	22.41
5	Audio-visual materials are available in school library	10	10.86	20	17.24
6	Library period are fixed in the school time table	15	16.30	15	12.93
7	The school has literacy and debating clubs	24	26.08	5	4.31
	Total	92	100	116	100

4.1 Response from Copies of Questionnaire

Heads of primary schools and libraries as well as teachers were requested to respond to questionnaire. Table 2 showed data on two columns on seven different statements on school library policy as it affects acquisition of reading and playing materials as library periods and literary/debating club/societies. As can be noticed from the two columns, there was higher responses from the No column with 116 as against 92 responses from YES column. This signifies that respondents disagree with majority of statements on the variables particularly on the frequency of the acquisition of reading materials; playing materials as well as audio-visual materials. This showed that school libraries even if they existed in some primary schools, they do not acquire adequate collections for reading and playing by pupils on regular basis.

On the items 3 and 7 of the questionnaire 25(27.17%) and 24(26.08%) of the teachers indicated that school libraries acquire both story books and books on different subjects and that library/debating clubs existed.

4.2 Interview

Based on the interview conducted for selected primary six pupils, revealed that two public schools has neither libraries nor reading/playing materials and that the school lack clubs and society. On the other hand, one institutional and two private primary schools possessed libraries, reading and playing materials though inadequate. Responses from selected primary six pupils showed that four out of six

schools owned libraries with reading and playing materials. This means that the other two public primary schools have neither libraries nor reading materials. The affected schools do not have clubs and societies. On the other hand, one institutional and two private schools possessed libraries, reading and playing materials such as story books and textbooks on different subjects as well as football, volleyball, ropes and see-saw.

Pupils from one of the private primary schools claimed that even though library exists in their school, they do not visit the library because the school policy does not allow them to use the library. Responses showed that pupils from three primary schools with libraries visited libraries to read and do assignment. Majority of pupils from the four primary schools with libraries belong to press, drama, sing, and debate clubs. None of the pupils belong to readers or literary clubs. One the casting of news, few pupils opined that their classmates cast news during morning assembly.

4.3 Discussion of Results

Responses from questionnaire and interview conducted revealed that there was no written school library policy on the acquisition of reading materials, formation of clubs and societies as well as library periods and school time table. These shortcomings were responsible for poor state of school libraries in Niger state and poor reading culture among pupils. This has long term effect on students' academic performance at secondary schools and higher educational level. This finding corroborates those of Saka, Bitagi and Garba 2012; Saka and Mohammed, 2009; and Imaga, 2017 who reported that some schools within Minna metropolis possessed inadequate school libraries, lack of fund; accommodation for libraries with inadequate collection, while some school libraries were converted to classroom/ staffroom due to shortage of accommodation. Pupils read for examination and there was absence of school library policy. The finding disagreed with that of Akanya, 2012 who reported absence of school library legislation in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria.

Responses from interview conducted for primary six pupils showed availability of libraries and collection though inadequate. However, the inadequacies in school libraries and their collection affect not only the formation of reading habit but also create set back in the educational development of pupils thus having long-term effect on pupils' intellectual, academic and career development in later life. This

finding disagrees with that of Egbe-Nwiyi, Chinyere and Eneh, 2017 as the results showed the availability of fictions, textbooks, periodicals, posters, pictures in Enugu State Library Board. Pupils visited school libraries to read and do their assignments. This means that students read for academic purpose and not for pleasure. This finding corroborates that of Saka, Bitagi and Garba, 2012 who reported that primary six pupils in federal parastatals schools in Minna metropolis read for examination.

On pupils' affiliation with clubs/societies, study found that pupils belong to press, dancing, singing, mathematics clubs but none was affiliated to readers and literary clubs. No wonder that primary school pupils find it difficult to express themselves verbally as a result of none affiliation to literary and debating clubs. This finding contradicts the findings by Christopher, 2013 as the study revealed that the two main university libraries investigated has adhere to acquisition policy.

The situation in the student primary schools in the three communities confirm the findings by Akanbi-Ademolake, 2017 in a research work discovered that students' patronage to library was low due to inadequate collection and accommodation used for libraries.

4.4 Summary of Major Findings

1. School libraries do not exist in two primary schools owned by Bosso Local Government Education Authority. Federal Government and privately-owned primary schools owned libraries on average status;
2. There was absence of laid-down policy on school libraries as the accommodation and collection were grossly inadequate.
3. Acquisition of school library collection were not on regular basis
4. Majority of pupils belong to reading, press, debating, mathematics clubs/societies.

5. Conclusion

Based on the findings in terms of the existence of school libraries, types and frequency of the acquisition of collection, the conclusion is that lack of laid down school library policy was the major factor responsible for poor reading habit among primary school pupils in the Local Government Area of Niger State, Nigeria. if this trend continues without intervention of government and stakeholders in Library and Information Science profession, there is going to be a slow pace in the educational

development of primary school pupils not only in the studied schools but, also in the entire local government and Niger State at large.

6. Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion reached the study recommended that: Proprietors and management of primary schools within Bosso Local Government Area in Niger State Nigeria should design library policy that would take care of the establishment of libraries, collection, frequency of acquisition of reading and playing materials; formation of clubs/societies and pupils' constant patronage of school library and collection.

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