

## **CRITICAL ANALYSIS ON THE AVAILABILITY AND USE OF TRADITIONAL LIBRARY AND ELECTRONIC LIBRARY RESOURCES AND STUDENT'S READING CULTURE.**

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### **Abstract**

The place of libraries in any academic environment cannot be over-emphasized. However with the advent of social media provided by computer and its associated resources, students now hardly visit and use conventional libraries. Instead students are now commonly found of being adapted to the use of electronic social media. Since students are now commonly fond of using social media resources such as Facebook, Twitter, E-mail, etc. It then becomes imperative to see the possibilities of adapting these media to library practice. The study uses method of critical analysis to access the availability and extent of use of traditional library over e-library in schools. Therefore the researcher suggests that library resources should be made available and also be included as a subject of study in the secondary schools in other to enhance student's reading culture.

**Key words:** Library resources, Reading Culture, School library

### **Introduction**

Traditionally, libraries are collections of books, manuscripts, journals, and other sources of recorded information. In the last 50 years, libraries have increasingly developed into a provider of information resources and services that do not even require a building. The terms digital library and virtual library are used to refer to the vast collections of information to which people gain access remotely.

The materials provided for on this virtual platforms are referred to as e-facilities and at such provide access to wide range of information to people of all works of life. It is therefore no wonder that the resources provided on this virtual platforms are mostly sorted and used by students in trying to tackle their different academic problems, but that notwithstanding, the traditional library on the other hand is a better promoter of sit-down-and-read culture based on the opportunity it offers to read without getting distracted by other activities.

It is therefore safe to say that the virtual library materials are more available and most frequently used but mainly for research purposes and not for the promotion of a good reading culture. Besides, the e-resources provides fast access to information and doesn't allow users the

opportunity to go beyond the scope of their research. For the enhancement of reading culture amongst students, the e-resources and the traditional library resources must come to play.

The changes in libraries and the roles of librarians originated in the US and other English-speaking countries, but electronic networks do not have geographical boundaries; and their influence has spread rapidly. With Internet connections across the globe, people who did not have access to traditional library services now have the opportunity to get information about all subjects while free of political censorship. Increasingly, librarians have assumed the role of educator to teach users how to find information both in the library and over networks. Traditional libraries and librarians exist alongside the electronic libraries which are eroding the functions of both traditional and librarians.

This paper studies the availability of both the traditional and electronic resources in our secondary schools and offers ways we can improve its use in the promotion of reading culture amongst secondary school students.

### **CONCEPT OF SCHOOL LIBRARIES**

Library and education are two vital institution of socialization and perpetuation of human race. Eberhart (2010) defines library as "a collection of resources in a variety of formats that is organized by information professionals or other experts who provide convenient physical, digital, bibliographic, or intellectual access and offer targeted services and programs with the mission of educating, informing, or entertaining a variety of audiences and the goal of stimulating individual learning and advancing society as a whole". The library is one of the information centres where a person can obtain information. It is also a place where a person can go to read or study. Hence, they are places where the habit of reading books can be acquired. Libraries increase students' success at school and they help them to acquire the educational knowledge necessary for adapting to changing and evolving circumstances (Owen 2010). In the words of Ajidahun (2011), the library is unarguably and indubitably one of the intellectual wonders of life and one of the greatest and remarkable innovations and inventions that have proved indisputably man's creative audacity. He adjudged the library to also be a splendid educational masterpiece, a redemptive global phenomenon with robust capacity, ecumenical power and capability to bring the desired and the unimaginable transformation and positive changes to the society; the results of which are immeasurably eternal.

According to Ajidahun (2011), any country which wants its people to be informed, articulate, efficient, productive and current must give priority attention to the development of its libraries.

A school library (or a school library media center) is a library within a school where students, staff, and often, parents of a public or private school have access to a variety of resources (Eze, 2016). The goal of the school library media center is to ensure that all members of the school community have equitable access to books and reading, to information, and to information

technology (Eze, 2016). A school library media center "uses all types of media... is automated, and utilizes the Internet (as well as books) for information gathering. School libraries are distinct from public libraries because they serve as learner-oriented laboratories which support, extend, and individualize the school's curriculum. A school library serves as the center and coordinating agency for all material used in the school. In simple and clear terms, school libraries are libraries found in primary and secondary school. They are now being referred to as media resources center (Oku, 2011). School libraries occupy a significant position in discussions on learning and many international studies have asserted the positive role school libraries have exerted on education, linking them directly to the improvement of students' academic performance, also in secondary education.

### **ROLES OF SCHOOL LIBRARIES**

Seven roles performed by school libraries according to (Patson) 2012 are; Leading the teaching and learning of information literacy across the curriculum; Collaborating with teachers to embed information literacy across the curriculum; Providing training for teachers and students; Offering a suitable environment for research; Affording access to a wide range of resources; Facilitating opportunities to browse and discover; and Stimulating independent learning libraries can be powerful and persuasive.

Similarly, Broady-Preston and Lobo (2011) argued that the role and function of school libraries is closely tied to, and contingent on, the educational mission and institution of the school. Shonle (2018) stated that studies on the impact of school libraries in different parts of the world revealed that sufficiently financed school libraries staffed with qualified school librarians influence students academic performance, regardless of their socio-economic status or educational background. Students' examination performance is also higher when school libraries usage increases. Furthermore, the frequency with which students borrow books from school libraries is indicative of students bond with studying. In schools with libraries and trained library personnel, students tend to read more, not exclusively for their school work, but also for general information and for the sake of entertainment in its own right.

The quality of the school library book collection and the presence of a powerful computer network connecting classrooms with library resources have a significant relationship with student success. Furthermore, the incorporation of information literacy into the curriculum may improve the knowledge and skills of students. Teacher/school librarian partnership has also a strong positive impact on learning. A study environment with the appropriate facilities is a sure footing on comprehension, vocabulary building, spelling, and writing style of the students. Librarians strengthen students sense of self-esteem, self-confidence, independence and responsibility in students and lead them to better performance. Therefore, school library usage reinforces students' school performance.

## Reading Culture

The definition of reading has gone through many changes. In the past, reading simply meant to extract visual information from any given codes or systems. However, thereafter, reading became much more complex and involved the understanding of a whole text composed of written signs Samuel (2016 ) defined reading as an active attempt on the part of reader to understand a writers message. According to patson (2012) Reading is a process of thinking, recalling and relating concepts under the functioning of written words. Reading provides experience through which the individual may expand his horizons of knowledge, identify, extend and intensify his interest and gains deeper understanding of himself, of other human beings and of the world (Chettri & Rout, 2013) defined reading as the art of interpreting printed and written words.

Lone (2011) describes reading as the passion of the greatest personalities of all times. Humans have been reading since ages, and thus, words of knowledge have been passed on through generations. Reading is an action of a person who reads and habit is a product of this action or learning. Like all other habits, the habit or reading in an individual develops during the course of time (Thanuskodi,2011). A habit is a settled or regular practice, especially one that is hard to give up (Jato, Ogunnniyi & Olubiyo, 2014). The reading habit influences in the promotion of one's personal development in particular and social progress in general. Regular and systematic reading sharpens the intellect, refines the emotions, elevates tastes and provides perspectives for ones living; and thereby prepares a person for an effective participation in the social, religious, cultural and political life. Reading fires the imagination of the person. It adds new sight to eyes and new wisdom to mind. Reading loads the mind with new software (Eze, 2016). The individual who reads well has a means for widening mental horizons and for multiplying opportunities of success. Reading is a vital factor affecting intellectual and emotional growth.

Reading habits are well-planned and deliberate pattern of study which has attained a form of consistency on the part of students toward understanding academic subjects and passing at examinations. Reading habits determine the academic achievements of students to a great extent. Both reading and academic achievements are interrelated and dependent on each other. Students often comes from different environments and localities with different levels of academic achievement Therefore, they differ in the pattern of reading habits. While some students have good reading habits, others tend to exhibit poor reading habits. Academic achievement means how much knowledge the individual has acquired from the school (Bashir & Mattoo, 2012).

Palani (2012) is of the opinion that, effective reading is important avenue of effective learning and reading is interrelated with the total educational process and hence, educational success requires successful reading habit. He believes reading is the identification of the symbols and the

association of appropriate meaning with them. It requires identification and comprehension. Comprehension skills help the learner to understand the meaning of words in isolation and in context. Before the advent of the television, both the young and the old found enough time to read. Apart from teachers, other professionals used to spend their leisure time in reading both English and vernacular literature. English medium schools almost always demanded extra reading from their students. But all these have become a thing of the past.

Reading habit is someones behavior which does not need much thinking process or repeated activity which is done regularly by him then does continuously as a result it becomes a habit. If reading is a habit (liah,2012).A student would like to get into of course there are a number of ways to cultivate it. The student will realize that reading is highly enjoyable if he or she reads his or her interests. On the other side, if a student has to read a lousy material or an extremely difficult one then he or she is forcing himself through it then it will seem like a chore. If this happens for several times, consider abandoning the material and finding one that he or she likes best. To acquire the habit of reading is to construct you a refuge from almostall the miseries of life.

## **FACTORS AFFECTING REGULAR USE OF LIBRARY FACILITIES IN SCHOOLS**

Some of the issues affecting students' regular use of school Libraries have been noted to include the following:

- a) Lack of a library policy: A library policy is supposed to offer guidelines for actions and decisions to be taken within the library. Thus, without written guidelines it would be difficult to have effective school library programs. The policy should act as the roadmap to school library management practices.
- b) Poor staffing practices: Lack of professional staff in the library leads to further challenges such as irrelevant library collection, un-catalogued and poorly organised books. Poor staffing leads to lack of information literacy among students. Unprofessional staff also results in inadequate marketing of library services and raising awareness on its role while qualified librarians can contribute greatly to the development of students reading habit and culture.
- c) Agyekum and Filson, (2012) stated that Lack of adequate Funding leads to inadequate resources and poor staffing. The issue of school library budget and funding need to be addressed within the school library policy and the National school library policy within the Ministry of Education. Mojapelo (2018) affirm that lack of funding is a major stumbling block in school

library development. This thwarts all efforts for the development and maintenance of functional school libraries thereby hampering students' usage of the library.

d) Poor ICT infrastructure: In today's era, it is vital to have robust technological infrastructures within the education system. Unfortunately the situation in most schools is disheartening. As a result, opportunity for students to use ICT s for information access is limited. Lack of ICTs in school libraries results in continuous provision of outdated information thereby making students lose interest in library usage

e) Poor library facilities: In some cases, schools do not even have a school library. But in cases where the library is available, the facilities are outdated and not in good condition. There is need to build libraries which are built in order to provide adequate reading, ICT and discussion spaces required by students. Batool and Webber (2017) agree that school libraries are playing a limited role in developing reading habits and making children independent learners. Lizazi and Mbanga (2013) states that the school library is the heart of the school and the two organs are inseparable. This means that as long as school libraries are still facing these numerous challenges, the development of reading habit through regular use of library would be near impossible.

In dealing with these challenges suggestions has been enumerated to include;

1. Creation of a Public Relations Unit: Agyekum and Filson (2012) suggest that, school libraries should create public relations unit to perform the following functions

\* Sourcing funds to support the meager government grants for school libraries

\*To create awareness and educate users on the recognition of the importance of the school libraries.

2. Schools that lack space for adequate library facilities should use trolley to push books into the classroom whenever required and can be pushed room a corner when in use.

3. School are advised to employ staff who are professional librarians to enable them build a collection suitable for secondary School students as it is not merely enough to surround students with books .if the books are in attractive the students will certainly be in different to them. It is also important to provide books that meet the students' information needs not excluding teachers and parents as well.

Awoyemi(2011) said that although literacy is generally acquired in Schools that foundation for good reading habit are set in the homes in the earliest year of life this means that the ability in written language rests on the foundation of spoken language, children from home where speech is vivid and expressive, rich in content topics , anecdote thought and experiences bring greater

resources to their meeting with the written word. The home lays the foundation for literacy in the attitude displayed towards book. If books are plentiful in the home and valued and used by parents children develop positive attitude towards reading and feels easy and familiar with books.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Teachers at the secondary levels of education should maintain high levels of ICT usage among students through continuous education and promotion of the benefits attached to the use of ICT resources. This would involve the use of seminars and training programmers as well as encouraging teachers to embrace e - learning and its resources.
- Introduction of library Studies in the school curriculum right from primary to tertiary levels. With this, learners will be earlier exposed library skills right from the early stages of schooling before they actually get to the tertiary level of education.
- Government should make a policy compelling all secondary schools to provide sufficient traditional library and ICT facilities for use in their respective library.
- Government should encourage local production of computers and related accessories in order to make the facilities more affordable.
- Epileptic power supply in Nigeria is one of the major hindering factors in the effective use of library materials especially the e-resources in schools. Government should provide steady power supply in schools.
- The present situation of low level of appreciation and use of both the e-library and the e-library resources need to be corrected via necessary legislation, proper funding and an overall of teacher education programs in Nigerian secondary Schools.

### **CONCLUSION**

The world is fast changing to a technological approach to solving it's problems and libraries are not left out... By deciding to change to digital production, a traditional library would make it much easier to cooperate with other libraries around the world. And such co-operation should be encouraged in schools as well Anambra government should ensure a co-operation amongst all The libraries in secondary schools in Anambra state because the more a library can communicate with others the more they will be able to learn what has already been done. One of the ways we waste time and money is to try to invent everything ourselves. Whatever you are trying to do in developing your library, you can guarantee that somebody else has already done something similar. If we are working with traditional methods and the only means that we have of sending materials to other institutions is by the post, then it is understandable that libraries tend to concentrate on their own affairs and their own public. It takes weeks to communicate with other libraries then the efforts becomes too much and it is faster to produce materials than to borrow it, if however, libraries can start to use the Internet to exchange information and materials, the exchange can happen in seconds. The digital library offers more possibilities for enhanced scholarly communication. The Internet and related technologies such as electronic mail enable collaborative projects to be undertaken between geographically distant groups. All secondary

schools can derive tremendous advantages from this technology for updating the knowledge of its researchers and scientists. The entire world is going online. The agenda for global preparedness includes the development of telecommunications and Internet infrastructure. Technology is the backbone of digital library, and the centre piece of preparedness is the expansion of technology in Nigeria and other developing countries.

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