

BUILDING A USER CENTRIC LIBRARY COLLABORATION IN SECONDARY SCHOOL LIBRARIES IN KWARA- CENTRAL ZONE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The paper examined user centric library collaboration in secondary school libraries in Kwara Central Senatorial zone, Nigeria. By means of stratified random sampling technique, ten secondary schools were chosen for the study. Moreover, ten staff and ten students were selected in each of the schools by means of stratified random sampling technique. Hence, a total of two hundred (200) research subjects were selected for the study. The data collection instrument used was a structured questionnaire. The validity and reliability of the instrument were carried out, and the statistical tool employed for analysing the data was the chi-square. The study found out that, the reading materials were grossly inadequate in the school libraries; there were virtually no e-library facilities in the schools; and that poor maintenance culture characterized the school libraries. Specifically, there was no significant difference in the responses of the staff and students with regard to: inadequacy of modern reading materials; non-existence of e-library system; and poor maintenance of the school libraries. It was recommended that the government should provide, at least, 25% of its annual budget to education, and that a good proportion of the budget on education should be spent on school libraries. It was also recommended that all stakeholders in education, i.e. government, parents, teachers, communities, religious organizations, Old Students Associations and philanthropists should contribute to the development of school libraries in the Senatorial zone.

Key words: Building, User centric libraries, Collaboration, Secondary school, Kwara State

Introduction

In the contemporary time, a library can be defined broadly as a collection of materials books or media which are accessible for use. A library contains hard and soft copies of reading materials. In order to achieve a school library which is user-centered, there is the need for collaborative efforts of the stakeholders in education such as the government (Federal, State and Local), parents, guardians, students and even the philanthropists.

In building user-centric library, efforts need to be made by the libraries to get in their stock the kind of information materials that will serve the categories of users being served, consider it not necessary that the users come, they already know that their needs are available. Libraries need to present their collections to users in various ways, which include online enlightenment programme, exhibition, media broadcast, social media and many more. This will motivate users to develop more interest in the use of library and its resources. The quality of services rendered influence the patronage of the library. For school libraries to experience high patronage by their users, their services must be a qualitative in terms of performance, currency of information, serviceable and perceived quality (Afolabi 2017).

School library which is an essential organ in both preprimary, primary and post-primary should not be left out because: to catch them young, there is need to inculcate the habit of reading through the provision of various information materials both printed and non-printed. This will have a positive impact on the pupils and students' literacy and learning outcomes. Kerele & Ogunniyi (2015) viewed school library as an integral and supportive organ of the school curriculum.

A casual observation of school libraries, especially in Kwara Central Senatorial area, has shown that the school libraries' condition does not make them fit to be given the modern definition, because their condition leaves much to be desired (Hassan, 2019). Moreover, in this modern and ever-changing world, it is vital to build user-centered libraries.

Statement of the problem

The importance of school library cannot be overemphasized in Nigerian secondary schools due to the services they provide and their implication for reading culture and development. This is the reason why building a user centered library is very paramount. However, it has been discovered that majority of students do not patronize the school library as a result of poor location, size, insufficient information experts, poor environmental condition and inadequate funding. School library is an essential part, helpful school curriculum. Despite this, schools still fail to collaborate with the school librarian because mostly teachers fail to have time. The school library is often used for workshop, meeting, training, but during these times the library is closed which is not supposed to be so. Moreover, there are no adequate spaces for school libraries, furniture and good stock. Teachers that are supposed to stay during the library hours often leave and do not plan with the school librarian, they simply drop off their classes and feel there is no connection between the classroom and the library. Furthermore, many students do not make use of the library when they are in post-primary schools. This ugly habit is carried up to higher institution, such that when they become students in tertiary educational institutions, they do not see the need to make use of the library. It is in the light of this that this study focused on building a user-centric library collaboration with particular reference to secondary school libraries in Kwara Central, Nigeria.

Literature Review

The term ‘library’ has been defined in various ways by different scholars and writers. However, one of the modern and comprehensive definitions is the one that describes the library as a building in which collection of books, CDs, newspapers, etc. are kept for people to read, study or borrow (Ufuoma, 2017). According to Busari (2022), library is a place where both printed and non- printed materials like films, real objects, slide projectors, tape cassette are kept for reading and teaching purposes. The library’s clientele and services offered vary, depending on the type. However, modern libraries extend their services beyond the physical walls of the building by providing materials accessible by electronic means, including from home, via the Internet. The Key services of a typical library are library services and information services. (Robinson, 2016).

Building a user-centric library collaboration is important. Usability can be defined as the capacity of a system to provide a condition for its users to perform the tasks safely, effectively and efficiently. The object of use may be a software application, website, book, tool, machine or process; (Corradini, 2016). Building a user centric library collaboration entails user centred design or user – driven development which is framework of process, not restricted to the interface’s technologies in which usability goals, user characteristics, environment, tasks and work flow of a product service, or process are given extensive attention at each stage of the design process (Sloan, 2022).

The needs, goals, satisfaction and comfort of the users must be given utmost attention and priorities when establishing a school library. When erecting a school library building, experts in the construction of school library buildings need to be consulted. Decision to be made include: suitable site, funds, determining the library size, Components within the building and the size of each component, building materials, adequate ventilation, etc. in order avert building collapse, experts must examine the ground texture and topography; whether the building is a bungalow or storey-building. After erecting the school library building, section for books, journals, newspapers, e-resources Akande (2022).

Skilled librarian would attract attention of students when he solves their problems. His competence in the use of technology to locate and access information could make the students to evaluate him as an indispensable agent in their academic pursuit (Akande, 2022). Also, Summonds and Andaleeb (2021) concluded that the use of library is influenced mostly by users’ perceived familiarity with library services and its resources. Gunasereka (2020) found that majority of students’ exhibit negative opinion about library orientation programme in Egerton University, Kenya. Also, Baskaran (2021) posited that students visit the library occasionally due to poor perception towards school library. Therefore, there is need for collaboration effort by the school library management and other stakeholders to provide adequate resources and services to its users. Reference (such as the encyclopedia) should be clearly demarcated. There should be an ample space for e-library section with adequate computer and internet facilities. Materials such as chairs, desks/tables should be comfortable for the users (students). The floor must not be slippery so as to avert tripping and falling down. Rules and regulations pertaining to the use of the library should be conspicuously printed and pasted at the appropriate parts of the library for the users (students) to see. Appropriate penalties for defaulting the rules and regulations should also be publicised (Snowball, 2018).

It should be stressed that power supply is an essential requirement for a modern library to function effectively. In addition to the public power supply, each school should own either generating sets or solar powered equipment or both. This is important as no e-library can function at all in the absence of power supply. All the stakeholders in the secondary school system should ensure that they collaborate efforts towards facilitating the utilisation of the library resources (Garrod, 2014).

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are to find out:

1. the quality of reading materials in secondary school libraries in Kwara Central Senatorial Zone.
2. the types of e-library facilities available in the school libraries.
3. the types of maintenance regularly carried out in the school libraries.

Research Questions

The following are the research questions of the study:

1. What is the quality of reading materials in secondary schools in Kwara Central Senatorial Zone?
2. What types of e-library facilities are available in the school libraries?
3. What types of maintenance are regularly carried out in the school libraries?

Hypotheses

Ho1: There is no significant difference in the response of students and staff concerning the level of availability of reading materials in secondary school libraries in Kwara Central.

Ho2: There is no significant difference in the responses of students and staff concerning the availability of functional E Library facilities in Kwara Central State.

Ho3: There is no significant difference in the responses of students and staff concerning the level of library maintenance in Kwara Central Secondary School

Research Methodology

The population of the study consisted of all secondary school libraries in Kwara Central Senatorial zone. The zone is made up of four Local Governments Areas (LGA). These are: Asa, Ilorin East, Ilorin South, and Ilorin West. By means of stratified random sampling technique, ten secondary schools were chosen out of all the schools in the zone. Furthermore, by means of random sampling technique, 10 staff and 10 students in each of the schools were selected as research subjects. Hence, a total of two hundred (200) respondents were used for the study. The research instrument was titled "Building a user-centered library collaboration in a changing world check list". The respondents were asked to state the level of availability of each item in Likert scale format. The instrument was validated by submitting the original draft

to a few lecturers who are experts in research method. The draft was corrected where required and content validity was subsequently ensured. A test -retest system was used to ascertain its reliability. Using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation technique, the coefficient of correlation obtained was 0.91, which signify a very high reliability index.

The researchers visited the sample school to administer copies of the instrument. in addition, they also observed the condition of each of the school libraries. The statistical tool utilised for analyzing the data is the chi-square.

Results and discussions

1. Testing of hypothesis.

Ho1: There is no significant difference in the responses of staff and students concerning the level of availability of reading materials in Kwara Central secondary school libraries

Table 1: Chi square analysis of staff and students' responses on the level of availability of reading materials in Kwara Central secondary schools.

	READING MATERIALS								
Group	Available		Not available		Total	Calc. X^2	Critical X^2	df	Level Of sign
	Obs.	Exp.	Obs.	Exp.					
Staff	10	(8)	90	(92)	100	1.08	3.841	1	0.05
Students	6	(8)	94	(92)	100				
Total	16		184		200				

The results in Table 1 shows that the calculated chi-square value is less than the critical value (since $1.08 < 3.84$) at 1 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. Hence the null hypothesis 1 is retained, i.e cannot be rejected.

Ho 2: There is no significance difference in the responses of staff and students concerning the availability of functional e-library facilities in Kwara Central secondary schools

Table 2: chi-square analysis of staff and students' responses concerning the availability of functional e-library facilities in Kwara Central secondary schools.

Group	E-LIBRARY FACILITIES				Total	Calculated X ²	Critical X ²	df	Level of sig
	Available		Not available						
	Obs	Exp.	Obs.	Exp.					
Staff	2	(3)	98	(97)	100	0.68	3.841	1	0.05
Student	4	(3)	98	(97)	100				
Total	6		194		200				

The result in Table 2 indicates that the calculated chi-square value is less that the critical value (since $0.68 < 3.841$) at 1 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. hence the null hypothesis 2 is retained i.e cannot be rejected.

Ho 3: There is no significant difference in the responses of staff and students concerning the level of library maintenance in Kwara Central secondary schools.

Table 3: Chi-square analysis of staff and students, responses concerning the level of library maintenance in Kwara Central Secondary School

Maintenance in Rwanda Central Secondary School									
Group	LIBRARY MAINTENANCE				Total	Calculated X ²	Critical X ²	df	Level Of Sig
	Good		Poor						
	Obs.	Exp.	Obs.	Exp.					
Staff	16	(18)	84	(82)	100	0.54	3.841	1	0.05
Student	20	(18)	80	(82)	100				
TOTAL	36		164		200				

The result in Table 3 reveals that the calculated chi-square value is less than the critical value (since $0.54 < 3.84$) at 1 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance; null hypothesis 3 is retained, i.e. cannot be rejected.

Discussion of the Results.

The result in Table 1 indicated that null hypothesis 1 is retained.

The hypothesis states that there is no significant difference in the responses of staff and students concerning the level of availability of library materials in secondary schools in Kwara Central senatorial zone of the state. In specific terms, both the staff and students were of the view that the library suffer immensely from lack of modern suitable reading materials such as books, journal, newspapers, newsmagazine and encyclopedia in their view, the available reading materials were rather few and most of them were outdated. This result is in consonance with that of Okoh (2017) who found out that reading materials in secondary schools in Makurdi metropolis were grossly inadequate.

The result in Table 2 reveals that null hypothesis Stated that there is no significant difference in the responses of staff and students concerning the level of availability of e-library facilities in secondary Schools in Kwara Central zone of the state. Specifically, the staff and the students were of the opinion that e-library facilities were virtually non- existent in the schools. To corroborate this point, only two (2) members of staffs out of one hundred (100), stated that there were e-library facilities, while homogenous number (i.e. 98) stated that there were e-library facilities. In the same vein only four (4) students out of 100 stated that there were e-library facilities, while a huge proportion i.e 96 stated that there were no such facilities. They were unanimous in their view that most of the schools' libraries suffered from lack of Internet facilities, functional computer sets, generating sets, solar energy apparatus. The results are in agreement with that of Ugwumadu (2021) who found out that it was very rare to find any significant number of public schools with e-library facilities in the whole of Abia State of Nigeria.

The result in Table 3 shows that there was no significant difference in the responses of staff and students concerning the level of maintenance of the school libraries in Kwara Central. They were of the view that the damaged books were not usually mended, neither were they replaced. They also stated that the library buildings themselves were poorly maintained: there were cracks in the walls; there were potholes in the floor; the walls paints had faded considerably; the ceiling systems were caving in; there were a lot of cobwebs in various segments of the buildings; many reference books were very dusty; some benches and desks had damaged legs; some of the roofs were leaking rain water, e.t.c. this result is in consonance with those of Okoh (2017) and Ugwumadu (2021) who found out in their respective studies, that secondary school libraries in Makurdi metropolis and Abia state were poorly maintained.

Conclusion

Building a user-centric library collaboration entails certain specific steps to take and goals to attain. User centric libraries essentially entail the provision of some basic facilities which will make the libraries serve useful purpose; which will consequently pave way for productive teaching and learning in schools. It has been established, from the study, that the secondary schools in Kwara Central Senatorial zone lacked current books, journals, newspapers, magazines and encyclopedias that are essential for efficient learning. Similarly, e-library facilities are virtually nonexistent in these schools, since most of them lacked public electricity supply, generating sets, solar energy system, computer sets and the Internet. Furthermore, the schools lacked regular library

maintenance since the library walls had cracks; damaged books neither mended nor replaced; some ceiling had some portions damaged and the furniture in the libraries were not good enough. Thus, for all these deficiencies to be addressed, there should be collaborative efforts by all stakeholders in education to erect user-centric libraries in the zone.

Recommendations

In order to improve on the current deplorable situation, the following recommendations are considered necessary.

1. There must be collaboration of all the stakeholders in education, i.e. the government, parents, teachers, communities, religious organizations and philanthropists.
2. Government should ensure that it sets aside at least 25% of the total state budget on education. Also, a good part of the total budget on education should be allocated to establishing and maintaining user-centric libraries.
3. The Parents-Teachers Association (PTA) should pay a special attention to user-centric libraries in all the secondary schools in the zone.
4. All the library personnel (staff) in the schools should be motivated in terms of good remunerations.
5. All the staff in charge of the school libraries should be exposed to regular professional seminars, conferences and workshops, and attendance should be accompanied by handsome monetary allowances.
6. In order to be conversant with the skills and current practices in library organization and management, the school library staff should be sponsored for further studies and in-service training both locally and internationally. This will enhance efficient and effective performance in the management of the school libraries.
7. The government should ensure the provision of reliable power supply, computers and Internet in the schools for effective and efficient e-library services and operation.
8. The Old Students Association in the zone should assist their respective alma mater to build user-centric libraries in order to contribute their quota to the educational development of the schools.

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