

## A SURVEY OF LIBRARY SERVICES AVAILABLE FOR PRE-PRIMARY AND PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN IN LAGOS STATE

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### **Abstract**

*The study investigated the library services available for pre-primary and primary school children in Lagos State. The study employed the descriptive survey design. The sample consisted of 240 primary school pupils and 120 primary school teachers randomly selected from 12 primary schools in four Local Government Areas of Lagos State. The instrument used for data collection were the pupils questionnaire which is made up of 15 items and the teachers questionnaire which is made up of 20 items. The questionnaires were designed to find out the availability and use of library facilities and personnel in pre-primary and primary schools in Lagos State. Frequency counts, mean, standard deviation and percentage were used for data analysis.*

*The findings of this study indicated that:*

- *Some primary schools in Lagos state have library facilities.*
- *There are teacher librarians in some of the schools.*
- *There are library periods on the school time-table.*

*Recommendations were made on the effective use of the library facilities available by both the pupils and their teachers.*

### **Introduction**

The growth and development of the educational system of a nation depends much on the reading habit, attitude and culture of the citizens. This view is supported by Unoh (1980) when he pointed out that reading is an indispensable tool of learning in various hierarchies of the modern educational system. Thus, the library occupies a unique pedestal in our educational system by making information sources available in advancing human knowledge.

The quest to improve the reading culture and interest of the populace was among the factors that led to the establishment of the library. Freeman, as cited by Akande (2001), described the library as a place for quiet learning and enjoyment where pupils, students and teachers can become experts in using materials. The library should also be used to store, organize the school teaching aids, pictures, illustrations, film strips. Similarly, Fayose (1995) describes the school library as that part of the school where an organized collection of print and non-print materials are kept for teaching, learning, personal development and recreation. In support of all these views, Fafunwa, (1992) defined the school library as the heart of the school around which all school programmes revolve.

For a library to be a living part of the school, it must have a professional teacher who has training in Librarianship. This is supported by Elaturoti (2001), when he described the school librarian as a professionally qualified staff member responsible for planning and managing the school library, supported by as many adequate staff as possible working together with all members of the school community and liaising with the public library and other institutions. Nassir (2004) opined that a competent, effective and experienced library staff is the keynote to good library services. The staff should be knowledgeable in the school library system and the type of resources needed for both pupils and teacher. Staff should have the knowledge in selecting materials and the ability to have technical know-how in organizing the materials to be accessible by the users. Educational qualification of the Librarian should be at least a diploma in library science. Also, the school librarians should acquaint themselves with curriculum of the primary school. This will enable them to know what sort of materials are to be purchased for the library.

It is no exaggeration to say that good reading habit is inculcated from home. Edeghere (2001) stated that family libraries must be encouraged and the participation of parents in school library development must be stirred. To encourage children to read calls for the parents, teacher librarians and teachers to be good observer of children. At home, parents must expose their children to books early in life. For them to achieve this, they must be a role model for children to imitate. A child that sees his parents reading books and newspapers will pick up interest in books. The sensible parents who are anxious of

children's mental, cultural and physical development introduce them to book as soon as they show interest. One of the problems that are delaying inculcating reading habit in children is that parents don't love reading and they don't provide reading materials or register their children in public library at early stage. This is supported by Effel Faniki, Osunkoya as cited by Jam (1996). They all concluded that Nigeria is not a reading nation. Similarly, Awoniyi (1985) asked, if adults do not read, how then can the child be motivated to read? He suggested that the best time to form a good reading habit is in childhood.

At school, pupils must be exposed to the pleasure, experience and wisdom that can be found in books and other materials so as to pave way for self-reliance and self-discovery. For the sound education of the youth, it is necessary to have relatively good school library well equipped and managed. In the revised edition of the Nations Policy on Education (2004), the Nigerian Government specified the need to establish libraries in primary schools to enhance the growth of primary education. Similarly, Maduwesi (1990) opined that each primary school ought to have a library stocked with up-to-date and interesting books which children can read and enjoy. Children should be encouraged to discover things for themselves. Teachers should encourage their pupils to use the library by giving them assignments periodically. Provision of toys, educational games, print and non-print materials and audio-visual media are necessary to motivate them to read, explore, experiment and discover things for themselves.

The importance of providing libraries for children is as important as education itself. School library will enable a child to read widely so that he may be challenged to probe more deeply than a textbook in order that he may compare and evaluate facts and truths and develop critical judgement. It will also help to make a child to read so as to cultivate a life time reading habit. It helps to develop in the pupils the ability to learn from books without the teacher. Therefore, it is pertinent that every child should be exposed to well-equipped library at an early stage of learning to improve his/her skills in library use and to be able to digest and think independently in adulthood. The school library plays an important role in the educational development of a child. Children go to the library to satisfy a desire for knowledge or to obtain materials for some kind of leisure. Children who have no opportunity of reading at home acquire their first reading experience in

library use. The children's library helps the child to build an enquiring mind and develop innate facilities that will enable them to put knowledge into good use. It is not only an information resources centre, but also a place to acquire, organize, preserve, classify, catalogue and disseminate knowledge.

While the library is considered as an important component of the primary school education system; it has been observed that many primary schools have been operating without libraries. The schools that have libraries do not have all the necessary facilities needed in the library, most-especially in developing countries like Nigeria. This view is supported by Utor (1987) when he pointed out that the position of school libraries in Nigeria has been neglected or nonexistent. The books are old, disused and un-organized. Udo (1986) shared the same view and declared that school library services in Nigeria are still at the developing stage displaying inadequacies in staffing, funding and services provided. Dike (1980-90) gave a vivid picture of what the situation of school library was in Anambra State. She stated that there was no school library worthy of mention in the state. She quickly stated that if there were any, they were very small and insignificant in number. Similarly, Daniel as cited by Bello (2004) described the primary school libraries in Abuja as nothing to write home about. Most schools surveyed have no building that could be called libraries. Some have no 'enough chairs and tables for readers use and only two audio-visual materials, television and radio were found in just a few libraries. She also reported that there were inadequate learning resources in the schools.

If the Federal Capital Territory has inadequate library facilities in schools, it is doubtful if any other city in Nigeria would have. It is in an attempt to ascertain the state of affairs with respect to school libraries in some other big cities in Nigeria that this study was carried out.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The study investigated the library services available for use in some pre-primary and primary school establishments in Lagos State. It was particularly aimed in determining whether the library services are adequate and meet the information requirement of readers.

**Research Questions**

This study sought answers to the following research questions:

- Do pre-primary and primary schools in Lagos State have library facilities?
- Are there professional librarians in the schools?
- Is library period included in the school timetable?

**Methodology**

The study was a descriptive survey in which two questionnaires were used for data collection. The population for the study is made up of all pre-primary and primary schools in Lagos State. Out of the 20 Local Government Areas in Lagos State, four Local Government Areas were randomly selected for this study. Twelve primary schools were also randomly selected which comprised private and public schools. From each of the twelve primary schools, 20 primary five and six pupils and 10 teachers respectively were randomly selected as sample. In all, a total of 240 pupils and 120 teachers were involved in the study.

The two instruments used, the teachers and pupils questionnaire were designed and validated' by the investigators. In the pupils questionnaire, Kuder Richardson (KR-20) method of testing reliability was used because the questionnaire is based on the Yes/No format while the teachers' questionnaire, Cronbach Alpha co-efficient of reliability was used because of the Likert type mode (SA, A, DA, and SD). The pupils' questionnaire has a reliability coefficient of .9078 while the teachers' questionnaire on the other hand has a reliability coefficient of .8229.

**Procedure for Data Collection**

The investigators administered the questionnaires to the randomly selected primary five and six pupils in their various classes with the help of their class teachers. The researchers stayed around while the questionnaires were being completed with the necessary assistance to the pupils. They were requested to avoid omitting any of the items. To achieve this and to ensure proper completion of the questionnaire, the items in the questionnaires were read out to them and explained in English. The ten (10) teachers selected in each school were also given the questionnaires to complete on the spot. All the three hundred and sixty (360) questionnaires administered were duly completed and

returned on the spot. The administration of the questionnaire lasted two weeks.

### Analysis

The responses from the questionnaire were computer analyzed using frequency counts, percentage, mean score and standard deviation. The results are presented in the order in which the research questions were generated.

### Research Question One

1. Do pre-primary and primary schools in Lagos State have library facilities?

To answer this question, frequency counts, percentages and mean scores of response to each item were computed. The results are presented in Tables 1 and 2.

**Table 1: Primary School Teachers Responses**

No	Items N = 120	SA 4	A 3	DA 2	SD 1	MEAN	STD DEV
1.	We have a library in our school.	300 62.5%	93 25.8%	20 8.3%	4 3.3%	3.48	0.788
2.	Apart from the main school library; we equally have reading corners in the classroom.	124 25.8%	90 25.0%	78 32.5%	20 16.7%	2.60	1.048
3.	There is a library period on our school time table.	244 50.8%	93 25.8%	38 15.8%	9 7.5%	3.20	0.967
4.	I encourage my pupils to visit our school library by giving item assignment/project that requires the use of library.	168 35.0%	144 40.0%	39 15.8%	11 9.2%	3.01	0.939
5.	There is public library in the Local Government where this school is located.	172 35.8%	54 15%	60 25.0%	29 24.2%	2.62	1.203
6.	We have teacher librarian in our school.	228	78 47.5%	38 21.7%	18 15.8%	3.02 15%	1.115

7.	I have some training on how to organize and manage a school library.	128 26.7%	144 31.7%	80 33.3%	10 8.3%	2.77	0.941
8.	Not all teachers have training on the organization and management of a school library.	88 18.3%	174 48.3%	54 22.5%	13 10.8%	2.74	0.884
9.	Every teacher must be trained to manage a school library.	228 47.5%	138 38.3%	14 5.8%	10 8.3%	3.25	0.901
10.	There should be regular workshop/ seminar for teachers on the use of library.	232 56.7%	147 40.8%	2 0.8%	2 1.7%	3.53	0.608
11.	I often collect materials for my lessons in the school library.	176 36.7%	120 33.3%	56 23.3%	8 6.7%	3.00	0.935
12.	I enjoy making use of the library for my personal reading.	212 42.2%	144 40.0%	30 12.5%	4 3.3%	3.25	0.802
13.	Our school libraries are essential for developing good reading habits in the pupils.	384 80.0%	63 17.5%	2 0.8%	2 1.7%	3.76	0.550
14.	Many teachers do not make use of public libraries.	92 19.2%	192 53.3%	38 15.8%	14 11.7%	2.80	0.885
15.	We are allowed to borrow books from the school library and public library.	200 41.7%	168 46.7%	16 6.7%	6 5.0%	3.25	0.75
16.	Our school library is quiet and conducive for reading.	244 50.8%	111 30.8%	32 13.3%	6 5.0%	3.28	0.879
17.	Our school library has enough materials for all subjects in the school curriculum.	152 31.7%	96 26.7%	74 30.8%	13 10.8%	2.79	1.012
18.	We have enough seats and tables well arranged in the library.	216 45.0%	63 17.5%	74 30.8%	8 6.7%	3.01	1.017

19.	We are satisfied with reliable facilities provided by our School.	116 24.2%	63 17.5%	92 38.3%	24 20.0%	2.46	1.068
20.	The state government is funding our school library.	52 10.8%	39 10.8%	78 32.5%	55 45.8%	1.87	0.995

**Table 2: Primary School Pupils Responses**

No.	Items N = 240	Yes	No	Total
1.	My school has a library.	211 87.9%	29 12.1%	100%
2.	I make use of the library often.	141 58.8%	99 41.3%	100%
3.	There is a library period in our school time-table.	151 62.9%	89 37.1%	100%
4.	There is a reading corner in my class.	103 42.9%	137 57.1%	100%
5.	Our teacher encourages us to make use of the library by giving us Assignments /projects to do in the library.	120 50%	120 50%	100%
6.	I always read in the public library in my town.	59 24.6%	181 75.4%	100%
7.	We have a teacher librarian in my school.	177 73.8%	63 26.3%	100%
8.	The teacher librarian guides us on how to use the library.	174 72.5%	66 27.5%	100%
9.	There are many books, magazines and newspapers in the library.	166 69.2%	74 30.8%	100%
10.	I often make use of non-print materials, like toys/ game, TV, computer in our school library.	72 30.0%	168 70.0%	100%
11.	I always borrow books from the school library.	137 57.1%	103 42.9%	100%
12.	Our school library is quiet and neat for reading.	201 83.8%	39 16.3%	100%
13.	We have enough seats and tables well arranged in the library.	171 71.3%	69 28.8%	100%
14.	We must register in the school library before we can use it.	79 32.9%	161 67.1%	100%
15.	I have never made use of a library.	92 38.3%	148 61.7%	100%



As could be seen in Table 1, item 17, 18 and 19 with the mean scores of 2.79, 3.01 and 2.46 respectively indicated that majority of the teachers sampled agreed that their schools have library facilities. Also in table 2, item 9 (69.2%) of the pupils agreed that they have books, magazines and newspaper in their library. Again, 71.3% of the pupils in item 13 agreed that there are enough seats and tables well arranged in the library.

From the study, it has revealed that the selected pre-primary and primary schools in Lagos State have library facilities as recommended by the revised edition of National Policy on Education (NPE, 2004). From the personal observation of the investigators during visits to these schools, it was found that some of the public schools and all the private schools visited had school libraries. However, some of the public schools that have library facilities do not meet the standard recommended by Universal Basic Education.

### **Research Question Two**

2. Are there professional librarians in the school libraries?

To answer this question, the frequency counts, the percentage and the mean scores of responses for each item were calculated and the results are presented in Tables 1 and 2.

Teachers' responses with a mean score of 3.02 as revealed in table 1 item 6 shows that 47.5% of the teachers with a mean score of 3.02 strongly agreed that they have a teacher librarian in their schools. In table 2, item 7, 73.8% of the pupils agreed to the availability of teacher librarians in their schools. That is to say that some of the schools in Lagos State have professional librarians. The response of 73.8% of the pupils as to the availability of librarians may be due to their inability to differentiate between professionally qualified librarians and their teachers who act as librarians.

From the personal observation made by the investigators during their visits to the schools, it was found that some public and almost all private schools visited had teacher librarians in their schools. Even though, some teacher librarians said they are not professional librarians, but had some training on library use. This is to show that even though they have teacher librarians; they are yet to meet the standard recommended by Universal Basic Education, which stated that

the teacher librarian should be a professional with at least Diploma in Library Science.

### **Research Three**

3. Is library period included in the school time-table?

To provide answer to this Research Question, the frequency count, percentage and mean scores of response for each items were calculated and the result were presented in Tables 1 and 2.

As revealed in tables 1 item 3, 50.8% of the teachers strongly agreed that there is a library period on their school time-table. In item 3 of table 2, 62.9% of the pupils agreed that there is library period on their school time-table. Thus, a high percentage of both the teachers and the pupils sampled agreed that library period exists in their school time-table. From the researchers' personal observation during visits to the schools, it was observed that some schools have library period on their time table while some do not have.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

From the finding of this study, it is obvious that some primary schools in Lagos State have library facilities while some do not have at all. There is still room for improvement in library facilities in Lagos State, in order to meet the standard recommended by Universal Basic Education.

It is therefore recommended that libraries should be provided for those schools that presently have no libraries. These libraries must be properly stocked with print and non-print materials. New schools should not be approved unless there is provision for good school libraries. There should be regular inspection of the schools to ensure that the available school libraries are well managed. Regular workshops, conferences and seminars should be organized for school teachers and Head teachers on the use and management of school libraries. Above all, the inclusion of library period on the school time-table should be made compulsory for all primary schools. This will encourage and develop the reading habit among the young ones.

### **Suggestion for Further Studies**

Since this study was limited to only four Local Government Areas of Lagos State, it is hereby recommended that other studies should be carried out to cover all the Local Government Areas in Lagos and other

states in Nigeria. A comparative study of the library services provided to pre primary and primary schools should be carried out in rural and urban area of the country. Similarly, another study on the effect of availability of library facilities on the academic achievement of primary school pupils should also be carried out.

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