

LIBRARY PROVISION IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study investigated library provision in public secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. Three research questions and hypotheses guided the study. The population of the study consisted of 268 principals and 7,425 teachers. The sample size of the study comprised 268 principals and 743 teachers. The entire population of 268 principals was used as a census while the simple random sampling technique was adopted to obtain 743 teachers, representing 10% of the population of teachers. A validated 20-item self- designed instrument tagged Library Provision in Public Secondary Schools Questionnaire was used for data collection. Its reliability index was established at 0.80 using Pearson r. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while z-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed among others that lack of adequate funding of the school system is a challenge restricting the provision of libraries in public secondary schools in Rivers State. It was recommended among others that the Rivers State government should ensure adequate provision of libraries in schools in order to instill the culture of reading in youths by increasing secondary school funding.

Keywords: Provision, Library, Library Facilities, Public Secondary Schools, Objectives, Challenges, Rivers State

Secondary schools are institutions of learning that help to develop the mind and body of youths within the confines of the society. The library has a great role to play in order to achieve this objective. Libraries

are very vital in the dispensing of knowledge in the school setting. This is because the educational process functions in a world of books, periodicals and other reproduced materials which are of great interest and value to students. The importance of library has been demonstrated by the federal government of Nigeria when she expressed in her national policy on education (FRN, 2014) that every state ministry needs to provide funds for the establishment of libraries in all her educational institutions.

Uche (2002) describes a library as a collection of book materials and non-book materials, such as; films, slide, phonograph records and tapes, organized for use and preservation. Hornby (2010) perceives a library as a building or room in which collection of books, tapes, newspapers, etc are kept for people to read, study or borrow. Odu (2016) avers that the library is the interface between information seekers and the information sought by placing itself at the disposal of researchers to take advantage of its resources and services, especially lending, and photocopying services to achieve their dreams. The library is the rallying point for scholars and other categories of users for their information needs. This makes the library a companion, a dependable ally and trusted source of information for schools and research community at large.

Library is one of the basic ancillary services that should be provided by any educational institution. The books and other resources should be appropriate to the age and educational level of the students and teaching needs must be considered by including in the volume teachers' copies, work books and other standard set-books (Uche, 2002). The establishment of functional libraries in secondary schools has attracted the attention of various scholars and stakeholders in the education sector; thus, library facilities in secondary schools are usually provided from varied sources, including the community where the school is located, the educational resource centre, professional bodies, government through the Ministry of Education, international organizations, corporate bodies, Parent-Teacher Association (PTA), and Old boys and girls associations (Onyeagbako, 2014).

The community where the school is located plays an important role in the provision of library facilities by participating in the school programmes and activities which include fund raising, renovation and even erection of libraries. They also aid in security of library facilities within the school community by providing services like vigilante and alerting the school when there is suspicious activities. The educational resource centre provides library facilities such as books, visual and stimulation devices, references, newspapers/periodicals/serials; audio-visual software toys and play materials (Uche, 2002; Onyeagbako, 2014). Professional bodies such as the Nigeria Medical Association (NMA) Nigeria Bar Association (NBA) amongst others usually render help to their “alma Mata” in the areas of books, material donations, renovations of libraries and even erection of new libraries. Government through the Ministry of Education supplies library facilities to schools in form of grants, subventions and loans. International organizations such as the United Nations, International Children’s Education Fund (UNICEF), World Bank, United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) supply library facilities that aid teaching and learning to schools. Corporate bodies also assist in the provision of library facilities to aid schools in their teaching and learning process. The PTA and old boys and girls associations also assist schools in the provision of library facilities (Onyeagbako, 2014).

Consequent upon the aforementioned facts therefore, school libraries are usually provided with certain objectives in mind. The basic objectives for establishing and running school libraries in Nigeria as identified by Chibunna (2013, p. 325) include to:

1. Determine the information needs of users through user’s study;
2. Identify and select books and other materials to be required;
3. Acquire and select books and other non-book materials through purchase, bequest donations, legal deposit or gifts and exchange;
4. Properly organize these materials so as to make them accessible to users;
5. Ensure that people are assisted to use these materials by drawing their attention to them;

6. Provide materials promptly to satisfy the information needs of the students; and
7. Preserve for future generation all information/materials stored in it.

The objectives so listed can only be made possible by building functional libraries with all the necessary facilities in place. Surprisingly, most educational resources including libraries are lacking in most secondary schools, especially those located in villages and riverine areas (Dawari, 2014). Shodimu in Dawari (2014) argues that total absence of an organized school library would continue to spell doom for thousands of secondary school students. A library must be up-to-date and at the same time allow access to old materials; it must be properly supported financially to fund materials and other services usually provided by school libraries. In the light of these facts, Farombi in Dawari (2014) asserts that school libraries may not be effective if the books therein are not adequate and up to date as its impact may only be meaningful if the library could be opened to the students always for a considerable length of time in a school day. Thus, Uche (2002) posits that the aim and objectives of the library will be difficult to achieve if the library does not open regularly or if it opens for use only during the day.

The provision of libraries in Nigeria is faced with enormous challenges. Asiabaka (2008) identifies the challenges to include the following:

1. Lack of policy guideline for development of infrastructures in schools;
2. Insufficient funding;
3. Lack of technical knowledge or lack of trained personnel to handle maintenance and supplies;
4. Enrolment explosion;
5. Security and safety;
6. Lack of timely maintenance;
7. Lack of effective supervision of staff responsible for maintenance and supplies;
8. Lack of storage facilities;
9. Lack of consultation between supplier and user.

Lack of Policy Guideline: Ogbonnaya (2010) describes a policy as general directives for action in an organization. Therefore, in the absence of policy, libraries are left to the whims and caprices of school administrators. In some schools, there are inadequate libraries while in some they are adequately provided. This situation arises because government has not established policy directives on minimum standard in relation to school libraries.

Insufficient Funding: Funds are utilized in educational institutions in setting up of infrastructures (Ogbonnaya, 2010). In any country, the standard of resource provision is a function of funding (Abali & Nwapi, 2017). The funding of the Nigerian educational system has been haphazard as the government has not performed to expectation in terms of education funding in the country. This has cumulated to poor library facilities provision in public secondary schools in the country. Thus, school administrators find it difficult to provide and maintain library facilities.

Lack of Technical Knowledge: Many administrators in our secondary schools lack the requisite knowledge in handling the problems that often occur in managing school libraries. To perform this duty successfully, the school administrators should know how to use fix and make minor repairs of facilities in the library. He should have a general understanding of the facilities in the library, so that he/she can appreciate their possibilities and limitations, can give advice on new facilities needed, and can assist teachers and students in making use of facilities of any kind (Uche, 2002).

Enrolment Explosion: The persistent increase in student population in secondary schools creates challenges for these schools as this leads to excessive pressure on existing library facilities. Ebong (2006) affirms that increase in enrolment is an important fact that affects the utilization of school resources stating that an increase in enrolment puts pressure on available resources. This is because there is an increase in the actual usage rate.

Lack of Timely Maintenance: Libraries in some schools are either uncompleted or completed but very ragged dilapidated, due to partly to lack of fund and partly due to poor maintenance culture. The lack of maintenance culture by Nigerians is a challenge to library provision in schools. Igbinedion (2014) opines that imbibing a good maintenance culture is important in the utilization of school facilities. Schools should therefore show high level of commitment in ensuring that library facilities are in good condition by obeying and enforcing school rules and regulations that are made for the use of the facilities.

Security and Safety: Most secondary schools in rural areas are not fenced to provide security to the school library facilities. Thus, students or people from the community can vandalize the facilities. The safety of those using the library is not guaranteed when the library is filled with broken seats or an un-replaced naked wire due to lack of maintenance.

Statement of the Problem

It is an established fact that the success of any educational endeavour rests squarely on the availability of physical facilities especially the school library. Buttressing on their importance, one can assert that the provision of libraries contribute to good academic performance, as they enhance effective teaching-learning activities. Adaralegbe in Dawari (2014) in his report on secondary school education in Nigeria reiterated that from inspectors' reports over the years, there is abundant evidence and catalogue of inadequacies in the provision and judicious use of school libraries and materials for instruction. That the situation is even worst in rural areas and under these unfavourable situations, much learning cannot be expected to take place. As a result of this deplorable condition, it becomes imperative that this study is carried out to investigate the factors posing as challenges in the provision of libraries in public secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study was to investigate the provision of libraries in public secondary schools in Rivers State. Specifically, the objectives of the study were to:

1. Examine the ways libraries can be provided in public secondary schools in Rivers State.
2. Determine the objectives for providing libraries in public secondary schools in Rivers State.
3. Highlight the challenges restricting the provision of libraries in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered in this study:

1. In what ways can libraries be provided in public secondary schools in Rivers State?
2. What are the objectives for providing libraries in public secondary schools in Rivers State?
3. What are the challenges restricting the provision of libraries in public secondary schools in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested in this study at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the ways libraries can be provided in public secondary schools in Rivers State.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the objectives for providing libraries in public secondary schools in Rivers State.
3. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the challenges restricting the provision of libraries in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Methodology

The study adopted the descriptive research design. The population of the study comprised 268 principals and 7,425 teachers in the 268 public senior secondary schools in Rivers State (Source: Planning, Research and Statistics Department, Rivers State Senior Secondary Schools Board (RSSSSB), 2018). The sample size comprised 268 principals and 743 teachers. A validated 20 – item instrument tagged “Library Provision in Public Secondary Schools Questionnaire (LPPSSQ)” developed by the researcher was used for data collection. The instrument was designed using four point modified Likert rating scale response pattern of Strongly Agree (SA) = 4 points, Agree (A) = 3 points, Disagree (D) = 2 points, and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 point. Its reliability coefficient was established at 0.80 using Pearson r. Data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions while z-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The weighted mean score of $2.50 (4+3+2+1) = \frac{10}{4} = 2.50$ served as the criterion mean. Items above the criterion mean were tagged “Agreed”. A null hypothesis was accepted if the calculated z-value was less than the critical z-value of 1.96.

Results

The results obtained in this study after data analysis was presented as follows:

Research Question 1: In what ways can libraries be provided in public secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 1: Ways that Libraries can be Provided in Public Secondary Schools in Rivers State

S / N	Questionnaire Items	Principals N=268		Teachers N = 743		Mean Set $\frac{\bar{X}_P + \bar{X}_T}{2}$	Remarks
		\bar{X}_P	SD_P	\bar{X}_T	SD_T		
1	The community can provide a library for the school by participating in fund raising activities.	2.92	1.05	3.07	0.84	3.00	Agreed
2	Educational resource centre can provide library facilities such as books, visual and stimulation devices for schools.	3.40	0.74	3.32	0.75	3.36	Agreed
3	Professional bodies can provide libraries for schools through donations.	3.53	0.65	2.94	1.04	3.24	Agreed
4	The government can provide libraries for schools in form of grants.	3.28	0.87	3.07	0.95	3.18	Agreed
5	International organizations can provide library facilities for schools through donations.	3.12	0.90	3.18	0.86	3.15	Agreed
6	Corporate bodies can provide library facilities to aid teaching and learning in schools.	2.87	1.03	2.87	1.10	2.87	Agreed
7	Parent-Teacher Associations can provide libraries by participating in school fund raising programms.	3.33	0.80	3.18	0.87	3.26	Agreed
8	Old boys and old girls associations can assist schools in the provision of library facilities	3.07	0.95	3.31	0.75	3.19	Agreed
Grand Mean/SD		3.19	0.87	3.12	0.90	3.16	

Source: Field Survey, 2020

The data on Table 1 showed that items 1 – 8 have mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50. With a grand mean set of 3.16 therefore,

it was evident that the respondents agreed that all the items are ways that libraries can be provided in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Question 2: What are the objectives for providing libraries in public secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 2: Objectives for Providing Libraries in Public Secondary Schools in Rivers State

S/N	Questionnaire Items	Principals N=268		Teachers N = 743		Mean Set $\frac{\bar{X}_P + \bar{X}_T}{2}$	Remarks
		\bar{X}_P	SD_P	\bar{X}_T	SD_T		
9.	To determine the information needs of users through user's study.	3.05	0.96	2.96	1.01	3.01	Agreed
10.	To identify and select books and other materials to be required.	3.18	0.85	3.37	0.76	3.28	Agreed
11.	To properly organize these materials so as to make them accessible to users.	3.08	0.96	3.24	0.77	3.16	Agreed
12.	To ensure that people are assisted to use these materials by drawing their attention to them.	3.22	0.83	3.19	0.28	3.25	Agreed
13.	To provide materials promptly to satisfy the information needs of students.	3.25	0.82	3.19	0.88	3.22	Agreed
14.	To preserve for future generation all information/ materials stored in libraries.	3.47	0.75	3.10	0.92	3.29	Agreed
Grand Mean/SD		3.21	0.86	3.18	0.77	3.20	

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Table 2 showed that items 9 – 14 have mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50. With a grand mean set of 3.20 therefore, it was evident that the respondents agreed that all the items are objectives for providing libraries in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Question 3: What are the challenges restricting the provision of libraries in public secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 3: Challenges Restricting the Provision of Libraries in Public Secondary Schools in Rivers State

S/N	Questionnaire Items	Principals N=268		Teachers N = 743		Mean Set $\frac{\bar{X}_P + \bar{X}_T}{2}$	Remarks
		\bar{X}_P	SD _P	\bar{X}_T	SD _T		
15.	Lack of policy guideline for development of infrastructures in schools.	3.63	0.74	2.76	1.12	3.20	Agreed
16.	Lack of adequate funding of the school system.	3.05	0.96	2.96	1.01	3.01	Agreed
17.	Administrators lacking the technical knowledge of handling maintenance and supplies of library facilities.	3.13	0.93	3.32	0.81	3.23	Agreed
18.	Over population of students in public schools.	3.10	0.92	3.32	0.73	3.21	Agreed
19.	Lack of maintenance culture.	2.75	1.10	3.13	0.91	2.94	Agreed
20.	Lack of effective supervision.	2.80	1.09	3.19	0.87	3.00	Agreed
Grand Mean/SD		3.08	0.96	3.11	0.91	3.10	

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Table 3 showed that items 15 – 20 have mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50. With a grand mean set of 3.10 therefore, it was evident that the respondents agreed that all the items are challenges restricting the provision of libraries in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the ways libraries can be provided in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 4: Z-test Analysis of the Mean Ratings of Principals and Teachers on Ways Libraries can be provided

Respondents	N	\bar{X}	SD	DF	Z-Cal	Z-Crit.	Decision
Principles	268	3.19	0.87	1,009	1.12	1.96	Ho ₁
Teachers	743	3.12	0.90				Accepted

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Table 4 showed the z-test of difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on ways libraries can be provided in public secondary schools in Rivers State. The z-test statistics calculated and used in testing the hypothesis stood at 1.12 while the critical z-value stood at 1.96, using 1,009 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated z-value was less than the critical z-value, hypothesis 1 was therefore accepted by the researcher. This signified that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the ways libraries can be provided in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the objectives for providing libraries in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 5: Z-test Analysis of the Mean Ratings of Principals and Teachers on the Objectives for Providing Libraries

Respondents	N	\bar{X}	SD	DF	Z-Cal	Z-Crit.	Decision
Principles	268	3.21	0.86	1,009	0.50	1.96	Ho ₂
Teachers	743	3.18	0.77				Accepted

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Table 5 showed the z-test of difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the objectives for providing libraries in public secondary schools in Rivers State. The z-test statistics calculated and used in testing the hypothesis stood at 0.50 while the critical z-value stood at 1.96, using 1,009 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated z-value was less than the critical z-value, hypothesis 2 was therefore accepted by the researcher. This signified that there is no

significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the objectives for providing libraries in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the challenges restricting the provision of libraries in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 6: Z-test Analysis of the Mean Ratings of Principals and Teachers on the Challenges Restricting the Provision of Libraries

Respondents	N	\bar{X}	SD	DF	Z-Cal	Z-Crit.	Decision
Principles	268	3.08	0.96	1,009	-0.44	1.96	Ho ₃
Teachers	743	3.11	0.91				Accepted

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Table 6 showed the z-test of difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the challenges restricting the provision of libraries in public secondary schools in Rivers State. The z-test statistics calculated and used in testing the hypothesis stood at -0.44 while the critical z-value stood at 1.96, using 1,009 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated z-value was less than the critical z-value, hypothesis 3 was therefore accepted by the researcher. This signified that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the challenges restricting the provision of libraries in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Discussion of Findings

The discussions of findings of this study were done under the following sub-heads:

Ways Libraries can be Provided in Public Secondary Schools

The findings of this study revealed that the community can provide a library for the school by participating in fund raising activities; educational resource centre can provide library facilities such as books, visual and stimulation devices for schools; professional bodies can

provide libraries for schools through donations; the government can provide libraries for schools in form of grants; international organizations can provide library facilities for schools through donations; corporate bodies can provide library facilities to aid teaching and learning in schools; parent-teachers associations can provide libraries by participating in school fund raising programmes; and old boys and old girls associations can assist schools in the provision of library facilities. It was also discovered that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the ways libraries can be provided in public secondary schools in Rivers State. These findings conformed to the views of Onyeagbako (2014) who opined that library facilities in secondary schools are usually provided from varied sources, including the community where the school is located, the educational resource centre, professional bodies, government through the Ministry of Education, international organizations, corporate bodies, parent-teacher association, and old boys and girls associations. Based on the findings and discussions, the researcher is in agreement with the above findings.

Objectives for Providing Libraries in Public Secondary Schools

The findings of this study revealed that the objectives for providing libraries in public secondary schools in Rivers State are; to determine the information needs of users through user's study; to identify and select books and other materials to be required; to properly organize these materials so as to make them accessible to uses; to ensure that people are assisted to use these materials by drawing their attention to them; to provide materials promptly to satisfy the information needs of students; and to preserve for future generation all information/materials stored in libraries. The findings also revealed that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the objectives for providing libraries in public secondary schools in Rivers State. In corroboration with these findings, Chibunna (2013) posited that the basic objectives for establishing and running school libraries in Nigeria include to determine the information needs of users through user's study; acquire and select books and other non-book materials through purchase, bequest donations, legal deposit or gifts and exchange; properly organize these

materials so as to make them accessible to users, among others. Based on the findings and discussions, the researcher is in agreement with the above findings.

Challenges Restricting the Provision of Libraries in Public Secondary Schools

The findings of this study revealed that the challenges restricting the provision of libraries in public secondary schools in Rivers State are lack of policy guideline for development of infrastructures in schools; lack of adequate funding of the school system; administrators lacking the technical knowledge of handling maintenance and supplies of library facilities; over population of students in public schools; lack of maintenance culture; and lack of effective supervision. It was also discovered that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the challenges restricting the provision of libraries in public secondary schools in Rivers State. The above findings agree with the submission of Asiabaka (2008) who identified the challenges of library provision to include; lack of policy guideline for development of infrastructures in schools, insufficient funding, and lack of technical knowledge to handle maintenance and supplies, enrolment explosion, lack of timely maintenance, lack of effective supervision of staff responsible for maintenance and supplies, among others. Based on the findings and discussions, the research is in agreement with the above views that library provision is faced with enormous challenges in Nigeria.

Conclusion

There are enormous challenges facing the provision of libraries in public secondary schools in Nigeria in the contemporary period. Amongst these are lacks of policy guidelines, enrolment explosion, lack of maintenance culture, lack of effective supervision. It therefore becomes pertinent for government, communities, corporate organizations, professional bodies, and parent teacher associations to assist schools in the provision of libraries and other materials. It is only when this is done that the objectives for which libraries are provided can be achieved in Rivers State in particular and Nigeria in general.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher recommended the following:

1. The Rivers State government should ensure adequate provision of libraries in schools in order to instill the culture of reading in youths by increasing secondary school funding.
2. Secondary school administrators should ensure the effective management of library facilities by acquiring the technical knowledge of handling maintenance and provision of libraries.
3. Members of the community in which the school is situated should ensure the provision of school library by effectively participating in school fund raising programmes.
4. Parent-Teacher Associations should ensure that library facilities are adequately provided and up-to-date in order to achieve the objectives in which the library is established.
5. School administrators and classroom managers should show high level of commitment in ensuring that library facilities are in good condition by obeying and enforcing school rules and regulations that are made for the use of the facilities with a view to overcoming the challenges of providing libraries in schools.

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