

**AVAILABILITY AND USE OF LIBRARY RESOURCES IN SELECTED  
SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NNEWI EDUCATION ZONE OF ANAMBRA  
STATE**

**By**

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**ABSTRACT**

The study investigated the availability and use of library resources in selected private secondary schools in Nnewi education zone of Anambra State. The study was prompted by the fact that former studies mainly focused on government-owned institutions, with little or no attention paid to happenings in the privately – owned secondary schools. The design of the study was descriptive survey. A sample of 60 respondents were conveniently sampled from the institutions at the ratio of 20 respondents per institution. Observation checklist and structured interview were instruments used for data collection of the study. Data generated in the study were analyzed with descriptive statistics using tables, frequency counts and percentages. Findings from the study show that all the schools have school libraries; they also have books in various subjects offered in the schools as well as computers in varying numbers. Also, usage of the library resources is low; resources mostly consulted by the respondents are science books; none of the schools has qualified librarian and library hour. Moreso, findings also show that the respondents have unrestricted access to the school libraries, but they rated their school libraries as fair, thereby implying lack of contentment. Based on the findings, the study recommended continuous awareness creation through visits by library bodies and other stakeholders to continually sensitize students on the need for them to be patronizing their school libraries. The study also recommended creation of library hour in all schools by policy makers to encourage students' use of school libraries; investigating the information need of students and incorporating such need during acquisition of school library resources, as well as employment/posting of qualified librarians in all school libraries.

**Keywords: Availability, use, library resources, school libraries, Nnewi education zone.**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Secondary School, as the name implies is the second level of education in the education hierarchy. It is that level of education that exists just after the primary school level and before the tertiary level of education. Secondary School occupies a very important position in the education agenda of all nations, as it prepares individuals for higher education by imparting in them, the necessary knowledge, skills and qualification needed for them to excel in future educational endeavours. It is able to do this because; it is equipped with both human and material Resources. Hornby(2006) defined resource as something that can be used to help achieve an aim, especially a book, equipment and others, that provides information for teachers and students. The human resources are the personnel working at various levels in the school, while the material resources encompass the books of various types, equipment such as tables, chairs and other type of media in print and non-print formats that are acquired to facilitate and make this skill, knowledge acquisition and transfer feasible. The repository of all the information resources in the Secondary' School is the library. Hornby(2006) defines library as a building in which collections of books, tapes, newspapers and others are kept for people to read, study or borrow. It is the store house of knowledge. The type of library that exist in the Secondary School is known as the school library. The importance of the school library is such that Adeniji (as cited in Idiegbeyan-Ose of Okoedian, 2012) described it as the heart and soul of the educational system. According to the author, the role of the school library in any school in Nigeria cannot be over-emphasized, as the library provides the necessary impetus to all categories of learners in the schools, from the slowest learner in the kindergarten, to the most intelligent senior in the high school through the provision of print and non-print materials to aid learning.

Achebe (2008) listed the roles of the school library as provision of library hours and materials, teaching of reading through story-telling and games, teaching – information literacy skills, provision of readers guide and preservation of library materials. Idiegbeyan-Ose and Okoedian (2012) assert that the educational aims of the school library are to stimulate and enhance the reading habit and promotion of life-long learning, developing the ability to read in children, to help pupils to increase, and improve their knowledge of reading, speaking and writing, to train children to care for books and make good and intelligent use of the library. Others are to enhance children's reading and communication skills, to provide children with both current and retrospective information and to provide recreation.

The school library therefore cannot perform it's numerous functions without the availability of necessary books and non-book materials, as well as personnel to direct and co-ordinate usage of the material resources. Availability is crucial to usage. According to Idiegbeyan-Ose and Okoedian (2012) a school library that is adequately

staffed, resourced and funded can lead to higher student achievement, regardless of the socio-economic or educational levels of the community.

It is also by using the resources that the expected educational development and societal transformation are hoped to be attained (Ibe, 2014). Sharma (as cited in Busayo 2011) stresses that to know about the world and its environment, a child helps himself/herself through reading of books, newspapers and magazines. Also, stressing the importance of using the library books, Panda, as cited in Busayo 2011 posit that once the child has been taught to read and develop a love for books, he can explore for himself/herself, the wealth of human experience and knowledge. Making rightful use of the resources of the school libraries is also very important to future development of the users of the school libraries. This therefore also raised the need to determine what materials that are mostly utilized by the students, as this will help to guard against abuse and also .help the authorities during acquisition so as to avoid wastage. Aruah (2011) stated that the school library is as good as wasted if it is not properly used by the students.

In recognition of the crucial roles of school libraries in ensuring overall development, the Anambra State government released the sum of one hundred million naira (₦100,000,000) for the development of libraries in two hundred secondary schools, in the State (Nzeagwu,2012). In making the release, the governor of the State emphasized that the libraries will serve as information centres, promote reading culture in children and act as store-house of knowledge for both teachers and students. It is however not known how much of this attention are being directed towards the development of privately owned Secondary Schools in the State, as preliminary observation by the researchers cast a big doubt as regards the availability and use of the resources of the privately owned Secondary Schools especially in Nnewi Education Zone of Anambra State. The role of the privately-owned institutions in the educational development of the State cannot be over-emphasized. It has therefore become imperative to investigate whether the privately-owned Secondary Schools are lagging behind in terms of school library development hence this study titled availability and use of library resources in selected private Secondary Schools in Nnewi education zone of Anambra State.

### **Statement of the problem**

School library plays a very important role in educational development. There is therefore the need to equip it with the requisite human and material resources so as to enable it to play its roles very effectively. There is also the need to ensure that the resources of the school library are put to adequate use so as to ensure attainment of goals of its establishment. This is because, according to Aruah(2011), the school library is as good as wasted if it is not properly used by students. The researcher observed that whenever the need for development of this vital educational facility arises, attention is always focused on the publicly-owned schools, with little or no attention paid to the privately-

owned schools. In view of the crucial role the private schools play in educational development, it has become imperative to investigate whether the private schools are lagging behind in terms of provision and use of library resources as preliminary observation suggests, with the view to proffering the ways forward, and avert decadence in education. This is what necessitated the study on availability and use of library resources in selected private Secondary Schools in Nnewi education zone of Anambra State.

### **Purpose of the study**

The purpose of the study was to determine the availability and use of library resources in selected Private Secondary Schools in Nnewi education zone of Anambra State. Specifically the study sought to:

1. Identify the resources available in the school libraries.
2. Determine the availability of library hour in the schools.
3. Determine the availability of librarians in the school libraries
4. Ascertain the level of use of the school libraries by the students
5. Ascertain the rating of the school libraries by the students
6. Determine the most used information resources in the school libraries
7. Identify possible impediments to effective use of the school library resources by the students.

### **Significance of the study**

The study will be very beneficial to many stakeholders in education including proprietors of private schools, students, researchers and supervising agencies of private schools.

It is hoped that through the findings of the study proprietors of private schools will be better informed on ways to ensure library development in their schools, as well as ensure effective usage by students.

The findings of the study is also hoped to help students to appreciate the need for library use in their schools.

The findings of the study is hoped to serve as rich source of literature to researchers on related topics as it can be easily consulted by them.

Also the findings of the study will assist policy-makers and supervising agencies of private schools in making policy decisions that will translate to overall school library development in Anambra State.

### **Research questions**

Seven research questions were formulated to guide the study as follows:-

1. What are the resources available in the school libraries?
2. Are there slated hours for library use in the schools?
3. Are there professional librarians in the school libraries?
4. What is the level of use of the school library resources by the students?

5. What is the rating of the school libraries by the students?
6. What is the most used information resource in the school libraries?
7. What are the possible impediments to effective use of the school libraries by the students?

### **Literature Review**

Achebe (2008) defined school library as a library that is found in Primary and Secondary Schools. School library is a library established to take care of the information and educational resources needs of pupils, students and teachers in the Primary and Secondary Schools. Busayo(2011) asserts that the school library is an integral part of the educational system that cannot be ignored without jeopardizing the quality of education in schools. The author stated that the school library is an important part of elementary, middle and high and school programme without which students would not thrive academically and would find it difficult to do research before reaching college level.

School library is therefore programmed to groom and nurture .pupils and students to imbibe the culture of reading and succeed educationally in life. As a result, it is always equipped with various resources such as books on various subjects taught in the schools and those for reference purposes. Developed ones also have computers, internet sources and are stocked with such media like television, radio, newspapers, magazines, films, projectors, tapes, maps, atlases, all housed in a conducive and comfortable accommodation. They also have furniture and qualified personnel to facilitate easy use of the library resources. The Federal Ministry of Education stresses that books that should be in a school library are reference books such as encyclopedia and dictionaries, books on non-fiction such as textbooks on subject taught in the schools, supplementary orders such as easy to read books and fiction materials such as novels, story books and cartoons (Aruah, 2011). Fayose, as cited in Aruah, 2011 stated that resources of school libraries are books, magazines, newspapers, films and film strips, video tape recording of all types, slides, computers and study kits. Nnadozie (2007) posit that resources in school libraries include such media like books, journals, magazines, newspapers, film strips, computers, tape recordings, cartoons, regalia, study kits, games, simulations, among others. Ibe (2014) stated that school library resources encompass both the materials and human resources such as books, newspaper, magazine stands, as well as personnel like librarians, library officers, assistants and other support staff. Aruah (2011) posit that employee such as librarians, teacher-librarians, library officers, library assistants, library attendants and library prefects are necessary to help school libraries to fulfill their mission depending on the school enrollment, staff collection and academic programme.

In terms of use, Nnadozie (2007) stresses that contemporary school libraries are centres for acquisition, processing and utilization of an extensive variety of educational media-teaching aids and learning resources. According to Anyaoku (2015) library use involves

the consulting, reading, borrowing and obtaining information, to socialize with friends and colleagues, to do class assignments, to get direction or to consult with library staff on topics of interest. Orji, as cited in Dulle and Bernard 2014 said that users patronize the school library for various reasons such as to prepare for examination, for leisure, recreation, serious academic work or to see a friend. Sote, Aramide and Gbotoso (2011) posit that the library, as the hub of educational set-up, provides information and ideas that are fundamental to functioning successfully in the increasingly information and knowledge - based society. In ideal situations, school libraries always, have hours for use by students and pupils, so as to aid monitoring and avoid mis-use. This is because some unruly students may be hiding in the libraries under the guise of reading, while in actual fact, they may be running away from punishment, avoiding a particular teacher or for the joy of being contented in playing truancy in the school. Library hour also aids in creating needed awareness among users, as even the classroom teachers join in urging the pupils and students to go to the library. This also highlights the need for adequate and qualified personnel to monitor and guide usage of the library resources.

Authors such as Anyaoku (2015); Ibe (2014) and Aruah (2011) revealed that library use is always hampered by a lot of factors such as lack of adequate resources, lack of accommodation, poor lighting, lack of qualified personnel, lack of internet resources, lack of computers and poor attitude of management. Anyaoku (2015) identified factors against students' use of libraries as lack of computers and internet, lack of current materials, hot environment, insufficient space and seats for reading and poor lighting. Onuoha and Subair (2013) attributed the problem of poor use of library resources to lack of awareness and presence of outdated books. Aruah (2011) identified factors against use of libraries as lack of current and up-to-date information materials, poor accommodation, poor library orientation, restricted library hours and lack of professional librarians. Ibe (2014) posit that challenges to use of libraries include poor reading culture of our people, un-conducive reading environment, economic situation with its negative impact on the people, funding problems that has made acquisition of vital resources impossible and lack of current books. There is therefore need to maximize use of school library resources for attainment of the objectives for establishing them, otherwise it will be a colossal failure. Other efforts in this direction have been focused on the public-owned schools with little or none on the privately-owned schools despite their numerous contributions to educational development, thereby drawing the attention of the researchers to carry out the study.

### **Methodology**

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. A total of sixty respondents were conveniently sampled from each of the three private secondary-schools located at Nnewi, Amichi and Ozubulu, at the ratio of twenty students per school. They were selected for the purpose of responding to questions posed in the structured interview

to support observation made by the researchers. Thus, observation checklist and structured interview were adopted as instruments for data collection of the study. While observation checklist was adopted for collecting data in respect of research questions 1 – 3, structured interview was used to collect data for research questions 4–7. Descriptive statistics using tables, frequencies was used to analyze data collected from the study.

**Findings:**

Research questions 1, 2 & 3: Availability of resources, library hour and library staff.

**Table: 1**

Resources & Library Hour	Private Secondary Schools		
	OZUBULU	NNEWI	AMICHI
Library Staff			
Books on reference			
Books on non-fiction			
Books on fiction			
Shelves			
Reading tables			
Chairs			
Catalogue Cabinet		—	—
Photocopiers		—	—
Computers			
Journals		—	—
Newspapers		—	—
Magazines		—	—
Internet	—	—	—
Radio	—	—	—
Television	—	—	—
Projectors	—	—	—
Video tapes		—	—
Audio tapes	—	—	—
Films	—	—	—
Library hour	—	—	—

Observation checklist as shown in table 1 reveals that all the secondary schools have library staffs that are in charge of their libraries. They also have books on reference, fiction and non-fiction, as well as reading tables, chairs, shelves and computers in varying numbers. They however do not have internet connection, library hour, projectors and

such media like television, radio and films. Interview by the researchers revealed that the library staffs in the libraries are not professional librarians. Students are also given unrestricted access to the libraries.

Research questions 4: What is the level of use of the library resources by the students?

Table 2: Level of use of the library resources

<b>Options</b>	<b>Response Rate</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
High	8	13.33
Moderate	15	25
Low	37	61.67
Total	60	100

Responses as shown in Table 2 shows that the level of use of the library resources by the students is low (61.67%)

Research question 5: What is the rating of the school libraries by the students?

Table 3: Rating of the school library by the students

<b>Options</b>	<b>Response Rate</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Excellent	6	10
Good	18	30
Fair	36	60
Total	60	100

Responses as shown in Table 3 revealed that majority of the students rated their school libraries as fair. This is despite availability of various resources in the libraries and unrestricted access given to the students.

Research questions 6: What is the most used information resource in the libraries?

**Table 4:** Most used information resource in the libraries

<b>Information Resources</b>	<b>Response Rate</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Newspapers	—	—
Computers	—	—
Dictionaries	15	25
Encyclopedia	—	—
Books on Languages	—	—
Literature Books	15	25
Novels	—	—
Religious Books	—	—
Science Textbooks	24	40
Social Science Textbooks		
Mathematics Textbooks	6	10
Magazines		
Art Textbooks		
Books on Travels		
Geography Textbooks		
Computer Textbooks		
Total	60	100

Responses as shown in Table 4 show that the few students that patronize the libraries mostly consult science textbooks.

Research question 7: What are the challenges to use of the libraries by the students?

**Table 5:** Challenges to use of the libraries by the students

<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Response Rate</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Lack of current books	—	—
Poor reading culture	30	50
Lack of awareness	—	—
Lack of internet	18	30
Restricted library hours	—	—
Unfriendly staff	—	—
Funding problems	—	—
Poor orientation	12	20
Total	60	100

Responses as shown in Table 5 shows that there is no reason behind poor use of the school library resources other than poor reading culture. It can also be seen that lack of internet connection has its negative impact on the students' use of the library resources.

### **Summary of the findings**

- The private secondary school libraries have enough resources to guarantee effective and rewarding use by students, although they have no internet connection.
- The schools have no library hour, but students have unrestricted access to the libraries.
- The private secondary school libraries have library staffs that are in charge of operations, but they are not professional librarians.
- The level of use of the library resources was low.
- The students rated their school libraries as fair despite presence of resources and personnel.
- The few students that patronize the libraries mostly consult science books.

- The students have no major reason for not using the school libraries other than poor reading culture prevalent among them, although lack of internet seem to have negative effect on them.

### **Implications of the findings**

- That the secondary school libraries have enough resources, but are not used as expected, implies the need for continuous awareness creation.
- That the schools have no library hour, internet and professional librarians implies that there is need for library hour, internet connection and employment of professional librarians.
- That the level of use of the school libraries by students was low implies the need for more awareness creation by the schools and other stakeholders.
- That the students rated the school libraries as fair despite presence of resources implies that there is need to determine the information need of the students to act as-guide during acquisition of the library resources.
- That the students have no major reason for not using the school libraries still implies need for continuous awareness creation by all stakeholders.

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations are hereby made based on the findings of the study and implications.

- There should be continuous awareness creation through visits to school by library bodies and other stakeholders so as to continually sensitize students on the need and gains of using their school libraries.
- Government and other policy makers should make library hour compulsory in all schools as it helps in sensitization.
- Effort should be made to effect internet connection in the schools as the schools already have computers.
- Government should make posting of qualified librarians compulsory in all schools and encourage the privately-owned ones to do so.
- The information need of students should be ascertained so as to incorporate such needs during acquisition of school library resources.

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