

Students' Background Variables and Utilization of Library Resources among Secondary School Students' in Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State, Nigeria

Agnes Ebi Maliki¹ and Rachel D. Uche²

1. Department of Educational Foundations, Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island, 560001, P.M.B. 071, Bayelsa State, Nigeria

E-mail: agnesmaliki@yahoo.com

2. Library Department, University of Calabar, P.M.B. 1115, Calabar, 540004, Cross River State, Nigeria

KEYWORDS Library; utilization; parental occupation; family size; facilities at home

ABSTRACT The study sought to determine the relationship between students' background variables and the utilization of library resources among secondary schools students in southern senatorial district of Cross River State. The authors developed a nineteen item student's background questionnaire (SBQ) and twenty two item students utilization of library resource scale (SULIRES) was utilized. The instrument had a correlation coefficient of 0.89 and 0.82 determined using test- retest method. The design adopted in this study is the ex-post facto design, the instrument was administered on a sample of 280 students. The research findings indicated that students' background variables are significantly related to as well as significantly predict their utilization of library resource. Study advocates that parents need to provide the enabling physical and psychological environment for their children to read, study and develop.

INTRODUCTION

The major purpose of the library is to provide information, thus it is repository of human experience not subject to the barriers of space and time. According to Lawal and Udofia (1994), the library meets the information needs of the user in five categories namely:

- i. Education to develop society, adults, children and to fill gaps in memory.
- ii. Information to develop executive activities such as economics, social and commercial development.
- iii. Aesthetic appreciation for culture, art, truth and judgement.
- iv. Recreation - to provide amusement, hobbies.

The function of the library therefore is to implement, to enrich, to vitalize and humanize the educational programmes, as it strives to attain excellence in content, process and product. Being a carrier of knowledge, the library is a vital partner in knowledge, management and shares with all other instructional agents their responsibility for systematically designing, carrying out and evaluating the total process of learning and teaching (Davies, 1994). Modern library according to Davies, has changed from hall/book dispersal centre to learning laboratory, complete with all kinds of appropriate media carriers essential for a

bonus- rich instructional environment. Thus, library manage knowledge such that learning becomes more lastingly significant, more permanently meaningful and more personally satisfying.

The library is not just a reservoir of knowledge, information and human experiences but has also made provision for accessing this treasure Beswick (1975) sees school libraries as a continuing change in the pattern of school teaching and learning, away from instruction and towards exploration.

In the opinion of Allen and Allen (1973), Ezewu (1987), the whole essence of libraries are two fold- service and instruction. Service which involves provision of whatever materials, equipment, assistance and guidance that are required by the user.

Hence, it is rather difficult to imagine an educational system without a library, more so a situation whereby students go through their academic programmes without having access to the library and its numerous facilities. Obviously, it will limit their academic achievement and the level of exposure to current development and trends in the world. That would translate to depriving oneself or being deprived of the basic component of holistic development and programmes of individual.

It is important to note that the home as well as the school background are bound to influence effective utilization of the library and its abundant resources among secondary school students and consequently reflect on their academic performance and achievement. This is because the type of home from which a student comes may determine his awareness of library facilities, how to use them and their external value. It is against this background that this paper seeks to determine if students' background factors such as socio-economic background of students, parental level of education, occupation, facilities at home, quality of residence, family size are significant factors in the utilization of library resources.

METHODOLOGY

Design: The design adopted in this paper is the ex post facto design. In this study the independent variables are student's socio-economic background, parental level of education, occupation, facilities at home, quality of residence, and family size. The manifestations of these variables are already evident in the students who are the subjects of this investigation. Thus, the existing levels or dimensions of the variables are not manipulable. The dependent variable is the use of library resources by the students.

Sample: Subjects in this study were 280 students in senior secondary school two (SS 11) from fourteen secondary schools in the southern senatorial District of Cross River State.

Instrumentation: Two instruments were used to obtain data from subjects, they are (1) students

Background Questionnaire (SBQ) and (ii) students utilization of library Resources Scale (SULIRES).

The first of these is a 19 item instrument seeking from subjects various information of their background as well as some biographic information. The second instrument is a 22 item instrument. It is essentially a catalogue of various resources available in a student library. The reliability indices resulting from the application of test-retest procedure are 0.89 and 0.82 on administration of the test on a sample of 50 students.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The data collected were analyzed based on the hypothesis formulated. The result is presented here: The hypothesis stated that there is no significant relationship between socio-economic status, parental level of education, parental occupation, family size, facilities in the home, parental supervision, quality of residence, age, sex and the use of library resources.

The above hypothesis was tested using various correlation analyses techniques: Pearson Product Moment, Point Biserial and the Phi Coefficient.

The resulting data are shown on table 1. A consideration of the data on the table indicates that the first variable sex, was related inversely to level of parental supervision (Pb= 0.18) and level of use of library resources (Pb= - 0.12). Both value depict the greater tendency among males than females to be subjected to parental supervision and to use of resources available in a library respectively. Socio-economic status was

Table 1: Score order correlation depicting relationships between students background variables and their utilization of library resources

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Sex	1.00										
2. Socio-economic status	0.05	1.00									
3. Age	0.11*	0.07	1.00								
4. Locality	0.09	0.15*	0.02	1.00							
5. Family Size	0.05	-0.24**	0.07	0.16	1.00						
6. Parental Education	0.10	0.19**	0.05	0.12	-0.27**	1.00					
7. Parental Occupation	0.03	0.16	0.05	0.04	0.03	0.14**	1.00				
8. Quality of Residence	0.09	0.19**	0.09	0.17*	-0.21**	0.27**	0.18**	1.00			
9. Facilities at Home	0.11	0.14**	0.03	0.23**	0.22**	0.21**	0.09	1.00			
10. Level of Parental Supervision	-0.18**	0.23	0.09	0.18*	0.16*	0.19*	0.23**	0.12**	0.06	1.00	
11. Parental Assistant with Homework.	0.08	0.2	0.11*	-0.15*	-0.22**	0.19**	0.19**	0.15**	0.16*	0.19**	1.00
12. Use of Library	-0.21*	0.19**	0.07	0.23**	-0.20**	0.25**	0.22**	0.18**	0.21**	0.16**	0.24**

found related to family size inversely ($r = 0.24$), parental education ($r = 0.19$), parental occupation, ($r = 0.16$), quality of residence ($r = 0.19$) level of parental supervision ($r = 0.23$) and tendency to utilize library resources. This suggests that higher socio-economic status person tend to have relatively lesser number of family members, are generally quite educated, work on high status jobs, their children and relatively use the resources available in the library for their academic growth.

The data also show that locality is significantly related with family size ($P_b = 0.16$), parental education ($P_b = 0.12$), quality of residence ($P_b = 0.17$), facilities available at home ($P_b = 0.20$), level of parental supervision ($P_b = 0.18$) and use of library resources ($P_b = 0.23$). These suggest that large families are associated more with rural than urban localities. Similarly, parents in urban settings are relatively better educated, live in better quality houses, have more facilities at home, supervise their children to a greater degree and have their children use library resources to a greater degree than their rural counterparts.

Family size is significantly related to parental education, inversely ($r = 0.27$), quality of residence ($r = -0.22$), facilities at home ($r = 0.23$), parental assistance with homework ($r = 0.22$), and level of use of library resources ($r = 0.20$). In the same manner, parental education is related to quality of residence ($r = 0.23$), parental assistance with home work ($r = -0.25$). The latter refers to smaller size families being associated with high level of parental education, quality of residence, facilities at home, parental assistance with home work and use of library resources. Quality of residence is positively related to level of parental supervision ($r = 0.15$) and use of library resources ($r = 0.18$). This means that people who live in residence of high quality on the average tend to supervise their children, assist them in their assignments and encourage them to use resources available in the library to a greater degree than those who live in poor quality residences. On the bases of these data one can conclude that significant relationships exist between socio-economic status, parental level of education, parental occupation, family size, facilities in the home, parental supervision, quality of resident, age, sex and the use of library resources.

COMMENTS AND CONCLUSION

There is indication that students need proper orientation and education about the benefits derivable from effective utilization of the library and its abundant resources. Such benefits are mirrored in the students reading ability level, intellectual development and level of academic achievement and performance. The study has provided overwhelming support to the fact that the background of the learner has a tremendous influence on his/her tendency to utilize the various resources available in a library in order to enhance their scholastic achievements.

It is also found out that not only the learners but also their parents and the circumstances of their existence place a consideration impact on the learner's ability to utilize library resources. Therefore, parents need to lay proper foundation for their children's school learning, socio-economic strata notwithstanding, if the home provides the necessary level of cognitive stimulation which the learner requires at different stages of development, the reading culture will be cultivated early in life the hunger for printed materials will be created and utilization of the library and its abundant resources will just follow a natural course, for the enhancement and intellectual development of the learners.

An enabling and conducive environment enhance the learners ability to perform mentally and physically. It therefore behoves both the parents and the school to provide the necessary environment, materials and the incentives for learners to read, study and to develop.

REFERENCES

- Davies, R. A. 1994. *The School Library Media Centre: A Force for Educational Excellence*. 2nd ed. New York: Bowker. 1
- Lawal, O. O. and U. I. Udofia 1994. "Information needs of Rural Secondary School Adolescents in Nigeria." *Journal of Education and Peace*, I(1): 1-8.
- Allen, K. W. and L. Allen. 1973. *Organization and Administration of the Learning Resources Centre in the Community College*. Hamden, Connecticut: The Shoe String Press.
- Beswick, N. 1975. *Organizing Resources*. London: Heinemann Education Books.
- Ezewu, E. E. 1987. *Social and Psychological Factors of Human Learning in School*. Onitsha: Leadway.