

# Availability and Use of School Libraries in Kwara Central Senatorial District

by

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## Abstract

This study was carried out of one hundred and seven secondary schools in Kwara Central Senatorial District to find out whether all the schools had libraries and whether students use them. One hundred and seven questionnaires were administered; ninety-two were returned (85.9%) and used for this study. This study revealed that only 37% had school librarian while 63% had none. The study also revealed that the P.T.F and ETF books supplied to those schools by the Ministry of Education were kept in either the school stores or principal's office. Recommendations were made to the Kwara State Government on how to improve on the present situation.

## Introduction

Obajemu (2002) stated that the falling standard of education was most noticed in the year 1985 which had the worst West African school Certificate result in its 44 years of existence. It recorded 70.1% failure and 29.9% passes which led the Federal Government of Nigeria to institute a committee to find out the cause(s) of the general failure. One of the recommendations of the committee was the need for "well-equipped libraries" in secondary schools because academic excellence may not be achieved if good libraries are not established and run effectively.

Fifteen years after the West African School Certificate result is on the downward trend as reflected in the following data statistics of performance of Nigeria students in English May-June SSCE (1993-2001).

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Year	Total Sat	Credit (A1- C6)	Pass (P7-P8)	Fail (F9)	Absent
1993	496,685	66,176 (13.13%)	145,545 (29.3%)	285,023 (57.4%)	4,833 (1.0%)
1994	524,294	74,157 (14.1%)	159,900 (30.5%)	290,237 (55.4%)	5,713 (1.0%)
1995	464,270	57,588 (12.4%)	128,450 (27.7%)	278,202 (59.9%)	27,701 (0.6%)
1996	516,196	58,533 (11.3%)	124,041 (24.0%)	333,614 (64.6%)	3,471 (0.6%)
1997	618,139	40,488 (6.5%)	165,533 (26.8%)	412,118 (66.7%)	4,294 (0.7%)
1998	636,777	53,990 (8.5%)	136,873 (21.5%)	417,312 (65.5%)	3,849 (0.6%)
1999	752,233	73,531 (9.7%)	171,098 (22.6%)	471,593 (64.9%)	3,827 (0.5%)
2000	784,129	84,932 (9.8%)	172,158 (21.4%)	523,117 (65.9%)	3,922 (0.6%)
2001	1,025,027	267,251 (26.7%)	316,767 (30.9%)	441,009 (43.02%)	15,074 (1.45%)

Source: WAEC, Yaba, Lagos.

The data above reveals the result for nine consecutive years as follows:-1993.(13.3%); 1994 (14.1%);1995 (12.4%); 1996 (11.3%); 1997 (6.5%); 1998 (8.5%); 1999 (9.7%); 2000 (9.7%); 2001 (26.07%).

The results were getting worse more than the year 1985 which led the Federal Government to set up a committee to look into the causes of failure in WASC Examinations.

The Federal government set mercenaries in motion under the Petroleum Trust Fund (PTF) to fund purchase of text books to secondary schools in order to improve the students performance. Later in 1993, the Education Tax Fund (ETF) was

established. The Education Tax Fund (ETF) is a Trust Fund established under the Education Tax Act No. 7 of 1993 and amended by Act No. 40 of 1998 with the objective of using funding with project management to improve the quality of education in Nigeria.

To enable the ETF achieve the above objective, Act No. 70 of 1983 as amended imposes a 2% Education Tax on the assessable profit of all registered companies in Nigeria. The Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) is empowered by the Act to assess and collect Education Tax. The fund administers the tax imposed by the Acts and disburses the amounts to educational institutions at Federal, States and Local Government levels. It also monitors the projects executed with the funds allocated to the beneficiaries.

Among the ETF objectives is to:

“Stimulate support and entrance improvement activities in educational foundations areas like Teacher Education, Teaching Practice, Library development etc”

This study investigated whether the books supplied by the PTF, ETF, and PTA were fully utilized or not, where they were not fully utilized, why they were not fully utilized.

#### Literature review

The idea of providing school library service was first conceived in Ibadan in a UNESCO seminar on the Development of Public Libraries in Africa in August 1953 (Elaturoti *et al.*, 2003). It was resolved that Public Library in Africa should serve the following purposes:

- i. Provide effective services for children and young peoples including requisite services for schools;
- ii. Provide needed information and reference services;
- iii. Promote and stimulate reading for pleasure and recreation;

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- iv. Provide ever needed adequate services for special group i.e. women, girls, language group, handicapped and rural dwellers;
- v. Support and reinforce programme of adult and fundamental education.

Since then, series of efforts have been made to promote the establishment of school libraries by the Nigerian Library Association which came into being as a result of the breaking up of West African Library Association (WALA) in 1962. The regional divisions of the NLA started working with the Western and eastern regional Ministry of Education in 1964 to plan programme for school Library development in the public schools. According to Elaturoti *et al.*, 2003) there was no strong school Library section in the Northern region. However, the Northern regional library compiled “A selected list of books and periodicals for schools in Northern Nigeria to help secondary schools build up balanced library collections.

Fayose (1995) asserted that the role and function of the school library resources centre would depend upon the emphasis, which the educational system of a nation places on it. The Federal Government of Nigeria came out with a National Policy on Education in 1981, which state that:

*Government will ensure that all schools are Properly equipped to promote sound and effective teaching and in particular that suitable textbooks and Libraries are provided to schools.*

Umunake (1992) stated that well developed school libraries would be indispensable in environments where students have been introduced to a life of independent enquiry and desire for full expression of innate potentials. A good library will play the same role in the new education system as science and language laboratories methodology. The design adopted was a descriptive survey method.

**Target Population**

The target population of the study was 107 schools in 5 local governments areas: Asa (14); Moro (14) Ilorin East (26); Ilorin South (23) and Ilorin West (30). These local governments comprised the Kwara Central Senatorial District. Instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire. A copy of the questionnaire was sent to each of the principals and out of 107 sent out, 92 were returned and were all found usable, thus making 85.9%

**Data Analysis****Table 1: Ownership of schools**

Schools	Frequency	%
Public	84	78.55
Private	23	21.5

Table 1 reveals that the public owns 78.5% of the schools in the district while private proprietors own 21.5%

**Table 2: Do you have school library?**

Library	Frequency	%
Yes	34	37
No	58	63

Table 2 reveals that 37% of the schools studied have school library while 63% do not have.

**Table 3: Do you have a Librarian in charge of the school library?**

Librarian	Frequency	%
Yes	3	8.82
No	31	91.18

Table 3 reveals that only 8.82% of the school libraries have librarians while 91.18% have no professional librarian

**Table 4: Qualifications of the officers in charge of the school libraries**

Qualification	Frequency	%
B.L.S (Hons)	3	8.82
Diploma in Lib Sc	2	5.88
Ass. Lib Officer	9	26.47
Other disciplines	20	58.82

Table 4 reveals that 8.82% of the respondents have degree in Library Science, 5.88% have Diploma in Library science and 26.47% have Assistant Library Officer Certificate while 58.82 have certificate in other fields. The findings show that professionals do not staff school libraries

**Table 5: Who supplies you the books in your library?**

Source	Frequency	%
ETF /PTF	69	75
PTA /Proprietor	23	25

Table 5 reveals that only 75% of the books supplied are from the Petroleum Trust Fund and Education Tax Fund while 25% were from Parent Teacher's Association (PTA) or the Proprietors.

**Table 6: In a situation where you have NO school library where do you keep the books supplied?**

Where	Frequency	%
Principal's office	46	79
School store	12	21

Table 6 reveals that only 79% of the books are kept in the principal's office while 21% are kept in the store. As to why the principal keep the books in their offices. Majority of them

said the auditors will hold them responsible for their loss or damage hence the need to keep vigil on them. Also those that keep theirs in the store have the same defence. They claimed that there is nowhere for the students to make use of the books and no staff to take care. The books gather dust where they are kept and some are even attacked by termites and rodents.

**Table 7: Do the students make use of the ETF books?**

Book usage	Frequency	%
Yes	11	32.35
No	23	67.65

Table 7 reveals that only 32.35% of the respondents make use of the ETF books, while 67.65% do not make use of the textbooks.

**Table 8: Are the quantities of the books adequate for the population of the student?**

Quantity	Frequency	%
Yes	2	2.9
No	67	97.1

Table 8 reveals that 2.9% of the respondents indicated that the books are sufficient for the student's population while 97.1% said the books are not sufficient.

### Conclusion

From the data collected analyzed and discussed in this study it has been revealed that the government has done well by supplying relevant textbooks to the public schools, though the private schools were however neglected. It was further revealed that most of the principals are not interested in the use of the texts by the students but took interest on the safety of the texts.

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This counters the motive of the government. Although the books are not found to be very relevant, but they are not sufficient for the population of the students. It was further revealed that there was no library hour in the timetable for students to make use of the library. Once the school closes the library closes too, thus no access to it after school. The research revealed that private schools pay better attention to provision of school libraries than public schools.

### Recommendations

Kwara state Ministry of Education, should extend its allocation of ETF textbooks to all government approved secondary schools be it public or private.

Kwara state Ministry of Education should give school library building a priority as science laboratories in their West African Examination Council (WAEC) recognition inspection of schools.

Teacher- librarians should be given periodic seminars and orientations on how to manage school library.

National Council on Colleges of Education should be approached by the Nigerian Library Association (NLA) to offer library sciences as double major as is done for primary science in Colleges of Education in Nigeria.

Now that the Nigerian Library Association is officially registered the body should strive to write a memo to the Federal Ministry of Education to enforce Library hour in the school timetable. The association is advised to refer to the National Policy on Education that recommends school Library for schools to in turn issue a policy statement on putting "Library hour" on the timetable. The students should also be given assignment that them use the texts in the school library. For this to succeed there should be some mutual working relationship between the school, subject teachers and the teacher librarian.

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