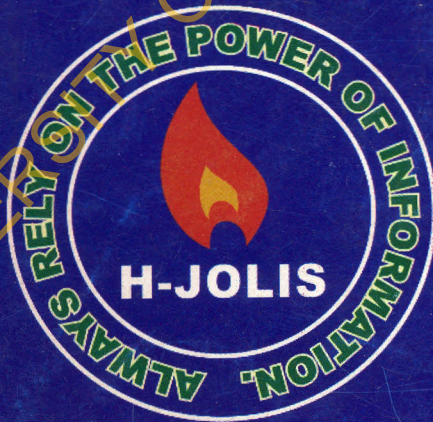


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## **DIFFERENTIAL RESOURCE AND SERVICE NEEDS OF CHILDREN IN EDO STATE PUBLIC LIBRARIES**

**BY**

**FLORENCE ADEOLA ASHOKO**

*Hezekiah Oluwasanmi Library,  
Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria.*

**&**

**BEATRICE AYODEJI FABUNMI**

*Kenneth Dike Library,  
University Of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria.*

### **Abstract**

The children library's resources and services in Edo state public library vary according to the location. The categories of the libraries are; urban area libraries (UAL), sub-urban area libraries (SAL) and rural area libraries (RAL). The difference in the resources and services indicates that resources and services are not evenly distributed in the state.

### **Introduction**

It is observed that Public Library is the centre of the intellectual in the locality. The intellectual life covers all stages from the incipient curiosity of those whose intelligence is only beginning to awaken to the advanced research to highly trained specialist. The library has to serve not only the earnest seekers after knowledge but also those who are merely curiosity gratifying an elementary and those who are seeking relaxation use of the libraries.

The development of Public Library in Edo State dates back to 1940, when the Benin divisional council library was established. In 1973, the Edo State library (then Bendel state) established a distinct children's service in Edo State. Benin divisional council had some children's collection, but no child had registered or used the library.

Culna (1985) asserted that the principle underlying the library service is that it exists for the training of the good citizens.

Brooks (1993) opined that the main criterion for selection of Public Library's resources is that the stock meets the needs of the local community or predicted by qualified Librarians who have developed knowledge of the community. The guardian newspaper of Friday November 2002 posits that all over the world, public and private Libraries perform the functions of holding books, documents, journals and papers and providing the ambience for interested persons to consult such school holdings... Apart from serving as information bank, the Library will also keep our youths engaged and keep them from mischief.

*Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1973) asserted that children in many countries throughout the world are served by two major library systems; one in the school and one designated as Public- whether administered or housed separately from the public system for adults or as an integral physical part of the system. The two systems usually complement each other philosophically and collections in the two systems will usually overlap.

Strategies for promoting reading among children and young adult was given in the library work with children by Fayose (2003) as follows; story telling, creative drama, quizzes, word games, book talks and film show. She further suggested the strategies that can sustain the cultivated reading habit in children as follows; book talks, hobby groups and the likes, creative activities, writing and speaking, book maps, reading therapy, display and exhibition and teaching and handling skills.

Public libraries are helping to close the book 'gap' by providing children of all backgrounds access to high-quality reading materials and rich language experiences

Dowed (1991) observed that educators often assume that library programs promote children's literacy, but few studies have measured their impact on preschool and elementary school children.

Kupetz (1993) also observed that one of the few researchers to undertake such a study found that children who had been exposed to a library outreach literacy training effort in Pre School demonstrated a greater number of emergent literacy behaviours and pre-reading skills. These children also read significantly more words correctly than did children in a controlled group.

He further pointed out that Public libraries can serve as essential resources for parents and teachers. First they can assemble collections of materials appropriate for very young readers such as books of rhymes, "point and say books" "touch and smell" books and board books, second, they can guide parents and child care professionals in selecting books for very young children. Finally, librarians can help parents who feel uncomfortable reading to their children by modelling read aloud techniques; helping parents develop their own literacy and encouraging them enjoy their own reading.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The resources in Edo State libraries have been found to vary in line with the type of area they find themselves. Those in the urban areas have more resources in good quality and better quantity than those in rural areas. Despite the fact that those in rural areas need more exposure which will only come through a well stocked public library. No new resources were found to be available in the libraries in the rural areas.

### **Methodology**

The area of study is Edo state. It has 18 local government council areas.

The geographical division of Edo state was considered for the sampling technique. The head quarter was chosen, and then a local government area was selected at random without replacement from each of the geographical division. They are Edo north, Edo south and Edo Central. In Edo North, Akoko-Edo was selected, in Edo south and central Egor and Owan East were selected respectively. All the public libraries found in each of the local government were used for the research.

### **Instrument of Data Collection**

Four approaches were combined in the study; questionnaire, interview, personal observation and examination of existing library statistics.

### **Questionnaire**

Questionnaire for the Public Library users (QPLU) consists of two sections A and B

Section A consists of the bio data and their experience in the library, namely; age, class, library interest, distance covered to get to the library, loaning activities, special programmes attended in the library.

Section B has 13 items consisting of the level at which the Public Library satisfies the resource needs of users.

Questionnaire for Public Library staff (QPLS) has 3 sections: section A consists of bio data of the respondent namely: sex, age, qualification, library experience, children library experience and training experience. Sections B and C consist of the resource needs of users and resources provided respectively.

### **Interview**

The QPLU was used to interview children that could not read.

### **Personal Observation**

The resources were looked out for if they were really in place.

### **Examination of Existing Library Statistics**

A form was drawn by the researcher for the head in each of the library to fill. This revealed the total library holdings in the children section, other resources available, the percentage of the budget that goes for resources and the staff strength.

### **Validation of Instrument**

The face and content validity were verified by some lecturers from the departments of educational management and library studies both at the University of Ibadan.

### **Reliability of Instrument**

The instrument was subjected to test re-test method using the children in Oyo State Public Library at Dugbe in Ibadan. The questionnaire was administered to the same respondents at two weeks interval. The test scores of the pre test were each correlated using cronbach coefficient alpha. The final instrument had a reliability coefficient of 0.82 for QPLU.

## Administration of Instrument

### Staff's and Users' Questionnaire Administration and Retrieval

Libraries	QPLS		QPLU	
	Administered	Retrieved	Administered	Retrieved
Oredo	50	42 (84%)	65	62 (95%)
Egor	4	4 (100%)	35	31 (89%)
Owan-East	4	4 (100%)	15	14 (93%)
Akoko-Edo; Igarra	4	4 (100%)	28	25 (89%)
Ibillo	5	5 (100%)	30	28 (93%)
Ekpe	3	3 (100%)	20	16 (80%)
Total	70	62 (99%)	193	176 (91%)

### Research Hypothesis

- There are no significant differences in resources needs of users in these library categories: rural area libraries (RAL), urban area libraries (UAL) and sub-urban area libraries (SAL).
- There are no significant differences in service needs of users in these library categories: rural area libraries (RAL), urban area libraries (UAL) and sub-urban area libraries (SAL).
- Users need satisfaction does not vary significantly amongst the three library categories: rural area libraries (RAL), urban area libraries (UAL) and sub-urban area libraries (SAL).

### Methods of Data Analysis

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and regression analysis were used to analyse the data based on the hypothesis.

### Test of hypothesis

**Table 1A**

**ANOVA**

Variation	Sources of variation	Sum of squares	Degree of freedom	Mean square	F	P	Remark
Resource needs	B/W groups	3711.090	2	1855.545	23.104	.000	S
	Within groups	4738.394	59	80.312			
	Total	8449.484	61				

**Multiple comparisons**

Dependent variable: resource needs

Scheffe

**Table 1<sup>n</sup>**

Library category (i)	Library category (j)	Mean difference	Standard error	significant	95% confidence interval	
					Lower bound	Upper bound
UAL	SAL	18.8579	2.815	.000	11.7890	25.9267
	RAL	10.2681	5.340	.166	-3.1420	23.6783
SAL	UAL	-18.8579	2.815	.000	-25.9267	-11.7890
	RAL	-8.5897	5.740	.333	-23.0043	5.8249
RAL	UAL	-10.2681	5.340	.166	-23.0043	3.1420
	SAL	8.5897	5.740	.333	-5.8248	23.0043

The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

Homogenous subsets

Resource needs

Scheffe a, b

Library category	N	Subset for $\alpha = 0.05$	
		1	2
SAL	13	65.0769	-
RAL	3	73.6667	73.6667
UAL	46	-	83.9348
Significant	-	212	0.111

Means for groups in homogenous subsets are displayed

(a) Uses harmonic mean sample size 6.945

(b) The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type one-error levels are not guaranteed.

**Table 2**

Mean of resource needs of children

	SA	A	D	SD
F	674	528	147	144
Mean	10.9	9.5	2.4	2.3

- SA - Strongly Agreed
- A - Agree
- D - Disagree
- SD - Strongly Disagree

### **Discussion And Conclusion**

**Ho;** there is no significant difference in resource and service needs among the three library categories.

From table 1 we reject the null hypothesis at 5% level of significance. Thus a significant difference exists among the three library categories.

Table 1b shows that UAL and SAL are significantly different from one another, but RAL is not significantly different either from UAL or SAL.

UAL seems to have on the average the highest resource needs while SAL has the least

**Ho;** there is no significant difference in users' needs satisfaction among the three library categories.

From table 2a, we reject this null hypothesis and conclude that significant difference does exist.

The Scheffe analysis shows that UAL is significantly different from SAL but not significantly different from RAL.

In conclusion, from the above analysis, it is discovered that the distribution of resources and services is not even in Edo State public libraries. Some have what they ought to have, while some do not have at all and some are in-between.

### **Recommendations**

Resources and services should be evenly shared among the libraries in Edo State using a percentage that considers the population that the library is meant to serve.

The staff and the users (children) should be informed on the standard of the resources and services need of children in the public libraries.

The state government should try and have a model of what the children library should look like and should ensure equal distribution of resources and service.



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