READING HABITS OF USERS AS DETERMINANTS OF THE UTILISATION OF LIBRARY INFORMATION RESOURCES IN TWO SELECTED PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN THE SOUTH -WEST, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This paper examined reading habits of users as determinants of the utilisation of library information resources in two public libraries in South-west Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey research method and utilized questionnaire to generate data for the study. Five research questions were presented for the study. Pearson product moment correlation and regression analysts were used to test hypotheses one at 0.05 level of significance. The result shows that there is a significant relationship between reading habits of users and utilisation of information resources of the selected public libraries in South-west, Nigeria. The study concluded that many of the users of the libraries under study possess some form of reading habit, even though some actually read to pass examinations but the majority read to upgrade knowledge. The study recommended that the government should make it a priority to fund the public libraries adequately and concerted efforts should also be made by the public library management to ensure that there is adequate, sufficient and up to date information resources in the two libraries.

Keywords: Reading Habits, Users, Library Information Resources, Public Libraries

Introduction

Reading is a powerful means of communication that can form part of an individual to the extent that it becomes a habit which once developed, become very difficult to break. In the words of Igwe (2011), reading is one of the

fundamental building blocks of learning, becoming a skilled and adaptable reader enhances the chances of success at school and beyond. Reading is not just for school, it is for life.

The definition of reading has gone through many changes. In the past, reading simply meant to extract visual information from any given codes or systems. However, thereafter, reading became much more complex and involved the understanding of a whole text composed of written signs. According to Toit (2001) "Reading is a process of thinking, recalling and relating concepts under the functioning of written words". Reading provides experience through which the individual may expand his horizons of knowledge, identify, extend and intensify his interest and gains deeper understanding of himself, of other human beings and of the world (Chettri and Rout (2013).

Reading is an action of a person who reads and habit is a product of this action or learning. Like all other habits, the habit of reading in an individual develops during the course of time (Thanuskodi, 2011). Jato, Ogunniyi and Olubiyo (2014) described habit as a settled or regular tendency or practice, especially one that is hard to give up. The reading habit influences the promotion of one's personal development in particular and social progress in general. Regular and systematic reading sharpens the intellect, refines the emotions, elevates tastes and provides perspectives for one's living; and thereby prepares a person for an effective participation in the social, religious, cultural and political life. Reading fires the imagination of the person, It adds new sight to eyes and new wisdom to mind. Reading loads the mind with new software (Satija, 2002).

The library is one of the information centres where a person can obtain information. It is also a place where a person can go to read or study. Libraries are places where the habit of reading books can be acquired. Libraries increase student success at school and they help them to acquire the educational knowledge necessary for adapting to changing and evolving circumstances (Curley, 1990; Kachel 1997). In the words of Ajidahun (2011) the library is unarguably one of the intellectual wonders of life and one of the greatest and remarkable innovations and inventions that have proved, indisputably, man's creative audacity. He adjudged the library to also be a splendid educational masterpiece, a redemptive global phenomenon with robust capacity and ecumenical power and capability to bring the desired and the unimaginable transformation and positive changes to society; the results which are immeasurably eternal.

The library, irrespective of its form, status, typology or classification has profound potency in bringing cultural, political and socio-economic empowerment to the society. Saleh and Lasisi (2011) opined that libraries in general and public libraries in particular, play an important role in all aspects of societal development especially when viewed against its users, which consist of all categories of people in society.

Public library has been defined variously. Many see it as a place built for the collection of books and other printed resources and the personnel to provide and interpret such resources as required to meet the information, research, educational, recreational, cultural and aesthetic needs of the varied users and it is usually financed with public funds. Obinyan, et al (2011) see public libraries as non -for- profit organizations, established, supported and funded by the community, either through local, regional or national government or through some other form of community organization. They provide access to knowledge, information and works of the imagination through a range of resources and services that are meant to be equally available to all members of the community regardless of race, nationality, age, gender, religion, language, disability, economic and employment status, and educational attainment. In other words, public libraries are locally-based service organizations set up to meet the needs of the local communities and to operate within the context of the communities while contributing to the creation and maintenance of a well-informed and democratic society. Public libraries help to empower people in the enrichment and development of their lives and that of the communities.

Parvathamrna and Reddy (2009) noted that public libraries have improved literacy through various information and educational services that they render over time. They are also well known to stimulate imaginative thoughts *ant* expand personal horizons while making the empowerment of citizen, and provision of access to a common cultural heritage a reality. This study investigated reading habits of users as determinants of the utilisation of library information resources of two public libraries in the South-West, Nigeria.

Profiles of Ondo and Ekiti States Library Board
A. Ondo State Library Board
The Ondo State Library was first established as a Central Library in 1976; and it was likewise known by the name. Central Library. In 1985, an Edict was promulgated for the smooth running of the Ondo State Library Board, thus, the

Ondo State Library Board which was initially a division under the Ministry of Education became an autonomous body. Consequently, a Board was put in place for the day to day administration of the Library. The said Edict equally established the position of the Director of Library Services, and Secretary to the Board. In 1986, the Ondo State Library Board became a full-fledged Library Board.

The library does not loan out materials. Experiences from the past showed that the users rarely returned borrowed books thereby leading to loss of a lot of library books. The sources of acquisition are identified as purchase, gifts and donations. The library, it was observed, has almost all the known print information resources; textbooks in different subject areas, encyclopedias, indexes, abstracts, gazettes, journals, magazines, bibliographies, who's who, etc. The library has a cyber cafe where users pay to use Internet facility. It was learnt during the interview that the cyber cafe is to generate revenue and not primarily to make available electronic information resources. The library also has a children's section. Categories of users cut across students, workers (private and government sector), retirees, artisans (who the researcher was told they rarely come), The larger population however, comprises students. The library has a daily subscription of six newspapers, five of which are national dailies and one local daily. The library does not engage in interlibrary loans with other libraries. The library has 6 professional staff.

B. Ekiti State Library Board
As a result of the creation of Ekiti State in October 1996 out of Ondo State, there came into existence the Ekiti State Library Board. The Board inherited the former Ado Local Government Library Board till date. During this time, there was no Edict establishing the Board in Ekiti State but the enabling Act for establishment of Ondo State Library Board was used in October 1998 to establish Ekiti State Library Board.

In the enabling Act, it was stated that Board shall be a body corporate with perpetual succession and a common seal and with the power to sue and be sued in its corporate name and to acquire, let, lease, construct, maintain or repair and dispose of any property for the purposes of performing its functions under the edict.

The library has a few CD-ROMs but the researcher learnt that they were yet to be in use as the computers were yet to be set up. The library has a children's section. Categories of users cut across students, workers (private and

government sector), retirees, and artisans. The larger population however, comprises students. The library has a daily subscription of 4 newspapers, all of which are national dailies. The library does not engage in interlibrary loans with other libraries. The library has 3 professional staff.

Objectives of the Study
The objectives to be accomplished by this study are to:

1. examine the reading habits of the users of two selected public libraries in Southwest, Nigeria regarding their primary purpose of reading, area of interest of reading materials, time spent on reading, the preference of reading period, and their enjoyment of reading;
2. identify the information resources owned by the two selected public libraries in South-west, Nigeria;
3. find out the level of utilisation of the information resources in the selected public libraries in South-west, Nigeria;
4. examine the problems faced by the users in utilising the information resources of the selected public libraries in South-West, Nigeria;
5. find out the perception of users on the adequacy or otherwise of the information resources in the selected public libraries in South-West, Nigeria;
6. Make appropriate suggestions for improvement of the reading habits of users and management of information resources in the selected public libraries in South West, Nigeria to encourage better utilisation.

Research Questions
To achieve the identified objectives of the study, the following research questions were raised:

1. What are the reading habits of the users of the selected public libraries in South West, Nigeria regarding their primary purpose of reading, area of interest of reading materials, time spent on reading, the preference of reading period, and their enjoyment of reading?
2. What is the various information resources held by the selected public libraries in South West, Nigeria?
3. What is the level of utilisation of the various information resources in the selected public libraries in South West, Nigeria?
4. What are the problems encountered by the users in utilising the information resources of the selected public libraries in South West, Nigeria?

5. What is the perception of users on the adequacy or otherwise of the information resources in the selected public libraries in South West, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

In order to achieve the stated objectives and research questions, the following two null hypotheses were tested.

H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between the reading habits of users and utilisation of information resources of the selected public libraries in South West, Nigeria.

H_{02}: There is no significant difference among the users of the public libraries in their reading habits given variation in their demographic characteristics (educational background, marital status, gender and age).

Literature Review
Public library and its users

Obinyan, et al (2011) portray public libraries as non-for-profit organizations, established, supported and funded by the community, either through local, regional or national government or through some other form of community organization. They provide access to knowledge, information and works of imagination through a range of resources and services that are meant to be equally available to all members of the community regardless of race, nationality, age, gender, religion, language, disability, economic and employment status, and educational attainment. In other words, public libraries are locally based service organizations set up to meet the needs of the local communities and to operate within the context of the communities while contributing to the creation and maintenance of a well-informed and democratic society. Public libraries are founded wholly with government grants in the developing countries in agreement with the UNESCO public library manifesto (1972) which states that public library should be maintained by public funds and no direct charge should be made to .anyone for its services. To fulfill its purposes, the public library must be readily accessible, and its doors open for free and equal use by all members of the community regardless of race, colour, nationality, age, religion, language, status, sex, educational attainment.

Chatterjee (2013) opined that public library created a great impact on human mind and human society. Akparobore (2011) is of the view that public libraries are very important in the life of any nation. Public libraries provide book and

non-book materials to meet the educational needs and support the efforts of the adults' education programmes to help contribute to the growth of a nation. Public libraries have vital role to play in decision and policymaking. It is in search of this justification that public libraries were established, Oyegade, Nassarawa and Makogwu (2003) state that public libraries are the people's university providing for an independent decision taking. The public library attempts to meet a wide variety of readers' needs, providing varied information resources such as textbooks, journals, literary books and other publications. Specifically, the primary purpose of public libraries according to Wheeler and Goldhor (1962) are as follows:

a. Enable information education opportunities for the citizens in the communities.
b. Enrich the knowledge of individuals in various subject disciplines where they undertake formal education.
c. Provide awareness to meet the information needs of people.
d. Support the educational, civil and cultural activities of groups and organisations.
e. Provide recreational opportunities and encourage constructive use of leisure time. Public libraries in carrying out the role of education can provide necessary materials such as textbooks, journals, magazines and exercise books related to the curriculum of the existing literacy institutions in the community be it conventional schools or adult classes. In this way, it assists in the campaign to make the society a more literate one.

Akparobore (2011) opine that public libraries can play their role of information centre by making available journals, newspapers and all other reading materials in the indigenous language so that education will be available at the grassroots. Public libraries provide the information needs of the illiterates that constitute the bulk of the population in the developing countries and unite all who enter its house to partake fully in its intellectual activities.

The public library unlike other types of libraries is not restricted to any group of users. It is more or less a universal library. It is expected to serve all kinds of people including young children and people with disabilities and even people who for one reason or the -other are incapacitated. Such people include patients in hospitals, prisons etc. They are generally managed, financed and supported by government, local communities and occasionally non-governmental organizations etc (Nwachukwu, Abdusalami and Salami, 2014).

Information resources of public **library**

Adeoye (2011) opine that library resources are the stock in trade of librarians. These materials in the library make services possible. They are the materials, which the users come to consult, read or borrow. Library information resources are many and varied, but they can be divided into two broad categories namely "printed and non-printed materials". The printed materials are books, pamphlets, periodicals, newspapers and reference resources. Non-printed resources can be grouped into three i.e. audio, visual and audio-visual. We also have electronic information resources as part of information resources in the libraries. Olowu (2004) opine that, library information resources include such materials as books, periodicals and audio visual materials that are provided for use by the people

Ogunmodede, et al (2011) in their study stated that information resources in the library can also be grouped according to formats. The main format includes printed materials, non-printed material, and electronic materials. Printed library materials/resources are made up of all items that are printed on paper through moveable type. This consists of books, periodicals, government publications, graphics and other illustrative materials such as maps and atlases. Books may be written by one or several authors and may come in a single volume or in multiple volumes. Periodicals/serials come at regular or irregular intervals and are meant to continue indefinitely; they are characterised with distinct titles and several authors or contributors contributing to each issue. Other printed materials include judicial publications, indexes and abstracts, legislative publications, ephemerals etc.

Non-printed materials or media are often referred to as audiovisual resources. They are the product of advanced technology, some of which require special equipment to operate. Non-printed media can be grouped into three: (a) Audio: - This has to do with hearing. They are sound recordings produced on magnetic tapes. Only the auditory senses are required for their appreciation. Examples are Mp3, CD audio, etc,; (b) Visual- this appeals to the eyes, Materials in this group include photographic, three dimensional objects, painting and other information bearing resources that the eye can focus on and abstract information; (c) Audio-Visual- these combine both the auditory and the visual: sound, film, and slides, video tapes, video cassettes, video compact disk (VCD) etc. Other non-print resources in the library include microforms, which can be sub-divided into microfilm, microfiche and micro card (Harrison, et al (1981).

Electronic resources can also be explained as "a broad term that include a variety of publishing models, including OPACs, CD-ROMs, online databases, e-journals, e-books, Internet resources, print-on-demand (POD), e-mail publishing, wireless publishing, electronic link and web publishing, etc. (Sethi and Panda, 2012). With the advent of information explosion, users are less satisfied with only information contained in print resources; they crave for supplementary information contained in these dynamic information sources. The electronic resources are made available using information technologies; this has brought about improvement in the management of scholarly information and enhanced speed in accessing scholarly information not held locally. Therefore, electronic resources are seen as invaluable research tools that complement the print-based resources in a traditional library setting (Egberongbe, 2011).

Most public libraries, in Nigeria, however, do not share this same rave of information technology. The selected public libraries, subjects of the case study of this research work do not have such functional electronic resources.

Utilisation of information resources in public libraries
Biradar (2006) who conducted a study relating to use of information resources by the users of public library assessed the frequency of visits of the users to the library and the amount of time spent and how the users get information for their study. He investigated the use and adequacy of the reading material such as textbooks, periodicals, and non-book materials, etc. He observed whether the arrangements of books and other materials are helpful to the users in the city central library. He found that majority of the users spent more than two hours in library, read the newspapers, located the reading materials directly from the racks, did not use the catalogue cards, preferred information sources like newspapers, books, periodicals etc., and were satisfied with the arrangements of books and co-operation of the staff of the library. Chopra and Banerjee (2005) in a study related to utilization of library and information services of public libraries in Punjab, collected data on the usage of the public library services by different age group of users and users from different level of qualification. He identified their needs and assessed the quality of library services provided by the public libraries in the state of Punjab. He used Questionnaire Method for the collection of data. The number of users surveyed was 383, comprising of 227 male and 156 female. Out of 383 users, 212 users belong to the age group of 18-30 years, 67 thereof from 31-40 years, 31 of them are from 41-50 years another 36 of them are from 51-60 years, while 37 thereof are from more than 60 years of age. The author

highlighted that the usage of public library services by the female users is significantly low and needs serious attention by the library authorities of the state.

Ugah (2008) in his study identified two variables that have relationship with the use of library information resources. He gave these as: availability of information resources, and accessibility of information resources. He further distinguished these two variables as: Availability of information sources means ensuring their presence in libraries for immediate use (Aguolu and Aguolu 2002). Learning materials might be available, i.e., the library has acquired them, but they are inaccessible to those who need them for whatever reason (uncatalogued, miscataloged, misshelved, etc.). Accessible means that users can identify and use the resources. Both variables have a relationship with the use of library resources.

Ease of accessibility to reading materials can encourage reading. Reading corners in classrooms, theatres, villages etc. can provide easy and convenient access when needed. Cheunwattana (2003) describes a range of different types of mobile library operating in Thailand. These include the Portable Library Project, begun in 1979 to make available recreational and informative books to rural children. Mobile libraries provide convenient access to people in remote areas who otherwise would have little or no access to libraries and reading materials.

Buckland (1975) analyses frustrations felt by users who fail to find the information sources they want in the library. He outlines four relationships between the user and availability of resources, which are:
1. The greater the popularity, the lower the immediate availability.
2. The longer the loan period, the lower the immediate availability, the shorter the loan period, the higher the immediate availability.
3. The greater the popularity, the shorter the loan period has to be and the less the popularity, the longer the loan period can be.
4. Increasing the number of copies available, like shortening the length of loan periods, increases the immediate availability.

According to Katunmoya (1992), public libraries in most countries in tropical Africa rarely provide relevant materials and hence they are ineffective. They are stocked mainly with foreign literature that is both out of date and irrelevant to the information needs and interests of the people that are expected to read

them, thereby making the utilization of those resources and the library very low.

Reading habits of users of public library

Reading is an attempt to absorb the thought of an author and know what the author is conveying. It is principally through reading that people obtain knowledge (Quadri and Abomoge, 2013). Reading habit is the act of reading as a regular activity. It is the cultivation of an attitude and possession of skills that make reading a pleasurable, regular and constant activity. Reading habit is identified as the single most important determinant of a student's success in education and in our modern complex society (Nssien, 2008). Possessing reading culture requires a process of building up positive reading attitude among students and children over a period. When an individual habitually and regularly read books and other information materials that are not necessarily required for him to advance in his profession or career, he is said to have a reading culture (Gbadamosi, 2007). Reading habit, on the one hand, is the kind of habit that imbibes reading and studying as the basis of growth and development. It is the type that sees continuous and dedicated reading of information resources by pupils, children, students and adults for knowledge acquisition, which will be applied practically for development. Shen (2006), identifies reading habits, as how often, how much, and what readers read.

Dumea (2001) implies that access to reading materials, such as that provided through libraries, encourages students to read and re-read books, which improves their reading skills.

According to Etim (2008), basic literacy means an individual's ability to read, write and speak in English. Reading is the corner stone of learning.

Aguolu (1975) contends that the majority of African readers fall into two categories. The first group is those newly literate who have learned to read/write in school or through adult education classes. Aguolu (1975) stated that this group is most likely to lapse into illiteracy after their formal schooling unless they continue to have access to appropriate reading materials. The second group of readers is those who might be referred to as semi-literate. They are interested in reading in order to improve their trade, farming, and the lives of their families, but tend to be shy users of libraries. The author asserted that even those people who have learned to read and write at some point are in danger of losing these skills because of lack of access to materials to read.

The low level of reading habits and a reading culture among Nigerians has been ascribed to multi-varied factors. According to Gbadamosi (2007), it includes change in Nigeria's value system. He posited that the quest for material wealth has eroded the interest for the search of knowledge. Likewise, economic hardship that is prevalent in many homes is another factor. Most parents barely manage to pay their children/wards' school fees that they can easily forget about buying book for them. Even for some parents, buying books is indulging the children/wards since it is believed that the class note is sufficient for them. Another factor recognized by Gbadamosi (2007) is the astronomical prices of books and other information material:; have put them out of the reach of the masses, coupled with the high cost of books is poor availability of indigenous books owing to the fact that local authors are not encouraged to write books. In addition, the cost of publishing books is very high. Indigenous writers *are not* motivated as they may not be able to finance the high cost of book publishing.

Aina, et al (2011) observe that acquisition of reading skills has a beneficial effect on all school subjects, including social studies, science, mathematics, and so on. Poor reading skill can make a child develop a poor attitude toward school and can create self-esteem problems later in life (Fosudo, 2010).

A study carried out by Henry (2004), reveals that 40 percent of adult Nigerians never read a non-fiction book from cover to cover after they finish school. He stated that the average Nigerian reads less than one book per year, and only one percent of successful men and women in Nigeria read one non-fiction book per month, The same study showed that 30 million Nigerians have graduated from high school with poor reading skills. Some Nigerians may not read because they are not working in the right field(s). If regular reading and studying is a required condition of the job or profession, this in effect means he/she reads, even if it is under duress. The magnitude of this problem jeopardizes the future of the public libraries. Henry (2004) considered it most frustrating that much of the reading problem in Nigeria can be prevented if government, libraries, and teachers apply what is known as reading instruction or techniques.

Lone (2011) identifies that sex and age are the two principal factors affecting reading habits. Stenberg (2001), Ross (2002) and Abram (2007) report female as more heavy reader than male. Clark and Foster (2005) reports that girls enjoy reading greater than boys and boys tend to hold more negative attitudes towards reading than girls do. McKenna, Kearn and Ellsworth (1995), Hassell

and Rodge (2007) reveal that girls have more favourable attitudes for both recreational and academic reading than boys do. Hopper (2005) depicts that (67%) of girls were reading compared to (54%) of boys. Sana; (1970) study shows that more than (90%) of the library users read newspapers and magazines and the percentage of women readers is higher than the men. Yilmaz (2000) finds that the majority of the students (77.8%) do not have reading habits whereas the smallest ratio (6.5%) belongs to the heavy readers. Hastings and Henry (2006) reveal that more than half of respondents (56%) spend less than an hour a day on reading and (13%) say that they do not read at all. Igun & Adogbeji (2007) report that nearly two-thirds (61.5%) of postgraduate students are motivated for studying and read primarily because of the desire for knowledge and skills, while (22.5%) study mainly to pass their examinations and tests and for self-development. The study of Hassell & Rodge (2007) depict that (72%) of the students are reading in their leisure time in which 22% read constantly and (50%) read when they get a chance. Telia & Akande (2007) disclose that the majority of the students (53.3%) spent between 1-2 hours per day on reading. The Department of Education, Hong Kong (2001) points out that the students are spending two or more hours on reading in a week, Sheorey and Mokhtari (1994) results reveal that students read an average of 4.75 hours per week. Igun and Adogbeji (2007) identify that the students spend about 7 to 9 hours per week on average to read. Sarjit and Thiyagarajah (1999) reveal that while many students prefer spending as much as 3-5 hours per week in reading yet the breakdown of the responses indicate that (69.8%) of them spend this amount of time on literary works, (28.6%) on newspapers and (25.4%) on novels. Shokeen (2005) is of the opinion that it is the duty of parents and librarians to promote a love for reading among students. However, all parties concerned- parents, teachers and librarians should work together to infuse a habit of reading in children at the young age when the mind is most impressionable.

In a survey carried out on the reading habits of students in Hong Kong, by the Education Department (2001), it was found that students spend two hours or more per week on reading books, newspapers and electronic information. It showed that more students read books at lower levels whilst at higher levels, more students read electronic information. The topics that students read most in newspapers and on the computer are similar, namely "Entertainment", "Daily living" and "Computer, information technology".

The types of books that students read most are "Stories", "Jokes/humours", "Fairy tales" and "Comics". It is apparent that the types of books that students

favour are for entertainment and leisure, rather than for intellectual enhancement. For primary students, the main purpose of reading is "to enrich knowledge" whilst for secondary students, it is "for leisure". Students possessing books at home usually spend more time on reading books compared with those with few or none.

Simisaye and Quadri (2010) brilliantly illustrate how free voluntary reading benefit students achievements. He remarked that children read more when they see other people reading; the longer free reading is practiced, the more consistent and positive the results; and that people who read more, write better. He then submitted that reading, as a leisure activity, is best predictor of comprehension, vocabulary and reading speed of students. Celano and Neuman (2001) assert that when children participate in public library Summer Reading Programme, they spend more time with books and become better learners. Mills and Welch (2008) and Krashen (2006) aver that Summer Reading programme facilitates voluntary reading among children.

It is important to state that few empirical studies with local content exist in this area of literature. Most of the studies carried out in this area are of theoretical nature. This research work will contribute towards correcting this position.

Research Methodology
The descriptive survey is the research method adopted for this study. The population of this study comprises 31, 998 registered users of the public library in Ondo and Ekiti States. There are one thousand, four hundred and eighty four registered users of Ondo State Library Board and thirty thousand, five hundred and fourteen registered users of Ekiti State Library Board according to the record provided by the office of the Librarian of both Ondo State Library Board and Ekiti State Library Board. It was observed that majority of the users of both State Library Boards are students of secondary schools, students seeking admission to higher institutions, and some of tertiary institutions. The population of this study therefore is more of students albeit from across institutions in Ondo State, Ekiti State and Nigeria as a whole.

The researcher selected 319 registered users from both State Library Boards employing the systematic random sampling procedure because the user population at both libraries was unevenly distributed by category.

Data were collected through a combination of questionnaire, interviews and observation at the study locations. However, the main instrument used was

319 copies of questionnaire, which was developed to collect data for this study. The questionnaire was divided into sections. Section "A", dealt with demographic information, Section "B", was on utilisation of the library information resources, Section "C" was to elicit information on the reading habits of the users of the State Library Boards, while Section "D" was about the impediments to utilisation of information resources of the State Library Boards.

Another instrument used was observation; the researcher visited both State Library Boards to observe the information resources available in the libraries. Interview was the third instrument used for data collection. Interview was conducted for two staff in each of the State Library Boards; the Librarian and one other staff.

The data collected with the questionnaire were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) frequency counts, percentages, mean and standard deviations. Pearson correlation test was used for hypothesis one, while ANOVA and t-test were used for hypothesis two.

All test regarding retention or rejection of the null-hypotheses (Ho) were conducted at 0.01 level of significance (P <0.01) and 0.05 level of significance (P<0.05). The 0.01 level of significance and 0.05 are chosen as studies have shown that it is reliable at this level to accept or reject a hypothesis.

In all, 319 copies of questionnaire were distributed to the sampled users of the selected public libraries and 269 copies were filled and returned giving a response rate of 84.3%.

Results and Discussions
The results from data analyses was presented and discussed in the light of the objectives and hypotheses that were formulated to guide the study.
Data on demographic variables of the respondents are presented in Table 1

Table 1: Distribution of Users Eased on Demographic Characteristics

S/N	Specific Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	**Sex of Respondents**		
	Male	181	67.3
	Female	84	31.2
	No indication	04	1.5
	Total	269	100.0
2.	**Age Range of respondents**		
	5-9 years	09	3.3
	10-19 years	85	31.6
	20-29 years	140	52.0
	30-39 years	25	9.3
	40-49 years	06	2.2
	50+ years	01	0.4
	No indication	03	1.1
	Total	269	100.0
3.	Marital status of respondents		
	Single	233	86.6
	Married	29	10.8
	Divorced	03	1.1
	No indication	04	1.5
	Total	269	100.0
4.	Qualification		
	Primary Certificate	02	0.7
	JSCE	09	3.3
	SSCE	114	42.4
	Diploma	14	5.2
	Postgraduate Diploma	08	3.0
	Degree	103	38.3
	Masters	02	0.7
	No indication	17	6.3
	Total	269	100.0
5.	Occupation		
	Student	191	71.0
	Police	01	0.4
	Corper	02	0.7
	Business/farming	02	0.7
	Business	08	3.0
	Farming	01	0.4
	Civil servant	28	10.4
	Self employed	01	0.4
	Unemployed	03	1.1
	Applicant	03	1.1
	Clergy	01	0.4
	Researcher	01	0.4
	No indication	27	10.0
	Total	269	100.0

Table 1 revealed that 269 users were involved in this study, out of which (67%) are male and 31% are female, while the rest (2%) failed to disclose their gender. The analysis of the age range of the respondents shows that the majority (52%) fall within the age range of 20-29 years, followed by 10-19 years (32%), and 30-39 years (9%). Others are 5-9 years (3%), and 40-49 years (2%). One percent failed to indicate their age, while the 50+ years age range is less than 1%. It is revealed that a large proportion of respondents (86.6%) is single, followed by married respondents (10.8%). The divorced make up just 1%, while 2% fail to indicate their marital status. The table further reveals that 42.4% of the respondents possess Senior Secondary Certificate (SSCE), 38% have Bachelor degree, and 5% have Diploma while other respondents (8%) possess Primary School Certificate, Junior Secondary Certificate (JSCE), Postgraduate Diploma (PGD), and a Masters' degree. Six percent failed to indicate their educational qualification. Table 1 indicates that large proportions (71%) of the respondents are students. This is followed by civil servants (10%). Others like business men, farmers, unemployed, applicants, clergy, researchers, Corpers and Police make up 9%, while 6% failed to indicate their occupation.

The study sought to find out the reading habit of public library users with respect to purpose, interest, frequency, period and rate of enjoyment. The result is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Reading Habits of Users

S/N	Items	Options	Freq.	%
1	My primary purpose of reading is	To pass examinations	60	22.3
		To get information on particular issue	50	18.6
		To upgrade knowledge	121	45.0
		For leisure	23	8.6
		Research purpose	06	2.2
		No indication	09	3.3
2	Area of interest that you read about most times	Literature	103	38.3
		Politics	40	14:9
		Religion	13	4.8
		Science and Technology	38	14.1
		Games and Sports	15	5.6
		Business	37	13.8
		Agriculture	01	0.4
		Law & adventure	01	0.4
		Official issues & current Affairs	03	1.1
		Language	03	1.1
		Language literature	03	1.1
		Philosophy & biography	03	1.1
		Psychology and learning	03	1.1
		History, biography & Politics	03	1.1
		Cartoons	01	0.4
		Fiction books	01	0.4
		No indication	01	0.4
3	Time spent on reading per day	One hour or less	60	22.3
		More than one hour but less than two hours	70	26.0
		Two hours but less than three hours	100	37.2
		Four hours or more	39	14.5
4	I prefer to read during the	Morning	124	46.1
		Afternoon	47	17.5
		Night	49	18.2
		Late night to early morning	41	15.2
		No indication	8	3.0
5	I enjoy reading	A lot	147	54.6
		A bit	76	28.3
		Not much	44	16.4
		Not at all	2	0.7

Table 2 revealed that a large proportion of the users read to upgrade knowledge (45%); this is followed by those who read to pass examinations (22%), and this is followed by those that read to get information (19%). Other reasons include, for leisure (9%) and research purposes (2%). In the table, it is revealed that 38% of users read literature, followed by those that read about politics (15%); followed by those that read about Science and Technology (14%), and those that read about Business (14%). Other areas of interest include: games & sport (6%), religion (4%). Table 2 further revealed that the majority of the users spend more than two hours but less than three hours reading per day (37%); these users are followed by those that read for more than one hour but less than two hours per day (26%), followed by those that read for one hour or less per day (22%). The least proportion (15%) of the users read for four hours or more per day.

Table 2 shows that 55% of the users enjoy reading a lot, while users who enjoy reading a bit make up 28%. 16% of the users responded that there is not much enjoyment in their reading, while less than 1% does not enjoy reading at all. From the result of the Table, it is evident that the need to upgrade one's knowledge is of paramount purpose among the users of the two public libraries. Literature seems to be a popular area of interest, and most of the users spend more than two hours but less than three hours reading per day.

Table 3: Information Resources that the Library Has in Stock

S/N	Information Resources	Ondo State Library Board	Ekiti State Library Board
		Available in the library	
a.	Textbooks on various disciplines	Yes	Yes
b.	Encyclopaedia	yes	Yes
c.	Dictionary	Yes	Yes
d.	Directories	Yes	Yes
e.	Biographies	Yes	Yes
f.	Handbooks	Yes	Yes
9.	Manuals	Yes	Yes
h.	Reports	Yes	Yes
i.	Almanacs	Yes	Yes
j.	Yellow pages	Yes	Yes
k.	Year books	Yes	Yes
l.	Who's who	Yes	Yes
m.	Maps & Atlases	Yes	Yes
n.	Gazettes	Yes	Yes
o	Magazines	Yes	Yes
p.	Index	Yes	Yes
q.	Abstracts	Yes	Yes
r.	Journals	Yes	Yes
s.	Newspapers	Yes	Yes
t.	Bibliographies	Yes	Yes
u.	CD-ROM	No	Yes
v.	Microfilm	No	No .
w.	Microfiche	No	No
x.	Project (research work)*	No	Yes

*There were few copies of project work in the public library in Ekiti State. This is not a usual information resource of a public library. During the interview that was conducted by the researcher with the librarian, it was gathered that these came to the library's holdings with the collections of an individual who bequeathed his library collections to the library.

The data in Table 3 was collected during a personal observation carried out by the researcher in the selected public libraries and from responses to the interview questions held with the staff of the selected public libraries. Table 3

reveals the information resources making up the holdings of the selected public libraries. The Table shows that the public libraries have similar information resources except for CD-ROMs and research project which Ondo State Library Board does not have.

The CD-ROM in Ekiti State Library Board is not utilised because there are no computers to access them. Likewise, the research project materials are not in open display because they are not catalogue. So, they are inaccessible to the users too.

Table 4: Usage of Library Information Resources

S/N	Information resources	VU	OU	SU	RU	NU	No indication	Mean	Std. D
a.	Textbooks	152 (56.5)	79 (29.4)	34 (12.6)	2 (0.7)	2 (0.7)	-	4.4	0.79
b.	Encyclopaedia	66 (24.5)	72 (26.8)	35 (13,0)	65 (24.2)	31 (11.5)	-	3.29	1.37
c.	Dictionaries	82 (30.5)	89 (33.1)	53 (19.7)	*24* (8.9)	21 (7.8)	-	3.70	1.21
d.	Directories	55 (20.4)	46 (17.1)	63 (23.4)	56 (20.8)	49 (18.2)	-	3.01	1.39
e.	Biographies	61 (22.7)	32 (11.9)	61 *(22.7)*	73 (27.1)	42 (15.6)	-	2.99	1.39
f.	Handbooks	72 (26.8)	28 (10.4)	49 (18.2)	83 (30.9)	37 (13.8)	-	3.06	1.43
g	Manuals	57 (21.2)	61 (22.7)	43 (16.0)	78 (29.0)	28 (10.4)	2 (0-7)	3.13	1-36
h.	Reports	56 (20.8)	50 (18.6)	85 (31.6)	52 (19.3)	26 (9.7)3	-	3.22	1.25
i.	Almanacs	35 (13.0)	55 (20.4)	62 (23.0)	54 (20.1)	63 (23.4)	-	2.80	1.35
j.	Yellow pages	11 (4.1)	42 (15.6)	59 (21.9)	82 (30.5)	75 (27.9)	-	2.38	1.16
k.	Year books	8 (3.0)	31 (11.5)	69 (25.7)	116 (43.1)	45 (16.7)		2.41	0.99
l.	Who's who	23 (8.6)	82 (30.5)	37 (13.8)	76 (28.3)	51 (19.0)	-	2.81	1.29
m.	Maps & Atlases	43 (16.0)	52 (19.3)	104 (38.7)	41 (15.2)	29 (10.8)	-	3.15	1.18
n.	Gazettes	44 (16-9)	37 (13.8)	101 (37.5)	51 (19.0)	36 (13.4)	~	3.01	1.23
O.	Magazines	61 (22.7)	61 (22.7)	41 (152)	57 (21.2)	49 (18.2)	-	3.10	1.44
p.	Index	95 (35.3)	65 (24.2)	42 (15.6)	33 (12.30)	33 (12.3)	1 (0.4)	3.57	1.41
q.	Abstracts	48 (17.8)	87 (32.3)	51 (19.0)	52 (19.3)	31 (11-5)	-	3,26	1.28
r.	Journals	95 (35.3)	63 (23.4)	30 (11-2)	51 (19.0)	29 (10.8)	1 (0.4)	3.52	1.43
s.	Newspapers	88 (32.7)	73 (27.1)	54 (20.1)	28 (10.4)	20 (7.4)	6 (2.2)	3.61	1.35
t.	Bibliographies	51 (19.0)	79 (29.4)	55 (20.4)	40 (14.9)	44 (16.4)		3.20	1.35
	Weighted Average	(63.6%)						3.18	

Table 4 shows that the users often use the following: Textbooks (mean= 4.40); Dictionaries (mean= 3.70); Indexes (mean= 3.57); Journals (mean=3.52); and Newspapers (mean=3.61). The users sometimes use the following: Encyclopaedia (mean=3.29); Directories (mean= 3.01); Biographies (mean= 2.99); Handbooks (mean= 3.06); Manuals (mean= 3.13); Reports (mean= 3.22); Almanacs (mean= 2.80); Who's who (mean= 2.81); Maps & Atlases (mean= 3.15); Gazettes (mean= 3.01); Magazines (mean= 3.10); Abstracts (mean= 3.26); and Bibliographies (mean= 3.20). The Yellow pages (mean= 2.38) and the Yearbooks (mean= 2.41) are rarely used.

The Weighted Average is 3.18, which indicate that the users sometimes use the information resources. This level of usage can be rated up to 64%.

Table 5: Problems Encountered by Users in the Utilisation **of Information Resources**

S/N	Items	SA	A	UD	D	SD	*No* indication	Mean	Std. D
a.	Lack of the relevant information resources needed	55 (20.4)	125 (46.5)	59 921.9)	22 (8.20	7 (2.6)	1 (0.4)	3.73	0.99
b.	Difficulty in information resources needed	40 (14.9)	70 (26.0)	64 (23.8)	74 (27.5)	18 (6.70	3 (1-1)	3.12	1,22
c.	Few available copies of the information resources needed	22 (8.2)	162 (60.2)	29 (10.8)	51 (19.0)	4 (1.5)	1 (0.4)	3.54	0.96
D	Lack of assistance from the library staff	56 (20.8)	85 (31.6)	61 (22.7)	49 (18.2)	9 (3.3)	9 (3.3)	3.38	1.27
e.	Little time to read the available material because of the closing time of the library	59 (21.9)	80 (29.7)	47 (17.5)	70 (26.0)	12 (4.5)	1 (0.4)	3.38	1.27
f.	Discomfort due to lack of fan or air conditioner	57 (21.2)	66 (24.5)	84 (31.2)	54 (20.1)	7 (2.6)	1 (0.4)	3.41	1.13
g.	The information materials are outdated	30 (11.2)	97 (36.1)	112 (41.6)	23 (8.6)	6 (2.2)	1 (0.4)	3.44	0.91
h.	Lack of modern technologies to facilitate access to electronic information resources	88 (32.7)	117 (43.5)	42 (15.6)	13 (4.8)	8 93.00	1 (0.4)	3.97	1.00
i.	The library environment is generally not conducive	35 (13.0)	42 (15.6)	82 (30.5)	87 (32.3)	22 (8.2)	1 (0.4)	2.92	1.17

Table 5 revealed the problems in utilising the information resources include lack of relevant information resources needed (67%); difficulty in locating the information resources (40%); few available copies of the information resources (68%); lack of assistance from library staff (52%); little time to read the information resources (52%); discomfort caused by lack of air conditioner and fan (46%); outdated information resources (47%); and lack of modern technologies to facilitate use of electronic resources (76%). From the above, it is shown that the paramount problem is the tack of modern technologies to facilitate use of electronic resources.

Table 6: Perception of Users on the Adequacy of Information Resources

	Item	Adequate	Inadequate	Undecided	No indication
	How do you see the information resources held by the library	96 (35.7%)	69 (25.7%)	43 (16.0%)	61 (22.7%)

Table 6 shows that just 36% of the users perceived the information resources to be adequate. 16% of the users were undecided, while 23% failed to indicate their perception. These percentages can be explained in line with the fact that the weighted average (64%) of utilisation of the information resources of the libraries showed that the users only sometimes use the information resources; therefore, they may not be able to state definitely whether the resources are adequate or inadequate. It is safer though to conclude that the result of the study which shows a close percentage between those who perceived it to be inadequate and those who perceived it as adequate is not conclusive.

Table 7: Summary of Pearson Product-Moment Correlation showing relationship between reading habits and utilisation of information resources

Variable	N	Mean	Std. D	R	Sig.	Remark
Utilisation of information resources	269	63.58	18.13			
				.542	.000	Sig.
Reading Habits of users	269	24.98	2.85			

Table 7 shows that there is a significant relationship between reading habits of users and utilisation of information resources of the selected public libraries in

South West, Nigeria (r = 0.542; P< 0.05). Therefore, H_0i is rejected. The relationship is positive which implies that increase in reading habits bring about an increase in utilisation of information resources.

Table 8: Summary of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) showing difference among users with varying educational background in their reading habits

Educational background	N	Mea n	Std .D	Source	Sum of Square	D f	Mean squar e	F	Sig (P)	Remark
Primary certificate	2	23.50	0.01							
JSCE	9	26.0	2.8 7	Between groups	67.21	8	8.40			
SSCE	114	24.93	2.88							
Diploma	14	26.43	2.2 1							
PGD	8	25.38	2.5 6					1.03	.412	Not Sig.
Degree	103	24.79	3.0 2							
Masters	2	27.50	0.7 1	Within groups	2114.66	260	8.13			
No indication	17	24.41	2.0 6							
Total	269	24.98	2.85	Total	2181.87	268				

Table 8 reveals that there is no significant difference among the users with varying educational background in their reading habits ($F_{(8, 260)}$= 1.03; P> 0.05). H_{02a} is not rejected.

Table 9: Summary of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) showing difference among users with varying marital status in their reading habits

Marital Status	N	Mean	Std	Source	Sum of square	Df	Mean square	F	Sig. (P)	Remark
Single	233	24.97	2.75	Between groups	12.39	3	4.13			
Married	29	24.97	3.10							
Divorced	3	26.67	0.58					0.50	0.680	Not Sig.
No indication	4	24.00	6.83	Within groups	2169.48	265	8.19			
Total	269	24.98	2.85		2181.87	268				^

Table 9 reveals that there is no significant difference among the users with varying marital status in their reading habits ($F_{(3, 265)}= 0.50$; $P> 0.05$). H_{02b} is not rejected.

Table 10: Summary of t-test showing difference among users with varying gender in their reading habits

Variable	N	Mean	Std. D	T	Df	Sig7(Pn	Remark
Reading habits							
Male	181	24.87	2.84	-.689	263	.486	Not Sig.
Female	84	25.13	2.89				

Table 10 shows that there is no significant difference between male and female in their reading habits ($t= -0.70$; $df= 263$; $p>0.05$). Therefore, H_{02c} is not rejected.

Table 11: Summary of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) showing difference among users with varying age in their reading habits

Age range	N	Mean	Std. D	Source	Sum of square	Df	Mean square	F	Sig. (P)	Remark
5-9 yrs	9	26.56	2.92	Between groups	37.26	6	6.21			
10-19yrs	85	24.93	2.90							
20-29yrs	140	24.95	2.82							
30-39yrs	25	24.56	3,01							
40-49yrs	6	24.67	1.86	Within groups	2144.61	262	8.19	.76	.603	Not Sig.
50yrs and above	1	27.00	0.1							
No indication	3	26.33	3.51							
Total	269	24.98	2.85		2181.87	268				

Table 11 reveals that there is no significant difference among the users with varying age in their reading habits ($F_{(6,262)}$ = 0.76; P> 0.05). H_{02b} is not rejected.

It is observed from the results analyzed so far that the larger percentage of the public library users are male, they are within the age bracket of 10-29, single and are students. The higher percentage of them possess senior secondary school certificate followed by those with Bachelor degree.

However, the results also show that the users enjoy reading a lot, the area of interest to most users is literature; and quite a number of users prefer to read in the morning. While for most users the primary purpose of reading is to upgrade their knowledge, more than half of the users read for three hours and less in a day. This finding supports the survey carried out on the reading habits of students in Hong Kong by the Education Department (2001), which revealed that students spend two hours or more in a day on reading books, newspapers and electronic information and that students often read to upgrade their knowledge.

The test of significance of relationship between the reading habits of users and utilisation of information resources shows that there is a significant relationship between reading habits and utilisation of information resources by users with Pearson moment correlation value (r = .542**, N= 102, P < .000). Based on this, hypothesis one which states that there is no significant relationship between the reading habits of users and utilisation of information

resources was" thus rejected. This connotes that as there is improvement in reading habits; users reading more hours, reading more areas of interest, read for leisure in addition to upgrading knowledge, usage of information resources will improve.

Hypothesis two states that there is no significant difference between the users of varying demographic characteristics in their reading habits. The result of the tested hypothesis indicates that there is no significant difference between the reading habits of male and female, young users and older users, single and married, and other tested demographic characteristics (result of hypotheses H_{02a}, H_{02b} H_{02c}, and H_{02d}. These imply that the reading habits of all the various categories of users do not differ significantly. The Null hypothesis is therefore not rejected. This finding contradicts the findings of Lone (2011) who identifies that sex and age are the two principal factors affecting reading habits. Stenberg (2001), Ross (2002) and Abram (2007) report female as more heavy reader than male. Clark & Foster (2005) reports that girls enjoy reading greater than boys and boys tend to hold more negative attitudes towards reading than girls do.

When asked about the problems faced in utilisation of information resources, many respondents cited few available copies of relevant information resources, lack of relevant information resources, lack of modem technologies to facilitate access to electronic information resources, and that the information resources are outdated.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings, it could be concluded that many of the users of the libraries under study possess some form of reading habit, even though some actually read to pass examinations but the majority read to upgrade knowledge. The users appreciate the need to be knowledgeable. This is also supported by the fact that the users identified as problems, the availability of few copies of the information materials they need, making it insufficient to serve the number of users; the lack of up to date information resources; lack of relevant resources and most of all, lack of access to electronic resources.

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are being proffered:
- The Government should make it a priority to fund the public libraries adequately; these libraries are the open institution of learning and study centre for the general community.

- Public library management should endeavour to invest more human and financial resources to conduct a needs assessment of users to know and understand the needs of the users.
- Concerted efforts should be made by public library management to ensure that there is adequate, sufficient and up to date information resources in line with the result of the needs assessment conducted. This could be through well organized partnership both at local and international levels. Public libraries need to explore various alternative modes of subscription and a consortium-based subscription might be an appropriate solution to providing access to relevant information resources if the problem is to be addressed. This will not only facilitate acquisition but also inter library lending where shortages are experienced.
- As the world has become a global village through the use of Information technology (IT), the benefits of ICTs in accessing information today cannot be over emphasised. In this information oriented world, the Internet has proved to be the easiest way of how to find information without much stress. Full integration of ICTs in information provision will help minimize the problem of inadequate time cited by some respondents because it will be faster to access information.
- Library services for users in Ondo and Ekiti States still need to be improved; library facilities and services are inadequate. Therefore, scholars, philanthropists and other erudite members of the Nigerian society are enjoined to identify with the libraries by donating books, materials and funds.
- Reprographic department of the technical unit should be functional. Binding services, photocopying and repair should be made here and funds should be generated. This will enable users who wish to have copies of certain information get such information without having to resort to stealing and mutilation.
- The libraries should organise awareness campaign and programmes; on air and through other mass media channel to tell the public that many benefits are derivable from library patronage. For instance, professionals can update themselves with the libraries. One can be self-employed after carrying out intensive research in the libraries. Some people are making millions of naira in the production of natural honey. This, they are able to do it after carrying out intensive research on how to cage bees. So, many other discoveries and opportunities are derivable from the libraries.

- Other facilities like standby noise-free generator or inverter should be installed to power the facilities and ensure that stable and cool temperature is maintained at all times even when there is public power outage.

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