Full Length Research

Information needs of Secondary School Students in selected Schools in Abaraka Community

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The focus of the study is on the information needs of secondary school students from selected schools in Abraka. Using a questionnaire, data was collected and analyzed using the descriptive statistics. The study found that although Abraka is a rural community, the secondary school students do have information needs which encompass academic, health, entertainment, friendship, religious, family care, societal values, future career choice. However certain constraints such as inadequate information resources, poor library skills, poor information literacy skills, lack of awareness of information needs.

Key Words: information needs, secondary school students

INTRODUCTION

To succeed in academics, students whether at the primary, secondary or tertiary level need information. Information remains the major ingredient in taking decisions and assists in reducing the degree of uncertainty. It is a valuable resource in the life of a student. Information enables students to meet their learning and research needs. Information facilitates decision making, problem solving and reduction of uncertainty among students (Aina, 2004). Belkin (2000) defined information as the data associated with text, modified by purpose, intend, knowledge of recipients state of mind and conceptive structure which underlines the surface structure of a text. The concept of information needs was corned by Robert S. Taylor. According to Taylor (2009). Information needs has four (4) major

levels. The levels are:

1.	The conscious and unconsciousness need for information.
2.	The conscious mental description of defined area of decision. In this level, the inquirer might talk to someone else in the field to get an answer.
3.	The inquirer forms a rational statement of his question. This statement is a rational and unambiguous description of the inquirer's doubts;
4.	The question been presented to the information system.

According to Wilson (2009), information need is an individual or group desire to locate and obtain information

to satisfy a conscious or unconscious need. Needs and interest leads to information search. Khan and Shafigue (2010) stated that the objectives of studying information needs includes: the examination of wants; the explanation of observed phenomena of information use or expressed needs; the prediction of instance of information use; and the control and improvement of the utilization of information for solving problems and making decisions.

Kamarudin (2010) stated that information need leads to information seeking which could be successful or unsuccessful. If successful, information located would be used for decision making and problem solving. Satisfaction occurs when the located information has been analyzed and satisfies the original need. A failure to find information to satisfy the required need leads to dissatisfaction.

Although only a few studies have been conducted on the information needs of secondary school students, majority of studies on information needs have been focused on the information needs of staffs, faculty members, lecturers, under-graduate students, post graduate students, farmers, traders, rural dwellers, rural women, lawyers, teachers and other categories of people. The few studies conducted on the information needs of secondary schools students have reported similar needs of secondary schools students which include information needs on learning, parental up-bringing, societal values, cultural activities, religious activities, science and discoveries, peer groups, nature and environment, childhood activities and maturity (Fister, 2012)

With advancement of information and communication technology, information is everywhere. The of choice of information might be problem for the students in secondary school, furthermore, there is perceived inability of students to search for information sources and resources because the community the students are located is a rural community. Abraka community in Delta State of Nigeria only became popular as a result of the establishment of a state funded university, hence the indigenes of the community are predominantly farmers, and university staff. Personal observations show that most of the students might lack basic information literacy skills, lack of experience in seeking information, lack of awareness of information need and poor knowledge of information needs. It is against this background that this study is embarked upon to examine the if the secondary school students in selected secondary schools in Abraka community have information needs and how they meet these needs.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

i.   Find out the areas secondary school students

need information.

ii.   Examine the purpose for which secondary school students seek information.

iii.   Find out how frequent secondary school students seek information to meet their information needs,

iv.   Find out the constraints militating against the information needs of secondary school students.

RELATED LITERATURE

Khadli and Kumar (2011) stated that the need for information among secondary school students is one of the cognitive needs of childhood which enable them to understand things, the environment, the society, the family, the school and the future. Asking questions constitute the major means through which secondary school students extract information from information sources such as their parents, guidance, elders, teachers, friends, family members and peer groups. According to Bitter (2012) secondary school students have information needs just like their tertiary institution counterpart. However, the information needs of secondary school students are quite different and even more complex compared to the information needs of tertiary institution students. Fieldman and Etington (2010) believe that secondary school students select their information needs based upon values, interest and characteristics that they exhibit.

In a study by Grefins (2011) to find the information needs of secondary school students in California, United States of America, the result revealed that the secondary school students have information needs in the areas of learning, games, recreation, entertainment, leisure, holiday, family, parental care, teaching methods, teachers, culture, religion and peer group. In another study, conducted by Seaman (2012), it was reported that secondary school students information needs encompass information about learning, academic growth, health, family, societal values, friendship and peer groups, religious groups, childhood and adulthood, career choice and culture and personal development. The study concluded that majority of secondary school students have similar information needs. In Swintter (2013)'s study, it showed that 12% of the secondary school student required information for personal development, 11% required information for health-related issues, 13% required information for family care and friendship, 9% required information for recreation, travels and entertainment, while a vast majority of the secondary school students 64% required information for their learning (schooling) career choice, academic excellence and welfare. The study further reported that majority of the secondary school students satisfy their information needs by asking questions, consulting books, visiting the school library, talking to parents and family members,

reporting to teachers and complaining to friends for assistance. Similarly, Foster's (2012) findings revealed that the information needs of secondary school student include: academic related information (64.1%), information for personal development and knowledge acquisition (12.5%) health-related and friendship information and cultural information on childhood and growing up (9.1%), societal and cultural information (2.8%) and information about parental and teachers care (2.1%). Other authors such as Parvez (2009) investigated the information needs of secondary school students and found that students irrespective of their characteristics and school attended have similar and multi-related information needs. The result of the study revealed that 68% of the secondary school students needed information on academic matters, 48% needed information on personal development and knowledge acquisition, 29% needed information for keeping themselves up-to-date and to broaden their horizon 29% needed information for family and parental care, while 17% needed information for entertainment, recreation and exercise. These needs constitute the major needs of secondary school students. According to Koft (2014) secondary school student require current news, events and happenings around them to enable them get up-to-date with information for their academics, personal development and societal values.

According to Aina (2004), people seek information based on their personal interest and desires. Belkin (2000) reported that majority of the reasons why people seek information are to satisfy their conscious and unconscious information needs: to be relevant in the information world; to be up-to-date with current and relevant information; to be knowledgeable, vast and competent; to be information literate; and to be useful in the society. Buckland (2011) stated that there are different purposes for which different categories of people seek information students seek information for the purpose of learning, research and academic success. Secondary school students seek information for the primary purpose of learning, academic pursuit, academic excellence and knowledge acquisition. The need to excel academically is the main purpose for which secondary school student seek information. However, apart from the primary purpose of seeking information which revolves round academic related purpose, secondary school student also seek information for secondary purposes such as to be physically fit and to stay healthy, to participate in cultural and societal events as well as to be responsible in the society (Fister, 2012).

On the issues of how students meet their information needs, Nwosu (2010) reported that secondary school students have information needs, to meet or satisfy, the students often consult the school library, teachers, parents, books, family members and friends. Smart, Reddy (2014) emphasized that secondary school

students actively consult information from various information sources to satisfy their information needs. They usually consult books, the school library, personal resources both at home and in school, teachers, parents, brothers, sisters, uncles and aunts. Secondary school students need information for decision making and to solve life problems both at home and in school. They may acquire information through the question and answer method, which is a major process of finding ideas, facts and new information by secondary school students

Abels (2014) is of the opinion that the frequency of information seeking among secondary school students to meet their information needs has increased in recent times, presently, secondary school students seek for information on regular and daily basis. Suriya, Sangeetha and Nambi (2014) concluded from their study that majority of secondary school students visited the school library several times a week to search for information to meet their academic needs, while few of the secondary school students visited the school library on daily basis. In the same vein, Shokeen and Kustile (2012) found that secondary school students visits the school library, school counselor and head teachers on daily basis for the purpose of findings solutions to their information needs. Similarly, Nazli (2011) found that most secondary school students use books, parents, teachers and personal resources to meet their information needs and they usually consult these information sources frequently. Also, Seaman (2012) stated that 73(35.7%) of secondary school student used the school library and its resources on daily basis, 112 (53.3%) consulted teachers 2–3 times a week, 8(8.9%) met their parents and family members 4–5 times a week, while 5(2.1%) of the secondary school students consulted their friends and school counselor 1–2times a week. Wikipedia (2014) reported that secondary school students use the library resources more often and frequently compared to their occasional use of parents and teachers. While majority of secondary school student use the library resources on regular basis like daily, twice, thrice or 4–5 times a week, the secondary school student tend to use other sources. Such as parents, family members and teachers.

Grefins (2011) reported that 36% of secondary school students surveyed spent four hours per week in consulting information resources from the library, while 64% of the students spent two hours per week to consult books in the school library. Apart from the school library which is the major information source for secondary school student, some of the students consulted their parents, school teachers and friends when stranded academically and this was done less frequency. Fister (2012) reported that secondary school student usually make about seven visits to the school library on weekly basis to look for information resources to satisfy their information needs. The study reported that 96% out of 100 student surveyed used the school textbooks,

newspaper, magazines and other school resources, while the other pupils used their school teachers, parents at home and family members. The study concluded that the frequency of information seeking among secondary school students in meeting their information needs is relatively high and encouraging.

Wilson (2009) noted that in the process of seeking for information, problems may arise or encountered. In the same vein, Taylor (2009) noted that after interacting with the information sources, what a user actually needs may not eventually tally with what is practically available due to constraints either within the stock or due to the users own negligence or inadequacy. Constraints may serve as hindrances to secondary school student when seeking information and this might affect their information seeking behaviour negatively. Some of the constraints highlighted by Wikipedia include library anxiety, poor information literacy, poor retrieval skills, poor library skills, poor attitude towards information resources. Ajiboye and Tella (2007) stated that secondary school students do not use information resources effectively to meet their information needs due to certain constraints such as poor library skills, poor information searching skills, unfamiliarity with information sources, shyness, anxiety, inadequate information resources and high cost of information resources. With these constraints, the secondary school students tend to record poor information seeking results and consequently lead to information dissatisfaction.

METHODOLOGY

Adopting the descriptive survey design, the population of this study is two hundred and eighty five (285) secondary school students. This consists of SS II students of Abraka Grammar-School, Delsu Secondary School, Erho Secondary School and Urhoka Secondary School. The choice of these selected secondary schools by the researcher is because of the researcher's familiarity with selected schools. Also, the choice of SS II students was based on the students' ability to read, write and understand the questionnaire items.

Participants

In order to have results that would represent the entire population and for generalization to be done on sound basis, Okorodudu (2013) recommended that40% may be used and considered as appropriate and adequate representation of a given population. Hence, the sample for this study is one hundred and fourteen (114) respondents. From the population the researcher used the simple random sampling technique to select 40% of the population as the sample depending on the total number of SS II students present in each school.

Procedures

The instrument for collection of data is the questionnaire. The retrieved copies of questionnaire were analyzed using simple percentages and statistical mean ($\bar{x}$). The criterion mean($\bar{x}$) score is placed at 2.00 level of significance.

RESULTS

Table 1 shows the response rate, gender and age of the respondents. 39(34.2%) copies of questionnaires were administered and retrieved from respondents in Abraka Grammar School, 37(32.5%) Delsu secondary school, 22(19.3%) Erho secondary school, while 16(14.0%) copies of questionnaire were administered and retrieved from respondents in Urhoka secondary school. The gender of the respondents. 38(33.3%) of the respondents are male, while 76(66.7%) of the respondents are female. This implies that majority of the secondary school students in Abraka are females. As shown in the Table 1, 21(18.4%) of the respondents fall within the age range of 8-14years, 87(76.3%) 15-18years, while 6(5.3%) fall within the age range of 19-25years. This implies that majority of the respondents are within the age range of 15-18years.

Research Question One: *What are the information needs of secondary school students?*

Table 2 shows the information needs of the respondents. With a calculated mean ($\bar{x}$) score of 2.80 which is greater than the criterion mean ($\bar{x}$) score is 2.00. hence, it is agreed that secondary school students have information needs. They include academic information health information, entertainment information, friendship information, religious information, family care information, parental guidance information, societal values information, future care choice information childhood/adolescent information and environment information.

Research Question Two: *For what purpose do secondary school students seek information?*

Table 3 reveals the purpose of information seeking among the respondents. It is seen that the respondents seek information to achieve certain purposes such as learning, knowledge acquisition, recreation, entertainment, up-to-date information, personal development, academic success and research.

Research Question Three: *How often do secondary school students seek information to meet their information needs?*

Table 1. Demographics of the respondents

S/N	Name of school	No of questionnaire administered	No of questionnaire retrieved	(%)
1.	Abraka Grammar School	39	39	34.2%
2.	Delsu Secondary school	37	37	32.5%
3.	Erho Secondary School	22	22	19.3%
4.	Urhoka Secondary School	16	16	14.0%
Total		**114**	**114**	**100%**
Gender	**Number of Respondents**		**Percentage (%)**	
Male	38		33.3%	
Female	76		66.7%	
Total	**114**		**100%**	
Age range	**Number of Respondents**		**Percentage (%)**	
8– 4years	21		18.4%	
15-18years	87		76.3%	
19-25years	6		5.3%	
Total	**114**		**100%**	

Table 2. Information needs of secondary school students

S/N	Items	N	Agree	Disagree	Undecided	Score	$\bar{x}$
1.	Academic information	114	114	-	-	342	3.00
2.	Health Information	114	97	17	-	385	2.90
3.	Entertainment information	114	78	36	-	306	2.70
4.	Friendship information	114	100	14	-	328	2.90
5.	Religious information	114	93	21	-	321	2.80
6.	Family care information	114	66	48	-	294	2.60
7.	Parental guidance information	114	114	-	-	342	3.00
8.	Societal value information	114	69	37	8	289	2.50
9.	Cultural information	114	58	50	6	280	2.40
10.	Future career information	114	114	-	-	342	3.00
11.	Childhood/adolescent information	114	82	32	-	339	3.00
12.	Environment information	114	65	49	-	299	2.60
Total						Total	$\bar{x}$
						3807	2.80

The data in Table 4 shows the frequency of information seeking among the respondents. As revealed in the Table 4, 29 (35.4%) of the respondents indicated very frequently, 79(69.3%) of the respondents indicated frequently, while 6(5.3%) indicated occasionally. This implies that majority of the respondents seek information to meet their information needs frequently.

Research Question four: *What are the constraints militating against the information needs of secondary students?*

In Table 5, the constraints militating against the information needs of secondary school students are shown. The students are constrained in meeting their

Table 3. Purpose of information seeking

S/N	Items	N	Agree	Disagree	Undecided	Score	$\bar{x}$
1.	For learning purpose	114	114	-	-	348	3.00
2.	For knowledge acquisition	114	114	-	-	342	3.00
3.	For recreation purpose	114	90	24	-	318	2.80
4.	For entertainment purpose	114	69	45	-	297	2.60
5.	For up to date information	114	114	-	-	342	3.00
6.	For personal purpose	114	108	6	-	336	2.90
7.	For academic success	114	114	-	-	342	3.00
8.	For research purpose	114	89	18	-	303	2.70
Total						Total	$\bar{x}$
						2622	2.90

Table 4. Frequency of information seeking

Frequency	Number of response	Percentage (%)
Very frequently	29	25.4%
Frequently	79	69.3%
Occasionally	6	69.3%
Not at all	-	-
Total	**114**	**100%**

Table 5: Constraints militating against the respondent's information needs

S/N	Items	N	Agree	Disagree	Undecided	Score	$\bar{x}$
1.	Unavailability of school library	114	-	114	-	228	2.00
2.	Inadequate information resources	114	114	-	-	342	3.00
3.	Poor library skills	114	97	17	-	325	2.90
4.	Poor information literacy skills	114	96	14	4	320	2.80
5.	Lack of awareness of information needs	114	78	34	2	304	2.70
6.	Unfamiliarity with school library	114	104	6	3	327	2.90
Total						Total	$\bar{x}$
						1846	2.70

information needs and the major constraints include inadequate information resources, poor library skills, poor information literacy skills, lack of awareness of information needs and unfamiliarity with the school library.

DISCUSSIONS

The findings form research question one correspond with the findings of Seaman (2012; Smart, Fieldman and Etington, 2010) who reported that secondary school students have information needs which encompass academic, health, childhood, family care, parental upbringing, friendship, nature, environment, societal values, exercise, recreation, holiday, tour/travels, career choice, religion and welfare information. On research question two, the findings from this study corroborates the findings of Buckland (2011), who reported that

secondary school students seek information to satisfy their diverse information needs both academic, personal, recreational and societal needs, Fister (2012) also reported that secondary school students seek information for the primary purpose of learning, academic excellence /success, knowledge acquisition, recreation/ entertainment and to broaden horizon. In the study carried out by Belkin (2000) majority of secondary school students seek information for the purpose of learning, research, knowledge acquisition, recreation and up-to-date news/information. These results however do not correspond with Koft (2014), who found out that secondary school student mostly require current news, events and happenings around them to enable them get up-to-date with information for their academics, personal development and societal values.

Research question three asked how often secondary school students seek information to meet their information needs. This finding from this research is in line with the findings of Abels (2014) who reported that the frequency of information seeking among secondary school students in meeting their information needs has increased in recent times. Presently, secondary school students seek for information on regular and daily basis for the purpose of meeting their information needs. Suriya, Sangeetha and Nambi (2004) reported that majority of secondary school students visit the school library several times a week to search for information to meet their information needs, while others visit the school library on daily basis. Shokeen and Kustile (2012) found that secondary school students visit the school library school counselor and head teachers on daily basis for the purpose of finding solutions to their information needs Nazli (2011) reported that majority of secondary school students use books, parents, teachers and libraries as source of information and they usually consult these information sources frequently. Also, research question four results tallies with the findings of Ajiboye and Tella (2007) who reported that secondary school students need information to excel academically, personally and recreationally but certain constraints militate against their desire to satisfy their information needs such as poor library skills, unavailability of information resources, inadequate library resources, outdated library resources, irrelevant library resources, poor information seeking skills, poor information literacy skills, unfamiliarity with the school library and lack of awareness of information needs.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results from this study go to confirm that information is a valuable resource in the life of every individual even secondary school students whether they live in urban or rural communities. The secondary school students in

Abraka need information for their academic pursuit, health care, entertainment, friendship, religion, family care etc. They need this information for learning, knowledge acquisition, recreation, entertainment, up-to-date information personal development, academic success and research. However, inadequate information resources, poor library skills, poor information literacy skills, lack of awareness of information needs and unfamiliarity with the school library are some problems they encounter while trying to meet theses information needs. The study recommends that relevant, up-to-date adequate information resources should be provided in the school library to enable the secondary school students to effectively satisfy their information needs. Also, students should be effectively trained and educated in the use of the library resources and services for meeting their information needs. The students should be taught the rudiments of information seeking towards the satisfaction of their information needs.

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