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## Evaluation of the Availability and Utilisation Status of Texts in Core Subjects in Primary Schools' Libraries

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### Abstract

The study evaluated primary texts' availability and utilisation status in core subjects (English Language, Mathematics, Social Studies and Basic Science) in primary schools' libraries in Obubra Local Government Area of Cross River State. The researchers formulated six null hypotheses to guide the study. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The target population of this study comprised a total of 30,036 teachers and pupils, distributed across the 73 public primary schools. A proportionate stratified sampling technique was used to select 30% and 5% of the available teachers and pupils in each school, resulting in a sample of 270 respondents. Two instruments were used for data collection: Availability and Pupils Utilisation of Primary Texts in Core Subjects Questionnaire (APUPTCSQ) and Teachers Utilization of Primary Texts in Core Subjects Questionnaire (TUPTCSQ). Collected data were analysed using descriptive statistics, while the null hypotheses were all tested at the .05 level of significance using population t-test and independent t-test statistical techniques. Findings revealed that textbooks in core subjects are available to a significant extent; the utilisation status of texts in core subjects is not significantly low; the available books in core subjects are not considerably utilised by the pupils and teachers respectively; factors affecting availability are not substantially different from those affecting utilisation of textbooks in core subjects in the area of study. Based on the study's findings, it was recommended, among others, that textbooks be procured and distributed evenly across all subjects and schools in the Local Government Area by the Government. Outdated books should also be eliminated from the school libraries frequently by the primary school librarians or other people assigned to do so.

**Keywords:** Basic Science, English Language, Learning materials, Libraries, Mathematics, Primary education, social studies, teachers.

### Introduction

Primary education equips people with the information, skills, and attitudes required for a successful life. This is why, in all contemporary countries, investing in elementary education for children is seen as critical. Primary education is a vital component of education in terms of developing human capital and providing life chances. It serves as a crucial connection between

elementary education and the world of employment on the one hand and postsecondary education on the other. Nigeria undertook numerous education reforms due to the necessity to provide equal educational opportunities and access to every citizen of school-going age, regardless of social status, age, gender and other related variables (Chukwuji et al., 2017). The never-ending need to improve education quality, particularly at the post-primary level, when pupils are prepared for higher study, cannot be overstated. At this level, the early saying "catch them early" is reinforced, as students are required to acquire a strong reading habit, lifetime education skills, autonomous reading and information literacy abilities, and so on.

In Nigeria, the educational system is dominated by examination-based instruction. Passing exams serves as the only benchmark of success due to an internal mechanism for evaluating learning accomplishments at various levels during an education cycle. Additionally, a sign of a high-quality education is developing literary cognitive skills, performance, and advancement to higher levels of study. However, the nation may not achieve this in the presence of poor usage of materials required for the teaching and learning processes. Any country cannot accomplish excellent education without enough resources in general, particularly textbooks, since they are critical in achieving basic Education goals and objectives. The availability and utilisation status of texts are among the most important factors contributing to students' academic performance (Kapur, 2018; Wanjiku, 2013). According to Abdelgadir (2010), the quantity and the quality of available and proper utilisation of texts determine their aesthetic appeal. This, in turn, influences the learner behaviour and, consequently, their academic performance.

Some studies have shown that the availability and utilisation of primary texts in core subjects coupled with teacher effectiveness can affect academic performance (Chukwuji et al., 2017; Ida, 2016). For example, Ida (2016) revealed that students with available library materials outclass their counterparts in schools with minor or no library resources. Like the Humanists, other schools of thought believe that learning can take place without a teacher, but teachers cannot teach without students. This suggests the importance of primary texts in core subjects such as English Language, Mathematics, Social Studies and Basic Science for pupils to study, undertake exercises, research and update their knowledge with current information. This can only be achieved if the data in school libraries are well managed (Odigwe et al., 2020) by the managers of primary schools (Owan & Agunwa, 2019). According to Abijo (2008), one of the primary tools for supporting economic growth is the availability and use of resources in critical areas.

Educational resources are classified into four categories: human, material, physical, and financial. These are critical components of the educational process because, when used effectively, they may promote educational goals and objectives; they facilitate instructors' work and speed students' learning. The importance of utilising primary texts in core subject areas cannot be over-emphasised, as Altbach (2006) identified that nothing has ever succeeded in displacing the written word as the direct part of the educational process. As a consequence, textbooks remain essential to education at all levels. The scholar emphasised that in all cases, main texts in critical topics serve as the only source of information for pupils and the primary level course of study for the subject. In a piece on instructors' dependence on textbooks, he said that people wishing to enhance education via teaching would undoubtedly need resources, particularly texts, to flourish.

The poor academic performance of students in placement and classroom examinations and other recorded levels of academic performance of primary school pupils has called for questioning and scrutiny. It is noted that many primary schools' pupils' transits into secondary schools without gaining adequate ability to read and write. Some of these pupils eventually complete secondary education through doubtful means, without still attaining the competence to read and write. They become a source of trouble to their secondary schools by performing poorly in WAEC, NECO, JAMB and other such standardised examinations. Consequently, many problems are caused for the university system, leading to unproductive graduates and poor economic growth.

Many studies have attempted to identify the factors responsible for the poor academic performance of pupils. For instance, past studies have considered teachers' quality (Ajaja, 2010; Assam, 2016), professional qualification (Digola, 2010; Owan et al., 2021), reading culture, availability of facilities (Sam-Kalagbor, 2021), class size, socioeconomic status of parents, head teachers' style of leadership, school site/environment (Owan, Asuquo, et al., 2021; Owan et al., 2019), peer group influence, poor use of instructional materials/teaching aids, poor motivation of teachers, etc. were identified as the factors affecting pupils' academic performance in mathematics (Owan, 2012).

However, no study has been found to specifically evaluate the extent of availability and utilisation of primary text in core subjects as considered in this study. Early studies had rather explored the availability and utilisation of generous text/materials/resources without focusing on the core subjects. For instance, in Kenya, Wanjiku (2013) discovered that although textbooks were insufficient, there was no severe shortage since many pupils across all school categories could share a text. This corroborates Olagbaju and Senghore (2020) report in the Gambia that demonstrated that students' Oral English performance had a non-significant positive low connection with the availability but a non-significant negative common association with the common connection resource usage. The researchers added that the combined effect of the two independent variables on accomplishment was not significant, and the relative impact of availability and use was not substantial. Research conducted in Zamfara State showed that most post-primary schools lack library resources, and those that do exist are outdated (Chukwuji et al., 2017). Similar findings arose in Tanzania (Ida, 2018; Sephania et al., 2017), in Kenya (Ong'amo et al., 2017), in Rivers State, (Sam-Kalagbor, 2021), in Kwara State, (Suleiman et al., 2018), in Ekiti State, (Owoeye & Yara, 2011) and Ibadan (Akinyo & Michael, 2020). Furthermore, Milligan et al. (2017) reported in Rwanda that textbooks are rarely utilised due to lack of availability of books for learners

Contrary to these cited studies, Mogaka et al. (2019) reported that teaching and learning materials were accessible in Kisii County public day secondary schools. The research found a link between textbook availability and student academic performance. In Ondo State, Nigeria, Afolabi and Elaturoti (2016) reported that the availability of school library media resources was above average. There was a connection between the availability of media resources and students' performance in Social Studies. Similar findings were reached in Kenya, (Akungu, 2014) and in Ibadan (Abubakar et al., 2021). The study of Chukwuji et al. (2017) revealed that textbooks are mostly utilised regularly and that most Library users prefer to seek information through e-resources. However, Chukwuji and his colleagues' cited report may be in doubt, in the Nigeria context, because it assumed that a very high percentage of students at the primary level of education do not have access to electronic library resources (Ajegbomogun & Salaam, 2011). This gives a sense of necessity for primary texts in core subject to be evaluated since it is the primary source of gathering teaching- and learning-learning information necessary

beyond the mere passing of an examination. Hence, as mentioned earlier, the present study seeks to assess primary texts' availability and utilisation status in core subjects.

This study is anticipated to be of great significance to the ministry of education, headteachers, teachers, parents, students, and researchers. The study may expose the extent to which textbooks in core subjects (English Language, Mathematics, Social Studies and Basic Science) are available, making it possible for the Ministry of Education to ascertain where to supply more textbooks, leading to the proper allocation of resources (books). The headteachers might find this study useful. It may reveal the extent to which these texts are utilised by students and staff, making it possible to caution any erring student or teacher not living up to expectations. The teachers are the direct recipients of this study. It may inform them of their strengths and weaknesses in using textbooks, thereby creating room for consistency or improvement in utilising texts in the identified core subjects. Primary school pupils may also find the study relevant because they will understand the reasons for the provisions of textbooks in core subjects and see reasons to utilise these textbooks for improved study culture and academic performance maximally. Finally, the research community will also find this study relevant because it will enable future scholars to build on the gaps exposed in the study, serve as a primary or secondary source of literature material, and constitute a basis for further research in related areas.

This study is anchored on the social learning theory by Albert Bandura (1977). Bandura (1977) postulated that personality results from an individual's interaction with their environment. According to the idea, one cannot talk of an individual's inherent personality being independent of the environment, nor can one speak of behaviour being an instinctive reaction to a particular set of environmental stimuli. Rather than that, to comprehend behaviour, one must consider both the person and the environment. Adesola (2014) defines personality as a generally consistent collection of possible responses to circumstances. He views personality and behaviour as perpetually malleable. According to him, if a person's way of thinking or environment changes, that person's behaviour will almost definitely alter. This theory implies that learners' performance depends upon the availability and utilisation status of primary texts in core subjects like social studies and Basic Science. According to Adesola (2014), there is no internal personality that is independent of the environment. The textbook availability and utilisation status may inform instructional behaviour and attitudes towards core subjects. Effective teaching and learning are dependent on the basic infrastructural facilities of a school generally. It can also be said that textbook availability constitutes an inevitable set of facilities in any formal school system. The utilisation of these textbooks could account for pupils' academic performance since they are stimuli from the environment.

### **Objectives of the study**

The core purpose of this study was to evaluate the availability and utilisation status of primary texts in core subjects (English Language, Mathematics, Social Studies and Basic Science) in Obubra Local Government Area, Cross River State. The specific objectives of the study were to evaluate:

- i. the availability status of primary texts in core subjects
- ii. the utilisation status of primary texts in core subjects
- iii. how effectively students utilise the available textbooks in the core subjects
- iv. the extent of teachers' utilisation of the available books in the core subjects
- v. the factors that affect textbook availability and utilisation status in core subjects

## Research hypotheses

The researchers formulated the following null hypotheses to guide the conduct of this study.

- i. Textbooks in core subjects are not available to any significant extent in primary schools' libraries.
- ii. The utilisation status of textbooks in core subjects is significantly low in primary schools' libraries.
- iii. Pupils do not significantly utilise the available textbooks in core subjects in the primary schools' libraries.
- iv. The utilisation status of textbooks in core subjects is not significantly different.
- v. Teachers' use of the available textbooks in core subjects is not significantly high.
- vi. Factors affecting textbook availability are not significantly different from those affecting utilisation.

## Methodology

### *Research design*

The design adopted for the study was a descriptive survey design. This design tries to address issues of distribution of some phenomena in a population or among subgroups. The focus of this design is to ascertain facts and not to establish or test a theory. This design was considered appropriate because the study purports to use questionnaires' information to describe observed phenomena.

### *Participants of the study*

The target population of this study included all the public primary schools' teachers and pupils in Obubra Local Government Area of Cross River State. According to data gathered from the Cross River State Ministry of Education, there are 1,384 teachers and 28,652 pupils, resulting in a total population of 30,036 respondents, distributed across all the public primary schools in the area of study.

### *Sampling techniques and sample*

A simple random sampling technique was used to select ten public primary schools out of the area's available 73 public primary schools. To achieve this, all the available public primary schools in the area were listed in alphabetical order of names, with serial numbers assigned to each school based on the order, from 1 – 73; this meant that each school had a unique serial number for identification purpose. The researchers used a plain sheet of paper to cut out 73 small pieces of paper of equal sizes with the help of a metre rule. Each small piece of paper was assigned a unique number accordingly, ranging from 1 – 73 and folded to unidentifiable form. One piece of paper was blindly picked at a time, the number on it was recorded, while the paper was folded back and replaced in the hat. This was done to ensure that every school had an equal probability ( $1/73$ ) of being selected. The same procedure continued until all the 10 (ten) primary schools were established.

A proportionate stratified sampling technique was used to select 30% and 5% of each school's available teachers and pupils, respectively. In achieving this, all the sampled schools were listed on a paper with their corresponding population for both teachers and students. Simple percentage formula was used to compute 30% of teachers and 5% of pupils across the schools. The sample of this study was made up of a total of 270 respondents. This comprised 214 pupils and 56 teachers, representing 5% and 30% of pupils and teachers respectively, drawn proportionately from 10 (ten) selected public primary schools in Obubra Local Government Area, Cross River State.

### *Instruments and measures*

Two instruments were used for data collection: Availability and Pupils Utilisation of Primary Texts in Core subjects Questionnaire (APUPTCSQ) and Teachers Utilization of Primary Texts in Core subjects Questionnaire (TUPTCSQ). Instrument APUPTCSQ was designed in two sections. Section A was intended to obtain respondents demographic data. Section B comprised of 20-items that were organised into four groups of five items, respectively. These items were used to assess the utilisation of primary texts in core subjects such as English, Mathematics, Basic Science, and Social Studies, respectively. Instrument TUPTCSQ was designed to obtain information for the availability of textbooks, utilisation of books by pupils, and factors affecting the availability and utilisation of texts in the core subjects. The instrument was divided into two parts. Part A was used to obtain respondents demographic variables and information about the availability of textbooks in core subjects. In contrast, part B was used to elicit information on the utilisation of books in core subjects and information about factors affecting the availability and utilisation of textbooks in core subjects. Part B was designed with a total of 37 items, organised on a 4-point Likert scale according to the study's variables.

### *Validity and reliability of the instruments*

The instruments received their face validity through two Research, Measurement and Evaluation experts, Department of Educational Foundations, University of Calabar, Calabar. These experts ensured that items were relatively clear in contents and arrangements, avoiding irrelevant information and ambiguity. The reliability of the instruments was established through a test-retest method. The pilot study used two schools in Calabar South Local Government Area of Cross River State, not part of the study sample. Two weeks after, the same instruments (questionnaires) were administered to the same set of respondents in the two piloted schools. The data were then correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistical technique, and both administrations yielded a correlation coefficient of 0.76 and 0.88, respectively, for the two instruments. Based on these coefficients, the instruments were considered internally consistent in measuring what they were designed to measure.

### *Data collection and analysis procedures*

All the sampled schools were visited on different days by the researchers and two research assistants. The research assistants were briefed on the purpose of this study to enable them to follow properly. Each school was visited, as permitted by the headteacher. In each primary school, the questionnaires were administered first to the teachers, then the pupils. Before issuing to the pupils, the researcher taught the ten (10) learners in each school to tick the

questionnaire and took time to read each item to those pupils having difficulty with reading. After the respondents filled the questionnaires, they were retrieved for analysis. To ease the process of data analysis, the researchers prepared a person-by-item matrix for the questionnaire responses using a spreadsheet program (Microsoft Excel 365). Each reaction was scored depending on whether the item was worded negatively or positively. The procedure used in the analysis of quantitative data was carried out according to the various hypotheses of this study. One-sample (population) t-test and independent t-test analyses were employed in testing the null hypotheses at the .05 alpha level (where applicable).

## Results

### *Hypothesis One (Ho1)*

Textbooks in core subjects (English Language, Mathematics, Social Studies and Basic Science) are not available to any significant extent in the primary schools in Obubra Local Government Area. The result of the analysis of data using Population t-test analysis is presented in Table 1. The results presented in Table 1 indicates that the calculated t-value 9.014 is greater than the critical value of 1.968 at 269 degrees of freedom. The result also implies that the p-value is less than the .05 alpha level. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. The conclusion is that; textbooks in core subjects (English Language, Mathematics, Social Studies and Basic Science) are available significantly in the primary schools in Obubra Local Government Area of Cross River State. The results in Table 1 further disclose that; out of the four core subjects, social studies (Mean = 0.522) have the highest level of availability, followed by Basic Science (Mean = 0.478), Mathematics (Mean = 0.441) and English Language (0.437) in that order.

**Table 1:** Summary of a population t-test results for the availability of textbooks in core subjects (English Language, Mathematics, Basic Science and Social Studies)

Variables	Mean	S <sup>2</sup>	S.E	$\mu$	t-cal.
Availability of textbooks in core subjects	1.878	1.126	0.065	2.5	9.014*
English Language	0.437	0.247			
Mathematics	0.441	0.247			
Basic Science	0.478	0.250			
Social Studies	0.522	0.250			

\* p < .05      df = 269      t-crit. = 1.968       $\mu$  = hypothesized population mean

### *Hypotheses two (Ho2)*

The utilisation status of textbooks in core subjects (English Language, Mathematics, Basic Science and Social Studies) is significantly low in primary schools in Obubra Local Government Area. The result of the analysis of data using Population t-test analysis is presented in Table 2. The results presented in Table 2 revealed that t-cal. 10.664 is greater than t-crit. 1.968 implying that the p-value is also less than the .05 level of significance at 269 degrees of freedom. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected, implying that; the utilisation status of textbooks in core subjects (English Language, Mathematics, Basic Science and Social Studies) is not significantly low in Obubra Local Government Area of Cross River State primary schools. In addition to this, the results presented in Table 2 also indicates that Basic Science textbooks had the highest level of utilisation (Mean = 12.681), followed by Mathematics



textbooks (Mean = 12.267), English Language (Mean = 12.233), and Social Studies (Mean = 12.196) in that order.

**Table 2:** Summary of population t-test results for utilisation status of textbooks in core subjects (English Language, Mathematics, Basic Science and Social Studies)

<b>n = 270</b>					
<b>Variables</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>S.E</b>	<b>μ</b>	<b>t-cal.</b>
Utilisation status of textbooks	49.378	78.206	0.538	100	10.664*
English Language	12.233	19.786			
Mathematics	12.267	21.349			
Basic Science	12.681	21.556			
Social Studies	12.196	19.593			

\*  $p < .05$        $df = 269$        $t\text{-crit.} = 1.968$        $\mu =$  hypothesized population mean

### *Hypotheses three (Ho<sub>3</sub>)*

The available textbooks in core subjects (English Language, Mathematics, Basic Science and Social Studies) are not significantly utilised by the pupils in the primary schools in Obubra Local Government Area. The result of the analysis of data using Population t-test analysis is presented in Table 3. The results presented in Table 3 indicates that the calculated  $t$  0.0896 is less than the critical  $t$  1.972 at 213 degrees of freedom, implying that the  $p$ -value is also greater than the .05 level of significance. With these results, the null hypothesis is retained. The available textbooks in core subjects (English Language, Mathematics, Basic Science and Social Studies) are not significantly utilised by the pupils in the primary schools in Obubra Local Government Area Cross River State. The results presented also indicates that; Basic Science textbooks (with Mean = 12.916) have the highest utilisation by primary school pupils in Obubra Local Government Area. This is followed by Mathematics (Mean = 12.407), English Language (Mean = 12.196), and then Social Studies (Mean = 11.981).

**Table 3:** Summary of population t-test results for pupils' utilisation of textbooks in core subjects (English Language, Mathematics, Basic Science and Social Studies).

<b>n = 214</b>					
<b>Variables</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>S.E</b>	<b>μ</b>	<b>t-cal.</b>
The utilisation of textbooks by pupils.	49.5	81.660	0.618	50	0.0896*
English Language	12.196	19.651			
Mathematics	12.407	22.364			
Basic Science	12.916	21.476			
Social Studies	11.981	20.356			

\*  $p > .05$        $df = 213$ ;       $t\text{-crit.} = 1.972$ ;       $\mu =$  hypothesized population mean

### *Hypotheses four (Ho<sub>4</sub>)*

The utilisation status of textbooks in core subjects (English Language, Mathematics, Basic Science and Social Studies) is not significantly different. The result of the analysis of data using the Population t-test is presented in Table 4. The results presented in Table 5 indicates that Basic Science textbooks (with mean = 12.681; and  $S^2 = 21.556$ ) achieved the highest utilization

status; followed by Mathematics textbooks (Mean = 12.267; and  $S^2 = 21.349$ ), English Language textbooks (Mean = 12.233; and  $S^2 = 19.786$ ), and Social Studies textbooks (Mean = 12.196; and  $S^2 = 19.593$ ). This result shows that the values of the means and variances for all the core subjects are not the same. Therefore, based on the evidence provided, the null hypothesis is rejected, implying that textbooks' utilisation status in core subjects (English Language, Mathematics, Basic Science and Social Studies) is significantly different in the Obubra Local Government Area of Cross River State.

Table 4: Mean, Standard Deviation, and Variance of results for the utilisation status of textbooks in core subjects (English Language, Mathematics, Social Studies and Basic Science).

<b>n = 270</b>				
<b>Variables</b>	<b>Sum (<math>\Sigma</math>)</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>S<sup>2</sup></b>
English Language	3303	12.233	4.448	19.786
Mathematics	3312	12.267	4.620	21.349
Basic Science	3424	12.681	4.643	21.556
Social Studies	3293	12.196	4.426	19.593

\* $S^2$  = Variance

#### *Hypotheses five (H<sub>05</sub>)*

Teachers' use of the available textbooks in core subjects (English Language, Mathematics, Social Studies and Basic Science) is not significantly high. The result of the analysis of data using Population t-test analysis is presented in Table 5. The results in Table 5 revealed that the calculated t-value 0.1235 is less than the critical t-value of 2.004 at 55 degrees of freedom. This result also means that the p-value is greater than the .05 alpha level. Thus, the null hypothesis is retained. The conclusion is that; teachers' use of the available textbooks in core subjects (English Language, Mathematics, Basic Science and Social Studies) is not significantly high in the Obubra Local Government Area of Cross River State. However, the results further revealed that; out of the four core subjects, Social Studies textbooks (with Mean = 13.019) had the highest utilisation by teachers; English Language textbooks follow this (Mean = 12.375), Basic Science textbooks (Mean = 11.786), and Mathematics textbooks (Mean = 11.732) in that order.

Table 5: Summary of population t-test results for teachers using available textbooks in core subjects (English Language, Mathematics, Social Studies and Basic Science).

<b>n = 56</b>					
<b>Variables</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>S.E</b>	<b><math>\mu</math></b>	<b>t-cal.</b>
Teachers' use of available textbooks	48.911	65.973	1.085	50	0.1235
English Language	12.375	20.639			
Mathematics	11.732	17.436			
Basic Science	11.786	21.226			
Social Studies	13.019	16.127			

\*  $p > .05$ ;  $df = 55$ ;  $t\text{-crit.} = 2.004$ ;  $\mu$  = hypothesized population mean

### *Hypotheses six (Ho<sub>6</sub>)*

Factors affecting textbook availability are not significantly different from those affecting utilisation. The result of the analysis of data using an independent t-test statistical technique is presented in Table 6. The results presented in Table 6 indicates that the p-value of 0.084 is greater than the 0.05 level of significance. The calculated t-value of 1.743 is also less than the critical t-value of 1.9817 at 110 degrees of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis is retained, implying that; factors affecting textbook availability are not significantly different from those affecting utilisation of textbooks in core subjects (English Language, Mathematics, Basic Science and Social Studies) in Obubra Local Government Area of Cross River State.

**Table 6:** Summary of Independent t-test results for the difference between factors affecting textbooks availability and those affecting utilisation in core subjects (English Language, Mathematics, Social Studies and Basic Science).

<b>Variables</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>t-cal.</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Factors affecting availability	56	21.018	47.472	1.743	0.084
Factors affecting utilization	56	23.590	74.392		

\* p < .05      df = 110      t-crit. = 1.9817

## **Discussion**

### *Availability of textbooks in core subjects*

The finding of this study established that textbooks in core subjects (English Language, Mathematics, Social Studies and Basic Science) are available to a significant extent in the primary schools in Obubra Local Government Area of Cross River State. The result further disclosed that out of the four core subjects, Social Studies textbooks were more available, followed by Basic Science, Mathematics and English Language in that order, in primary schools in Obubra Local Government Area. The finding of this study negates the result of Digola (2003) that textbooks were inadequate and unevenly distributed among rural and urban schools in the area of study. In another study, Adeogun (2008) examined the effective management of primary schools in Nigeria. The Government's failure to establish policy directives on minimum standards concerning textbooks has led to disparities in acquisition. While some schools have well-equipped books for teaching and learning, others have none or, in some cases, are poorly equipped. In the same vein, he also noted that the lack of textbooks is one of the challenges facing the successful implementation of introductory books in primary schools. The present study results may have been different due to the area of research or due to the recent improvement in the supply of textbooks by the State Government and other non-governmental organisations such as the Nigerian Education, Research and Development Council. They, in recent times, have been assisting in the production and distribution of textbooks to various states.

### *Utilisation status of textbooks core subjects*

It was established through the finding of this study that; the utilisation status of textbooks in core subjects (English Language, Mathematics, Basic Science and Social Studies) is not significantly low in primary schools in Obubra Local Government Area of Cross River State.

In addition to this, the results of this study revealed that Basic Science textbooks had the highest level of utilisation, followed by Mathematics textbooks, English and Social Studies in that order. This finding is consistent with the results of Sepulveda-Stuardo and Farrell (2003) that twenty-three per cent of the teachers said they always requested books, 60 per cent said they sometimes did, and 17 per cent said they never did. Yet, when teachers were observed, some who said they sometimes requested textbooks were never regarded using them. Observation by the cited scholars showed that teachers tended to exaggerate their use of books when they answered questionnaires. Although the findings of Sepulveda-Stuardo and Farrell (2003) presented above looks contradictory to that of the present study, the results are the same. This is because teachers exaggerated their responses when asked if they used textbooks, which may have also been possible in the present study. The difference in the results emanates from the methods of data collection. The present study did not use observation techniques that may have yielded the actual position of things.

#### *Pupils' utilisation of available textbooks in core subjects*

The finding of this study showed that; the available textbooks in core subjects (English Language, Mathematics, Basic Science and Social Studies) are not significantly utilised by the pupils in the primary schools in Obubra Local Government Area of Cross River State. Although pupils' utilisation of textbooks in core subjects was low, Basic Science textbooks had the highest utilisation by primary school pupils in Obubra Local Government Area. This is followed by Mathematics, English Language, and then Social Studies in that order. This result is a clear indication that many primary school pupils do not make use of the library and lack positive attitudes towards reading. Even when these books are available, they tend not to be utilising them accordingly. The findings of Mbugua (2011) indicated that available textbooks in mathematics are not effectively utilised by the students, which is a serious problem since mathematics is an abstract subject that requires these materials to facilitate the abstraction of concepts by the learners. This finding is consistent with the result of the present study. Lyimo et al. (2017) also revealed through the results of their research that; students display a poor attitude towards the utilisation of textbooks, with many of them claiming that it was the duty of teachers to make use of texts during teaching. Students' textbook utilisation was very low (mean = 1.5); many students own books at home but mainly use them for assignment purposes.

#### *Textbooks utilisation by subjects*

The finding of this study revealed that; out of the four core subjects examined in this study, Basic Science textbooks achieved the highest utilisation status, followed by Mathematics textbooks, English Language textbooks and Social Studies textbooks. This result indicates that the utilisation status of textbooks in core subjects (English Language, Mathematics, Basic Science and Social Studies) is significantly different in the Obubra Local Government Area of Cross River State. This result may have been so because of the adequate supply of Basic Science and Mathematics textbooks which are rarely lacking in most primary school libraries. Consequently, many teachers and pupils also owned some of these books. But one still wonders why Social Studies textbooks with the highest level of availability are the least utilised.

### *Teachers' utilisation of textbooks in core subjects*

This study also revealed that; teachers' use of the available textbooks in core subjects (English Language, Mathematics, Basic Science and Social Studies) is not significantly high in the Obubra Local Government Area of Cross River State. It can be added that through technological advancement, it may be possible for many teachers to use their computers or smartphones to browse for materials online, thereby reducing the need for textbooks. This finding is supported by Harris et al. (2007), who reported on their intensive study of teaching practices in 14 schools revealed that most teachers were not using textbooks in the classroom because they feared they would be held responsible for losses and damage. Sosniak (2009) also disclosed that teachers who appear to use materials differently might not be very different in the thinking that underlies their behaviour. In asking teachers their views of textbook materials, the researchers learned that textbooks do not necessarily play the dominant role often assumed. The teachers also saw themselves teaching knowledge and skills to a group of children, not teaching a book or a specific set of materials.

However, the present study results further revealed that; out of the four core subjects, Social Studies textbooks had the highest utilisation by teachers, followed by English Language textbooks, Basic Science textbooks, and Mathematics textbooks in that order. This finding may be because; many Social Studies and Social Studies textbooks are designed with good graphics content such as pictures and other attractive drawings. This may have made it possible for most teachers to easily use them as teaching aids, especially for illustrative purposes. Teachers may have also been widely used by English language textbooks, perhaps because of their core nature of the comprehension passages, stories or poems that are usually interesting to children. Mathematics textbooks are the least utilised by primary school teachers, perhaps because of the fear that mathematics is difficult. Since a class teacher teaches all subjects in primary school, and many primary school teachers are not mathematicians, it might not make sense to them to read what they do not seem to understand.

### *Factors affecting availability and utilisation of textbooks in core subjects*

The finding of this study revealed that factors affecting availability are not significantly different from those affecting utilisation of textbooks in core subjects (English Language, Mathematics, Basic Science and Social Studies) in Obubra Local Government Area of Cross River State. This finding does not imply that the factors affecting availability are the same as those affecting utilisation. The conclusion is based on the impact of such respective factors on the availability and utilisation of textbooks in core subjects (English language, Mathematics, Basic Science and Social Studies). However, the following factors were discovered as affecting textbook availability in core subjects: some pupils take home textbooks from the library without returning them, supply of books to the school, insects/rodents, storage facilities, transfer of books to the library by headteachers, record keeping practice of librarians, and supervision of pupils. According to Awana (2006), one of the factors affecting the availability of textbooks was adequate supply and availability of up-to-date, relevant reading textbooks, journals and reference materials to aid users in their academic pursuit. Adequacy of services rendered in the library tells many success stories about the library and the availability of textbooks. Many textbooks in the library and store rooms disappear without anybody noticing such absence due to many librarians' poor record-keeping efficacy (Awana, 2006). Ajaja (2010) pointed out that the inability to encourage positive reading interest to foster and promote love

for textbooks readers, which will encourage a reading culture in our society, is also a factor affecting the availability of textbooks in primary school.

The following factors affect utilisation of textbooks in core subjects (English language, Mathematics, Basic Science and Social Studies): denial of access, the inadequacy of textbooks, poor classification of books in the library, poor use of the library by teachers and pupils, inability to search for readers, outdated books, the mismatch between library textbooks and current syllabus, poor reading culture, availability of new texts are not communicated to teachers or pupils. Assam (2016) asserted that the coverage, quality and effectiveness of education provision depend on the amount (level) and how textbooks are used. Unomah (2007) revealed that users' failure to get the title of a book they wanted made them gave up the search and went home disappointed. Fabayo (2010) identified poor textbooks allocation and distribution policies as a factor affecting the utilisation of textbooks in primary schools. According to Buchman (2015), the school administration has to play a major task to manage textbooks utilisation.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Through the findings of this study, it was concluded by the researchers that textbooks in core subjects such as English Language, Mathematics, Basic Science and Social Studies are available. However, both teachers and pupils do not effectively utilise the available textbooks in such core subjects. Social studies textbooks had the highest, while English textbooks had the lowest availability out of the four core subjects. Basic science textbooks have the highest level of utilisation by both teachers and pupils while Social studies textbooks were the least utilised by primary school pupils. Primary school teachers in Obubra Local Government Area used more Social studies textbooks and fewer mathematics textbooks out of the four core subjects. Factors affecting the availability of texts were also different from those affecting utilisation in the Obubra Local Government Area of Cross River State.

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- i. Textbooks should be provided and distributed evenly across all subjects and schools in the Local Government Area by the Government. Outdated books should also be eliminated from the school libraries frequently.
- ii. Through sensitisation campaigns, teachers and pupils should be encouraged to use the library in lesson preparation and for leisure purposes. Pupils should imbibe good reading culture by constantly sourcing for books in the library and reading them accordingly.
- iii. Library materials should be effectively managed through proper sanitation, supervision and classification. This will ensure that the environment and materials such as books, periodicals, journals, and so on are kept safe for accessibility and easy retrieval by all teachers and pupils.
- iv. Teachers should make regular visits to the library to search for good materials and ensure that they buy books also from their pockets. This will enable them to have access to all relevant materials necessary for effective lesson preparation and delivery.

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