

**IMPACT OF ACADEMIC LIBRARIES AND STUDENTS PERFORMANCE IN
RWANDAN HIGHER LEARNING INSTITUTIONS*****NIYIKIZA YOBOKA Henri**

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to assess the impact of academic libraries and student performance in Rwandan higher learning institutions. Despite the importance of school library, its operation in terms of compliance to academic achievement of students' cannot be overemphasized. Hence the assessment of the student characteristics is determined so as to know the composition of the students to the school library patronage. Specifically, this study found out the standard of school library facilities in higher learning institutions in Rwanda; determined the influence of school library facilities to the academic performance of higher learning institutions in Rwanda; and to examine the level of student academic performance at higher learning institutions in Rwanda. A descriptive research design was used with both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The target population was 955 students' respondents from 32 higher learning institution in Rwanda. A sample size of 134 respondents participated in the study. Systematic random sampling technique was adopted in this research. Teaching staff were chosen with purposive sampling technique. A questionnaire survey, interview guide and observation were used to collect data. Reliability and validity of research instruments. Findings discovered lack of library facilities in many higher learning institutions creates a diverse impact on student's performances. The researcher found out that the availability of library services and their utilization enhance the level of academic performance. It was revealed that in Rwanda, there is a lack of reading culture, and students were unmotivated for reading, and they did not afford enough time for enhancing their skills and performance in Rwanda. The relationships were all positive and significant therefore each of these elements significantly increases academic performance of the students when they are improved. The researcher suggested that there is a need to develop cultural practices of reading in order to enhance the utilization of library facilities, there is a need of cooperation between school principals and librarians to obtain adequate books and well-equipped libraries while parents are recommended to provide rooms which provide conducive reading environment within their families.

Keywords: Academic Libraries, Students Performance.**INTRODUCTION**

Libraries are collections of books, manuscripts, journals and other sources of recorded information. These collections include reference works that provide factual information and indexes that help users find information in Library and information centers; creative works such as poetry, novels, short stories, music scores, and photographs; non-fiction, for example biographies, histories and other factual reports and periodical publications, including magazines, scholarly journals, and books published as part of a series. Library collection may include use of CD-ROMs and audiotapes as well as video tapes and other forms of media resources (Mohammed, 1997). Students reading habit can be traced to childhood days when an individual starts to communicate with books and humans alike. Students with poor reading habit would not likely read even in the school Library, even if they are forced to do so. (Smith, 2001) carried out a study on academic of students who frequently use the Library with those who do not use the Library. He found that the students who frequently read in the Library and carry out researches increasing demands for accountability for student learning by internal and external stakeholders, ever-decreasing resources, eroding public confidence, and greater numbers of students from diverse backgrounds going to college than ever before present many challenges to those responsible for creating meaningful and inspiring co-curricular learning environments.

The Rwanda Education Board (REB) strives to ensure access to a range of high-quality learning and teaching resources in higher learning institutions, In the light of the above, the school libraries guidelines have been developed. The guidelines provide guidance on establishment, management and maintenance of a standard school library, minimum standard library and Classroom library. The guidelines also provide an evaluation framework which facilitates the monitoring and evaluation of the status of the school libraries, including those that are on standard, minimum standard and underdeveloped level in meeting the requirements set forward in these guidelines. These guidelines are intended to assist school administrators and their partners to develop inclusive school libraries. This document has easy to follow steps intended to help school administrators, school librarians, and other stakeholders to establish, manage and maintain school libraries that are not simply collections of books but also hubs for knowledge for learners, teachers, and members of community in Rwanda (REB, 2020). In developed countries where a culture of reading has developed, the role of books and libraries for educational achievement is highly relied to the role of library facilities to afford adequate and relevant evidences and to support students to differentiate appropriate information related to socio-economic, scientific, technology and culture among community members (Campbell, 2006). The beginning of library was used to manage employment records, since 20th century. Therefore, the rapid development of computers, internet, satellites, TV, e-mails, phones, made it possible to retrieve data. The technology and political strategies stimulate reforms in the advancement of libraries.

(Anyadike, 2000) established a relationship between library use and students' academic achievement. His study revealed that students perform better when they frequently use the school library than when they do not. (Bresciani, 2012) asserted that American higher education is facing a distinct shift that compels the need for assessment. Similarly, other studies have examined the association between library use, student learning, and student engagement; for example, (Laird, 2005) found that participation in information and library-related activities (for example, using the library website to find academic resources, asking librarians for help, etc.) were positively and moderately correlated with student engagement in other areas; namely, participation in information technology was associated with factors the researchers labeled as active and collaborative learning (for example, working with other students on class projects, working with other students outside of classes, etc.).

According to (Akala, 2002), it is an example that children plan how to read with the purpose to overcome the challenges of lacking skills related to new knowledge in globalization and technological era in the world. (K, 2002) evidenced that library facilities are linked with life-long reading and learning. The author argued that school library facilities are very important for students to enhance their reading skills and accomplish the high level of academic performance. (Dent, 2006) the success of student at school depends on the habits for reading, unfortunately, children do not obtain high score in schools due to the bad study habits for reading difference books and level of attending school library to complete the class lessons. (Jean, 2021) evidenced that children in middle schools who have library facilities had 18% of high performance compared to those who are studying where there are no library facilities. Considering the above evidences, the presented study investigated school library facilities and academic performance of higher learning institutions students. However, lack of library facilities and the culture of reading did not enable students to attain their expected academic targets. These means good grades in homework, internal exams and national examination results. School library development in Rwanda has been facing a lot of problems even before the current economic problem. The important of school libraries as a repository of information, a storehouse of knowledge and a potential vehicle of educational advancement, has not been fully acknowledged. Thus, lack of understanding and appreciation of the importance of school libraries in the social and educational development of students have adversely affected its development in Rwanda. Also, the problem of finance and management is overwhelming. In addition, teachers and the general public lack a good reading culture. Consequently, the impact of school library and its operations on various literacy programs would be investigated in the current study.

The student usage of an academic library; founds that the undergraduates are overall satisfied with available library resources, services and facilities. But it further found that library resources and services are not being fully utilized by undergraduates. he suggested that the information literacy program should be conducted to promote awareness and use of electronic information resources. He also recommends that the library should increase its usage. Providing access to information about the resources available in academic libraries play a significant role in helping the students discover the facilities available in the library. Many factors of library usage

play an imperative part in determining students' performance such as individual behavior, Library staff co-operation, library services, and proper guidance to use the resources, better communication and learning facilities and atmosphere and harmonious relationship between librarian and students. A library is considered as a heart of any educational institute. The main motive and objective of any academic library is to impart knowledge and skills to its students in higher education. (Maya Carvalho e Rodrigues Dr, 2020). The general objective of this research was to assess the impact of academic libraries and student performance in Rwandan higher learning institutions while the specific objectives was to found out the standard of school library facilities in higher learning institutions in Rwanda, to determine the influence of school library facilities to academic performance of higher learning institutions in Rwanda, as well as examining the level of student academic performance at higher learning institutions in Rwanda.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

This study adopted a descriptive research design with both qualitative and quantitative approaches. According to Franis, et al (2010) a descriptive research design helped to collect data with accuracy subject of the study. This research adopted a descriptive research design because of its appropriateness that require the experience of school librarian's members about how they manage school libraries facilities and use them in line with student's academic performance. Primary and secondary data were used in this study and deep interview with students and librarian in higher institutions. Spatial data were used in this study to show the map of Rwanda with the help ArcGIS software 10.6.1. ArcGIS 10.6 software and it analysis tools was used in this research, by using the spatial data from CGIS UR it was possible to create map showing the study area

Study area

Description of study area

The study was conducted in Rwanda situated in East-Central Africa. It lies 121KM South (75miles) of the equator in the tropic of Capricorn, 1416 kilometers west of the Indian ocean and 1250Km East of the Atlantic Ocean-literally the heart of Africa. Rwanda border with Tanzania in East, Democratic Republic of Cong (DRC) in West, Uganda (UG) in North and Burundi in South. The country is made of 30 district with public and private higher institution including University of Rwanda with its branches in districts, East African University Rwanda located in Nyagatare District, University of Technology and Arts of Byumba (UTAB) located in Byumba District and other non-mentioned Universities.

Interview

Interview was conducted deeply with students and librarians in higher institution such as University of Rwanda, Nyagatare campus, University of Rwanda College of Sciences and Technology and students from East Africa University of Rwanda Nyagatare Branch. The information to obtain was the influence of school library facilities to the academic performance of higher learning institutions in Rwanda, the standard of school library facilities in higher learning institutions in Rwanda and level of student academic performance at higher learning institutions in Rwanda.



Fig1. Administrative Map of Rwanda (Data source: CGIS/UR)

Questionnaire

Questionnaire a set of printed and written questions with a choice of answers was administered to the School libraries, devised for the purposes of a survey or statistical study. The questionnaire was the main tool which was used to gather data in this research. The questionnaire was administered to the students in higher institutions and librarian. The questionnaire included a set of open- ended questions. In this case, the respondents were limited to certain options which they were asked to select the answers.

Sample size and Sampling techniques

This study targeted population is 955 students in higher institution in Rwanda. Using purposive sampling, the selected number was thought to be adequate to provide sufficient information and also to minimize unnecessary repetition of information. The sample size of this study was 134 student got using the formula as it is shown in the following Slovin’s formula:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where: n: The representative sample, e: sampling error= 8%, N: The main population

$$n = \frac{955}{1 + 955(0.08)^2} = 134 \text{ people}$$

Which is approximately to 134 people?

Data analysis and data presentation

The analysis of data in this study required a number of closely related operations such as establishment of categories, the application of these categories to raw data through coding, tabulation and then drawing statistical inferences. The data was condensed into a few manageable groups and tables for further analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSION

Profile of Respondents

The respondents who were interrogated were 134, including 80 men and 54 women. The study administered the research instruments (questionnaires) to the respondents and the response rate is indicated by the table below:

Table 1. Showing response rate

Instrument	Distributed	Returned			
		Response		No response	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Questionnaire	134	130	97%	4	3%

The table 1 shows that the 134 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents and 130 questionnaires, which represent 97% of the population sampled, were answered. However, this indicates that the research was successful at 97% with good responses and quite representative.

Distribution of respondents by gender

The researcher asked questions related to gender profile of respondents. Results are presented in the following table:

Table 2. Respondent by gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	80	60%
Female	54	40%
Total	134	100%

Source: Primary data

Accordingly, Table 1 reveals that male is 80(60%) while the female students who participated in research process of the present study were 54(40%). The male students were more than the female student though the difference was minimal implying a normal distribution of the respondents by gender.

Distribution of respondents by age

The researcher sought to found out age of respondents are categorized under 17 years old, between 18-22 years old and more than 22 years as presented in the following table:

Table 3. Age of respondent

Age groups	Frequency	Percent
under 17 years old	20	15%
18-22 years old	74	55%
more than 22 years	40	30%
Total	134	100%

According to Table 3, 20 (15%) of the respondents were students below 17 years, 74(55%) students between 18-22 years and only 40 (30%) above 22 years old. The findings indicated that most respondents are aged between 18- and 28-year-old. This composition implies that the students were mature youths who were winding up the adolescent’s stage and were intractable. With the presence of mature adult teacher’s classroom management was possible.

The standard of school library facilities in higher learning institutions in Rwanda

The present study was also conducted order to have knowledge on whether higher learning institution has library experts to deliver services to students in higher learning institution of in Rwanda. School library services include adequate networking, guidance in using library, collaboration in discovering books, program that support students and parent to know how to use library, tripartite cooperation and interaction on the method used in library to find books (Librarians-teacher-student cooperation) and the supervision of the children during library using time. Findings were presented in the following table:

Table 4. Standard of library services in higher learning institutions in Rwanda

Statement	Frequency	Percent
Students are guided by their teacher during library activities	15	11%
Good collaboration in discovering books	10	7%
There is a program that support parents and student s to know how to use library	20	15%
There is enough time to seek books within library	40	30%
Expert in library interact and cooperate with teachers and their students on method to use library	19	14%
Supervising children during library activities	30	22%

Source: Primary data

The influence of school library facilities to the academic performance of higher learning institutions in Rwanda

The following are the responses from student on the importance of library facilities on the performance of students in higher learning institution:

Table 5. Pie chart showing the standard of library services in Higher learning institutions in Rwanda

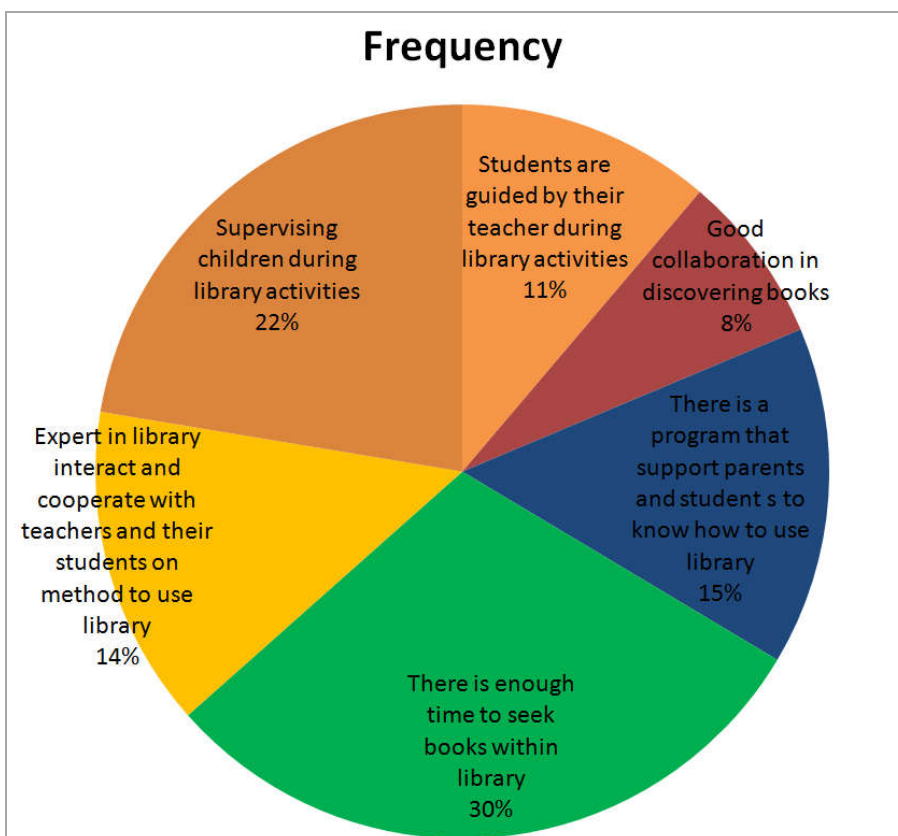
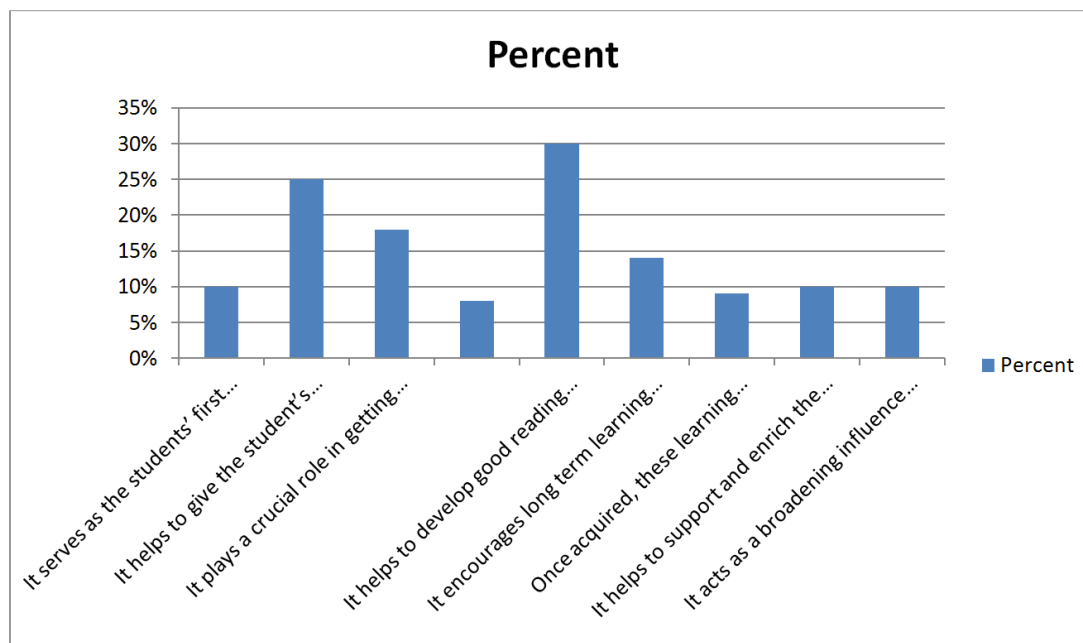


Table 6. Importance of library facilities on student performance

Statement	Percent
It serves as the students' first exposure to the world of information.	10%
It helps to give the student's information gathering behavior for the future.	25%
It plays a crucial role in getting the child prepared, through required exposure from reading for an adult role in the society	18%
It helps the child to build up innate faculties in him, which will enable him put knowledge into good use.	8%
It helps to develop good reading skills in child	30%
It encourages long term learning habits through listening, reading and viewing a wide variety of learning resources	14%
Once acquired, these learning habits from the key to continuous success in school and to personal enrichment of leisure time throughout life	9%
It helps to support and enrich the formal curriculum of the school	10%
It acts as a broadening influence by providing pupils with the means of studying theories and ideas put forward by other than their teachers or textbooks.	10%

Source: Primary data

Table 7. Column showing the importance of library facilities



Source: Primary data

The level of student academic performance at higher learning institutions in Rwanda

The third objective was to determine the level of students' academic performance in higher learning institutions in Rwanda. Students and teaching staff have been asked to provide responses on opinion, frequency for occurrence on each type of academic performance. Examination, Continuous Assessment Test (CAT) Homework grades were assessed to indicate academic performance with both qualitative as well as quantitative examination of the aspects performed and the outcome is presented in Table 8

Table 8. Satisfaction in examination

Performance in examination	Frequency	Percent
Satisfied	118	88%
Not satisfied	16	12%
Total	134	100

Source: Primary data

According to Table 8, 118 (88%) are satisfied with the performance in examination. The assessment of performance in examination were known by reviewing all records of examination done while the remaining 16(12%) were not. This response was both from teachers and students and clearly shows high level of satisfaction with examination performance.

Summary

On the standard of school library facilities in higher learning institutions in Rwanda, this study revealed that 11% Students are guided by their teacher during library activities, 7% there is Good collaboration in discovering books, 15% There is a program that support parents and student s to know how to use library, 30% There is enough time to seek books within library, 14% Expert in library interact and cooperate with teachers and their students on method to use library, and 22% Supervising children during library activities. On the influence of school library facilities to the academic performance of higher learning institutions in Rwanda; It serves as the students' first exposure to the world of information, It helps to give the student's information gathering behavior for the future, It plays a crucial role in getting the child prepared, through required exposure from reading for an adult role in the society, It helps the child to build up innate faculties in him, which will enable him put knowledge into good use, It helps the child to build up innate faculties in him, which will enable him put knowledge into good use, It helps to develop good reading skills in child, It encourages long term learning habits through listening, reading and viewing a wide variety of learning resources, Once acquired, these learning habits from the key to continuous success in school and to personal enrichment of leisure time throughout life, It helps to support and enrich the formal curriculum of the school and It acts as a broadening

influence by providing pupils with the means of studying theories and ideas put forward by other than their teachers or textbooks. On the level of student academic performance at higher learning institutions in Rwanda; 118 (88%) are satisfied with the performance in examination. The assessment of performance in examination were known by reviewing all records of examination done while the remaining 16(12%) were not. This response was both from teachers and students and clearly shows high level of satisfaction with examination performance.

Conclusion

Findings of the study lead the researcher to draw the following conclusions. There are no enough academic libraries in higher institutions in Rwanda and their availability improved students' academic performance in homework's, Continuous Assessment Test(CAT) and examination. It was concluded that students in these higher learning institutions are not motivated to use availed library sources and this is the greatest impediment to their academic performance in higher learning institutions in Rwanda.

Recommendation

The researcher recommended that there is a need to develop cultural practices of reading in order to enhance the utilization of library facilities, there is a need of cooperation between principals and librarians to obtain adequate books and well-equipped libraries. The study also recommended that students to provide rooms which provide conducive reading environment within their families

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