CONTRIBUTION OF SCHOOL LIBRARIES IN IMPROVING STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE: A CASE OF MOROGORO MUNICIPALITY

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ABSTRACT

This paper investigates the contribution of school libraries in improving students' performance. Analysis was based on a cross-sectional survey data collected from a sample of 100 respondents purposively selected from four Secondary Schools in Morogoro Municipal. The paper employed a mixed approach in data collection. The findings of the study indicate that most secondary schools have libraries. However, majority of respondents used the library occasionally. Pearson Chi-Square and Kendall's tau c test on the correlation between reading materials and accessibility of those materials gave a value which is significant at 5% level which implies that the reading materials and accessibility of those materials by the students were not related. Majority of respondents agreed that there is a positive relationship between school libraries and their achievement which is consistent with Lance Theory, Despite such consistence most of the school libraries lack sufficient reading materials and accessibility of those reading materials is limited. Probably that could be a reason for irregular visit. The study recommends that the government and stakeholders should ensure that schools have libraries adequately staffed with professional librarians, resourced with up-to-date materials, well-funded and improved customer care services. The study concludes that school libraries are the key indicators of academic success of any school and hub of the school curriculum.

Keywords: School library, school performance, secondary schools, school learning resources.

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

There are various types of libraries namely: special libraries, national libraries, public libraries, research libraries, academic libraries, college libraries (Dulle and Benard, 2014). Since the 1990s, various studies have been conducted on school libraries and students' literacy focusing on the correlation between school libraries and student achievement. In particular, the studies examined the positive effect of access to books and the importance of staffing school libraries with certified librarians who play an important role in teaching critical thinking skills, leading the way for technology use and inspiring literacy (Curry *et al.,* 2000). Studies on school libraries confirms that the fundamental purpose of school libraries is to provide access to books and that access is the primary factor that leads to raising students test scores in all aspects of literacy (Curry, 2010). Universal findings from more than 60 impact studies conducted in 22 States in USA concluded that schools with a well-equipped library, staffed by a full-time, certified librarian and appropriate support staff contribute significantly to gains in student learning. High quality school libraries do not only help students read more, but also help them to learn how to use and process information better and to perform better on achievement tests. Levels of library funding, staffing levels,

collection size and range, and the instructional role of the librarian all have a direct impact on student achievements (Curry, *et al.,* 1992; Curry, 2010). Since 2001, Tanzanian government has taken major strides to revamp its primary and secondary schools education sectors. The Primary Education Development Plan (PEDP, 2002-2006) and the Secondary Education Development Plan (SEDP) implemented starting in 2004. Following the implementation of these programs, enrolment of form 1 to 4 increased from 432,599 in 2004 to 1, 466,402 in 2009 and enrolment of form 5 and 6 increased from 31,001 in 2004 to 64,843 in 2009. The number of secondary schools increased from 1,291 (government 828 and 463 non-government including seminaries) in 2004 to 4,102 in 2009: (3,283 Government and 819 non-governments) which is an increment of 296%. Most of these Schools have been built through community support in their wards (URT, 2010). To improve the quality and relevance of secondary education strategies are put in place. One of them is to ensure that schools have well stocked libraries including text books, reference books, class readers, reading materials and recruit school library assistants (URT, 2010). In Its Revised Education Sector Development Program (2008-17) the Government plan to recruit and train library staff, earmark and allocate funds for enhancing the use of ICT applications in library services and improving provision of library services at all levels of learning (URT, 2010).

Construction of libraries and recruiting of library staff alone is not enough, for the school libraries to bring the intended impact. Studies have indicated that the level of library funding, staffing levels (staffed by a fulltime certified librarian), collection size and range, well-equipped library are all important (Fakomogbon, *et al...*, 2012; Lance, 2002). Therefore an investigation is required on the current situation of the existing school libraries in order to assess its effectiveness in improving students' performance. Various studies have indicated that, schools with well-equipped library, staffed by a fulltime certified librarian and appropriate support staff contributes significantly to gains in student learning. In addition to that, level of library funding, staffing, collection size, quality and relevance of instructional role of librarian have a direct impact on student achievements (Lance, *et al*., 1993; 2000; Lance, 1994; 2000; 2001; 2002). Lack of standard school library with relevant information resources which students could use for their studies could be one of the major causes of mass failure in the schools (Fakomogbon, *et al…*, 2012). It is from this background that this study is intended to investigate the current situation of the existing school libraries in an attempt to analyze its effectiveness in playing its role for improving Students Performance.

This study aims at investigating the contribution of school libraries to the students' performance and to propose measures to improve library services in Secondary Schools
This study was guided by the following specific research objectives
  i. To trace the existence of libraries in Secondary Schools
 ii. To find out if students are accessing reading materials in school libraries
iii. To investigate the contribution of school libraries to the students' performance
iv. To propose measures to improve libraries in Secondary Schools

LITERATURE REVIEW
The Role of a School Library

According to Waite (1989) a school library is a collection of a wide range of learning and teaching materials which are housed in a place and centrally organized by librarian and indexed to serve

reader needs. School library helps to support the school curriculum by providing up to date and relevant information sources geared towards keeping teachers and students abreast of new development (Fakomogbon, *et a.*, 2012). This means therefore, school library should promote the development of reading skills and encourages long term planning habits through reading, listening to and viewing a range of learning materials. World Bank (2008) contends that effective school libraries provide additional reading opportunities for students, which in turn improves reading skills, knowledge, and writing and clarity of expression, which in turn support student performance in all other curriculum subjects. The opposite of may also be true that the inadequacy of relevant information resources in school libraries contributes to low levels of student performance.

Access to And Use Of Library Information Resources By The Secondary Students

One of the factors that positively influence students' reading culture is the availability and accessibility of books and other non-books resources in their immediate surroundings, at home, in the classroom and in the library (Benard and Dulle, 2014). Accessibility and utilization of library information resources are key factors in the provision of quality services in different types of libraries. In addition to that Abdullahi (1998) points out that, the usefulness of a library depends upon its proper organization which includes the accessibility and availability of information resources, their arrangement and the situation of the library. Also, the successful library services depends mainly on satisfaction level of its users with the relevant library information resources, user-centric library services and library staffs' supportive attitude (Bhatt, 2013).

Several studies have been conducted on the use of library information resources. Among others are Agyekum and Filson (2012) who noted that most of the students use library resources and services to supplement their class notes, assignments and helped them in examination preparation. On the other hand, Clabo (2002) revealed that students used school library information resources for recreational readings, for reference purposes, doing their school homework, teacher requirements and reading news from newspapers. Orji (1996) and Abdullahi (2008) found out that pupils use school library for many reasons such as the preparation of examination, for leisure, recreation, academic work and to see or meet friends and people.

Challenges facing students in the use of school library
Empirical studies have identified several challenges facing students in using school libraries. According to (Benard and Dulle, 2014) lack of current reading materials; shortage of sitting facilities and lack of informational professional/ librarians for processing reading materials. Ladelunuri (2012) adds that poor performance of secondary schools in Tanzania is attributed to the lack of current text and reference books in the school libraries.

On the other hand, lack of professional librarians for processing reading materials in most of the schools libraries in the study area is a major problem, hindering students from using school libraries. For example, in the study areas surveyed the school libraries were managed by language teachers, by students, office attendant who are not professional in the library field. In view of this, it is difficult for students to access the right information at right time and get right guidance on how to locate and use information in such libraries (Benard and Dulle, 2014).

Reading Behavior and Students Performance

Children of all ages observe various behaviors exhibited by adults and peers and engage in imitating that behavior. Therefore, it is important for parents and teachers to model appropriate reading behavior. Empirical studies have found that children improved their oral reading skills by observing an individual read a passage proficiently. Particularly, students can improve their reading skills when they have carefully listened to and followed along as a teacher or more capable peer read (Knapp and Winsor, 1998). When children are beginning to learn to read and apply strategies to read words accurately and comprehend text, they may need to be provided with reinforcements in successive approximations to emitting correct responses (Carnine *et al…,* 2004). The overall impact of this is the student performance.

Keith Curry Lance Model

This study was guided by Keith Curry Lance and his colleagues in the United States (Lance, *et al…,* 1993; 2000; Lance, 1994; 2000; 2001; 2002). The model was designed to gain better empirical evidence of the nature of the relationship between school libraries and achievement in schools. The model suggests that there is positive relationship between the level of library funding, staffing levels, collection size and range, and the instructional role of the librarian on the student achievement. According to these scholars, a schools with a well-equipped library, staffed by a fulltime certified librarian and appropriate support staff contribute significantly to gains in student learning

Conceptual Framework

This study was also guided by a conceptual framework developed by the researchers after intensive review of related literature. The assumption of the framework can be expressed mathematically by the following formulae: A (school library and students performance (dependent variable)) if a function of ($B + C_1 + C_2 + C_3 + C_4 + C_5 + C_6$) as indicate in the diagram below.

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework: Relationship between School Libraries and Students Performance
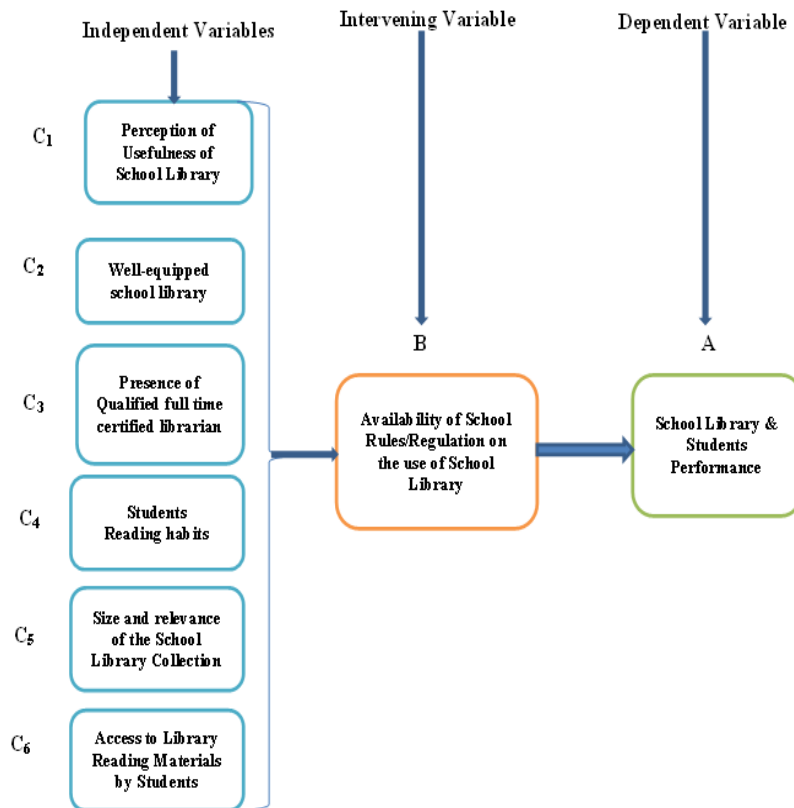
Source: Researchers' own Construct (2017)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
Research Context

This study was carried out in five (5) purposively selected Secondary Schools in Morogoro Municipal. The selected schools were Kilakala High School, Alfa High School, Saint Peter Seminary, Saint Francis High School and Morogoro Secondary School. The reasons for selection of the said schools are: They are the only high schools in Morogoro Municipality and secondly, some of these schools have not been performing well a reason which can be attributed to the lack of well-equipped library staffed with full time certified librarians.

Study Population, Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

The populations of this study consisted of all form five and form six students in the five purposively selected secondary schools. Both random and purposive sampling techniques were employed to select respondents for this study. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 20 respondents from each of the five selected schools to make a sample size of 100 respondents. Purposive sampling was used to select five (5) secondary schools involved in this study. The sample size was determined based on the required level of precision in the results, the available budget and time frame of completion of the study. The sample size was obtained from the total number of 2000 students' respondents from five selected secondary schools.

Methods of Data Collection

This study employed mixed approach method which is the systematic integration, or "mixing," of quantitative and qualitative data within a single investigation or sustained program of inquiry. The purpose of this form of research is that both qualitative and quantitative research, in combination, provides a better understanding of a research problem or issue than either research approach alone Creswell (2014). Primary data were collected through observation, structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews using checklist of leading questions. Secondary data were obtained from the Morogoro Municipal Council Department of education, schools and other available survey reports.

Data Quality Control

The questionnaire was developed by preliminary interviewing of students from the selected secondary schools, two from each of the five secondary schools. Feedback was requested from the pilot study respondents and suggestions were taken into account in developing the main questionnaire to be used in the field study. This was helped in maintain the reliability and validity of the data that was collected.

Data Analysis and Presentation

Descriptive analysis was used to analyze current situation of the existing school libraries, to investigate the access and use of library information resources by the secondary students and finding out challenges facing students in the use of school library. Data were analyzed by using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Version 20 and Microsoft excel spread sheet.

DATA ANALYSIS
Socio-economic Characteristics of the Respondents

Socio-economic characteristics of the respondents have significant role to play in expressing and giving the responses about the problem, in this regards, set of personal characteristics of interest namely: age, sex, level of education of respondents have been examined and presented in this section. The study findings revealed that out of 100 respondents interviewed, 60 (60%) were females and 40 (40%) males. In terms of age of respondents, the age category below 18 years accounted for 2 (20%), age category 18 – 21 years accounted for 62 (62%), and 18(18%) of respondents were above 22 years. The dominant age category was 18-21 years. This reflects the age group of most advanced level students in Tanzania.

Table 1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (N=100)

Category	Frequency	Percent
Male	40	40
Female	60	60
Total	100	100
Below 18 years	20	20
18-21 years	62	62
Above 22 years	18	18

| Total	100	100
Form V	48	48
Form VI	52	52
Total	100	100

Source: Field Data 2016

While age category below 18 years accounted for 20 (20%),on the other hand form five students accounted for 48 (48%); while form six students accounted for 52(52%) as shown in Table 1 and Figure1 respectively. Age categories of respondents give the perception that majority of interviewed were in the active age group implying that there were knowledgeable about the use and importance of school library.

Figure 1 Distribution of respondent by schools
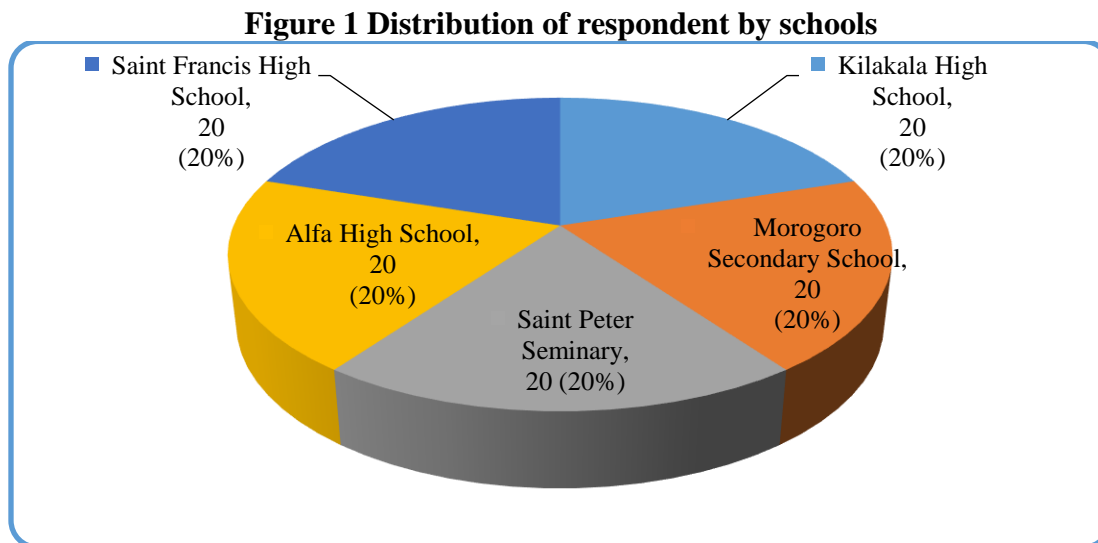
Source: Field Data 2017

Existence of Library in Secondary Schools
The study findings indicates that about 80 (80%) of the respondents had school library, whereas 20 (20%) of the respondents had no school library as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2 Existence of Library in Secondary Schools
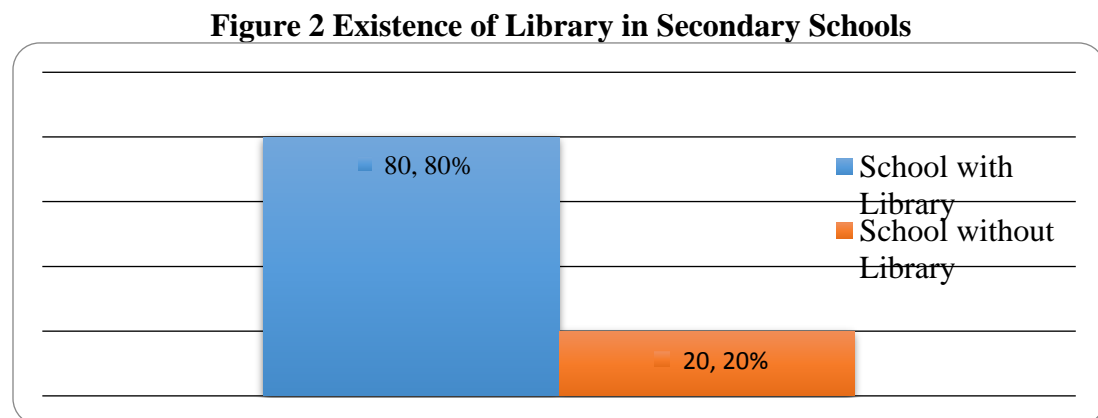
Source: Field Data 20167

Findings in Figure 2 above implies that majority of the school have a school library. This is likely because school library is a key indicator for education development of any school. These findings concur with that of Daniel (2004) and Fakomogbon (2012) who argues that the school library remains the power house of educational institution, it help to support the school curriculum by providing up-date information, keeping teachers and students abreast of new development, promoting of the development of reading skills and encouraged long term planning habits through reading, listening to and viewing a range of learning materials. According to these scholars an education institution without a library is like a motor car without an engine and a body without a soul. One respondent when asked if they have school library and whether they use it, she responded:

Yes we have, we have it, our school library is each and everything to us, you know what? Here, in our school library we access various reading materials we want, although some are missing, but we enjoy using our school library

Use of School Library

In order to extract information on the usage of libraries in the surveyed schools, respondents were asked to indicate how frequent do they visit school library. Results in Figure 3 show that 39 (49%) of respondents visited the school library occasionally, 32 (40%) used the library frequently while 9 (11%) never used the library. One respondent when asked how often s/he uses school library, s/he responded:
"Me? No, I don't go there at all, I normally go to classes even during "prep", but some of my friends go there occasionally"

Figure 3 Frequency of Use of school library
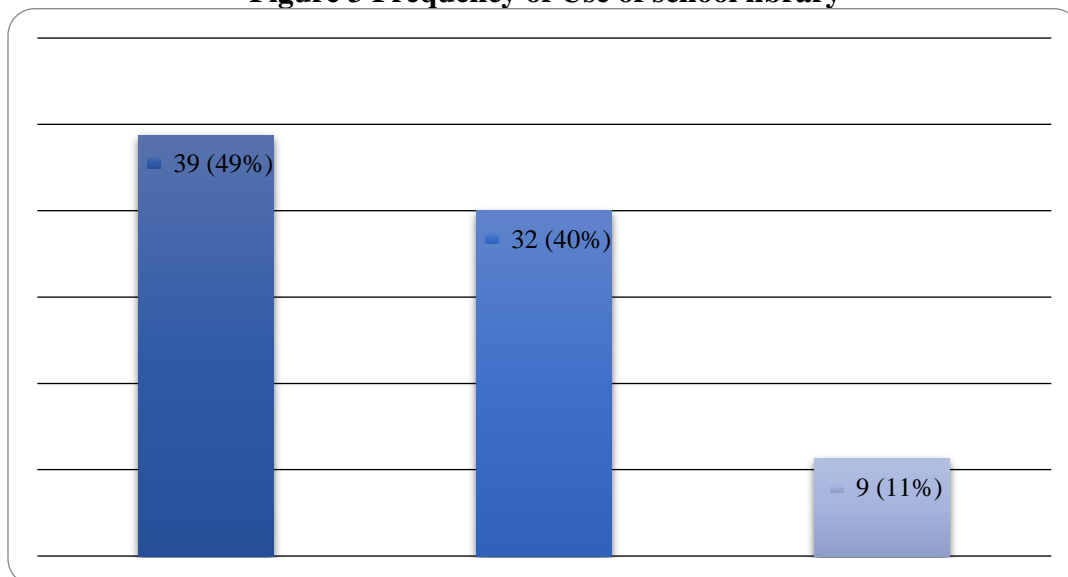
Source: Field Data 20167

Based on these findings it can be seen that majority of respondents used the school library occasionally. The study findings is supported by studies of Aura (2011) and Lonsdale (2003) on the use of library resources by staff and students of secondary schools who found that, most of the

students visited the library irregularly. This implies that more efforts need to be made to improve the frequency and regularity of library use and one of such efforts could be in the area of provision of current and up-to-date materials.

Accessibility of Reading Materials in School Libraries

Respondents were asked to indicate the accessibility of reading materials in their school libraries, using likert scale; they were asked to rank whether it is not accessible, accessible and highly accessible in relation with the identified categories of reading materials. The study findings as indicated in Table 4.2 reveal that the reading materials which were highly accessed by students were textbooks 80 (87.5%)followed by novels 62 (77.5%) and dictionaries (51.3%). However, the reading materials which were not accessible by students were Atlas and Maps (76.3%), Newspapers and magazines 61 (73.8%) and poetry 57 (71.3%).

Table 2 Accessibility of reading materials in school library (N=80)

Category	Accessibility of school library reading materials					
	Not accessible		Accessible		Highly accessible	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Novel	11	13.8	7	8.8	62	77.5
Text book	4	5.0	6	7.5	70	87.5
Dictionaries	13	16.3	26	32.5	41	51.3
Atlas and Maps	61	76.3	9	11.3	10	12.5
Poetry	57	71.3	20	25.0	3	3.75
Reference Books	15	18.8	25	31.3	40	50.0
Newspaper and Magazine	59	73.8	20	25.0	1	1.25

Pearson Chi-Square (df.12)=15.161, (Prob. 0.0233); Kendall's tau-c = 0.010
Source: Field Data, 2017

Findings presented in Table 4.2 show that textbooks, dictionaries and novels are highly accessible in school libraries compared to other reading materials. It is not surprising for the results, as this is possibly because of their availability and its significance to their academic discipline. Moreover, for those schools which study languages in their subject combination such as HKL and HGK, every student should read novels as part of their subjects; this is why they are highly accessible in secondary school libraries. Following a Chi-square test of the correlation between reading materials and accessibility of those materials by the students, the Pearson Chi-Square gave a value which was significant at 5 percent level, implying that the reading materials and accessibility of those materials by the students are not related. The Kendall's tau c test conducted and gave a value that was very small (0.010), supporting the proposition that there was no significant relationship between reading materials and the accessibility of those materials in school libraries. This findings of the current study align with Adeyemi (2009) who examined the school library in Ekiti State, Nigeria and students' learning outcomes in schools and he revealed that the level of development of school libraries in the State was low while the condition of libraries was poor, students were found not to have access to the use of many resources in the school libraries. This indicates that adequate provision of fund is necessary for the provision of current information resources and also

for the employment of qualified and trained teacher-librarian in order to improve accessibility of such resources to students.

Satisfaction of School Library Reading Materials

The respondents were asked to indicate their satisfaction to available reading materials in school library. The likert scale items were used to measure respondents' attitudes. The items were set to elicit the extent to which they were satisfied with school library reading materials. As indicated in Table 4.3, the findings, majority (50) respondents which translate to 71.3% said they were not satisfied with novels, 66.3% said newspaper and magazine, 65.0% atlases and maps, 62.5% said textbooks, and 53.8% said they were not satisfied with reference books. However, few respondents have different views as indicated in the Table 4.3 of findings. Based on this result, it is concluded that the reading materials in secondary schools under this study do not satisfy the information needs of users. Following a Chi-square test of the correlation between reading materials and satisfaction attained by the readers, the Pearson Chi-Square gave a value which was significant at 5 percent level, implying that the availability of reading materials and satisfaction attained by the readers are not related. The Kendall's tau c test conducted gave a value that was very small (-0.115), supporting the proposition that there was no significant relationship between reading materials and the satisfaction by the students.

Table 3 Satisfaction of school library reading materials (N=80)

Category	Satisfaction of school library reading materials									
	Not at all satisfied		Slightly satisfied		Moderately satisfied		Very satisfied		Extremely satisfied	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Novel	57	71.3	11	13.8	9	11.3	3	3.8	0	0.0
Text book	50	62.5	14	17.5	10	12.5	6	7.5	0	0.0
Dictionaries	14	17.5	13	16.3	23	28.8	14	17.5	16	20.0
Atlas and Maps	52	65.0	15	18.8	9	11.3	3	3.8	1	1.3
Poetry	12	15.0	29	36.3	16	20.0	13	16.3	10	12.5
Reference Books	43	53.8	12	15.0	13	16.3	9	11.3	3	3.8
Newspaper and Magazine	53	66.3	15	18.8	5	6.3	7	8.8	0	0.0

Pearson Chi-Square (df.24) = 19.627(Prob. = 0.0071); Kendall's tau-c (-0.115)
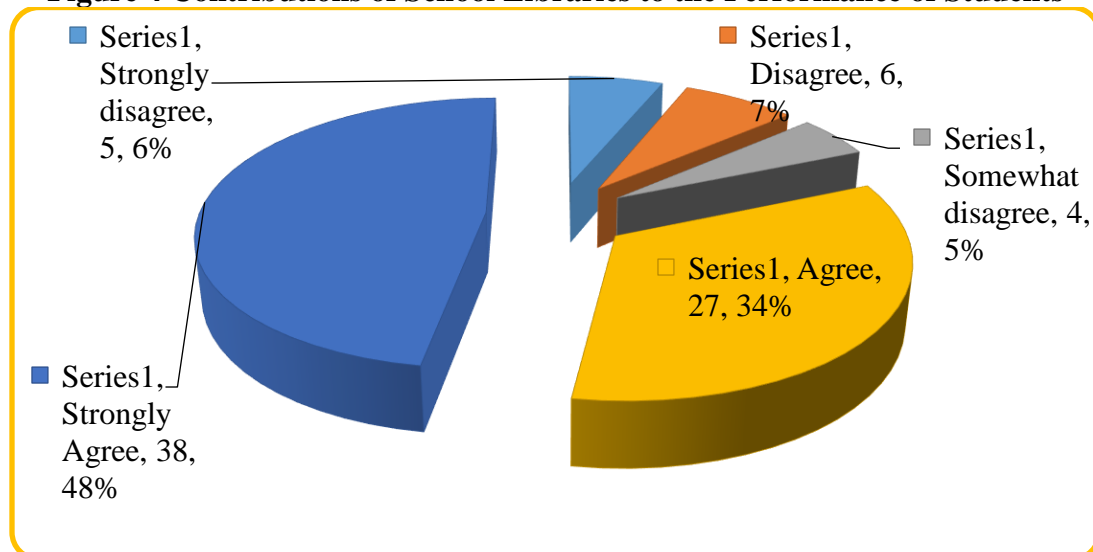**Source: Field Data 2017**

Based on this result, it is concluded that the information resources of the secondary schools understudy do not satisfy the information needs of users. The above findings are similar to those of Arua (2011) which show that vast majority of students had a view that the information resources

available to them in their libraries did not satisfy their information needs. Probably, this may be due to lack of quality of the available information resources and information system in place and lack of services that make the information product available (Iwhiwhu and Okorodudu, 2012).

Contribution of School Libraries to the Students' Performance

Respondents were provided with likert scale items with the following option to measure the relationship between school library and their performances: "strongly disagree, disagree, somewhat disagree, agree and strongly agree". The findings reveal that majority of respondent 66 (82%) agreed that there is positive relationship between school libraries and achievement in schools. However, few respondents (14) which translate to18% had contrary views as indicated in the Figure 4.3 of findings. The findings are consistent with Lance Theory which highlights a positive relationship between school libraries and achievement in schools (Lance, *et al*., 1993; 2000; Lance, 1994; 2000; 2001; 2002). These findings are also in agreement with a long posed debates by many scholars which agrees that school libraries provide access to books and that access is the primary factor that leads to raising student test scores in all aspects of literacy and contribute significantly to gains in student learning (Curry, *et al.,* 1992; Curry, 2010; Lance, 2001; 2002). Moreover, Lonsdale (2003) urge that test scores are higher when there is higher usage of the school library and that libraries can make a positive difference to students' self-esteem, confidence, independence and sense of responsibility in regard to their own learning.

Figure 4 Contributions of School Libraries to the Performance of Students

Source: Field Data 2017

Challenges Facing Students in Using School Libraries

Respondents were asked to mark the constraints in the questionnaire distributed to them. Results in Table 4.4 indicates that 68 (85%) respondents mentioned lack of updated material as a major constraint; 67 (83.8%) indicated lack of professional librarian; 63 (78.8%) opted for poor accommodation; 61 (76.3%) were of the view that poor library orientation was one of the constraints; whereas 57(71.3%) indicated restricted library hours.

Table 4 Challenges facing students in using school libraries (N =80)

Factor	Responses	
	Frequency	**Percent**
Lack of updated material	68	85.0
Lack of Professional librarian	67	83.8
Poor accommodation	63	78.8
Poor library orientation	61	76.3
Restricted library hours	57	71.3

Source: Field Data 2016

These findings are consistent with previous studies which found that lack of updated material, professional librarian, poor accommodation and restricted library hours are the major problems constraining students from using school libraries (Adeyem. 2008; Arua 2011; Ladelunuri, 2012). Nevertheless, Laddunuri (2012) on his study on status of school education in present Tanzania and emerging issues also asserted that poor performance of secondary schools in Tanzania is attributed by   lack of enough and current books in the school libraries.

Measures to Improve Services in Secondary Schools Libraries

The respondents were asked to suggest possible measures to improve libraries in Secondary Schools in Tanzania. As indicated in Table 4.6 below, majority (68) of respondent (85.0%) suggested improving customer cares, 66 82.5% suggested extending reading hours, 64 80.0% suggested improving sitting facilities, 63 78.8% suggested employing professional librarian, 57 respondents (71.3%) suggested provision of current materials and 47 58.8% suggested provision of enough fund.

Table 5: Measures to Improve Secondary School (N=80)

Proposed Measures	Responses	
	Frequency	**Percent**
Provision of enough fund	47	58.8
Provision of current materials	57	71.3
Employ Professional librarian	63	78.8
Extending reading hours	66	82.5
Improve sitting facilities	64	80.0
Improving customer care	68	85.0

Source: Field Data 2016

The findings on the measures to improve libraries in secondary schools agrees with findings and recommendations made by Arua (2011) who argued that adequate provision of fund is necessary for the provision of current information resources and also for the employment of qualified and trained teacher-librarian. In the same line, the review by Lonsdale (2003) which focused on studies conducted since 1990 on the impact of school libraries on student achievement show that a strong library program that is adequately staffed, resourced and funded can lead to higher student achievement regardless of the socio economic or educational levels of the adults in the community. A strong computer network connecting the library's resources to the classroom and laboratories has an impact on student achievement; the quality of the collection has an impact on student

learning and collaborative relationships (customer care) between classroom teachers and school librarians have a significant impact on learning, particularly in relation to the planning of instructional units, resource collection development, and the provision of professional development for teachers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made to enhance the effectiveness of school libraries in improving student's performance: Firstly, more efforts need to be made to improve the frequency and regularity of library use, one of such efforts could be in the area of provision of current and up-to-date materials and improving customer care. Secondly, user education or information literacy should be taken seriously in secondary schools in order to boost the interest of students on the use of library resources. Thirdly, adequate provision of fund is necessary for the provision of current information resources and for the employment of qualified and trained teacher-librarian in order to improve accessibility of such resources to students. Fourthly and lastly, the government through the Ministry of Education and Tanzania Library Service Board with collaboration with other stakeholders should make it a mandatory that no new school will be registered if it is not having a school library.
-        Culminate the culture of reading from the childhood age- the role that should be played by parents, early schools teachers etc.

CONCLUSION

Key findings have revealed that most secondary schools possess library. This suggests a recognition that school library is a key indicator for education development of any school. It is the power house of educational institution. An education institution without a library is like a motor car without an engine and a body without a soul. Despite the fact that most secondary schools possess library in Tanzania, majority of pupils visited those libraries occasionally. There must be initiatives to equip school libraries with reading materials and furniture.

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