

Full Length Research

Information resources' accessibility and perceived academic performance of public secondary school students in Lagos state, Nigeria

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Accepted 14 April 2023

Abstract

This study investigated the influence of information resources' accessibility on academic performance of students in public Secondary Schools in Lagos State, Nigeria. The study adopted survey research design. The population of the study comprised 5,458 public secondary school students in Lagos State, Nigeria. The sample size of 373 was determined using Taro Yamane formula. Multi-stage sampling technique was used to select the participants. A validated structured questionnaire was used for data collection. The Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients for the constructs ranged from 0.89 to 0.93. A response rate of 91% was achieved. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential (linear and multiple regression) statistics. The findings of the study revealed that information resources' accessibility significantly influenced perceived academic performance of public secondary school students in Lagos State, Nigeria. Information resources accessibility significantly influenced perceived academic performance of secondary school students in public secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria ($\beta = .136$, $t(364) = 3.881$, $p < 0.05$). The study concluded that information resources' accessibility is crucial to perceived academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria. The study recommended that secondary school principals, government and Ministry of Education should strive to sustain positive perceived academic performance of public secondary school students in Lagos State, Nigeria. The secondary school principals and government should also continue to provide all forms of information resources to public secondary schools and make them accessible to the students to improve their perceived academic performance.

Keywords: Information resources' accessibility, perceived academic performance, students in public secondary schools.

Cite This Article As: Anyanwu, C.M., Unegbu, V.E (2023). Information resources' accessibility and perceived academic performance of public secondary school students in Lagos state, Nigeria. *Inter. J. Acad. Res. Educ. Rev.* 11(1): 7-13

INTRODUCTION

In this era of globalization and technological revolution, education is considered as a first step in every human activity. It plays a vital role in the development of human capital and is linked with an individual's wellbeing and opportunities for better living. It ensures the acquisition of knowledge, competence and skills that enable individuals to increase their productivity and improve their quality of life. This increase in productivity also leads to new sources of earning which enhances the economic growth of a country, and it starts with better academic performance of students in the school (Tarimo & Kavishe, 2017). Academic performance has been described as the scholastic standing of a student at a given moment. The main outputs in education are expressed in terms of learning, that is, changes in knowledge, skills and attitudes of individuals as a result of their experiences within the school system. According to Stan (2019), academic

performance is the level of attainment of a student in an examination. It is how a student is able to demonstrate his or her abilities in an examination.

Perception of academic performance is an act or faculty of perceiving, or apprehending by means of the senses or of the mind, cognition, understanding, immediate or intuitive recognition or appreciation, as of moral, psychological, or insight; intuition; discernment: an artist of rare perception. This is an insight, intuition, or the faculty for understanding, knowledge gotten by perceiving, or a specific idea, concept, impression one formed.

Perception utilizes sensory and cognitive processes to appreciate the world around us. It is a unique way of understanding phenomena by interpreting sensory, information based on experience, processing information, and forming mental models. Perception also can be defined as a process by which an individual selects, organizes and interprets stimuli into a meaningful and coherent picture of the world. Perception can be positive or negative. Perception of academic performance is the way students perceive their academic performance. Students with higher academic achievement had more positive perceptions regarding their education, while low-achieving students exhibited more negative perceptions of education. Similarly, Irfan and Shabana (2018) state that perception of academic performance of students at the secondary school level plays a very important role in producing the best quality graduates at tertiary level, who will become great leaders politically, socially, economically and spiritually. As a result, they will impact positively on the social, political and economic development of the country. Perception of academic performance of students is an important measure of academic success at every educational level such as primary, secondary and tertiary. Al-Shorayye (2015) regards a student's perception of academic performance in an examination as being dependent on his or her positive/ negative perception. Al further posited that a student's success is generally judged by examination performance, and that the best criterion of performance is the sum of the students' academic performance in all the subjects taken in the school. The study also reveals that researchers had deliberated much on students' perception of academic performance. Academic performance of students is a key feature in education, it is considered to be the center around which the whole education system revolves.

Narad and Abdullah (2016) opined that the perception of academic performance of students determines the success or failure of any institution. They also stated that perception of academic performance of students has a direct impact on the socio-economic development of any country. According to them academic performance is the knowledge gained which is assessed through marks by a teacher and/or educational goals set by students and teachers to be achieved over a specific period of time. They added that these goals are measured by using continuous assessment or examination results. Students' perception is the process of preferential treatment of students toward information they get from an object. Perceived Academic Performance (PAP) refers to students' cognitive perception of their grades and the attitudes and procedures involved in their school achievement. De la Fuente (2019) states that perception of academic performance is a variable about which there is currently a high level of concern, principally due to its association with development.

Perception of academic performance can also be seen as the measurement of the ways by which students go about achieving their academic performance. Teachers and education officials typically measure academic achievement using classroom performance, graduation rates and results from standardized tests. It can also be referred to as persons' performance in a given academic area. Perception of academic performance in schools is evaluated in a number of ways by which students go about seeking for information resources, using the information resources and sharing the knowledge gained. For instance, the students demonstrate their perception through the ways they go about taking written and oral tests, performing presentations, submission of homework and participating in class activities and discussions. But some students may in a negative way decide not to participate in all these class activities and hope to perform better in their studies. Some students feel that Mathematics and English Language are difficult subjects and so have told themselves that they can never pass such subjects and so could not make any effort to attend the classes for such subjects. Singh (2016) emphasized that Academic achievement occupies a very important place in education as well as in the learning process, and so for one to be enrolled in secondary school the following conditions should be considered: Intellectual level of the student, interest, personality, self-esteem, skills, and study habits. Academic achievement also denotes the knowledge attained and skill developed in the school. Perception of academic performance of students determines the success or failure of any academic institution. Perception of academic performance of a student can be high or low, based on the ability or capability of the student to learn with positive perception and the necessary materials accessible for the student to learn. In other words, the academic performance of the students and the resultant institutional success or failure are majorly hinged upon these factors; first, the intellectual capacity of the student, secondly the perception of the student and thirdly the provision of relevant information resources accessible to students (material, social and environmental) by the academic institution. These factors are highly interdependent, such that the lack of one leads to insufficiency of the other. Hence, if an academic institution must record desired success, the institution should take up the responsibility of providing resources which will help the students to adequately harness their perception and apply their intellectual capacities in a measure that yields academic excellence for the students and enviable academic reputation for the institution. High perceived academic performance

is measured in terms of information resources accessible for the students to learn. This interplay of adequate provision of information resources and maximum utilization of the resources by the students is what brings desired positive perception of academic performance.

All over the world, inadequate information resources for high academic performance has always resulted in poor perception of academic performance, although it differs in magnitude and nature; everywhere has its own challenges with quality and adequate information resources. Perception of academic performance of students remains the top priority for educators. Educators, trainers and researchers have long been interested in exploring variables contributing to effective perception of academic performance of learners. These variables which include gender difference, teacher's education and teaching style, classroom environment, socio economic factor, family education background and student perception, to mention but a few, affect students' perceived academic performance. Unfortunately, defining and measuring students' perception of academic performance is not a simple task and the complexity of this process increases daily due to the changing values associated with Information Communication Technologies (Blevins, 2019; Parri, 2018).

Schools are established for the purpose of teaching and learning. It is also more important that the learners are properly equipped and oriented with the resources or materials that will enable them study well. This is the essence of establishing schools in Nigeria; schools irrespective of ownership are expected to function in compliance with the national education objectives which states that all Nigerian children must have equal education which would help them to be useful to themselves and contribute to the development of the Nation (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999). To this end, students are expected to perform brilliantly both in the classroom and in their final examination; it is the parameter used to measure the effectiveness of a school system. The better the perception of academic performance of the students, the more effective the system is assumed to be (Tarimo & Kavishe, 2017). But in this case, the students are neither useful to themselves nor to their nation because of poor academic performance because of lack of information resources' accessibility. All over the world, the issue of poor academic performance of students has been of a great concern to everyone. This concern is not unwarranted as empirical evidences have actually shown that no part of the world is free from poor perceived academic performance (UN, 2018; Philius & Wanjobi in Tarimo & Kavishe, 2017). The issue of student' perception of academic performance is becoming a monster that needs urgent attention from everyone such that it is giving everyone great concern and Nigeria as a nation cannot shy away from this. Lagos state as one of the 36 states in Nigeria involved in the molding of the students in secondary education is also not free from this mince.

Government may claim to have continuously encouraged secondary education by adopting the social demand approach towards planning the sector and by subsidizing the Senior School Certificate Examinations (SSCE) fee, provide instructional materials and teaching personnel and funds in public secondary schools all over the country over a long period of time (Adepoju in Yuniarsih, Kusnendi & Wibowo, 2019). This is an indication of government's interest in general education in the country which has reflected in the year's budgetary estimates of the states. But these are inadequate and also government has not followed up to ensure that all these information resources are actually accessible to the students to use for their academic success. Also reflected in the Nigeria's budgetary allocation for education in 2020 is the revelation by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) that Nigeria's budget on Education has continued to remain below the minimum 15 – 20% recommended for developed countries (Premium Times, 2020) and as long as the allocation on education is low and insignificant, and with the students' negative perception of academic performance, the sector will continue to have low global standard and poor academic performance recorded

Everybody clamors for improved students' perceived academic performance, but empirical evidence from researchers over the years has shown that meaningful use of information resources by the students and teachers helps to resolve the issue of perception of academic performance of students in public secondary schools. As a result of this perception of academic performance, stakeholders and researchers in education are curious to know the causal factors associated with the problem. Causes of the poor perception of academic performance in Lagos State may be lack of information resources accessibility in the schools, lack of student' interest, study habits, intellectual level of the students, fear and anxiety of external exams, of not have prepared fully for the exams and so on. These variables are directly or indirectly vital to high academic performance. Facilities such as blocks of classrooms, laboratories, workshops, libraries, laboratory equipment, consumables, audio-visual aids, electricity, water, chairs, tables, stationeries, playground, storage spaces and others which schools have or have not may affect students' perception of academic performance. It has always been realized that students' perceptions are very important in the improvement of their education, a school without adequate access to information resources, no proper orientation on perception of academic performance whether private or public may not be able to achieve the stated goals and objectives of the educational system. When students are given orientation on academic performance and information resources are accessible and skillfully utilized, they influence learning and make learning more meaningful, this bring about positive students perception of academic performance.

Information resources accessibility in schools is very vital because they aid teaching and learning process and high

academic performance achieved. Lack of information resources accessibility in public secondary schools in Lagos State has been responsible for the students' negative perception of academic performance in the sense that, information resources are not always available and the available ones are not accessible to students because of librarians' poor attitude to students. The achievement of positive perception of academic performance in any subject requires effective and efficient teaching and learning process with information resources available and accessible to students. This cannot be achieved without information resources accessibility.

Information resources accessibility is the ability to find, as well as the ease and convenience associated with locating information. According to Kumar (2016), information resources accessibility is the opportunity to find, as well as the ease and convenience associated with location of the information. Often, this is related to the physical location of the individual seeking the information and the physical location of the information in a book or journal. It is also understood as information provided in formats that allow every user and learner to access content on an equal basis with others (UNCRPD, 2018). Information resources accessibility is the freedom or ability to identify, obtain, and make use of database, internet, libraries' materials or information gained through different social media effectively. Information resources accessibility could also be attained through knowledge sharing, observation, experience, during practical works.

Information resources may be available in the school's library, but inability of the students to identify it as a good source of knowledge that is relevant for their studies is another factor that may be affecting students' perception of academic performance and this makes them feel that achieving high academic performance is difficult. This may also be as a result of the school not being able to give adequate orientation on how to access information resources and services the libraries are supposed to offer.

Access to information resources is of great significance to students in secondary schools (for those schools that possess internet and other information aids facilities) this is because it increases the acquisition of knowledge, skills and reading habit, and help the students to prepare for examination, and this eliminate fear and anxiety from the students during examination.

Research Questions

The following three research questions guided the study:

1. What is the level of perception of academic performance of students (Mathematics, English Language and Exam Anxiety) in public secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria?
2. To what extent are information resources accessible to public secondary school students in Lagos State, Nigeria?
3. What are the barriers to perceived academic performance of public secondary school students in Lagos State, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The null hypothesis was tested and measured at 0.05 level significance:

1. There is no significant influence of information resources accessibility on perception of academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Lagos State, Niger

METHODOLOGY

A survey design was used to examine the influence of information resources' accessibility on perceived academic performance of public secondary school students in Lagos State, Nigeria. Population for the study include three hundred and seventy-three (373) secondary school students purposively selected from three (3) educational districts in Lagos State. A-structured questionnaire was used to collect data for the study. The questionnaire consists of A, B and C. This includes questions in demographic data. The participants indicated to the set of items in the questionnaire based on their chose of their agreement or disagreement on the 4 point Likert scale. A test-retest reliability of two weeks' interval was carried out and cronbach alpha revealed a reliability score of 87%.The data collected from the questionnaire were analyzed and processed using percentage to ascertain how much information resources accessible to students, while Pearson product moment correlation co-efficient and multiple regression were used to assess the relationship between the independent variable (information resources' accessibility) and dependent variable (perceived academic performance).

Data Analysis, Results and Discussion of Findings

Research Question 1: What is the level of perception of academic performance of students (Mathematics, English Language and Exam Anxiety) in public secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria?

Table 1. *Level of Perception of Academic Performance of Students in Public Secondary Schools*

Level of perception on academic performance	To a Very High Level	To a High Level	To a Low Level	To a Very Low Level	M	SD
The level to which I perceive my academic performance ...						
English Language					3.56	0.49
I often pass English Language exams	287(78.0)	69(18.8)	12(3.3)		3.71	.63
My teacher teaches English language well	213(57.9)	133(36.1)	17(4.6)	5(1.4)	3.51	.65
I understand English language well	214(58.2)	127(34.5)	6(1.6)	21(5.7)	3.45	.79
Exam Anxiety					3.48	0.42
Examination stress does not affect my performance	314(85.3)	38(10.3)	16(4.3)		3.77	.66
I am not afraid of passing my tests	198(53.8)	154(41.8)	16(4.3)		3.49	.58
When I hear of WAEC examination, I am not afraid	197(53.5)	144(39.1)	22(6.0)	5(1.4)	3.45	.67
I am always confident of passing my mock exams	173(47.0)	104(28.3)	86(23.4)	5(1.4)	3.21	.85
Mathematics					3.36	0.46
I like mathematics	215(58.4)	92(25.0)	55(14.9)	6(1.6)	3.40	.80
My teacher teaches mathematics well	181(49.2)	142(38.6)	40(10.9)	5(1.4)	3.36	.73
Mathematics is easy for me to understand	159(43.2)	176(47.8)	23(6.3)	10(2.7)	3.32	.71
Perception on academic performance (Weighted Mean = 3.46)						

Source: Authors computation (2023)

The findings revealed that average score for English Language sub-scale ($\bar{x} = 3.50$) is very high, indicating that the students have a high level of positive perception towards their performance in English Language. The English Language sub-scale had all its item scores above the weighted mean. For instance, items on 'I often pass English Language exams ($\bar{x} = 3.71$)' and 'my teacher teaches English language well ($\bar{x} = 3.51$)' had very high mean scores while the one on 'I understand English language well' ($\bar{x} = 3.45$) attracted high mean.

For exam anxiety sub-scale, with a weighted mean of $\bar{x} = 3.48$, most of the items responded to attracted high mean scores. For example, item bordering on 'Examination stress does not affect my performance ($\bar{x} = 3.77$)' attracted the highest mean while the items on 'I am not afraid of passing my tests ($\bar{x} = 3.49$)', 'When I hear of WAEC examination, I am not afraid ($\bar{x} = 3.45$)', 'I am always confident of passing my mock exams ($\bar{x} = 3.21$)' attracted high mean scores. This shows that students in public senior secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria experienced low level of exam anxiety.

Research Question: 2

To what extent are information resources accessible to public secondary school students in Lagos State, Nigeria?

Table 2. Extent of Information Resources Accessibility by Students

Information Resources	HA	A	BA	NA	M	SD
Textbooks	161(43.8)	45(12.2)	38(10.3)	124(33.7)	2.66	1.33
Maps	92(25.0)	33(9.0)	76(20.7)	167(45.4)	2.14	1.23
Reports	93(25.3)	31(8.4)	59(16.0)	185(50.3)	2.09	1.26
Dictionary	91(24.7)	38(10.3)	48(13.0)	191(51.9)	2.08	1.26
Journals	70(19.0)	38(10.3)	69(18.8)	191(51.9)	1.96	1.17
Online databases	78(21.2)	27(7.3)	60(16.3)	203(55.2)	1.95	1.21
Newspapers	68(18.5)	32(8.7)	70(19.0)	198(53.8)	1.92	1.16
Magazines	68(18.5)	32(8.7)	43(11.7)	225(61.1)	1.85	1.19
E-books	64(17.4)	21(5.7)	42(11.4)	241(65.5)	1.75	1.16
Audio books	47(12.8)	28(7.6)	47(12.8)	246(66.8)	1.66	1.07
Bibliographies	45(12.2)	26(7.1)	56(15.2)	241(65.5)	1.66	1.05
Online catalogue (OPAC)	45(12.2)	16(4.3)	75(20.4)	232(63.0)	1.66	1.02
Encyclopedias	34(9.2)	26(7.1)	62(16.8)	246(66.8)	1.59	.97
Atlases	40(10.9)	27(7.3)	37(7.3)	264(71.7)	1.57	1.02
E-journal	28(7.6)	34(9.2)	55(14.9)	251(68.2)	1.56	.94
Information Resources Accessibility (Weighted Mean = 1.87)						

Source: Authors computation (2023)

The result of Table 2 shows that information resources are barely accessible among public secondary school students in Lagos State, Nigeria, based on the weighted mean score of 1.87. Most of the information resources were barely accessible, only (Textbooks) were accessible while none of the information resources were highly available. For example, the mean score for textbooks is $\bar{x}=2.66$, signifying that textbooks are accessible in public secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria. The finding also shows that maps ($\bar{x}=2.14$), reports ($\bar{x}=2.09$), dictionary ($\bar{x}=2.08$), journals ($\bar{x}=1.96$), online databases ($\bar{x}=1.95$), newspapers ($\bar{x}=1.92$), e-books ($\bar{x}=1.75$), audio books ($\bar{x}=1.66$), bibliographies ($\bar{x}=1.66$), online catalogue ($\bar{x}=1.66$), encyclopedia ($\bar{x}=1.59$), atlases ($\bar{x}=1.57$) and e-journal ($\bar{x}=1.56$) were barely accessible to students in public senior secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria. This could imply that the aforementioned information resources were not available in the public senior secondary schools, to avail the students the opportunity of their accessibility

Research Question: 3

What are the barriers to perceived academic performance of public secondary school students in Lagos State, Nigeria?

Table 3. Barriers to Academic Performance

Challenges to academic performance	SA	A	D	SD	M	SD
The distance to the library is far	259(70.4)	70(19.0)	22(6.0)	17(4.6)	3.55	.80
Power supply is not stable for electronic resources	261(70.9)	66(17.9)	20(5.4)	21(5.7)	3.54	.83
The librarians' attitude to the information resources users is poor	185(50.3)	135(36.7)	26(7.1)	22(6.0)	3.31	.84
I do not know what to share	196(53.3)	104(28.3)	41(11.1)	27(7.3)	3.27	.93
Lack of knowledge sharing culture in the school	219(59.5)	74(20.1)	32(8.7)	43(11.1)	3.27	1.03
I do not know when to share knowledge with my mates	206(56.0)	98(26.6)	15(4.1)	49(13.3)	3.25	1.03

Table 3. continuation

Information resources are not readily available	175(47.6)	85(23.1)	72(19.6)	36(9.8)	3.08	1.02
The cost of accessing information resources is high	192(52.2)	49(13.3)	51(13.9)	76(20.7)	2.97	1.22
I lack the initiative to voluntarily share information	143(38.9)	115(31.3)	44(12.0)	66(17.9)	2.91	1.10
Lack of relationship with my class mates, prevent me from sharing my knowledge with them	135(36.7)	105(28.5)	54(14.7)	74(20.1)	2.82	1.13
There is a restricted library hours so I do not go to the library often	135(36.7)	60(16.3)	66(17.9)	107(29.1)	2.61	1.24
Challenges (Weighted Mean = 3.02)						

Source: Authors computation (2023)

The result revealed that there are several barriers to academic performance of students in public senior secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria (Weighted mean = 3.02 on a scale of 4). Notably, 89.4% indicated the distance to the library is far as a barrier and 88.8% indicated unstable power supply as barriers to academic performance of students. This shows that the major barriers to academic performance of students in public senior secondary schools are proximity and power issues. Other challenges militating against academic performance of students were librarians' attitude (87.0%), not knowing what to share (81.6%), lack of knowledge sharing culture (79.6%), lack of inappropriate time in sharing knowledge (82.6%), unavailability of information resources (70.7%), cost of accessing information resources (65.5%), lack of initiative to share information (70.2%), lack of relationship with class mates (65.2%) and restricted library hours (53.0%). By implication, these challenges to academic performance of students deserve urgent attention.

Hypothesis, simple linear regression method was adopted. The results and conclusions are explained.

Table 4. Information Resources Accessibility and Perception of Academic Performance

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Coefficients Beta		
(Constant)	3.355	.046		73.207	.000
Accessibility	.059	.022	.136	2.634	.009

Dependent Variable: Perception of academic performance. $F(1, 366) = 6.936, p < 0.05, R^2 = .019, Adj. R^2 = .016$

According to the result, information resources accessibility ($Beta = .136, t(364) = 3.881, p < 0.05$) had a positive significant influence on perception of academic performance. Thus, the higher the information resources accessibility, the higher the perception on academic performance

The model's coefficient of determination value, R^2 was found to be 0.019 indicating that 1.9% of perception on academic performance was explained by information resources accessibility in public secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria. However, the model did not explain 98.1% of the variation in perception of academic performance, implying that there are other factors associated with perception of academic performance which were not captured in the model. Furthermore, the $F(1, 366) = 6.936, p < 0.05$ revealed that overall, information resources accessibility was considered statistically significant in predicting perception of academic performance in public secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria.

Discussion and findings

The finding in Table 1 revealed that students in public senior secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria experienced low level of exam anxiety.

The finding in Table 2 shows that information resources are barely accessible among public secondary school students in Lagos State, Nigeria, based on the weighted mean score of 1.87. Most of the information resources were barely accessible, one (Textbooks) was accessible while none of the information resources were highly available. For example, the mean score for textbooks is $\bar{x}=2.66$, signifying that textbooks are accessible in public secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria

The finding in Table 3 revealed that there are several barriers to perceived academic performance of students in public senior secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria (Weighted mean = 3.02 on a scale of 4). Notably, 89.4% indicated the distance to the library is far as a barrier and 88.8% indicated unstable power supply as barriers to academic performance of students.

According to the result of the hypothesis information resources accessibility ($Beta = .136$, $t(364) = 3.881$, $p < 0.05$) had a positive significant influence on perception of academic performance. Thus, the higher the information resources accessibility, the higher the perception on academic performance.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that information resources' accessibility critical factor for enhancing perceived academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria. From the present study, it has been discovered that information resources' accessibility influenced perceived academic performance of the students. However, information resources' accessibility faced challenges which must be resolved to ensure effective usage of the resources by the students in public secondary schools in Lagos State Nigeria. The results revealed that information resources' accessibility is vital for students' perceived academic performance in public secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Lagos State Ministry of Education should pay attention to magazines, dictionaries, reports, maps, journals, bibliographies, newspapers, online databases, e-journals, audio-books, atlases and encyclopedias which were least accessible and utilized by students to the ways to improve students' perceived academic performance.
2. Most of the information resources were barely accessible, only (Textbooks) were accessible while none of the information resources were highly available.
3. Lastly, the major challenges militating against Perceived academic performance such as far distance to the library, unstable power supply for accessing electronic resources, lack of knowledge sharing culture, poor attitude of librarians to library users and not knowing what to share should be addressed by the public secondary schools' principals.

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