

## **School Learning Resources and Learning Outcome in Social Studies in Calabar Metropolis, Cross River State, Nigeria: Implications for Sustainable Development Education**

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## ABSTRACT

The study examined school learning resources and students' learning outcome in Social Studies in Calabar Metropolis, Cross River State, Nigeria: Implications for Sustainable Development Education. Two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. Ex-post-facto research design was used for the study. The population of the study comprised 4487 Upper Basic III students, made up of 2569 girls and 1918 boys. While simple random sampling technique was used in selecting 200 Upper Basic III students for the study. A 20-item 'School Learning Resources Questionnaire (SLRQ)' and a 20-item Social Studies Learning Outcome Test (SSLOT)' were used for data collection. Data analysis technique adopted was the independent t-test. The result showed that, internet facilities and library facilities significantly influence students' learning outcome in Social Studies in the study area. Based on the findings, it was recommended amongst others that the government and all relevant stakeholders should ensure adequate stocking of our schools with internet facilities and library facilities to improve teaching and learning.

## Introduction

All over the world, education constitutes the bedrock of all progressive societies. This is because it equips citizens with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary for personal and national development. Social Studies, in particular, plays a crucial role in nurturing civic competence, cultural understanding, and responsible citizenship (National Council for the Social Studies [NCSS], 2010). However, the effectiveness of Social Studies education, like any other discipline, is significantly influenced by the availability and utilization of appropriate learning resources (Unimna et al., 2017).

School learning resources such as internet facilities and libraries serve as powerful tools for enhancing learning experience, promoting interest, and improving learning outcomes. These resources bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical understanding, enabling students to succeed in an increasingly knowledge-driven world. Technological advancements have drastically transformed educational landscapes in the 21st century. The internet, with its vast repository of information and interactive platforms, has become an indispensable tool for teaching and learning (Adams et al., 2024; Ekpoto et al., 2022; Johnson, et al., 2024; Nkanu, et al., 2024; Onuoha & Ekpoto, 2021; UNESCO, 2017). Similarly, libraries, both physical and digital, continue to serve as vital hubs for accessing scholarly resources, nurturing research skills, and promoting a culture of reading (American Library Association [ALA], 2019).

Notwithstanding the invaluable importance of these resources, many schools in Nigeria, particularly in developing urban areas like Calabar Metropolis, face challenges in providing adequate and up-to-date learning facilities (Nwafor et al., 2024a; Nwafor et al., 2024b; Ekpoto et al., 2024). Many schools in this Metropolis struggle with limited connectivity or outdated infrastructure in terms of internet connectivity; as well as inadequately stocked library facilities. This scarcity of resources can hinder effective teaching and learning, potentially leading to poor learning outcomes in subjects like Social Studies (Adams et al., 2024).

Understanding the impact of these indispensable resources on learning outcomes in Social Studies is essential for addressing educational disparities and enhancing sustainable development. Several studies have highlighted the positive correlation between the availability of learning resources and students' learning outcome (Akomolafe & Adesua, 2016; Olugbenga, 2019). Research has established that well-maintained school facilities, including libraries and access to technology, positively impact student achievement (Adams et al., 2024; Earthman, 2004; Ekpoto et al., 2024; Nwafor et al., 2024a & Nwafor et al., 2024b; Obia & Mumeen, 2021; Udo & Ben, 2022). Particularly, Adedimeji (2021) emphasized the role of open educational resources in addressing the challenges of providing adequate learning resources for students in Africa.

Amponsah, et al. (2022) remarked that internet outlets for SHS students include school ICT labs, mobile phones, internet facilities for families, and public internet cafes. The authors reported that internet access influences academic standards among students. The study recommended that the Heads of Institutions should liaise with other stakeholders to provide internet facilities with management support. It was concluded that the provision of school internet facilities plays a very important role in enhancing academic performance. Sokiprim (2021) observed that Internet facilities such as e-library, personal phones and online social networking used in teaching and learning to a low extent predict students' academic performance in private secondary schools in Obio/Akpor LGA of Rivers State. Ramson, et al. (2018) reported a significant difference in the internet literacy/exposure level; amount of time spent on the internet for academic purpose; and extent of utilization of internet facilities for academic purpose among the NCE and B.Ed undergraduate students of the Federal Colleges of Education in North central Nigeria.

In terms library facilities and students' learning outcome, Gbemi-Ogunleye (2016) observed that there exist a significant association between library use and students' academic achievement. Besides, the study revealed a significant association between counseling and students' use of school Library. It was recommended that school counselors should be proactive in tackling the issue of non-use of the school Library by students in the tertiary institutions across Nigeria. Also, Ida (2016) observed that students from secondary with libraries and enough materials performed better in CSEE than their peers from secondary schools with no libraries and enough materials. The researcher noted that the availability of well-equipped libraries encourages learning habits and strengthened students' study skills which results to good performance of the students in CSEE. In a similar vein, Mosha and Kapinga (2020) reported that there is a positive relationship between school libraries and students' achievement. The study recommended 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 concluded that school libraries are the key indicators of academic success of any school and hub of the school curriculum.

In Nigeria, the National Policy on Education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2014) emphasizes the importance of providing quality education through the provision of adequate infrastructure and instructional materials. However, the implementation of this policy has been

hampered by various factors, including inadequate funding, poor infrastructure, and a lack of qualified personnel (Adams et al., 2024; Ekpoto & Bassey, 2018).

This study, therefore, seeks to investigate the relationship between school learning resources, specifically internet and library facilities, and learning outcomes in Social Studies among students in Calabar Metropolis, Cross River State, Nigeria. By examining this relationship, the study aims to provide empirical evidence that can inform policy decisions and interventions aimed at improving the quality of Social Studies education in the region.

### **Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study was to examine school learning resources and learning outcome in Social Studies in Calabar Metropolis, Cross River State, Nigeria: Implications for Sustainable Development Education. Specifically, the study seeks to examine the influence of:

1. Internet facilities and students' learning outcome in Social Studies
2. Library facilities and students' learning outcome in Social Studies

### **Research questions**

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. To what extent do internet facilities and students' learning outcome in Social Studies?
2. How do library facilities influence students' learning outcome in Social Studies?

### **Statement of hypotheses**

Two null hypotheses guided the study:

1. Internet facilities do not significantly influence students' learning outcome in Social Studies
2. There is no significant influence of library facilities on students' learning outcome in Social Studies

### **Methods**

Ex-post-facto research design was used in the study. Nworgu (2015) avow that ex-post facto research design is a systematic empirical inquiry in which the researchers do not have direct control of independent variables because their manifestations have already occurred. The inferences about relationship among variables are made without direct intervention from concomitant variation of independent and dependent variables. This design was suitable for this study due to the nature and magnitude of relationship among variables explored in the study. The study area is Calabar Metropolis in Cross River State, Nigeria. Calabar Metropolis is made up of Calabar Municipal Council Area which has 16 government-owned secondary schools and Calabar South Local Government Area which has eight government-owned secondary schools. These schools have a population of 4487 Upper Basic III students, made up of 2569 girls and 1918 boys (Cross River State Universal Basic Education Board, 2023). A sample of 200 Upper Basic III

students were purposively drawn from 10 schools for the study. A 20-item 'School Learning Resources Questionnaire (SLRQ) and a 20-item Social Studies Learning Outcome Test (SSLQ)' were used for data collection. The independent t-test was used to test the two null hypotheses formulated for this study at .05 level of significance. The reason was to ascertain whether to retain or discard the hypotheses.

## Results

### Hypothesis one:

Internet facilities do not significantly influence students' learning outcome in Social Studies. The independent variable is internet facilities while the dependent variable is students' learning outcome in Social Studies. The statistical tool adopted in testing this hypothesis was the independent t-test. The result of the analysis is shown in Table 1.

The result of the analysis in Table 1 indicates that the calculated t-value of 3.53 is greater than the critical t-value of 1.97 at .05 levels of significance with 198 degrees of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis that stated that internet facilities do not significantly influence students' learning outcome in Social Studies was rejected; while the alternate hypothesis which states that internet facilities significantly influence students' learning outcome in Social Studies was upheld. This implies that internet facilities significantly influence students' learning outcome in Social Studies.

**Table 1:** Independent t-test analysis for the influence of internet facilities on the students' learning outcome in Social Studies (N = 200)

Internet facilities	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	t-value	p-level
Available	100	20.53	1.39	<b>3.53*</b>	.000
Not available	100	20.07	1.43		

\* Significant at .05 level, critical t = 1.97, df = 198

### Hypothesis two:

There is no significant influence of library facilities on students' learning outcome in Social Studies. The independent variable is library facilities while the dependent variable is students' learning outcome in Social Studies. The statistical tool applied in testing this hypothesis was the independent t-test. The result of the analysis is shown in Table 2.

The result of the analysis presented in Table 2 shows that the calculated t-value of 3.79 is greater than the critical t-value of 1.97 at .05 levels of significance with 198 degrees of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis that stated that, there is no significant influence of library facilities on students' learning outcome in Social Studies was rejected. While the alternate hypothesis which states that there is a significant influence of library facilities on students' learning

outcome in Social Studies, was upheld. This means that library facilities have a significant influence on the students' learning outcome in Social Studies.

**Table 2:** Independent t-test analysis for the influence of library facilities on students' learning outcome in Social Studies (N = 200)

Library facilities	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	t-value	p-level
Good	100	20.17	1.46	<b>3.79*</b>	.000
Bad	100	19.65	1.67		

\* Significant at .05 level, critical t = 1.97, df = 198

### Summary of findings

The following findings were gathered from the analysis of data:

1. Internet facilities significantly influence students' learning outcome in Social Studies.
2. There is a significant influence of library facilities on students' learning outcome in Social Studies.

### Discussion

The findings on hypothesis one showed that internet facilities significantly influence students' learning outcome in Social Studies. This result aligns with Amponsah et al. (2022) whose study showed that internet outlets for SHS students include school ICT labs, mobile phones, internet facilities for families, and public internet cafes. Amponsah et al. (2022) further revealed that internet access influences academic standards among students, as those with internet access have shown a higher improvement in academic performance than those without. This result also agrees with Sokiprim (2021) who found out that internet facilities such as e-library, personal phones and online social networking used in teaching and learning predict students' academic performance in private secondary schools in Obio/Akpor LGA of Rivers State. This means that, internet facilities significantly influence students' learning outcome in Social Studies.

In the same vein, the result of the analysis of hypothesis two disclosed that, library facilities significantly influence students' learning outcome in Social Studies. This result is in line with Gbemi-Ogunleye (2016) whose study revealed that there exist a significant association between library use and students' academic achievement. This result also agrees with Mosha and Kapinga (2020) who reported that there is a positive relationship between school libraries and students' achievement. These authors recommended 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. They concluded that school libraries are the crucial pointers of academic success of any school and hub of the school



curriculum. This study underscores the fundamental role of libraries to students' learning outcome in schools.

### **Implications for Sustainable Development Education (SDE)**

The findings of this study revealed that internet and library facilities significantly influence students' learning outcomes in Social Studies in Calabar Metropolis. These findings have several implications for Sustainable Development Education (SDE):

*Enhanced Access to Information and Diverse Perspectives:* Internet and library resources provide access to a wealth of information beyond textbooks, including current events, global issues, and diverse perspectives. This is crucial for SDE, which emphasizes understanding complex interconnected global challenges like climate change, poverty, and inequality. Students can research these issues, explore different viewpoints, and develop a more robust understanding of sustainability. For instance, students can use the internet to access real-time data on environmental degradation or explore case studies of successful sustainable development initiatives around the world. Libraries can provide access to academic journals, reports, and books that delve deeper into these topics.

*Development of Critical Thinking and Research Skills:* SDE requires students to be critical thinkers and problem solvers. Internet and library facilities support the development of these skills by providing opportunities for research, analysis, and evaluation of information. Students can learn to assess the credibility of online sources, synthesize information from various sources, and formulate their own informed opinions on sustainability issues. This is essential for building active and engaged citizens who can contribute to sustainable development.

*Promotion of Collaborative Learning and Global Citizenship:* The internet facilitates collaborative learning through online platforms, discussion forums, and virtual classrooms. This allows students to connect with peers and experts from around the world, nurturing a sense of global citizenship and promoting intercultural understanding, which are key aspects of SDE. They can engage in collaborative projects related to sustainable development goals, share best practices, and learn from each other's experiences.

*Empowerment for Action and Advocacy:* Access to information and opportunities for collaboration empowers students to take action on sustainability issues. They can use the internet to research local environmental problems, connect with community organizations, and advocate for sustainable practices. Libraries can provide resources on community engagement, activism, and policy-making. This empowers students to become active agents of change in their communities and beyond.

*Bridging the Digital Divide and Promoting Equity:* Ensuring equitable access to internet and library facilities is crucial for achieving the goals of SDE. Disparities in access can exacerbate

existing inequalities and limit opportunities for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Therefore, investing in these resources in all schools, particularly in underserved communities, is essential for promoting inclusive and equitable SDE.

*Integration of Technology into SDE Curriculum:* The findings highlight the need to integrate technology effectively into the Social Studies curriculum to enhance SDE. Teachers need professional development to effectively utilize internet and library resources in their teaching and to guide students in their research and learning. This includes training on digital literacy, information evaluation, and the use of online learning platforms.

*Strengthening School-Community Partnerships:* Libraries can serve as important hubs for community engagement in SDE. Schools can partner with local libraries and community organizations to provide access to resources, organize workshops and events, and promote sustainable practices in the community.

In general, ensuring access to and effectively utilizing internet and library facilities, schools can empower students with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to contribute to a more sustainable future. This requires a concerted effort from governments, educators, communities, and other stakeholders to invest in these resources and integrate them effectively into the curriculum. These implications emphasize the critical role of educational infrastructure in building a society that is knowledgeable, responsible, and prepared to meet the goals of sustainable development.

## **Conclusion**

Flowing from its findings, this study concluded that:

1. Internet facilities significantly influence students' learning outcome in Social Studies.
2. There is a significant influence of library facilities on students' learning outcome in Social Studies.

## **Recommendations**

The following recommendations were made from the findings:

1. That all relevant stakeholders should support government and ensure adequate provision of modern internet facilities in our schools to improve teaching and learning.
2. That adequate provision of modern library facilities should be made for in our schools to boost teaching and learning as well as elicit high learning outcomes.



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