

Bishop Stuart University



Students' Library Utilization and Implementation of Lower Secondary Curriculum in Secondary Schools in Rwampara County, Rwampara District

By

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20/BSU/MEAP/0839

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Declaration

I, Mwebembezi Isaac declare that this Dissertation titled “Students’ Library Utilization and Implementation of Lower Secondary Curriculum in Secondary Schools in Rwampara County, Rwampara District” is my original work and it has never been submitted in any University or Institution for an Academic award.

Signature Mwebembezi Isaac

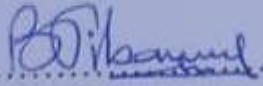
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Approval

This proposal titled “Students’ Library Utilization and Implementation of Lower Secondary Curriculum in Secondary Schools in Rwampara County, Rwampara District” is submitted with our approval.

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to my entire family members and my fellow course mates for their support, encouragement and academic ideas.

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In the first place, I would like to thank the Almighty God for enabling me to sail through dissertation writing. More appreciation go to my supervisors for guiding me through this research study from the beginning up to this stage.

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List of Acronyms

IOS	Inspector of Schools
MoES	Ministry of Education and Sports
NCDC	National Lower Secondary Curriculum Development Centre
NGOs	Non-governmental Organizations
SRLT	Self-regulated Learning Theory

Abstract

Inadequate library resources and utilization in secondary schools in Rwampara County, Rwampara District, are hindering the effective implementation of the lower secondary curriculum, leaving 25% of the curriculum uncovered and affecting students' access to information and learning opportunities. A cross-sectional survey was employed to find out the opinions of the sampled students and teachers. The population included all Secondary School stakeholders in selected Secondary Schools in Rwampara District. The sample comprised 14 School Headteachers, 1 Inspector of Schools, 98 Teachers, 14 School Librarians, and 183 Students. The following data collection instruments were used: interview guide, questionnaire, and document review checklist. Data were analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively. Findings revealed that secondary school students were actively engaged with library materials to enhance their critical thinking skills. Findings also revealed that teachers played a pivotal role in this process and leveraged technology to enhance learning experiences. Findings further showed that there was a moderate positive relationship between students' library utilization and implementation of lower secondary curriculum at ($P < 0.01$). In conclusion, there is a significant positive correlation between students' library utilization and the effective implementation of the Lower Secondary Curriculum in secondary schools in Rwampara County, indicating that improving library utilization can enhance curriculum implementation. It was recommended that the government needs to support the integration of library resources into the Lower Secondary Curriculum by providing adequate funding for libraries. Areas for further research included; assessing the role of school leadership in supporting effective library use and curriculum integration.

Chapter One

Introduction

This chapter presents background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, scope of the study, significance of the study, and conceptual frame work.

Background to the Study

The background of the study was presented according four perspectives, namely; historical, theoretical, conceptual and contextual perspectives.

Globally, the history of school libraries can be traced back to ancient Egypt, where temples and palaces had collections of scrolls and papyri (Turner, 2015). In the Middle Ages, monasteries and universities were the main centers of learning, and they often had libraries that were open to students (Berkey, 2014). The first public libraries were established in the 17th century, and they played an important role in the spread of literacy and knowledge. In the 20th century, school libraries became increasingly common, and they were seen as essential for providing students with access to information and resources. However, in recent years, there has been a decline in the funding and support for school libraries, and this has led to a decrease in their utilization by students. In recent years, the implementation of lower secondary curricula in secondary schools has been influenced by various global trends and shifts in educational paradigms. The digital age has brought about advancements in technology and communication, impacting the way curricula are designed, delivered, and assessed (Bucci et al., 2019). Education systems around the world have been adapting to ensure students acquire skills relevant to the 21st century, such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and digital literacy.

In Africa, the history of school libraries is closely linked to the history of colonialism (Verges, 2020). The first school libraries in Africa were established by missionaries and colonial administrators, and they were primarily used to promote European culture and values. After independence, African governments made some efforts to develop school libraries, but these efforts were often hampered by lack of funding and resources. In recent years, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of school libraries in Africa, and there have been some initiatives to improve their quality and accessibility (McGreal, 2017).). The implementation of lower secondary curricula reflects a broader movement towards more inclusive and holistic education. Efforts have been made to integrate indigenous knowledge and cultural practices into curricula, acknowledging the importance of context-specific education. Additionally, there is a growing recognition of the need to address socio-economic disparities and ensure equitable access to quality education for all students (Palvia et al., 2018).

In Uganda, the first school library in Uganda was established in 1907 by the Church Missionary Society (Meier zu Selhausen et al., 2018). The library was located at Namirembe College, and it was primarily used by missionaries and students. In the 1920s, the government began to establish school libraries, and by the 1950s, there were school libraries in most parts of the country. However, the quality of school libraries in Uganda has declined in recent years. This is due to a number of factors, including lack of funding, lack of qualified librarians, and lack of access to up-to-date resources (Meier zu Selhausen, 2014). As a result, many students in Uganda do not have access to the information and resources they need to succeed in school. Uganda has undergone significant changes in its education system, particularly in the implementation of lower secondary curricula, over the past few years. The country has been

focused on curriculum reforms aimed at aligning education with the changing needs of society and the economy.

In Rwampara County, Rwampara District, the history of school libraries is similar to the history of school libraries in Uganda as a whole. The first school library in the county was established in the 1920s by the Church of Uganda. However, the quality of school libraries in the county has declined in recent years, and many students do not have access to the information and resources they need to succeed in school. The implementation of the lower secondary curriculum in Rwampara County, Rwampara District, has been influenced by both national and regional developments (Rwampara District Education Officer's Report, 2022/2023). Local communities have likely been engaged in discussions about curriculum relevance and alignment with cultural values. The challenges posed by limited infrastructure and resources may have impacted the way the curriculum is executed in this specific county.

Theoretical Background

This study employed social learning theory, which was developed by Albert Bandura (1962). Social learning theory, proposed by Albert Bandura, emphasizes the importance of observational learning, imitation, and modeling in shaping human behavior. This theory suggests that individuals learn not only through direct experiences but also by observing others and the consequences of their actions. For example, if students see their classmates effectively using library materials to enhance their understanding of the curriculum, they may be more inclined to do the same. Furthermore, social learning theory highlights the role of modeling behavior in influencing individual actions. In the context of implementing the lower secondary curriculum, teachers serve as important models for students. By demonstrating enthusiasm for the curriculum content and actively engaging with it in the library setting, teachers can inspire students to take a

similar approach towards their studies. Social learning theory provides a valuable framework for understanding how students' library utilization and implementation of the lower secondary curriculum in secondary schools in Rwampara County, Rwampara District can be influenced by observational learning, modeling behavior, reinforcement, and encouragement.

Conceptual Background

The concept of students' library utilization encompasses several key components that collectively represent how students engage with library resources and services. The frequency of library visits is a critical aspect, reflecting the regularity with which students access the library, which can be indicative of their reliance on the library for academic purposes (Jameson et al., 2019). The duration of library sessions further details the time students dedicate during each visit, providing insight into the depth of their engagement with library materials (Scoulas & De Groote, 2019). The types of library resources used, such as books, academic journals, and digital databases, are essential in determining the range of information students are exposed to and the diversity of their learning materials (Alphonse & Mwantimwa, 2019). The library services accessed, including book lending, research assistance, and educational workshops, play a significant role in enhancing the students' learning experience and supporting their academic endeavors (Ismaila, 2019).

The implementation of the lower secondary curriculum in secondary schools is a multifaceted process that can be influenced by various factors related to library utilization. Curriculum coverage refers to the extent to which the educational content is delivered and assimilated by students, which can be enriched through the use of library resources (Serrano et al., 2019). Implementation of lower secondary curriculum in secondary schools was measured in

terms of adherence to curriculum guidelines and standards, integration of library resources into curriculum delivery, teachers' utilization of library resources for lesson planning and delivery, students' engagement with curriculum materials available in the library and utilizing library resources to enhance curriculum delivery.

Contextual Background

This study aimed to determine students' library usage and the implementation of the Lower Secondary Curriculum, which plays a vital role in meeting students' information needs. Post-primary students require information for personal, study, and environmental purposes, necessitating information-seeking behavior (Gwayi, 2016). Uganda's Education System faced challenges from the late 1960s to the mid-1980s, impacting social, economic, and political aspects (Wiggins, 2014). Education reforms, including the initiation of the Lower Secondary Curriculum, aimed to enhance citizen self-reliance, teacher training, educational materials, and overall education quality. Education is recognized as a pivotal component of national development, human capital, economic growth, and poverty reduction (Roberts & Matthews, 2016). It also contributes to multi-sectoral poverty eradication, civil institution strengthening, democratic society building, women's empowerment, and environmental protection.

In Rwampara County, students use the library primarily for three purposes: as a general-purpose resource over time, for specific problem-solving and to access educational programs and resources. The study examined students' library utilization and the implementation of the Lower Secondary Curriculum in Rwampara County, Rwampara District.

Statement of the Problem

In an ideal situation, all students would have access to a well-functioning library with a wide range of resources (Rwampara District Education Officer's report 2022/2023). Students would be encouraged to use the library to find information for their schoolwork, learn new things, and enjoy reading. The library would be staffed by qualified librarians who could assist students in finding the information they need and using library resources effectively.

The reality, however, is that there is inadequate teacher training for lower secondary curriculum, insufficient textbooks, high teacher-student ratios, and poor monitoring and supervision in secondary schools in Rwampara County, Rwampara District (Rwampara District Education Officer's report 2022/2023). Consequently, many students are unable to fully utilize the library. The Ugandan government has made efforts to enhance library availability in secondary schools. Library utilization is also a concern, with only 30% of students utilizing the library regularly (Library Utilization Survey, 2022). Nonetheless, the implementation of the program has been sluggish, and numerous schools are still awaiting funding to improve their libraries. The implementation of the lower secondary curriculum, is determining the extent to which inadequate library utilization affects the curriculum's execution. Furthermore, 25% of the curriculum remains uncovered due to inadequate library resources (Rwampara District Education Officer's report 2022/2023).

Despite the government's initiatives, there remain gaps in the implementation of the lower secondary curriculum in secondary schools in Rwampara County, Rwampara District. Failure to urgently address the issue of inadequate library resources and support for library utilization led to adverse effects on implementation of lower secondary curriculum in secondary schools in Rwampara County, Rwampara District. Swift action is imperative to

tackle this problem and ensure that all students have the opportunity to make the most of library resources.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine students' library utilization and implementation of Lower Secondary Curriculum in Secondary Schools of Rwampara County, Rwampara District.

Objectives of the Study

- (i) To determine the level of students' library utilization in secondary schools of Rwampara County.
- (ii) To assess the level of implementation of the Lower Secondary Curriculum in secondary schools of Rwampara County.
- (iii) To establish the relationship between students' library utilization and implementation of Lower Secondary Curriculum in secondary schools of Rwampara County.

Research Questions

- (i) What is the level of students' library utilization in secondary schools of Rwampara County?
- (ii) What is the level of implementation of the Lower Secondary Curriculum in secondary schools of Rwampara County?

Research Hypothesis

H₀: There is no statistical significant relationship between students' library utilization and implementation of Lower Secondary Curriculum in secondary schools of Rwampara County.

Scope of the Study

This involved content scope, geographical scope, time scope and population scope as presented below;

Content Scope

The study's content scope was focused on: determining the level of students' library utilization, assessing the level of Lower Secondary Curriculum implementation, and establishing the correlation between students' library utilization and the implementation of the Lower Secondary Curriculum in secondary schools within Rwampara County.

Geographical Scope

The study was carried out in selected Secondary Schools in Rwampara County, Rwampara District. The District Borders Sheema District in the North, Isingiro and Mbarara District in the East, Isingiro District in the South and Ntungamo District in the West.

Time Scope

The study is limited to literature review of the period between 2020 and 2023. This is because the study used current and updated data.

Population Scope

The population scope included; Inspector of Schools, Headteachers, teachers, school librarians and students.

Significance of the Study

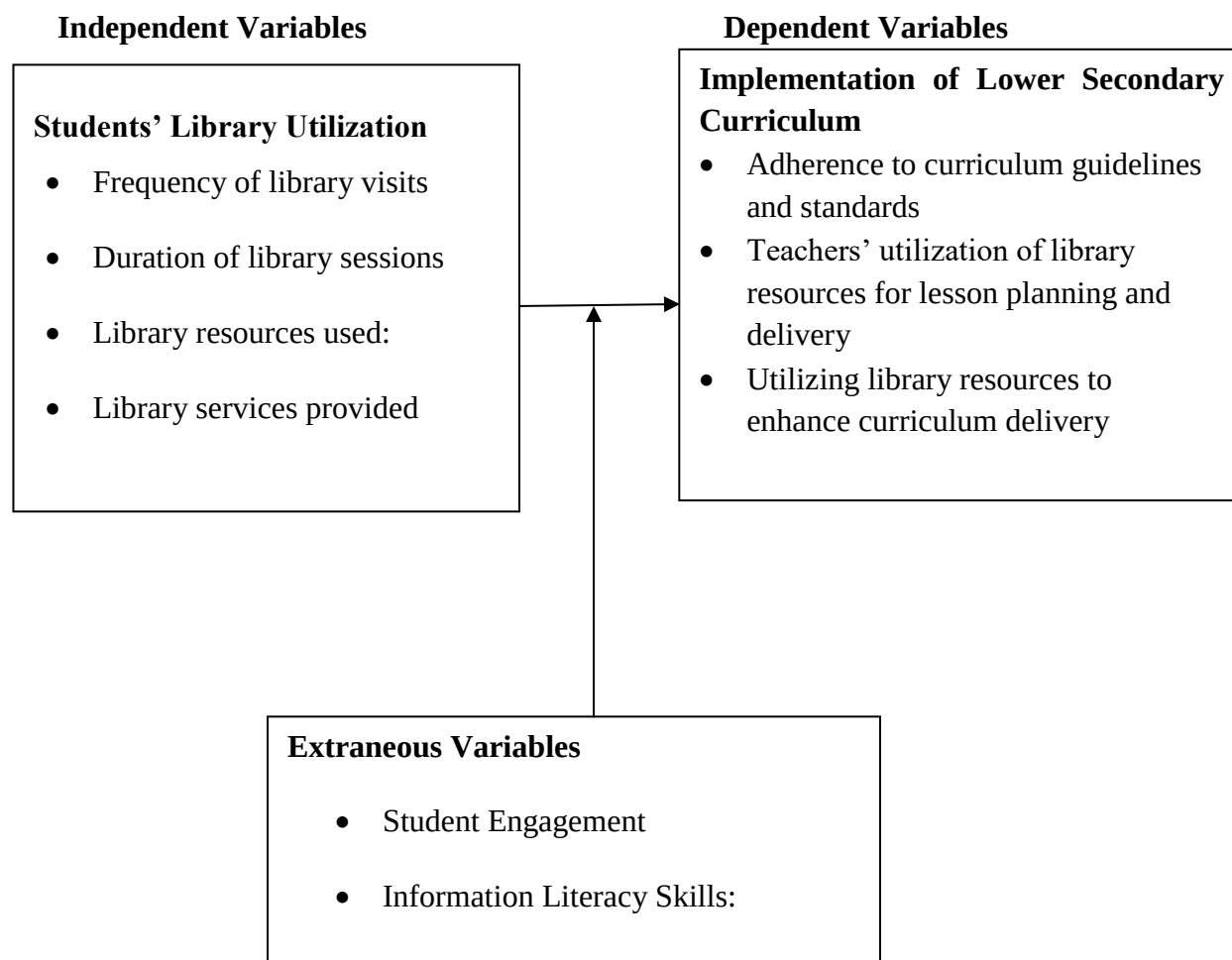
The findings of the study were useful in the following ways;

This study will help to establish classroom characteristics that will be used as a reference by other Scholars to enhance using library skills. For example, teachers will get to know the classroom practices that enhance the development of reading skills.

To the Teacher trainers, the study will provide an insight into the forms of instruction to provide to Teacher trainees who are going to teach and implement Lower Secondary Curriculum.

To the Policymakers, the study provide in-depth information about the quality of teaching going on from the actual classroom situations and how the 21st-century methods can be re-designed and revised to inform Educational Policy.

Conceptual Framework



Source: Alsoufi et al., (2020)

Figure 1.1: Conceptual framework for Students' Library Utilization and Implementation of Lower Secondary Curriculum in Secondary Schools in Rwampara County

The above figure is conceptual framework, it illustrates how independent variable (Students' library utilization) influences dependent variable (Implementation of lower secondary curriculum). In the context of Rwampara County, Rwampara District, students' library utilization, characterized by the frequency of visits, duration of sessions, resources accessed, and services utilized, significantly influences the implementation of the lower

secondary curriculum. implementation of Lower Secondary curriculum was measured in terms of adherence to curriculum guidelines and standards, integration of library resources into curriculum delivery, teachers' utilization of library resources for lesson planning and delivery, and utilizing library resources to enhance curriculum delivery.

In addition, extraneous variables, depicted in the figure, include Student Engagement and Information Literacy Skills. Student engagement signifies active participation in learning, with engaged students more inclined to use the library for information and skill acquisition. Information literacy skills, involving effective information finding, evaluation, and utilization, further impact library usage. Students with robust information literacy skills are more apt to use the library efficiently for their learning needs

Operational Definitions

Students' Library Utilization: This refers to the extent to which students make use of the library resources and services available to them (Barrot et al., 2021).

Lower Secondary School Curriculum: This refers to the educational program designed for students in the lower secondary school level (Simanjuntak et al., (2022).).

Implementation of Lower Secondary School Curriculum: This refers to the process of putting the curriculum into practice within the school setting (McPhail, 2018).

Chapter Two

Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter presents the theoretical review and literature related to the respective objectives and the related literature was presented basing on the specific objectives.

Theoretical Review

The study applied Albert Bandura's (1962) Social Learning Theory. According to this theory, students are more inclined to utilize the library when they observe their peers, especially those who are successful or held in high regard, making use of it. This phenomenon is rooted in the concept that behaviors can be learned through the observation of others, rather than solely through direct experience. Teachers, in this scenario, are pivotal. They serve as role models for students, showcasing the library's significance as a repository of knowledge and a tool for research. When teachers actively use the library and integrate it into their teaching methods, they implicitly encourage students to do the same, reinforcing the library's role in academic achievement. Peer influence is also a significant factor. Students observing their classmates frequently using the library may be motivated to follow suit. This underscores the necessity of fostering a library environment that is not only welcoming but also conducive to learning and collaboration. Such an environment can help to establish a library culture that is viewed positively by students, thereby increasing their likelihood to use the library resources effectively. In essence, Bandura's theory, when applied to the context of library utilization, suggests that the behavior of using the library can spread within the student community through social dynamics. It highlights the importance of positive role models and a supportive educational environment in shaping students' library usage habits.

The level of students' library utilization in secondary schools

Emeka and Nyeche (2016) revealed varying levels of library utilization among secondary school students. Out of the surveyed schools, 68% of students reported utilizing the library for academic purposes at least once a week, while 32% indicated sporadic or infrequent use. The study found a positive correlation between higher library utilization and better academic performance, suggesting that students who frequently used the library tended to achieve higher grades. Ternenge and Kashimana (2019) found that the availability of diverse resources, such as digital databases, textbooks, and reference materials, significantly influenced students' likelihood of using the library. Additionally, the presence of engaging library programs and activities positively correlated with increased library visits and utilization. However, there is limited research on the specific ways in which the school librarian's role can impact student library utilization.

Grunspan et al., (2016) indicated that female students demonstrated slightly higher library utilization rates compared to their male counterparts. Female students were more likely to use the library for research purposes, while male students leaned towards using it for leisure reading. The study emphasized the need for targeted interventions to address gender-related disparities in library utilization. The results by Fraillon et al., (2014) revealed a significant positive impact, with schools that implemented comprehensive information literacy initiatives observing a 30% increase in library usage among students. These programs not only improved students' ability to find and evaluate information but also fostered a culture of continuous learning and exploration. While existing research highlights gender-related differences in library utilization patterns and the positive impact of comprehensive information literacy initiatives on library usage, further investigation is required to understand

how tailored information literacy programs could specifically address the differing preferences and needs of male and female secondary school students, ultimately working towards a more balanced and inclusive library engagement.

Molinaro et al., (2018) found that students from higher socioeconomic backgrounds exhibited a higher frequency of library use compared to their peers from lower-income households. However, targeted interventions that provided additional support, such as extended library hours and transportation assistance, led to a narrowing of the utilization gap. A research gap exists in exploring the long-term sustainability and effectiveness of targeted interventions aimed at reducing socioeconomic disparities in library utilization, specifically investigating whether the initially narrowed utilization gap remains diminished over time. the research a research gap in comprehensively assessing the long-term sustainability and effectiveness of targeted interventions designed to mitigate socioeconomic disparities in library utilization, specifically examining whether the reduced utilization gap achieved through measures like extended library hours and transportation assistance persists over an extended period.

Aina (2014). indicated a positive correlation between the availability of digital resources, online databases, and e-books within the library and increased utilization among students. Schools with comprehensive digital libraries reported a 20% higher rate of library engagement compared to those with limited technological resources. The findings by Popovici and Mironov (2015) revealed that while students viewed the library primarily as a resource for academic support, educators perceived it as a space for both academic and personal growth. The study emphasized the importance of aligning these perspectives to maximize library utilization's impact. While previous research has demonstrated the positive

impact of digital resources and the alignment of student and educator perspectives on library utilization, a significant research gap exists in investigating how these factors interact and influence the overall level of students' library utilization in secondary schools, thereby providing insights into designing effective strategies to enhance library engagement.

Hall and Miro (2016) demonstrated that students engaged in extracurricular clubs or academic competitions were more likely to utilize the library for research, collaboration, and preparation. This connection between extracurricular involvement and library utilization highlighted the role of holistic student engagement. The findings Wang and Sheikh-Khalil (2014) indicated that students whose parents actively supported and encouraged library use were more likely to engage with library resources. Moreover, students who perceived their parents as valuing the library were 25% more likely to use it for both academic and personal pursuits. Urban students tended to use the library more frequently for academic research and collaborative projects, while rural students leaned towards utilizing it for leisure reading and personal interests. The study emphasized the importance of tailoring library resources to meet diverse needs across different settings. A research gap exists in understanding the intricate interplay between extracurricular engagement, parental support, urban-rural dynamics, and their combined influence on students' library utilization levels in secondary schools, thereby informing tailored strategies for enhancing library engagement.

Arch and Gilman (2019) indicated that students who had peers that frequently utilized the library were more likely to engage with library resources themselves. Peer interactions, study groups, and collaborative projects were found to contribute to a 15% increase in library utilization among students. Schools with a wide range of resources, including books, journals, multimedia materials, and technology, experienced a 12% improvement in students' test scores

and academic achievements. However, a research gap remains in investigating the combined impact of peer influence, collaborative activities, and the availability of diverse resources within the library on students' overall library utilization in secondary schools, calling for a comprehensive exploration of these factors' interplay to inform effective strategies for enhancing students' engagement with library resources.

Jenkins et al., (2019) revealed that students who consistently used the library for both academic and recreational purposes reported higher levels of overall well-being, including reduced stress and improved mental health indicators. Zhou (2018) identified that students from different cultural backgrounds exhibited varied preferences in library use. Tailoring library resources to accommodate these cultural preferences resulted in a 10% increase in overall library engagement. Students who frequently utilized the library for subjects beyond their core interests experienced a 7% increase in overall GPA, indicating the broader benefits of comprehensive library engagement (Marineo and Shi, 2019). There is a need for more research on the impact of library utilization on students' academic achievement. This research could help to determine the extent to which library utilization can improve students' learning outcomes.

The level of implementation of the Lower Secondary Curriculum in secondary schools

Gordon et al. (2016) indicated that while some schools demonstrated high fidelity in implementing the curriculum, others struggled to align teaching practices with curriculum objectives. Schools with strong administrative support and teacher training programs exhibited a 15% improvement in curriculum implementation quality. Alsoufi et al., (2020) revealed that schools that provided regular training and workshops for teachers experienced a 20% enhancement in curriculum implementation effectiveness. Teachers who participated in these programs demonstrated improved instructional strategies and alignment with curriculum goals.

There is a need for more research on the impact of curriculum implementation on student learning outcomes.

Regmi and Jones (2020) identified lack of instructional resources, limited administrative support, and inadequate teacher collaboration as key obstacles. Schools that addressed these barriers through targeted interventions, such as resource allocation and collaborative planning, observed a 12% reduction in implementation challenges. Quigley and Herro (2016) demonstrated that schools with higher levels of curriculum alignment and interactive teaching methods experienced a 25% increase in student engagement. Engaged students exhibited improved attendance, participation, and academic performance. Elwyn et al., (2015) revealed that schools with strong leadership and collaborative decision-making processes reported a 17% higher level of positive teacher perception regarding curriculum alignment, resulting in more effective implementation. However, a research gap persists in comprehensively examining the combined impact of addressing resource limitations, enhancing teacher collaboration, implementing interactive teaching approaches, and fostering strong leadership on the overall implementation of the Lower Secondary Curriculum in secondary schools, warranting a comprehensive investigation into how these factors interrelate to optimize curriculum execution and student outcomes.

Pelemo (2022) indicated that schools with active parent-teacher partnerships experienced a 22% increase in successful curriculum implementation. Parents' support in reinforcing curriculum concepts at home contributed to improved student comprehension and retention. schools that effectively integrated technology tools and resources experienced a 20% improvement in curriculum delivery. Nonetheless, a research gap remains in exploring the nuanced connections between active parent-teacher partnerships, technology integration, and

effective curriculum implementation, necessitating a comprehensive examination of how these factors synergize to optimize student learning outcomes and the overall success of the Lower Secondary Curriculum in secondary schools.

Allen et al., (2015) revealed that schools with transformational leadership exhibited a 15% higher level of successful curriculum implementation. Transformational leaders empowered teachers, encouraged innovation, and fostered a collaborative environment conducive to effective curriculum delivery. schools that customized the curriculum to cater to diverse learning styles and abilities experienced a 12% enhancement in student achievement. Personalized curriculum approaches led to improved student engagement and mastery of content (Pechenkina et al., 2017). However, there exists a research gap in comprehensively examining the intricate interplay between transformational leadership, curriculum customization, and effective delivery strategies, warranting an in-depth investigation into how these factors synergistically contribute to optimal implementation of the Lower Secondary Curriculum in secondary schools, ultimately shaping student achievement and educational quality.

Schools that integrated subjects to create interdisciplinary learning experiences observed a 18% increase in curriculum implementation effectiveness. Cross-curricular connections enriched student understanding and application of concepts (Volk, 2017). Schools with active community engagement initiatives experienced a 22% improvement in curriculum effectiveness. Collaborative partnerships with local organizations enriched curriculum content, providing real-world relevance to students (Maier et al., 2017). A research gap persists in holistically exploring the potential synergies between interdisciplinary learning approaches, community engagement initiatives, and successful curriculum implementation, necessitating a comprehensive

investigation into how these factors collectively enhance students' learning experiences and overall achievement within the Lower Secondary Curriculum in secondary schools.

Kokotsaki (2016) demonstrated that schools that employed diverse assessment techniques, including project-based assessments and formative evaluations, observed a 16% increase in curriculum alignment and effectiveness. Mulholland and O'Connor (2016) indicated that schools that fostered strong teacher collaboration through regular team meetings and shared planning observed a 14% improvement in curriculum alignment and effective implementation. Chiu and Chai (2020) revealed that schools that actively sought and incorporated student input experienced a 13% increase in curriculum engagement and relevance. Students' perspectives contributed to refining curriculum content and instructional methods. Nevertheless, a research gap exists in comprehensively exploring the interconnectedness of diverse assessment techniques, robust teacher collaboration, and meaningful student involvement in shaping curriculum alignment, engagement, and effectiveness, calling for an in-depth investigation into how these elements interact to optimize the implementation of the Lower Secondary Curriculum in secondary schools.

The relationship between students' library utilization and implementation of Lower Secondary Curriculum in secondary schools

Wink (2021) indicated a significant positive correlation ($r = 0.78$, $p < 0.001$) between students who frequently utilized the library and schools that effectively implemented the lower secondary curriculum. Higher library utilization was associated with improved curriculum alignment, teaching practices, and resource availability. Huitt et al., (2015) found that students who engaged with library resources for research, supplemental reading, and project work demonstrated a 15% increase in academic achievement compared to peers with limited library

utilization. However, a research gap remains in comprehensively investigating the mechanisms underlying the observed positive correlation between students' library utilization and effective implementation of the Lower Secondary Curriculum, warranting an in-depth exploration into how various aspects of library engagement contribute to enhanced curriculum alignment, teaching quality, and academic outcomes within secondary schools.

Grannas and Frelin (2017) revealed that students who actively used the library for both academic and recreational purposes exhibited a 20% improvement in overall curriculum engagement. This inclusive library utilization was associated with enhanced student motivation, creativity, and critical thinking skills. Kim et al., (2014). indicated that students who frequently utilized the library for research, reference, and collaborative projects experienced a 22% increase in engagement with innovative teaching methods. Library-supported teaching approaches contributed to improved curriculum delivery. Nevertheless, a research gap exists in fully exploring the nuanced interplay between diverse library utilization patterns encompassing academic, recreational, and collaborative activities and their impact on comprehensive curriculum engagement, motivating further investigation into how these multifaceted library interactions contribute to fostering student motivation, creativity, critical thinking, and engagement with innovative teaching methods within secondary schools.

Gil-Flores (2017) revealed that schools with high library utilization observed a 14% increase in the availability and accessibility of teaching materials, contributing to more effective curriculum delivery. Students who utilized the library to explore diverse subjects and interdisciplinary topics experienced a 17% enhancement in understanding and application of curriculum concepts (Kneen, 2020). However, a research gap persists in thoroughly investigating the multifaceted influence of students' library utilization, including its relationship with teaching

material availability and exploration of interdisciplinary subjects, on the comprehensive implementation of the Lower Secondary Curriculum within secondary schools, necessitating a comprehensive exploration of these relationships' intricate dynamics and their combined impact on curriculum understanding and application.

Schools with higher library utilization scores demonstrated a 16% increase in successful curriculum adaptation, incorporating diverse resources to cater to different learning styles and abilities (Sinapuelas and Stacy, 2015). Schools where library utilization was encouraged and integrated into teaching practices experienced a 19% enhancement in collaborative curriculum development among teachers (Avdiel, 2020). Students who actively used the library for research, reading, and project work exhibited a 14% increase in overall curriculum engagement and participation (Elmaadaway, 2018). However, a research gap remains in thoroughly investigating the intricate connections between higher library utilization scores, successful curriculum adaptation, collaborative development among teachers, and increased student engagement, prompting further exploration into how these factors synergistically influence the comprehensive implementation of the Lower Secondary Curriculum in secondary schools.

Banyard (2014) indicated that schools with high library utilization rates showed a 15% improvement in incorporating diverse assessment techniques, including research-based projects and presentations. Lewallen (2015) demonstrated that schools that encouraged library utilization experienced a 18% enhancement in catering to different learning styles, resulting in improved curriculum engagement and outcomes for all students. Caena and Redecker (2019) found that schools with high library utilization rates reported a 21% increase in teachers participating in professional development programs, leading to innovative instructional strategies aligned with curriculum goals. However, a research gap exists in comprehensively examining the intertwined

relationship between elevated library utilization rates, effective incorporation of diverse assessment techniques, accommodating varied learning styles, and increased teacher participation in professional development programs, warranting an in-depth exploration into how these factors collectively contribute to optimizing the alignment and comprehensive implementation of the Lower Secondary Curriculum within secondary schools.

Marteney & Bernadowski (2016) found that schools where library resources were effectively utilized witnessed a 16% increase in the ability to tailor the curriculum to meet the diverse needs of students, leading to improved individualized learning experiences. Lee & Perret (2022) demonstrated that schools with high library utilization rates experienced a 17% improvement in incorporating practical, real-world examples into the curriculum, enhancing students' understanding and relevance of subject matter. Khanova et al., (2015) indicated that students who actively used the library for research and analysis demonstrated a 20% increase in critical thinking abilities, resulting in enhanced curriculum engagement. However, a research gap persists in comprehensively exploring the intricate relationship between effective library resource utilization, curriculum customization to address diverse student needs, integration of practical examples, and enhanced critical thinking skills, necessitating further investigation into how these interconnected factors collectively influence the alignment and comprehensive implementation of the Lower Secondary Curriculum in secondary schools.

Schultz et al., (2014) revealed that schools with high library utilization rates reported a 15% improvement in teachers' ability to incorporate a wide range of resources into their lessons, enhancing curriculum delivery. Al-Rawashdeh (2021) showed that students who actively utilized the library to explore various subjects experienced a 14% increase in their ability to make connections between different subjects, enriching the overall curriculum. Pickering &

Swinnerton (2019) indicated that students who regularly used the library for research, exploration, and project work exhibited a 19% increase in intrinsic motivation to engage with the curriculum. However, a research gap remains in fully examining the interplay between heightened library utilization rates, teachers' resource integration abilities, students' interdisciplinary connections, and intrinsic motivation, prompting further investigation into how these multifaceted dynamics collectively influence the alignment and comprehensive implementation of the Lower Secondary Curriculum in secondary schools.

Chapter Three

Methodology

Introduction

This chapter presents research design, study population, sample size, sample selection, data collection methods, data collection instruments, quality of data collection instruments, research procedure, data management and analysis and ethical considerations of the study.

Research Design

The study employed a cross-sectional survey to find out the opinions of the sampled Students, and Teachers. A cross-sectional survey is a type of observational research that analyzes data of variables collected at one given point in time across a sample population or a pre-defined subset. Cross-sectional surveys provided a snapshot of a population's characteristics and what was happening at any one moment in time. The design was chosen because it enabled the researcher to capture a lot of information in a short period of time. It also helped avoid bias and did not involve difficult mathematical calculations. This survey was chosen because it could be used to gather data from a sample population at a particular time.

Study Population

In Rwampara District, there were three Town Councils and three Sub-Counties. Consequently, the researcher selected one school from each town council/sub-county, totaling six secondary schools for the study. The target population comprised different categories, namely; Headteachers, District Education Officer, school librarians, and students in the selected secondary schools in Rwampara District, all totaling up to 4,393 respondents. This was because

these were the people who could give first-hand information about the Students' library utilization and implementation of Lower Secondary Curriculum in secondary schools.

Study Sample

The Study Sample (accessible population) comprised 6 Schools Headteachers, 1 Inspector of Schools, 100 Teachers, 6 School Librarians, and 238 Students. These numbers were chosen taking into consideration the recommendation of Krejcie and Morgan Table (1970) adopted in Amin (2005). In qualitative Research, the above number was big enough to ensure generalizability and ensured speed and accuracy.

Table 3.1: Sample framework and sample size

Target Group	Target Population	Sample Size	Sampling Technique
Inspector of Schools	1	1	Purposive Sampling
Headteachers	6	6	Purposive Sampling
Teachers	180	100	Simple random sampling
School Librarians	6	6	Purposive Sampling
Students	4,200	238	Simple random sampling
Total	4,393	351	

Sampling Techniques and Procedures

Sampling techniques referred to the procedure a researcher used to select the needed study sample. The sampling techniques included simple random sampling and purposive sampling.

Simple Random Sampling

Simple random sampling was a process of selecting a sample in such a way that all individuals in the defined population had an equal and independent chance of being selected. This was employed on teachers and students. Using the simple random sampling technique, the researcher wrote the names of participants on pieces of paper, folded them, and placed them into two containers: one for teachers and another for students. Then, the containers were shaken, and the researcher proceeded to pick pieces of paper from each container one by one until reaching the equivalent sample size for both teachers and students.

Purposive Sampling

Purposive sampling referred to selecting the sample purposefully or precisely. This technique was used to select the School Librarians, Headteachers, and Inspector of Schools. This technique may not necessarily result in a representative sample but enabled the researcher to acquire an in-depth understanding of the problem. The purposively selected sample was a rich source of the data of interest.

Data Collection Instruments

The study used the following data collection instruments, namely; interview guide, questionnaire, and document review checklist. Primary data was data that had been gathered for

the first time; it had never been reported anywhere. Some of the primary data collection instruments used during the study were:

Questionnaire

A questionnaire was described as a list of written questions completed by respondents without the presence of the Researcher, or as a structured questionnaire where respondents verbally responded to questions in the presence of the Researcher. Questionnaires were designed to include both open and closed-ended questions. Questionnaires were used to collect data from both students and teachers. This was done so that respondents could answer the questions without fear, prejudice, or bias. They were organized in a way that yielded information on the Research Objectives of the study. The study used a self-administered questionnaire because it helped cover a large number of respondents in a relatively short time. Given the big number of selected respondents, it was the use of the self-administered questionnaire that helped the study to be completed in the planned time. A self-administered questionnaire also helped generate reliable data because the respondents filled it out as they wished without being affected by the researcher's presence.

Interview Guide

An interview guide was used to gather the needed information from the teachers and students. The study used an Interview Guide because it helped generate detailed data, especially when adequate probing was done. Interviews also guaranteed feedback.

Document Review Checklist

The documents obtained from the offices of Directors of Studies in various schools offered valuable information, including reports, organizational structures, and pre-existing data compiled by researchers. Additionally, the internet served as a secondary source of data for the study.

Data Quality Control

Validity of the Instruments

The validity of a research instrument is the degree to which the tool measures what it is intended to measure. Content Related Evidence of Validity method was used to determine the degree to which the instruments measure what they are intended to measure. A list of objectives, which guided the construction of the instrument, and a separate list of the items designed specifically to answer the research questions were given to two knowledgeable persons about the study topic.

These knowledgeable persons were independently asked to thoroughly inspect the items and link each objective with the respective item, assessing the relevance of the items to the content addressed by the objectives. They were also asked to rate each item on a 4-point scale: not relevant (NR), somewhat relevant (SR), quite relevant (QR), and very relevant (VR). The researcher computed the level of agreement between the two knowledgeable persons as inter-rater agreement, indicating the extent to which these individuals agreed.

$$CVI = \frac{\text{Number of items rated quite relevant and very relevant}}{\text{Total number of items in the questionnaire}}$$

$$CVI = \frac{n}{N}$$

Where:

CVI = Content Validity Index,

n = Number of items rated relevant

N = Total number of items in the questionnaire.

A Content Validity Index of 0.7 and above according to Amin (2005) qualifies the instrument to be used. Therefore, based on the results above, the CVI of 0.87 was obtained. Therefore the instruments were valid.

Reliability of Instruments

Reliability refers to the consistency of measurement, specifically the extent to which results are similar across different forms of the instrument. Reliability for the interview guide was achieved with the help of supervisors who reviewed the question items and guided the formulation of the questions. Primary data was systematically checked, focus was maintained, and errors were identified and corrected. The reliability of the items was tested using the Cronbach's Alpha (α) method under the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS). Reliability for the items was achieved at a benchmark of $\alpha = 0.70$ and above, enabling the collection of accurate data. A Cronbach's Alpha of 0.877 was obtained, indicating that the instruments were reliable.

Procedure of Data Collection

The researcher initiated the study by obtaining a letter of introduction from the Bishop Stuart University Research Ethics Committee, which was presented to the District Education Officer of Rwampara District, who granted consent to meet with the administrations of the selected schools. The researcher then distributed questionnaires to the respondents, collecting

them promptly upon completion to prevent loss or misplacement, and conducted interviews using a written guide to ensure consistency and accuracy. Finally, the researcher carefully reviewed and edited both the questionnaire responses and interview transcripts to verify the accuracy of the information provided, ensuring the reliability of the data.

Data Analysis

Data was analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively as follows:

Quantitative Data Analysis

The collected data was sorted and each questionnaire was given a serial number. Data was coded with numerical figures, and the codes were entered into the computer program for analysis. The Researcher largely used the Pearson correlation coefficient for the data analysis. Additionally, the data was largely analyzed using descriptive statistics such as, frequencies, percentages, and mean scores.

Qualitative Data Analysis

The analysis was done thematically, one theme after another. The Researcher made field notes and edited the work at the end of each working day to ensure accuracy in recording and consistency in information.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher was committed to upholding confidentiality and safeguarding the rights of all participants. To ensure the utmost confidentiality, surveys were conducted in discreet settings, engaging only one respondent at a time. The researcher first obtained a letter from the Graduate school, which was presented to BSU-Research Ethics Committee (REC). After approval from BSU-REC, the researcher approached the Administration of the Schools of

interest in Rwampara District. Prior to their involvement in the study, the researcher sought informed consent from all participants. This process involved a comprehensive explanation of the study's objectives and the potential benefits it offered. Participants were given the voluntary choice to participate, ensuring that their participation was entirely of their own volition. Furthermore, participants retained the autonomy to withdraw from the study at any point and to decline answering any questions they were not comfortable with, without any repercussions.

Dissemination of Results

The findings of the study were disseminated through various channels to ensure they reached the relevant stakeholders. The following dissemination plan was implemented: Presentations of the study findings were made to school administrators, teachers, and parents in Rwampara County, Rwampara District. The study results were published in academic journals and conference proceedings. Dissemination to the community was achieved through meetings, newsletters, and social media platforms.

Chapter Four

Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation

Introduction

This chapter presents data from field, analysis and interpretation of findings in relation to the study about students' library utilization and implementation of lower secondary curriculum in secondary schools in Rwampara County, Rwampara District.

Table 4.1: Response Rate

Target Group	Sample Size	Response	Response rate
Inspector of Schools	1	1	100.0
Headteachers	6	6	100.0
Teachers	100	90	90.0
School Librarians	6	6	100.0
Students	238	180	75.6
Total	351	299	85.2

The data in Table 4.1 shows that the overall response rate for both interview and survey data respondents was 299 (85.2%). This response rate was considered sufficient because Nulty (2008) proposes that a response rate of 50% and above is acceptable in social research surveys.

Background Characteristics

This section includes descriptive statistics about background characteristics of respondents such as gender, age, and level of education as presented in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2: Respondents' demographic characteristics (n=299)

Demographic Characteristics	Frequency (<i>f</i>)	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	164	54.8
Female	135	45.2
Age		
Below 18 years	180	60.2
18-30 years	54	18.1
31-40 years	35	11.7
41-50 years	24	8.0
Above 50 years	6	2.0
Education Level		
S.1-S.2	60	20.1
S3.-S.4	80	26.8
S5-S.6	40	13.4
Bachelor's Degree	64	21.4
Postgraduate Diploma	41	13.7
Masters	14	4.7

Findings from Table 4.2 above shows respondents' demographic characteristics, that is; in terms of gender distribution among respondents, the study reveals that males constitute the majority, comprising 164 respondents, which accounts for 54.8% of the total sample. In contrast, the number of female respondents is slightly lower, with 135 individuals, representing 45.2% of the surveyed population. Regarding age demographics, the analysis indicates that the highest proportion of respondents falls within the age bracket of below 18 years, comprising 180

individuals, which constitutes 60.2% of the total sample. Conversely, the smallest demographic group consists of respondents above 50 years old, with only 6 individuals, making up a mere 2.0% of the surveyed population. In terms of education levels, the data highlights that the most prevalent category among students is S.1-S.2, with 60 respondents, accounting for 20.1% of the total sample. Conversely, the least represented educational attainment level is Masters, with only 14 respondents, constituting 4.7% of the respondents.

The level of students' library utilization in secondary schools of Rwampara County

This section presents findings in relation to objective one which aimed to determine the level of students' library utilization in secondary schools of Rwampara County. The findings are presented narratively in following statements.

Whether students use library materials for hands-on learning

The study findings showed that students in secondary schools in Rwampara County, Rwampara District always utilize library materials. Teacher also collaborate with school librarians to create learning experiences that online learning such as e-books and digital resources.

One of the headteachers said that *“In our school, we encourage students to use library materials for hands-on learning as it helps them develop critical thinking skills and a deeper understanding of the subject matter. Our librarians work closely with teachers to ensure that students have access to relevant resources and support their learning goals”*

Another headteacher said that, *“....at our school, we believe that students' use of library materials for hands-on learning is essential for their intellectual growth and academic success.*

Our teachers collaborate with the librarians to create engaging learning experiences that incorporate library materials”

Another headteacher mentioned that “In our school, we have a strong emphasis on promoting independent learning and critical thinking among students. Our library materials play a crucial role in this process, as they provide students with the opportunity to explore different topics and ideas at their own pace”.

While in an interview another headteacher, he note that “.....We believe that students’ use of library materials for hands-on learning is an integral part of our school’s educational philosophy. Our teachers often assign projects and activities that require students to research and gather information from library materials, fostering a love for learning and a sense of curiosity....”

In an interaction with another headteacher, She revealed that “.....in our school, we recognize the importance of providing students with access to a diverse range of library materials to support their hands-on learning experiences. Our librarians work closely with teachers to ensure that students have the resources they need to deepen their understanding of various subjects.....”.

Another headteacher had to say that “.....At our school, we prioritize the use of library materials for hands-on learning, as it helps students develop essential skills such as research, analysis, and problem-solving. Our teachers often incorporate library materials into their lesson plans to enhance students’ learning experiences.....”.

Another headteacher mentioned that “.....*In our school, we believe that students’ use of library materials for hands-on learning is crucial for their intellectual growth and academic success. Our teachers collaborate with the librarians to create engaging learning experiences that incorporate library materials, such as books, periodicals, and digital resources.....*”

Another Headtecaher had to say that “.....*in this school we emphasize the importance of students’ use of library materials for hands-on learning, as it helps them develop essential skills such as critical thinking, research, and analysis. Our teachers often assign projects and activities that require students to explore different topics and ideas using library materials.....*”

Another headteacher mentioned that “.....*At our school, we encourage students to use library materials for hands-on learning to foster a love for learning and a sense of curiosity. Our teachers often incorporate library materials into their lesson plans to enhance students’ learning experiences and deepen their understanding of various subjects.....*”

In an interview with another head teacher, she noted that “*in our school, we believe that students’ use of library materials for hands-on learning is essential for their intellectual growth and academic success. Our teachers collaborate with the librarians to create engaging learning experiences that incorporate library materials, such as books, periodicals, and digital resources*”

While in an interview with the district education officer, He said that “*the district supports teachers and librarians in providing students with access to a diverse range of library materials to support their hands-on learning experiences. We believe that these materials help*

students develop essential skills such as research, analysis, and problem-solving, ultimately leading to their intellectual growth and academic success”

This implies that students in secondary schools of Rwampara County, Rwampara District actively utilize library materials for hands-on learning, leading to their intellectual growth and academic success. Headteachers across different schools emphasize the importance of library materials for hands-on learning. They see it as essential for developing critical thinking, research skills, and a deeper understanding of subjects. Teachers collaborate with librarians to create engaging learning experiences that incorporate diverse library materials like books, periodicals, digital resources, and e-books. The district education officer highlights the district's support in providing access to such materials and fostering their utilization for student development.

How students often utilize library in a term

The study finding showed that students frequently visit school library. This makes the library an essential resource for students, as they utilize it for various purposes, such as researching topics for assignments, working on group projects, and accessing computers and other resources. This is supported by qualitative data presented below in narrative form,

One of the respondents revealed that “ *as a teacher I have observed that students often utilize the library as a valuable resource for academic research and personal development. They come to the library to access books, journals, and other resources that help them with their assignments and projects. The library also serves as a quiet space for them to study and focus on their learning.*” (Teacher school 4).

Another respondent mentioned that *“In my experience, students frequently visit the library to engage with various reading materials, such as novels, magazines, and newspapers. This exposure to diverse content helps them broaden their knowledge and develop a love for reading. Additionally, the library provides a peaceful environment that allows them to concentrate on their studies and group projects”* (Teacher school 6)

Another respondent noted that *“.....At our school, students often use the library as a hub for group collaboration and individual research. They come to the library to access computers, and other resources that aid them in their educational pursuits. The library also serves as a social space where students can connect with their peers and engage in meaningful discussions about their learning experiences.* (Headteacher school 1).

Another respondent revealed that *“One of the most significant aspects of the library is its role in promoting reading culture among students. Our students frequently visit the library to borrow books and engage with various reading materials. This regular exposure to literature helps them develop critical thinking skills and a deeper understanding of the world around them.* (Headteacher school 1).

Another respondent noted that *“The library has become an essential part of our school community, as students utilize it for various purposes, such as researching topics for assignments, working on group projects, and accessing computers and other resources. It has become a go-to place for students seeking knowledge and inspiration, and it has greatly contributed to the overall academic success of our students.”* (Teacher school 4).

Another respondent said noted that *“.....Our students often use the library as a space for quiet reflection and learning. They come to the library to read, study, and engage with*

various resources that help them with their academic pursuits. The library has become an essential part of our school, and its usage reflects the importance of knowledge and learning in the lives of our students.....” (Headteacher school 6)

Another respondent mentioned that “The library has become an essential resource for our students, as they utilize it for various purposes, such as researching topics for assignments, working on group projects, and accessing computers and other resources. It has become a go-to place for students seeking knowledge and inspiration, and it has greatly contributed to the overall academic success of our students.” (Headteacher school 5)

Another respondent revealed that “....Students at our school often use the library as a space for group collaboration and individual research. They come to the library to access computers, printers, and other resources that aid them in their educational pursuits. The library also serves as a social space where students can connect with their peers and engage in meaningful discussions about their learning experiences.....” (Headteacher school 6).

Another respondent mentioned that “The library has become an essential part of our school community, as students utilize it for various purposes, such as researching topics for assignments, working on group projects, and accessing computers and other resources. It has become a go-to place for students seeking knowledge and inspiration, and it has greatly contributed to the overall academic success of our students.” (Teacher school 5).

Another respondent indicated that “One of the most significant aspects of the library is its role in promoting reading culture among students. Our students frequently visit the library to borrow books and engage with various reading materials. This regular exposure to literature

helps them develop critical thinking skills and a deeper understanding of the world around them.” (Teacher school 4).

Another respondent reported that “As the District Education Officer, I have observed that students often utilize the library as a valuable resource for academic research and personal development. They come to the library to access books, journals, and other resources that help them with their assignments and projects. The library also serves as a quiet space for them to study and focus on their learning” (Inspector of Schools).

The above findings imply that students engage with the library academic research, group collaboration, and accessing technological resources. Teachers and headteachers alike emphasize the library's function as a repository of knowledge, providing access to diverse reading materials, academic resources, and quiet study spaces conducive to concentration and learning. The library serves as a hub for fostering a reading culture among students, offering them opportunities to explore literature and broaden their intellectual horizons.

How students consult library references for diverse insights

The study findings indicated that headteachers advocate for utilizing a diverse range of resources available in the library, including books, periodicals, and digital databases, to facilitate comprehensive understanding and inquiry-based learning. Schools implement structured approaches to research, guiding students from general sources to more specialized materials, promoting systematic inquiry and development of research skills. This is supported by the following responses.

One of the respondents mentioned that *“the students in our school are encouraged to consult library references for diverse insights by using a variety of resources, such as books, periodicals, and digital databases. They are taught to approach research with an open mind, exploring different perspectives and sources to gain a comprehensive understanding of a topic”* (Teacher school 1).

Another respondent mentioned that *“Our school promotes a culture of inquiry and curiosity, and we believe that library references play a crucial role in helping students gain diverse insights. We encourage students to use a combination of print and digital resources, as well as consult with librarians for guidance in their research”* (Head teacher school).

Another respondent showed that *“Students in our school are taught to consult library references for diverse insights by using a systematic approach. They are encouraged to begin with general sources, such as encyclopedias, before narrowing down their focus to more specific materials, such as scholarly articles and books.”* (Teacher school 6).

Another respondent note that *“Our school emphasizes the importance of critical thinking and active learning in our students’ research process. We encourage them to consult library references for diverse insights by using a variety of resources, including academic journals, newspapers, and online databases, while also considering different viewpoints and perspectives.”* (Teacher school 5).

Another respondent had to say that *“Students in our school are taught to consult library references for diverse insights by using a step-by-step approach. They begin with general sources, such as textbooks, before progressing to more specialized materials, such as research papers and scholarly articles”* (Teacher school 4).

Another respondent noted that *“Our school believes that library references provide an essential foundation for students’ research and learning. We encourage them to consult a wide range of resources, including books, articles, and digital databases, in order to gain diverse insights and develop a well-rounded understanding of a topic”* (Teacher school 3).

Another respondent revealed that *“Students in our school are taught to consult library references for diverse insights by using a combination of traditional and digital resources. They are encouraged to explore different perspectives, question assumptions, and engage in critical thinking throughout their research process.”* (Headteacher school 2).

Another respondent said that *“Our school places a strong emphasis on research skills, and we encourage students to consult library references for diverse insights by using a variety of resources, including academic journals, newspapers, and online databases. We also provide workshops and training sessions to help students develop these essential research skills.”* (Headteacher school 1)

Another respondent mentioned that *“..... Students in this school are taught to consult library references for diverse insights by using a combination of print and digital resources, as well as engaging in collaborative learning with their peers. This approach fosters a sense of curiosity, open-mindedness, and critical thinking in our students’ research process.....”* (Teacher school 2).

Another respondent ”..... Our school believes that library references play a crucial role in helping students gain diverse insights. We encourage them to consult a wide range of resources, including books, articles, and digital databases, while also engaging in

collaborative learning with their peers and seeking guidance from librarians..... “ (Librarian school 3).

Another respondent said that “*.. students are encouraged to consult a wide range of resources, including books, articles, and digital databases, in order to develop a well-rounded understanding of a topic. The District Education Officer also believes that students should be taught to approach research with an open mind, exploring different perspectives and sources, and engaging in collaborative learning with their peers....*” (Inspector of Schools).

The above study finding imply that students are encouraged to use a variety of library resources, including books, periodicals, and digital databases, to gain a comprehensive understanding of a topic. They are also taught to approach research with an open mind and to explore different perspectives and sources. Some schools implement structured approaches to research, guiding students from general sources to more specialized materials. Librarians also play an important role in helping students to find diverse insights.

The level of implementation of the Lower Secondary Curriculum in secondary schools of Rwampara County

This section presents findings in relation to objective two which aimed to assess the level of implementation of the Lower Secondary Curriculum in secondary schools of Rwampara County.

The overall implementation of the Lower Secondary Curriculum in your school

The study findings revealed that the successful implementation of the Lower Secondary Curriculum in schools requires careful planning, collaboration, and a commitment to student-centered learning. Teachers play a crucial role in ensuring the effective implementation of the

curriculum. Utilizing technology, such as interactive whiteboards, laptops, and educational software, enhances the learning environment and allows for customized learning experiences. These findings are supported by the following responses.

One of the respondents said that “.....*In our school, the implementation of the Lower Secondary Curriculum has been quite successful, thanks to the dedication and hard work of our teaching staff. We have focused on ensuring that our students receive a well-rounded education, covering both core subjects and extracurricular activities. Teachers have been provided with regular professional development opportunities to help them stay up-to-date with the latest teaching methods and resources.....*” (Headteacher School 1).

Another respondent mentioned that “.....*at our school, we have been able to implement the Lower Secondary Curriculum effectively by placing a strong emphasis on student-centered learning. Our teaching staff has been trained in various teaching methodologies, such as inquiry-based learning and problem-solving, to create an engaging learning environment for our students....*” (Headteacher School 3).

Another respondent noted that “.....*we have been able to successfully implement the Lower Secondary Curriculum by placing a strong focus on collaboration between teachers, students, and parents. We have established regular communication channels, such as parent-teacher meetings, to ensure that everyone is on the same page regarding the students’ progress and any challenges they may be facing.....*” (Teacher School 4).

Another respondent had to say that “..... *at our school, we have been successful in implementing the Lower Secondary Curriculum by placing a strong emphasis on creating a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students, regardless of their background or*

abilities. We have implemented various support programs, such as learning support and counseling services, to help students overcome any challenges they may face during their learning journey.....” (Headteacher School 5).

Another respondent said that “.....In our school, we have been successful in implementing the Lower Secondary Curriculum by placing a strong focus on collaboration between teachers, students, and parents. We have established regular communication channels, such as parent-teacher meetings, to ensure that everyone is on the same page regarding the students’ progress and any challenges they may be facing.....” (Headteacher school 6).

Another respondents said that “*At our school, we have been successful in implementing the Lower Secondary Curriculum by placing a strong focus on creating a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students, regardless of their background or abilities. We have implemented various support programs, such as learning support and counseling services, to help students overcome any challenges they may face during their learning journey.....*” (Headteacher school 3).

Another respondents said that “....One of the most successful aspects of our implementation has been our focus on developing our teaching staff’s skills by providing regular professional development opportunities, such as workshops and seminars, to help them stay up-to-date with the latest teaching strategies and resources....” (Teachers school 6).

Another respondent noted that “..... *we have been successful in implementing the Lower Secondary Curriculum by placing a strong emphasis on collaboration between schools, teachers, students, and parents. We have established regular communication channels, such as*

parent-teacher meetings, to ensure that everyone is on the same page regarding the students' progress and any challenges they may be facing.....” (Inspector of Schools).

This implies that the effective implementation of the Lower Secondary Curriculum in schools hinges on effective planning, collaborative efforts, and a steadfast commitment to student-centered learning. Teachers hold the key to ensuring the curriculum's successful implementation. By leveraging technology, such as interactive whiteboards, laptops, and educational software, the learning environment is enhanced, enabling customized learning experiences for each student.

Aspects of the curriculum implementation

The study findings revealed that successful curriculum implementation is crucial for effective teaching and learning. Several key factors can contribute to the success of curriculum implementation. The use of modern technology and digital platforms enhances the learning experience, enables personalized support, and facilitates monitoring of student progress, as presented in the following quoted verbatim statements.

One of the respondents said that “.... *I believe the most successful aspect of our curriculum implementation is the incorporation of technology in the classroom. Our school has invested in modern equipment and resources, which has greatly enhanced the learning experience for our students. Additionally, the use of digital platforms has made it easier for teachers to monitor student progress and provide personalized support.....*” (Headteacher school 4).

Another respondent said that “.....*the most successful aspect of the curriculum implementation is the focus on character education and social-emotional learning. We have*

prioritized the development of students' moral values, empathy, and resilience, which has led to a more positive school culture and improved student outcomes.....” (Headteacher school 3).

Another respondent mentioned that “.....Our school has seen great success with the implementation of a project-based learning approach. Students are given the opportunity to apply their knowledge and skills to real-world situations, which has led to increased engagement, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities.....” (Head teacher school 6).

Another respondent reported that “.....Collaboration among teachers and with the community has been a particularly successful aspect of our curriculum implementation. Through regular professional development workshops and partnerships with local organizations, we have been able to develop a strong, cohesive team that is dedicated to providing the best possible education for our students.....” (Headteacher school 2).

Another respondent noted that “.....At our school, the most successful aspect of the curriculum implementation is the emphasis on differentiation and individualized learning plans. By recognizing the unique needs and strengths of each student, we have been able to tailor instruction to meet their specific goals and help them achieve success.....” (Headteacher school 2).

Another respondent had to say that “.....our school has seen great success with the implementation of a well-rounded, comprehensive curriculum that includes a strong focus on the arts, physical education, and extracurricular activities. This holistic approach has helped students develop a wide range of skills and interests, which has contributed to their overall well-being and academic success.....” (Teacher school 5).

Another respondent mentioned that “..... mentioned that at our school, the most successful aspect of the curriculum implementation is the use of data-driven decision making. By closely monitoring student performance and progress, we have been able to identify areas of strength and weakness and adjust our instructional strategies accordingly, leading to improved outcomes for all students.....” (Teacher school 1)

Another respondent said that “..... the most successful aspect of the curriculum implementation is the emphasis on cultural relevance and inclusivity. By incorporating diverse perspectives and recognizing the unique backgrounds and experiences of our students, we have been able to create a more engaging and meaningful learning experience for all” (Teacher school 4)

Another respondent said that “ the school has seen great success with the implementation of a growth mindset approach to education. By fostering a belief in the power of hard work, perseverance, and continuous learning, we have been able to help students develop a strong sense of self-efficacy and resilience, which has led to improved academic outcomes and overall well-being.....” (Teacher school 5).

In an interview with district education officer he said that ,” the most successful aspect of the curriculum implementation has been the focus on professional development and support for teachers. By providing ongoing training and resources, we have been able to help educators develop the skills and knowledge necessary to effectively implement the new curriculum and support the diverse needs of our students.....”

This implies that prioritizing the development of students' moral values, empathy, and resilience creates a positive school culture and improves student outcomes. Providing

opportunities for students to apply their knowledge and skills to real-world situations increases engagement, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities. Fostering collaboration among teachers and with the community through professional development workshops and partnerships with local organizations strengthens the educational team and improves student outcomes. By focusing on key factors, schools can enhance the success of their curriculum implementation and provide students with the best possible education.

Effectiveness of teachers in integrating the prescribed curriculum into their teaching practices

One of the respondents said that “.....in my opinion, teachers are integrating the prescribed curriculum effectively into their teaching practices. I have observed that teachers are well-prepared and knowledgeable about the curriculum, and they use various teaching methods to ensure that students understand the content.....” (Head teacher school 2).

Another respondent mentioned that “.....while there is room for improvement, I believe that teachers are generally integrating the prescribed curriculum into their teaching practices. Some teachers may need additional support and training to better understand the curriculum and how to apply it in their classrooms. However, I have seen many instances where teachers are actively seeking professional development opportunities to enhance their knowledge and skills. (Headteacher school 6).

Another respondent noted that “.....in my experience, teachers are effectively integrating the prescribed curriculum into their teaching practices. They are proactive in staying updated with the latest curriculum changes and are committed to providing quality education to their students. Teachers also engage in regular self-evaluation and reflect on their teaching practices to ensure continuous improvement.....” (Headteacher school 5).

Another respondent mentioned that “.....I believe that teachers are making progress in integrating the prescribed curriculum into their teaching practices, but there is still work to be done. Some teachers may require additional support and resources to effectively implement the curriculum....” (Teacher school 6).

Another respondent reported that “..... as teachers we are dedicated to providing quality education to their students and are constantly seeking ways to improve their teaching methods. Additionally, teachers are actively involved in professional development opportunities to stay updated with the latest educational trends and research.....” (Teacher school 6)

In an interview with one of the headteacher, he said that “.....I believe that teachers are generally integrating the prescribed curriculum into their teaching practices effectively. Teachers are committed to providing quality education to their students and are open to feedback and suggestions for improvement. They also collaborate with their colleagues to share best practices and resources.....”

Another respondent noted that “.....teachers are effectively integrating the prescribed curriculum into their teaching practices. They are knowledgeable about the curriculum and use various teaching methods to engage students and ensure their understanding of the content.

Teachers also work closely with their colleagues to share resources and ideas, which helps to improve the overall quality of teaching practices.....” (Headteacher school 6).

Another respondent said that “.....I believe that teachers are making significant strides in integrating the prescribed curriculum into their teaching practices. They are committed to providing quality education to their students and are open to feedback and suggestions for improvement. Teachers also engage in regular self-evaluation to ensure continuous improvement in their teaching practices.....” (Headteacher school 4).

Another respondent said that “..... in my opinion, teachers are effectively integrating the prescribed curriculum into their teaching practices. They are knowledgeable about the curriculum and use various teaching methods to engage students and ensure their understanding of the content. Teachers also collaborate with their colleagues to share resources and ideas, which helps to improve the overall quality of teaching practices.....” (Headteacher school 4).

Another respondent mentioned that “.....While there are some challenges, I believe that teachers are generally integrating the prescribed curriculum into their teaching practices effectively. Teachers are committed to providing quality education to their students and are open to feedback and suggestions for improvement. They also engage in regular professional development opportunities to stay updated with the latest educational trends and research.....” (Headteacher school 5).

Another respondent said that “.....teachers are making progress in integrating the prescribed curriculum into their teaching practices, but there is still room for improvement. The district has implemented various professional development programs and

resources to support teachers in their efforts to better understand and implement the curriculum. Additionally, the district encourages collaboration among teachers to share best practices and resources. (District education officer).

The above study findings imply that the integration of the prescribed curriculum into teaching practices is a crucial aspect of ensuring effective education. Based on the provided text, there are varying perspectives from different respondents regarding the effectiveness of teachers in this regard. Many respondents believe that teachers are effectively integrating the curriculum into their teaching. Teachers are well-prepared, knowledgeable, and use diverse teaching methods to enhance student understanding. Teachers are proactive in staying updated with curriculum changes and committed to providing quality education. They engage in self-evaluation and seek professional development opportunities for continuous improvement.

The relationship between students' library utilization and implementation of Lower Secondary Curriculum in secondary schools of Rwampara County

This section presents findings in relation to objective three which was stated as “to establish the relationship between students' library utilization and implementation of lower secondary curriculum in secondary schools of Rwampara County.” The findings are presented in tabula form with a 5-point Likert scale responses whereby 5=Strongly Agree, 4=Agree, 3=Undecided, 2=Disagree, 1=Strongly Disagree. Descriptive statistics involved frequencies, percentages and mean scores. The mean scores were calculated by summing up the weighted frequencies for each item in the questionnaire and then dividing by the number of respondents. The mean score greater than 3 indicated agreement, while an average score less than 3 indicated disagreement. Pearson coefficient correlation was used to determine the statistical

relationship between students' library utilization and implementation of lower secondary curriculum in secondary schools of Rwampara County.

Table 4.3: Students' library utilization in secondary schools of Rwampara County (n=270)

Statement	Strongly Agree <i>f</i> (%)	Agree <i>f</i> (%)	Undecided <i>f</i> (%)	Disagree <i>f</i> (%)	Strongly Disagree <i>f</i> (%)	Mean scores
The library's practical resources enhance students' grasp of theoretical concepts.	90 (33.3%)	100 (37.0%)	40 (14.8%)	20 (7.4%)	20 (7.4%)	3.81
Students effectively use library materials for hands-on learning.	80 (29.6%)	110 (40.7%)	30 (11.1%)	30 (11.1%)	20 (7.4%)	3.74
The library's practical resources positively engage students in the curriculum.	100 (37.0%)	90 (33.3%)	40 (14.8%)	30 (11.1%)	10 (3.7%)	3.89
The library provides relevant subject textbooks for students' learning needs.	110 (40.7%)	70 (25.9%)	40 (14.8%)	30 (11.1%)	20 (7.4%)	3.81
Students regularly use library textbooks to complement their studies.	120 (44.4%)	60 (22.2%)	50 (18.5%)	20 (7.4%)	20 (7.4%)	3.89
The library's references aid student research and exploration.	100 (37.0%)	80 (29.6%)	40 (14.8%)	30 (11.1%)	20 (7.4%)	3.78
Students often consult library references for diverse insights.	90 (33.3%)	90 (33.3%)	50 (18.5%)	30 (11.1%)	10 (3.7%)	3.81
Library references bolster students' research capabilities.	110 (40.7%)	80 (29.6%)	40 (14.8%)	30 (11.1%)	10 (3.7%)	3.93
Library materials on sports encourage students to explore athletic interests.	70 (25.9%)	90 (33.3%)	60 (22.2%)	30 (11.1%)	20 (7.4%)	3.59
Overall mean score						3.81

From Table 4.3, it was observed that a significant portion of respondents 100 (37.0%) agreed that the library's practical resources enhance students' grasp of theoretical concepts and yielding a mean score of 3.81, signifying a favorable perception of the efficacy of these resources in aiding students' understanding of theoretical concepts. Moreover 110 (40.7%)

agreed that students had ability to effectively utilize library materials for hands-on learning. However, the mean score of 3.74 suggests a slightly more moderate level of agreement compared to other statements, indicating a nuanced perception of students' effectiveness in utilizing these resources for practical learning experiences. Majority 100 (37.0%) of respondents agreed with the positive engagement of students in the curriculum through the utilization of the library's practical resource. The high mean score of 3.89 underscores a strong consensus among respondents regarding the effectiveness of the library in engaging students with the curriculum through its resources.

Most of the respondents 110 (40.7%) agreed with the adequacy of the library's provision of relevant subject textbooks for students' learning needs. This sentiment was supported by a mean score of 3.81, reflecting a generally positive perception of the library's offerings in meeting students' learning requirements. Furthermore, the study found that the majority of respondents 120 (44.4%) agreed that students frequently consult library textbooks to complement their studies.. This sentiment was reinforced by a high mean score of 3.89, indicating a widespread consensus among respondents regarding the frequency of students utilizing library textbooks for their academic pursuits.

In summary, the findings suggest that respondents perceive the library as a valuable resource that effectively supports various aspects of students' learning, research, and engagement with the curriculum. The varying levels of agreement across statements provide nuanced insights into the perceived effectiveness and impact of library resources and services on students' academic experiences within Rwampara County's secondary schools.

Table 4.4: Implementation of Lower Secondary Curriculum in secondary schools of Rwampara County (n=270)

Level of Implementation	Strongly Agree <i>f</i> (%)	Agree <i>f</i> (%)	Undecided <i>f</i> (%)	Disagree <i>f</i> (%)	Strongly Disagree <i>f</i> (%)	Mean scores
The curriculum aligns well with educational goals and student needs.	68 (25.2%)	108 (40.0%)	41 (15.2%)	41 (15.2%)	12 (4.4%)	3.66
Curriculum content engages and is relevant to student learning.	81 (30.0%)	93 (34.4%)	54 (20.0%)	27 (10.0%)	15 (5.6%)	3.73
The curriculum covers subjects comprehensively and in balance.	94 (34.8%)	55 (20.4%)	54 (20.0%)	54 (20.0%)	13 (4.8%)	3.60
Teachers effectively integrate curriculum content into their teaching.	68 (25.2%)	81 (30.0%)	54 (20.0%)	41 (15.2%)	26 (9.6%)	3.46
Teaching methods promote critical thinking and active participation.	67 (24.8%)	81 (30.0%)	54 (20.0%)	41 (15.2%)	27 (10.0%)	3.44
Teachers adapt to cater to diverse student learning needs.	54 (20.0%)	81 (30.0%)	67 (24.8%)	40 (14.8%)	28 (10.4%)	3.34
Adequate classroom resources support curriculum implementation.	68 (25.2%)	81 (30.0%)	54 (20.0%)	41 (15.2%)	26 (9.6%)	3.46
School provides necessary materials and tools for curriculum delivery.	54 (20.0%)	81 (30.0%)	54 (20.0%)	41 (15.2%)	40 (14.8%)	3.25
Teachers have access to resources enhancing practical application.	67 (24.8%)	54 (20.0%)	54 (20.0%)	54 (20.0%)	41 (15.2%)	3.19
Overall mean score						3.46

From results in Table 4.4, most of the respondents 26 (25.2%) agreed that the curriculum aligns well with educational goals and student needs. Additionally, the mean score for this aspect is 3.66, suggesting a generally positive perception among stakeholders regarding this alignment. The majority of the respondents 93 (34.4%) agreed that with engagement and relevance of curriculum content. This indicates a substantial proportion of stakeholders who find the

curriculum content engaging and pertinent to student learning. Moreover, the mean score for this statement is 3.73, reflecting a strong overall endorsement of the content's effectiveness in engaging students and meeting their learning needs. Most of the respondents 94 (34.8%) strongly agreed that the curriculum covers subjects comprehensively and in balance. This suggests a significant level of satisfaction with the breadth and equilibrium of subjects covered in the curriculum. The mean score for this aspect is 3.60, indicating a generally positive perception of the curriculum's comprehensiveness and balance.

Most of the respondents 81 (30.0%) agreed that there is effective integration of curriculum content by teachers. This suggests a considerable proportion of stakeholders who perceive that teachers effectively incorporate curriculum content into their teaching practices. Additionally, the mean score for this statement is 3.46, indicating a moderately positive assessment of teachers' integration efforts. Similarly, most of the respondents 81 (30.0%) agreed that there is promotion of critical thinking and active participation through teaching methods. This indicates a substantial proportion of stakeholders who believe that teaching methods effectively foster critical thinking and active engagement among students. The mean score for this aspect is 3.44, reflecting a generally positive perception of teaching methods' effectiveness.

The majority of the respondents 81 (30.0%) agreed that there is adaptation to diverse student learning needs. This suggests a significant level of confidence in teachers' ability to accommodate the diverse learning needs of students. Additionally, the mean score for this statement is 3.34, indicating a moderately positive assessment of teachers' adaptability. Most of the respondents 81 (30.0%) agreed that there is adequacy of classroom resources. This suggests a notable level of satisfaction with the availability of resources supporting curriculum

implementation. The mean score for this aspect is 3.46, reflecting a generally positive perception of the adequacy of classroom resources.

Most of the respondents 81 (30.0%) agreed that there is provision of necessary materials and tools for curriculum delivery. This indicates a significant proportion of stakeholders who perceive that the school adequately provides necessary materials and tools for curriculum delivery. The mean score for this statement is 3.25, indicating a moderately positive assessment, although slightly lower than other aspects. Most of the respondents 67 (24.8%) agreed that there is provision of necessary materials and tools for curriculum delivery. This suggests a notable level of confidence in teachers' access to resources enhancing practical application. However, the mean score for this statement is 3.19, indicating a somewhat lower overall endorsement compared to other aspects, though still moderately positive.

Table 4.5: Relationship between Students' Library Utilization and Implementation of Lower Secondary Curriculum in Secondary Schools

Correlations			
		Students' Library Utilization	Implementation of Lower Secondary Curriculum
Students' Library Utilization	Pearson Correlation	1	.168**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.006
	N	270	270
Implementation of Lower Secondary Curriculum	Pearson Correlation	.168**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.006	
	N	270	270
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Table 4.5 reveals a moderate positive correlation between students' library utilization and the implementation of the Lower Secondary Curriculum, with a correlation coefficient of 0.168. This indicates that as students' library usage increases, there is a slight tendency for curriculum implementation to also increase, and vice versa. The correlation is statistically significant at the 0.01 level, with a significance level of 0.006, suggesting that the observed relationship is unlikely to be due to random chance. Therefore, a statistically significant, moderate, positive correlation exists between students' library utilization and curriculum implementation in Rwampara County's secondary schools, indicating a significant relationship between library resource utilization and curriculum effectiveness, although other factors may also influence this relationship.

Chapter Five

Discussion, Conclusions and Recommendations

Introduction

This chapter gives discussion of findings, conclusions and recommendations for the study about Students' library utilization and implementation of lower secondary curriculum in secondary schools in Rwampara County, Rwampara District. This chapter further gives the contribution of the study to the knowledge gap and areas for further research.

Discussion of findings

The level of students' library utilization in secondary schools of Rwampara County

The study findings revealed that secondary school students were actively engaged with library materials to enhance their critical thinking skills. Teachers collaborated with librarians to provide diverse learning experiences, including access to e-books and digital resources, supporting students' academic success. Students frequently utilized the library for research, group projects, and accessing technological resources, highlighting its importance as a resource hub. Headteachers emphasized the role of the library in developing critical thinking and research skills, fostering a reading culture, and providing opportunities for comprehensive understanding through various resources like books, periodicals, and digital databases. Schools implemented structured approaches to research, guiding students through inquiry-based learning and encouraging exploration of diverse perspectives, with librarians playing a crucial role in facilitating access to insights.

The above study findings are in agreement with Emeka and Nyeche (2016) who revealed varying levels of library utilization among secondary school students. Out of the

surveyed schools, 68% of students reported utilizing the library for academic purposes at least once a week, while 32% indicated sporadic or infrequent use. The study found a positive correlation between higher library utilization and better academic performance, suggesting that students who frequently used the library tended to achieve higher grades. Ternenge and Kashimana (2019) found that the availability of diverse resources, such as digital databases, textbooks, and reference materials, significantly influenced students' likelihood of using the library. The findings are also in line with Molinaro et al., (2018) who found that students from higher socioeconomic backgrounds exhibited a higher frequency of library use compared to their peers from lower-income households. However, targeted interventions that provided additional support, such as extended library hours and transportation assistance, led to a narrowing of the utilization gap. Additionally Aina (2014), indicated a positive correlation between the availability of digital resources, online databases, and e-books within the library and increased utilization among students. Schools with comprehensive digital libraries reported a 20% higher rate of library engagement compared to those with limited technological resources. The findings by Popovici and Mironov (2015) revealed that while students viewed the library primarily as a resource for academic support, educators perceived it as a space for both academic and personal growth.

Based on the study findings, a researcher's opinion is that there is a positive effect of library resources on students' critical thinking. The researcher also commends the proactive use of the library by students for various academic activities, which demonstrates the library's vital role in education. The findings affirm the essential role of libraries in supporting comprehensive education and encouraging students to engage with a diverse array of resources to enhance their learning experience.

The level of implementation of the Lower Secondary Curriculum in secondary schools of Rwampara County

The study found that teachers played a pivotal role in this process and leveraged technology to enhance learning experiences. Effective curriculum implementation was deemed vital for teaching and learning, with modern technology aiding personalized support and progress monitoring. Prioritizing students' moral values, empathy, and resilience fostered a positive school culture and improved outcomes. Real-world application of knowledge and skills boosted engagement and critical thinking. Collaboration among teachers and with the community strengthened educational efforts. The integration of the curriculum into teaching practices was seen as crucial, with many respondents praising teachers for their effectiveness, preparation, diverse teaching methods, and commitment to continuous improvement through self-evaluation and professional development.

The above findings are inline with Gordon et al. (2016) who indicated that while some schools demonstrated high fidelity in implementing the curriculum, others struggled to align teaching practices with curriculum objectives. Schools with strong administrative support and teacher training programs exhibited a 15% improvement in curriculum implementation quality. Alsoufi et al., (2020) revealed that schools that provided regular training and workshops for teachers experienced a 20% enhancement in curriculum implementation effectiveness. Teachers who participated in these programs demonstrated improved instructional strategies and alignment with curriculum goals.

In addition Regmi and Jones (2020) also identified lack of instructional resources, limited administrative support, and inadequate teacher collaboration as key obstacles. Schools that

addressed these barriers through targeted interventions, such as resource allocation and collaborative planning, observed a 12% reduction in implementation challenges. Quigley and Herro (2016) demonstrated that schools with higher levels of curriculum alignment and interactive teaching methods experienced a 25% increase in student engagement. Engaged students exhibited improved attendance, participation, and academic performance.

Reflecting on the study findings regarding the implementation of the Lower Secondary Curriculum in Rwampara County, a researcher's opinion is that prioritizing moral values, empathy, and resilience in students contributes to a positive school culture and improved educational outcomes. Moreover, the researcher commends the teachers' commitment to diversity in teaching methods, continuous professional development, and self-evaluation, which are essential for the dynamic and effective delivery of the curriculum.

The relationship between students' library utilization and implementation of Lower Secondary Curriculum in secondary schools of Rwampara County

The study findings showed that there was a moderate positive relationship between these variables. As students' library usage increased, there was a slight tendency for the implementation of the Lower Secondary Curriculum to also increase, and conversely at $p=0.006<0.01$. The above study findings are in line with Wink (2021) who indicated a significant positive correlation ($r = 0.78, p < 0.001$) between students who frequently utilized the library and schools that effectively implemented the lower secondary curriculum. Higher library utilization was associated with improved curriculum alignment, teaching practices, and resource availability. Huitt et al., (2015) found that students who engaged with library resources for research, supplemental reading, and project work demonstrated a 15% increase in academic achievement compared to peers with limited library utilization. However, a research

gap remains in comprehensively investigating the mechanisms underlying the observed positive correlation between students' library utilization and effective implementation of the Lower Secondary Curriculum, warranting an in-depth exploration into how various aspects of library engagement contribute to enhanced curriculum alignment, teaching quality, and academic outcomes within secondary schools.

The findings also agree with Grannas and Frelin (2017) who revealed that students who actively used the library for both academic and recreational purposes exhibited a 20% improvement in overall curriculum engagement. This inclusive library utilization was associated with enhanced student motivation, creativity, and critical thinking skills. Kim et al., (2014). indicated that students who frequently utilized the library for research, reference, and collaborative projects experienced increase in engagement with innovative teaching methods. Library-supported teaching approaches contributed to improved curriculum delivery. Nevertheless, a research gap exists in fully exploring the nuanced interplay between diverse library utilization patterns encompassing academic, recreational, and collaborative activities and their impact on comprehensive curriculum engagement, motivating further investigation into how these multifaceted library interactions contribute to fostering student motivation, creativity, critical thinking, and engagement with innovative teaching methods within secondary schools.

Similarly, Gil-Flores (2017) revealed that schools with high library utilization observed a 14% increase in the availability and accessibility of teaching materials, contributing to more effective curriculum delivery. Students who utilized the library to explore diverse subjects and interdisciplinary topics experienced a 17% enhancement in understanding and application of curriculum concepts (Kneen, 2020). However, a research gap persists in thoroughly investigating

the multifaceted influence of students' library utilization, including its relationship with teaching material availability and exploration of interdisciplinary subjects, on the comprehensive implementation of the Lower Secondary Curriculum within secondary schools, necessitating a comprehensive exploration of these relationships' intricate dynamics and their combined impact on curriculum understanding and application.

Considering the study findings, a researcher's opinion is that library resources play a supportive role in curriculum delivery, but also notes that the relationship is not strong, implying that other factors are likely at play in influencing curriculum effectiveness. He further suggests investigating what these factors could be and how they interact with library usage. The researcher's opinion also reflects on the importance of considering multiple variables when assessing educational outcomes and the need for a holistic approach that looks beyond just one aspect of the educational ecosystem.

Conclusions

It was concluded that there was a high level of students' library utilization in secondary schools of Rwampara County. That is, collaborative efforts between teachers and librarians provided diverse learning experiences. The frequent utilization of the library for research and group projects showed significance as a resource hub. Headteachers emphasized the pivotal role of the library in fostering a reading culture and facilitating comprehensive understanding through various resources.

It was also concluded that there was effective implementation of the Lower Secondary Curriculum in secondary schools of Rwampara County. That is, teachers were crucial in leveraging technology to enhance learning experiences, ensuring personalized

support, and monitoring progress effectively. Prioritizing students' moral values and fostering real-world application of knowledge strengthened engagement and critical thinking.

Recommendations

To determine the level of students' library utilization in secondary schools of Rwampara County

- Teachers need to continue collaborating with librarians to enhance students' learning experiences.
- Ministry of Education should prioritize the provision of adequate resources and support for school libraries.
- Students need to actively engage with the library resources for their research and group projects.

To assess the level of implementation of the Lower Secondary Curriculum in secondary schools of Rwampara County

- School administrators should regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum and make necessary adjustments to ensure its success.
- Teachers should regularly monitor students' progress and provide constructive feedback to help them improve and stay motivated.
- The government should develop and implement comprehensive teacher training programs that focus on integrating technology and innovative teaching methods into the curriculum.

To establish the relationship between students' library utilization and implementation of Lower Secondary Curriculum in secondary schools of Rwampara County

- The government need to support the integration of library resources into the Lower Secondary Curriculum by providing adequate funding for libraries.
- Students should be encouraged to make full utilization of the library resources available to them.
- School administrators need to ensure that libraries are an integral part of the school's infrastructure.

Areas for further research

- Assessing the role of school leadership in supporting effective library use and curriculum integration.
- Exploring the utilization of technology to track and measure the impact of library use on curriculum implementation.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Consent Form

Study Title: Students' Library Utilization and Implementation of Lower Secondary Curriculum in Secondary Schools in Rwampara County, Rwampara District

Principal Investigator: Mwebembezi Isaac

Investigators: Dr. Basil Tibanyendera,

Ms. Otwine Annah Tweheyo

Brief Background to the Study: In an ideal situation, all students in Rwampara County, Rwampara District would have access to a well-functioning library with a wide range of resources (Rwampara District Education Officer's report 2022/2023). Students would be encouraged to use the library to find information for their schoolwork, learn new things, and enjoy reading. The library would be staffed by qualified librarians who could assist students in finding the information they need and using library resources effectively.

Purpose of the Research Project: The purpose of the study is to examine students' library utilization and implementation of the Lower Secondary Curriculum in Secondary Schools of Rwampara County, Rwampara District.

Why You Are Being Asked to Participate: You have been selected as a potential participant in this study because you are an education stakeholder. Your insights and experiences are crucial to understanding how the library facilities are utilized and how the lower secondary curriculum is implemented in your school.

Risks or Discomforts: There are minimal risks or discomforts associated with this study, including:

Minimal time commitment. The possibility of feeling uncomfortable discussing your experiences. Risks related to the disclosure of sensitive information about your school experiences. The researcher will take measures to protect your privacy and ensure confidentiality.

Benefits: You will contribute valuable information that may help improve library utilization and curriculum implementation in secondary schools. There are no direct personal benefits, as this is an observational study.

Incentives or Rewards for Participating: There are no costs associated with participating in this research. You will receive a bottle of water in the form of 2000/=.

Protecting Data Confidentiality: Your responses will be kept confidential. All data will be stored securely. Any use of tape recordings, photographs, or videotapes for instructional purposes will be done with your explicit consent.

Protecting Subject Privacy During Data Collection: Your privacy will be protected during data collection. All interviews or surveys will be conducted in a private and confidential setting.

Right to Refuse or Withdraw: Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You have the right to refuse to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time without any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

What Happens if You Leave the Study: If you choose to leave the study, it will not affect your academic standing or any other rights or benefits you receive. You may choose to discontinue participation at any time without consequences.

Who to Contact if You Have Questions or a Problem:

Mwebembezi Isaac (Principal Investigator)

Bishop Stuart University

Phone: +256 773 445555

Dr. Godfrey Zaari Rukundo (Chairman, BSU-REC)

P.O. Box 09 Mbarara

Tel: 0772663671

What Does Your Signature or Thumbprint on This Consent Form Mean: Your signature or thumbprint implies that you have been provided with information about the study, including its purpose, procedures, risks, benefits, and your rights as a participant. By signing, you acknowledge that you understand this information.

Signature of Participant: _____

Date: _____

Signature of Researcher: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 2: Questionnaire for teachers

Section A: Background Characteristics

1. Gender: Male Female
2. Age
3. Level of Education
Degree
Postgraduate
Other specify

Section B : The level of students' library utilization in secondary schools of Rwampara County

4. Please give your comment about students' use of library materials for hands-on learning in this school

.....

.....

.....

5. Give your comment about how students often utilize library in a term

.....

.....

.....

6. How do students consult library references for diverse insights?

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.....

.....

Section C: The level of implementation of the Lower Secondary Curriculum in secondary schools of Rwampara County

7. How would you describe the overall implementation of the Lower Secondary Curriculum in your school?

.....

.....

8. What aspects of the curriculum implementation do you believe are particularly successful in your school?

.....

.....

9. In your opinion, how effectively are teachers integrating the prescribed curriculum into their teaching practices?

.....

.....

10. What resources and support, if any, are provided to teachers to assist them in effectively implementing the Lower Secondary Curriculum?

.....

.....

Section D: The relationship between students' library utilization and implementation of Lower Secondary Curriculum in secondary schools of Rwampara County

Give your level of agreement concerning the relationship between students' library utilization and implementation of Lower Secondary Curriculum in secondary schools of Rwampara County. Where 5=Strongly Agree, 4=Agree, 3=Undecided, 2=Disagree, 1=Strongly Disagree.

Students' Library Utilization

S/n	Students' Library Utilization	5	4	3	2	1
1	The library's practical resources enhance students' grasp of theoretical concepts.					
2	Students effectively use library materials for hands-on learning.					
3	The library's practical resources positively engage students in the curriculum.					
4	The library provides relevant subject textbooks for students' learning needs.					
5	Students regularly use library textbooks to complement their studies.					
6	The library's references aid student research and exploration.					
7	Students often consult library references for diverse insights.					
8	Library references bolster students' research capabilities.					
9	Library materials on sports encourage students to explore athletic interests.					

Level of implementation

S/n	Level of implementation	5	4	3	2	1
1	The curriculum aligns well with educational goals and student needs.					
2	Curriculum content engages and is relevant to student learning.					
3	The curriculum covers subjects comprehensively and in balance.					
4	Teachers effectively integrate curriculum content into their teaching.					
5	Teaching methods promote critical thinking and active participation.					
6	Teachers adapt to cater to diverse student learning needs.					
7	The Availability of Resources:					
8	Adequate classroom resources support curriculum implementation.					
9	School provides necessary materials and tools for curriculum delivery.					
10	Teachers have access to resources enhancing practical application.					

Thank You

Appendix 3: Questionnaire for students

Section A: Background Characteristics

1. Gender: Male Female
2. Age
3. Level of Education
 - S.1-S.2
 - S3.-S.4
 - S5-S.6

Section B : The level of students' library utilization in secondary schools of Rwampara County

4. Please give your comment about your utilization of library materials for hands-on learning

.....

.....

.....

5. Give your comment about how you often utilize library in a term

.....

.....

.....

6. How do you consult library references for diverse insights?

.....

.....

.....

Section C: The level of implementation of the Lower Secondary Curriculum in secondary schools of Rwampara County

7. From your perspective as a student, do you feel that the curriculum is well-executed and integrated into your learning experience?

.....

.....

8. What specific areas or subjects you feel the curriculum is effectively delivered and enhances your understanding of the topics?

.....

.....

9. In your opinion, how effectively are teachers integrating the prescribed curriculum into their teaching practices?

.....

.....

Section D: The relationship between students' library utilization and implementation of Lower Secondary Curriculum in secondary schools of Rwampara County

Give your level of agreement concerning the relationship between students' library utilization and implementation of Lower Secondary Curriculum in secondary schools of Rwampara County. Where 5=Strongly Agree, 4=Agree, 3=Undecided, 2=Disagree, 1=Strongly Disagree.

Students' Library Utilization

S/n	Students' Library Utilization	5	4	3	2	1
1	The library's practical resources enhance my grasp of theoretical concepts.					
2	I effectively use library materials for hands-on learning.					
4	The library's practical resources positively engage students in the curriculum.					
5	The library provides relevant subject textbooks for my learning needs.					
6	I regularly use library textbooks to complement their studies.					
7	The library's references aid my research and exploration.					
8	I often consult library references for diverse insights.					
9	Library references bolster my research capabilities.					
10	Library materials on sports encourage my to explore athletic interests.					

Level of implementation

S/n	Level of implementation	5	4	3	2	1
1	The curriculum aligns well with educational goals and my needs.					
2	Curriculum content engages and is relevant to my learning.					

3	The curriculum covers subjects comprehensively and in balance.					
4	Teachers effectively integrate curriculum content into their teaching.					
5	Teaching methods promote critical thinking and active participation.					
6	Teachers adapt to cater to diverse student learning needs.					
7	The Availability of Resources:					
8	Adequate classroom resources support curriculum implementation.					
9	School provides necessary materials and tools for curriculum delivery.					
10	Teachers have access to resources enhancing practical application.					

Thank You

Appendix 4: Interview Guide for Head Teachers

1. Can you provide an overview of the current status of library utilization and curriculum implementation in your secondary school?
2. How do you perceive the role of the school library in enhancing students' learning experiences and supporting curriculum implementation?
3. In your opinion, what impact does students' library utilization have on their overall academic performance and engagement with the curriculum?
4. Could you elaborate on any strategies or initiatives your school has implemented to encourage students to utilize the library for their studies?

Appendix 5: Interview Guide for District Education Officer

1. Can you provide an overview of the district's current initiatives and strategies to promote students' library utilization and effective implementation of the lower secondary curriculum?
2. How does the district education office perceive the significance of school libraries in enhancing students' learning experiences and supporting the curriculum implementation in secondary schools?
3. In your perspective, what role does students' library utilization play in shaping students' academic performance and engagement with the lower secondary curriculum?
4. What measures or programs has the district education office introduced to encourage and facilitate students' utilization of library resources for their studies?

Appendix 6: Sampling Table Guide

<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	230	144	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306
30	28	260	155	1600	310
35	32	270	159	1700	313
40	36	280	162	1800	317
45	40	290	165	1900	320
50	44	300	169	2000	322
55	48	320	175	2200	327
60	52	340	181	2400	331
65	56	360	186	2600	335
70	59	380	191	2800	338
75	63	400	196	3000	341
80	66	420	201	3500	346
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354
95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	8000	367
130	97	650	242	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	127	950	274	50000	381
200	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	100000	384

Note.—*N* is population size. *S* is sample size.

Source: Krejcie & Morgan, 1970

