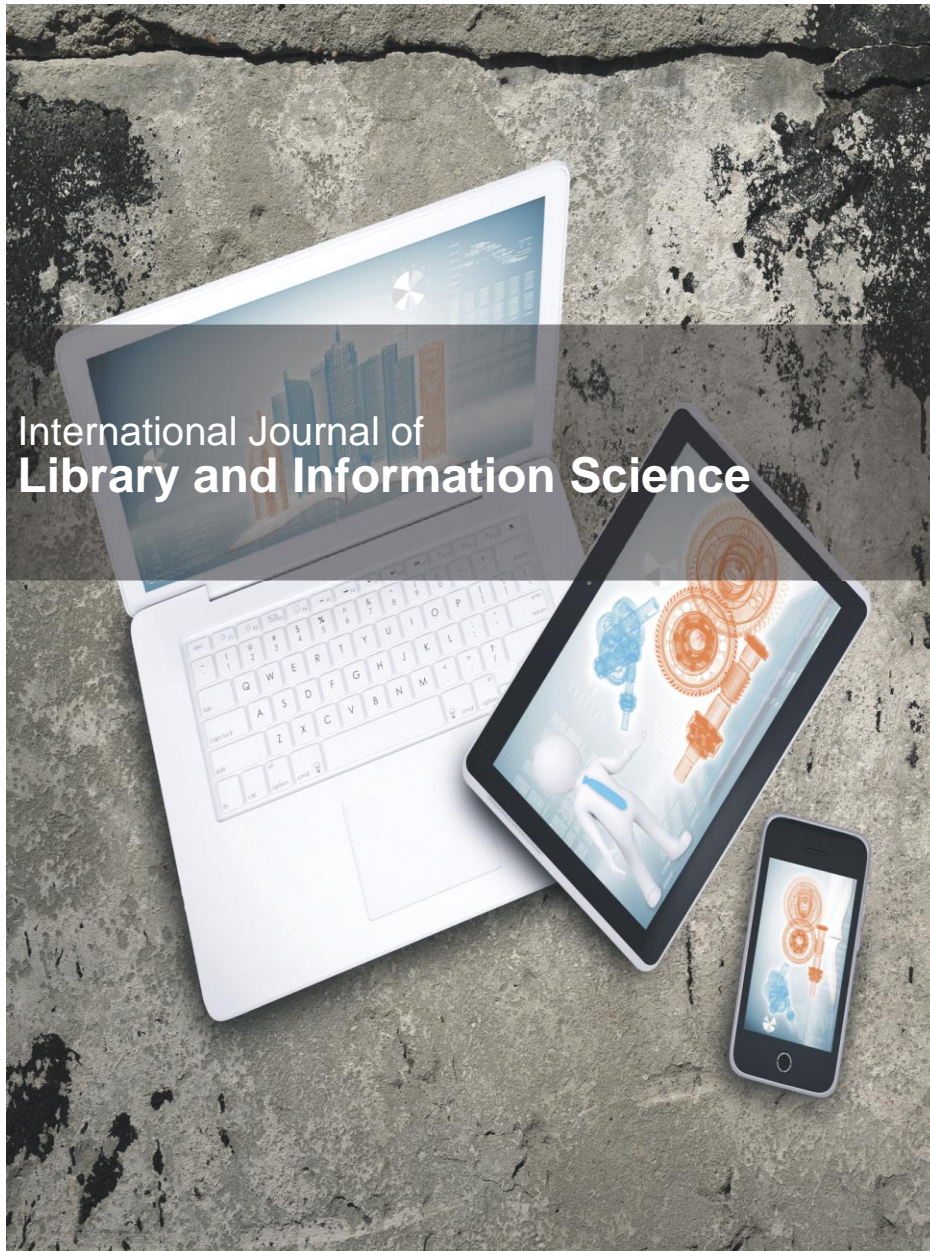


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*Full Length Research Paper*

# **The degree of possession of the faculty members at Princess Alia University College for the skills on the use of databases and its relation to research performance**

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**This study aimed to know the viewpoint of faculty members at Princess Alia University College on the degree of possession of the skills to use databases and its relationship with their research performance and to investigate the effect of gender, experience, qualification, and academic rank on the point of view of faculty members. The study sample consisted of 40 faculty members, males (17) and females (23) from Princess Alia University College. Means and standard deviations and t-test were used to analyze the results. The results showed that there were statistically significant differences in the views of the faculty members on the degree of possession of skills on the use of databases and its relationship with their research performance. It also showed a statistically significant difference at the level of significance ( $\alpha \geq 0.05$ ) in their views attributed to the experience. There are statistically significant differences at the level of significance ( $\alpha \geq 0.05$ ) in their views attributed to gender, and results also showed the existence of clear statistically significant differences in the views of the faculty members on the degree of possession of the skills on the use of databases and its relationship with their research performance by reason of qualification and academic rank variables.**

**Key words:** Faculty members, skills to use databases, research performance, data bases.

## **INTRODUCTION**

In light of the vast amount of information that the world is witnessing in the various thematic areas the access of the beneficiary to the information is no longer easy. Hence, it is necessary to use a specific mechanism to organize information and to retrieve it easily and quickly. The databases represented the mechanism used for that purpose, both in traditional form and in electronic form. Nonetheless, beyond that, where information security

could be achieved by making it possible to use the information of a private or confidential nature for specific people, using database management systems as means of organizing and configuring data is required. Many databases have been uploaded with bibliographical data, textual information, images, or audio files, and have been published in various thematic areas to serve academic disciplines as well as different aspects of life (Bamofleh,

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2004).

The databases can operate in different environments. They may operate on mainframe computers and can be connected through terminals. They may operate in the client/server environment, the databases are stored on the server and a set of client devices are directly connected to them using software that allows it. The client and the server may communicate through an intermediary that hosts the applications needed to connect to the database and controls the number of users of the database under the environment multitier. The database connection may be made available through a Web server and an application server through which the client connects to the database server when using the web environment (Stephens and Plew, 2003)

Database is defined as a collection of information related to one another on a subject, usually structured in a way that makes it useful to provide a basis for procedures such as information retrieval, drawing, conclusion, and decision-making. Thus, any set of information serving these purposes is classified as a database, even if that information is not stored on the computer. Examples include files in which storage cards are stored and stored in filing cabinets, as well as a bibliographic catalog containing bibliographic records of information vessels. Both represent paper databases (Zinedine, 2009).

Information in the database is usually divided into records, which in themselves are a form or formula that serves as a useful index to fill in specific data, and each record contains one or more data fields. Although it is possible to create a database without dividing the record into fields, the presence of fields helps identify accidental data accidentally and can make the retrieval process faster (Bryan, 1990). The database is also defined as a set of related objects that include tables, forms, reports, queries, and scripts that have been created and organized by the Data Bases Management System (DBMS). The database may include information from any, such as a list of subscribers to a magazine, personal data about the names of staff members, a collection of images and geographical drawings, clips or video clips (Haasballah and Al-Shami, 2001). The database may be as simple as a shopping list or as complex as a set of thousands of text, audio, and video files. Simple databases contain searchable rows and columns, and relational databases allow users to retrieve data and allow them to reorganize it in multiple ways. Advanced databases allow users to store and retrieve all non-standard data from clips sound to 12 video clips ([www.cnet.com/Resources/Info/Glossary/Terms/databases.html](http://www.cnet.com/Resources/Info/Glossary/Terms/databases.html))

### **Significance of the study**

Owing to the importance of training faculty researchers in using specialized databases to develop their research

capabilities, the present study will reveal to faculty researchers the research skills in electronic sources and databases that they should acquire to make the most of them. The results of several studies have shown the importance of training in providing trainees with electronic search skills. These studies include Christy (1995), who designed a program to train students and teachers of a middle school on Internet skills, including the use of databases; teachers have become more enthusiastic in using e-services to enrich the curriculum and as an additional source of lessons for the future. Students are now able to use the Internet to search for and obtain information to complete their homework.

Identifying e-research skills for researchers will enable them to understand many of the basic concepts in research, and will lead to the use of effective (successful) research strategies in databases and will put them on the first steps of successful research in databases. They will be able to encourage students to use these rules and will put in place the latest educational delivery systems, enhance the online search skills they need when they enter the field of work, and contribute to enriching scientific research both qualitatively and quantitatively.

### **Statement of the problem**

Searching for information using the Internet is one of the most important activities of Internet users, as Internet searches are the second-largest activity after e-mail. Internet users use various search tools to access useful information distributed to millions of servers, the most prominent of these tools search engines that help speed up the search process to a large extent, as the search engines are the most important tools used to search sites available on the Internet. It can be said that search engines are more like dictionary catalogs in libraries, as it can be searched through all the entries that are likely to have pages on the Internet.

Databases are very valuable for researchers, but they must acquire the skills to use these databases, they must be trained well to use it. In this study, the researchers tried to investigate the faculty members' point of views about the importance of possessing such skills.

### **Study questions**

- (1) What is the degree to which faculty members at Princess Alia University College possess skills to use databases?
- (2) Are there statistical differences in the views of the faculty members on the relationship of possessing the skills of using databases to the research performance according to the gender variable (male, female)?
- (3) Are there significant differences in the views of the faculty members on the relationship of possessing the skills of using databases to the research performance

according to the variable years of experience (5 years or less, more than 5 years)?

(4) Are there statistical differences in the views of the faculty members on the relationship of possessing the skills to use databases to the research performance according to the scientific qualification (Ph.D., MA)?

(5) Are there statistical differences in the views of the faculty members on the relationship of possessing the skills to use databases to the research performance according to the academic rank (Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, or Instructor)?

## Definition of terms

**Searching electronic:** It is a research in the library by the researcher or one of the employees in the library via computer, instead of searching the sources of information printed by hand, where you can search the library index and databases published by specialized companies.

**Specialized electronic databases:** E-Databases is an organized list of published information sources (often journal articles or indices) that gives the researcher guidance, which is a reference citation of the article citation where he can find complete information about the article or provide it in its full text, full in the case of full-text databases. Each source has one information record, and the record consists of a set of fields, each field contains specific information about the source. The database searches for information in these fields. The way databases work is different, but there is basic information about databases that the researcher must know to qualify for all databases.

**Virtual libraries:** Libraries use computers and telecommuting to connect to a wide range of information sources. Tochtermann (1996) noted that the collection of the e-library consists of digital documents and Internet resources that are links to other documents stored elsewhere on the Internet. The electronic library controls the links, but not the documents associated with these links. The electronic library is provided with digital indexes of information on the collection of documents. The digital library also provides all the services offered by traditional libraries and the technology is in their favor.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

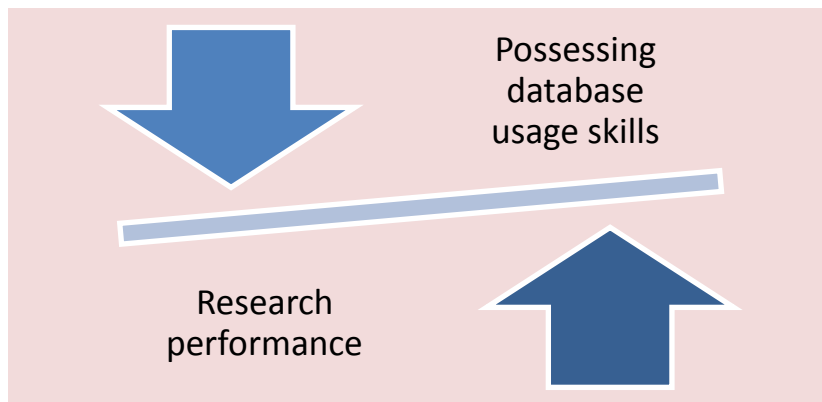
Rajeh (2003) conducted a study on 116 faculty members in the faculties of science, economics, administration, and home economics at King Abdul Aziz University to study the extent to which they use the databases in the form of CDs and the motivation of faculty members to use databases in the library of students, the most common and least used rules in research and teaching, the

obstacles faced by beneficiaries, and their satisfaction with the search in the databases. Results of the questionnaire showed that 73.2% of faculty members use databases on CD-ROMs, and 48% use it for scientific research and 34.4% use it for teaching. The reasons for their lack of use of the teachers' rules are lack of knowledge about the rules (26.7%) and difficulty in using them (38.7%). The challenge faced by faculty members is the difficulty of providing full-text requests for journal articles produced by the research process (43.9%), lack of adequate bibliographic databases in specialization (38.7%), lack of databases in the language needed by the beneficiary (17.2%), lack of rules in the specialty of home economics (38.7%), lack of suitable rules (28.4%), and lack of training programs on the use of the rules (24.1%). The results of the study showed that 66.4% of faculty members use the competent staff in the library, and 92.2% of them need training programs on the use of databases.

Al-Jurf (2003) dealt with the skills to use databases available in the library. The researcher conducted a study on a sample of (152) female faculty members from King Saud University: faculties, languages, translation, all faculty members in the departments of Islamic studies and Arabic as well as English, in the College of Education for Girls in the literary department in Mecca; with a total number of 106 females. The results of this study showed that the percentage of faculty members who can extract research from electronic databases does not exceed 6%. The researcher concluded that the use of electronic databases will enable researchers to obtain a large amount of modern information in time and with little effort, and will lead to a quantum leap in the quality of scientific research. The pace of using databases is very limited as the total searches did not exceed all the databases of the University of Umm al-Qura during the whole year (3686) research. Considering the average use of databases in Arab universities once a year per students and faculty members, this is a waste of university funds knowing the cost of one database a year is 24,000 US dollars.

Al-Shawish (2002) conducted a study on the objective, quantitative, and practical trends of bibliographic databases available in the libraries of the city of Riyadh. The study found that majority of libraries that acquire these bases are specialized libraries, mostly medical libraries; most of the substantive coverage of the rules focused on the pure and applied sciences, which accounted for 61% of the databases available in libraries. In contrast, arts came with the lowest ratio of only 2%. It was found that 56% of the databases shared by libraries were on CDs compared to (44%) those available online.

Mashali (1999) conducted a study on a sample of (145) faculty members, postgraduate students and BA students at King Abdul Aziz University to identify the attitudes of the beneficiaries towards the use of databases on CD-ROMs, the obstacles they face when using them, and the interviews with library specialists. The results of the study



**Figure 1.** Data possessing and research performance.

showed that 40% of the beneficiaries of databases on CDs are 40% and distributed as follows: faculty members 5.5%, postgraduate students 30%, and undergraduate students 4.6%. The results of the study showed that the reasons for non-use of databases are: lack of knowledge of the availability of these rules in the library and the preference for research in the searchlights printed and lack of time and lack of knowledge on how to use it.

MacFarland (1997) used a questionnaire to evaluate the results of a training program for part-time faculty members who make up 60% of faculty members at the University of Northeastern Florida in the use of electronic information systems in the library for 12 weeks.

## METHODOLOGY

### Population of the study

The study population consisted of faculty members at Princess Alia University College, 125, for the academic year 2017/2018.

### Study sample

The study sample consisted of a group of faculty members who were selected in a simple random way, the sample consisted of 40 faculty members. Table 5 shows the distribution of sample members by gender, years of experience, academic rank, and scientific qualification.

### Research instrument

The research instrument consisted of a questionnaire developed to measure the views of the faculty members on the effect of possessing the skills to use databases in the research performance. The questionnaire included several variables such as gender, academic rank, years of experience, and scientific qualification.

### Reliability of the questionnaire

To ascertain the reliability of the questionnaire, the researchers

applied it to a survey sample consisting of (30) faculty members at Princess Alia University College. They were excluded from the study sample and at least two weeks between the first time and the second time the questionnaire was distributed to reduce the transmission of the training effect. The reliability of the questionnaire was calculated using Alpha Cronbach correlation coefficients and it was 0.90, which is suitable for conducting such a study.

### Study variables

Independent variables: Gender (male, female), years of experience (5 years and less, more than 5 years), Academic qualification (Master, Ph.D.), Academic rank (Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor or Instructor).

Dependent variable: The views of the faculty members on their possession of research skills in databases and its relation to their research performance.

### Study procedures

A questionnaire was distributed about the degree to which faculty members possess the skills to use databases and its relation to their research performance on 40 faculty members at Princess Alia University College, (17) males and (23) females. The researchers retrieved the questionnaires, collected the data, and analyzed the data statistically (Figure 1).

### Statistical analysis

The results for each paragraph were analyzed in the questionnaire using appropriate statistical methods such as arithmetical averages, standard deviations, and t-test.

## RESULTS OF THE STUDY

This study aimed at revealing the degree to which faculty members possess the skills of using databases in Princess Alia University College and its relationship to their research performance from their point of view. It also aimed to know the impact of gender, experience,

**Table 1.** Number of sample members according to the study variables.

Variable		Number
Gender	Male	17
	Female	23
	Total	40
Years of experience	Less than 5 years	29
	5 years and over	11
	Total	40
Academic Rank	Professor	12
	Associate Professor	10
	Assistant professor or teacher	18
	Total	40
Scientific qualification	Master	9
	Ph.D.	31
	Total	40

**Table 2.** The degree to which the faculty members of Princess Alia University College possess the skills to use the databases from their point of view.

Item	Mean	Standard deviation
1	4.62	0.699
2	4.50	0.716
3	4.43	0.806
4	4.51	0.859
5	4.34	0.849
6	4.33	0.768
7	4.60	0.694
8	4.52	0.733
9	4.19	0.908
10	4.44	0.878
11	3.98	1.001
12	4.24	0.885
13	4.48	0.906
13	4.47	0.881
15	4.31	0.838
16	4.42	0.807
17	4.48	0.760
18	4.64	0.680
19	4.55	0.742
20	4.45	0.785
21	4.34	0.946
22	4.41	0.880
23	4.53	0.756
24	4.55	0.673
25	4.43	0.813
ALL	4.43	0.585

academic qualification on the rank, and scientific views of faculty members. Questionnaires were distributed to 40

managers, (17) males and (23) females in Princess Alia University College in Balqa Applied University. The mean, standard deviations, and T-test were used to analyze the results.

### Results related to the first question

What is the degree to which the faculty members of Princess Alia University College have the skills to use the databases? To answer this question, a questionnaire was distributed to them. Mathematical averages and standard deviations were calculated. Table 1 shows the results. Table 2 shows the existence of statistical significance between the views of the faculty members at Princess Alia University College about the impact of possessing the skills of using databases on their research performance. The table showed the results of the questionnaire distributed to 40 faculty members about their view of the impact of having database usage skills on their performance. Means and standard deviations were calculated and the results showed that item 18 obtained the highest mean (4.64), followed by item 1 with arithmetic mean (4.62). The standard deviation of item 18 was 0.680 which is higher than ( $\alpha \geq 0.05$ ) and that means it is statistically significant. The standard deviation of item 1 was approximately the same as it was (0.699), which is also statistically significant.

### Results related to the second question

Are there statistical significant differences in the views of the faculty members on the relationship of possessing the skills to use databases to the research performance according to the gender variable (male, female)? To

**Table 3.** Arithmetic averages and standard deviations and t-test by gender variable.

Gender	Number	Arithmetic average	Standard deviation	T	The degree of freedom	Sig. (2-tailed)
Male	17	4.32	0.686	-2.543	169	0.013
Female	23	4.54	0.426			

**Table 4.** Standard meanings and standard deviations and t-test results by experience variable.

Experience	Number	Arithmetic average	Standard deviation	T	The degree of freedom	Sig. (2-tailed)
Less than 5 years	29	4.27	0.723	-3.388	169	0.001
5 years and over	11	4.56	0.386			

answer this question, the arithmetical averages and standard deviations were calculated and Table 3 shows this.

Table 3 shows statistically significant differences due to the gender variable. The table shows the results of the questionnaire distributed to 40 faculty members who expressed their views on their relationship to the skills of using databases in their research performance. Mean averages and standard deviations were calculated and the results showed that female faculty members earned averages higher than male faculty members', with 4.32 and 4.54 respectively; this means that gender variable has an impact on the views of faculty members. The standard deviation of female faculty members was 0.426, which is higher than ( $\alpha \geq 0.05$ ); so this means that it is statistically significant. The standard deviation of male faculty members was higher at 0.686, which is also statistically significant. Thus, Table 3 shows that there are statistically significant differences due to the gender variable and in favor of females.

### Results related to the third question

Are there statistically significant differences in the views of the faculty members on the relationship of possessing the skills to use databases on the research performance according to the variable of years of experience (5 years or less, more than 5 years)? Means and standard deviations were calculated. Table 4 shows the results.

Table 4 shows the existence of statistically significant differences due to the variable of experience. The results of the questionnaire, distributed to 40 faculty members, show their views on their relationship to the skills to use databases in their research performance. Mean averages and deviations were calculated and the results showed that faculty members with experience fewer than 5 years had arithmetic mean less than the faculty members who have experience of 5 years or more, where the results were 4.27 and 4.56 respectively. This means that experience in the use of databases has a role in the

views of faculty members on the relationship of possessing the skills of using databases to their research performance.

The standard deviation of faculty members with less than 5 years' experience was 0.723 and this is higher than  $\alpha \geq 0.05$ , which means that it is statistically significant. The standard deviation for faculty members with 5 or more years of experience was less (0.386), which is statistically significant. Table 4 shows the existence of statistically significant differences due to the variable of experience and for those who have had 5 or more years of experience.

### Results related to the fifth question

Are there statistically significant differences in the views of the faculty members on the relationship of possessing the skills to use databases on research performance according to the scientific qualification (Ph.D., MA)?

Table 5 shows the existence of statistically significant differences due to the variable of scientific qualification. The results of the questionnaire, distributed to 40 faculty members, show their views on relationship of skills to use databases in their research performance. Means and standard deviations were calculated and results showed that faculty members who are Ph.D. holders had average higher than that of faculty members with a master's degree (4.23 and 4.48) respectively and this means that the variable of scientific qualification has an impact on the views of faculty members.

The standard deviation of faculty members with a Ph.D. degree was (0.483) higher than ( $\alpha \geq 0.05$ ), which means that it is statistically significant. Therefore, Table 5 shows the existence of statistically significant differences due to the variable of scientific qualification and for the benefit of faculty members of Ph.D. holders. Therefore, Table 5 shows the existence of statistically significant differences in the views of faculty members at Princess Alia University College, on the relationship of possessing the skills to use databases with their research performance



**Table 5.** Arithmetic averages and standard deviations and T-test results according to the variable of scientific qualification.

Academic qualification	Number	Arithmetic average	Standard deviation	T	The degree of freedom	Sig. (2-tailed)
Master	9	4.23	0.854	-2.300	169	0.024
Ph.D.	31	4.48	0.483			

**Table 6.** Arithmetic averages and standard deviations and T-test results according to the academic rank variable.

Academic rank	Number	Arithmetic average	Standard deviation
Professor	12	4.31	0.658
Associate Professor	10	4.52	0.510
Assistant professor or teacher	18	4.66	0.297
Total	40	4.43	0.585

**Table 7.** Post hoc comparison between groups.

Academic rank (I)	Rank (J)	Difference averages (I-J)	Standard error	Significance
Professor	Associate Professor, Assistant Professor or Teacher	(*)-0.22	0.099	0.31
		(*)-0.36	0.13	0.009
Associate Professor	Professor	(*)0.022	0.99	0.031
	Assistant Professor or Teacher	-0.14	0.139	0.33
Assistant Professor or Teacher	Professor	(*)0.36	0.13	0.009
	Associate Professor	0.14	0.139	0.33

due to the variable of scientific qualification and for the benefit of Ph.D. degree holders.

### Results related to the sixth question

Are there statistical differences in the views of the faculty members on the relationship of possessing the skills to use databases on research performance according to academic rank (Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor or Teacher)? Means and standard deviations were calculated and Table 6 shows the results.

Table 6 shows statistically significant differences due to the academic rank variable. The results of the questionnaire, distributed to 40 faculty members, show their views on the relationship of possessing database skills on their research performance at Princess Alia University College. Means and deviations were calculated and the results showed that the views of the professors were less than average followed by associate professors and then assistant professors or instructors who obtained the highest average (4.31, 4.52 and 4.66) respectively. This means that the academic level variable

has an impact on the views of the faculty members on the relationship of possessing the skills of using the rules of their performance statements at the Princess Alia University College.

The standard deviation of "Professor" is 0.658, which is higher than  $\alpha \geq 0.05$ ; which means that it is statistically significant. The standard deviation of "Associate professor" was lower (0.510), which also means that it is statistically significant. The standard deviation of "Assistant professor" or "instructor" was the lowest (0.297). Therefore, Table 6 shows the existence of statistically significant differences due to the academic rank variable and for the benefit of faculty members who hold the rank of assistant professor or instructor. The researcher also conducted a post hoc comparison to illustrate the difference between the three groups: Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, or instructor. Table 7 shows the results.

Table 7 shows that the differences were statistically significant at  $\alpha \geq 0.05$ . The above results show that the views of the faculty members on the relationship of possessing the skills of using databases on their research performance at the Princess Alia University

College were positive. It also found that faculty members differed in their views according to their different scientific qualifications and years of experience.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the results of the study, the researcher concluded with some recommendations:

- (i) Provide studies to assess the performance of faculty members and how to develop their abilities and skills.
- (ii) Conducting comparative studies between the applications of the faculty members and the skills to use databases;
- (iii) Presenting a study of the professional obstacles of the faculty member and its impact on his application of the skills to use databases;
- (iv) Presenting studies that explain, the role of universities in developing the skills of using databases among their faculty members.

## CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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*Full Length Research Paper*

# Effect of literature in the school library on the development of communication and conflict resolution skills of children

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**This study was done with private primary schools children in Orerokpe Educational Zone of Delta State, Nigeria in 2018. A quasi experimental design was adopted. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. The population of the study was 28,172. The sample comprised 63 primary four pupils. Purposive and cluster sampling techniques were used to sample 32 pupils in the experimental group one and thirty-one in the experimental group two (control group). Cluster sampling technique was further employed to draw out the two intact classes for the experiment. Data collected were analysed using mean and standard deviation, while Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Findings show that exposing children to literature is effective and significant in both the improvement of their ability to resolve conflicts and their communication skill. The implication of the study is that schools should emphasize on conflict resolution and development of communication skill of the students when recommending literature texts for them because such skills will help them to resolve challenging issues, ward-off inferiority complex and stage fright.**

**Key words:** Literature, children's literature, school library, social development, conflict resolution, communication skill.

## INTRODUCTION

A child is a person that has not attained independence and cannot take decisions for himself. There is no clear cut definition of a 'child'; however different groups and persons define it from their view points to suit their purposes. Biologically, a child is a human being between the stages of birth and puberty. The legal definition of child generally refers to a minor, otherwise known as a person younger than the age of majority which is

between 15 and 18 years in many countries of the world, but still as high as 21 years exist in some jurisdictions (Wikipedia). On the other hand, the United Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) sees a child as an individual below the age of 18 years, unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier. This definition is ratified by 192 of 194 member countries (of which Nigeria is one) and this makes it the most

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popular definition of a child in the Nigerian context. This definition is not rigid as it gives room for variations. For the purpose of this paper, the author will use the opportunity provided by this variation to consider a child (primary pupil) as an individual between the ages of 3 years and twelve years. A child below the age of 3 years is still an infant and cannot take part in group activities, while a child of 12 years is in the primary six (Akanwa and Chimdi, 2020). At these ages, the child needs literature for all round development which include social, moral, psychological and cognitive developments. For the child to be exposed to literature relevant for these developmental areas, he should be introduced to the school library.

A school library the world over is of many forms. In Nigeria specifically, it is a library that is situated in a nursery, primary, secondary school and Teachers' Training Colleges (TTC) with the aim of meeting the academic and social needs of pupils, students and staff, through the provision of a wide range of information resources. Anyanwu (2016) avers that a school library is a resource centre found in the school environment where students and teachers have access to a variety of resources. It is fundamentally established for the purpose of acquiring, organising, storing and disseminating information materials for use by teachers and students. The school library plays a crucial role in the social development of children because it affords them the opportunity of getting exposed to the world of literature. In this case, it becomes a veritable means of attracting and sustaining children's interest in reading. In addition to providing appropriate library furniture and conducive environment to encourage children to read, the school library should stock relevant and appropriate literature books that can make children grow into reasonable adults and impact on their development of communication and conflict resolution skills. Ker (2015)'s assertion that books intended for children must teach them honesty and should be visionary lends credence to this view.

Resolution of conflict is a way for two or more parties to find peaceful solution to disagreement between or among them. The disagreement may be personal, financial, political or emotional. Conflict resolution is very important in the human society because if conflicts are not resolved timely, they may result into serious disputes, and sometimes wars. Communication on the other hand is the ability and desire to connect verbally or non-verbally by exchanging ideas and feelings. It is a chief tool in the realization of individual and collective goals, and as such should be inculcated in children from childhood to enable them gain mastery of the art. The authors believe that these social traits (conflict resolution and communication skills) can be developed in children by exposing them to literature in the school library.

Literature is a creative work which can be described as written material, usually characterized by excellence of style, expression and themes of general interest. It can

come in form of prose, drama, essays, poetry, folklore etc. Literature has three major functions in the lives of readers, which are; to educate, instruct and entertain. It is also important for many other reasons like, it has the ability to provide pleasure to readers, helps build experience, helps readers empathize with others, and develops thinking skills. As a result, literature has the potential of instilling lifelong values in children. Exposing children to literature early is of great importance because at this stage they are still malleable and easily impacted. Akanwa (2013) corroborated this in her assertion that literature has its place in the education process of the child that no other media can take. Similarly, Hade (2007) avers that we think in stories, and they are incredibly powerful in the lives of all humans, especially children.

Children's literature refers to books that are specifically written and designed to appeal to children; it has special appeal to children. According to Akanwa (2013), it is any literature that interests children in the following aspects – education, recreation, enlightenment and travels. It is a very valuable resource which plays a pivotal role in the social development of children as they grow from one stage of life to another. The themes depicted in children's literature are intended to affect their general outlook and way of life. Books that can help children develop positive behaviour and acquire necessary skills that will help them through life should be made available in the school library. Through reading of literature, a child interacts with superior minds and acquires some skills through the various themes portrayed in literature. Children should therefore be encouraged to read books from the earliest age possible, especially in their formative years. The knowledge acquired at this stage goes a long way to instil values that the child grows up with, in the development of communication and conflict resolution skill.

Development is basically an economic concept that has positive connotations. It involves the application of certain economic and technical measures to utilize available resources to instigate economic growth and improve people's quality of life. It is also a social concept which refers to the changes that occur in the life of people at different stages of life - childhood and adult stages, and the process through which human beings typically grow and mature from infancy through adulthood. Therefore, development in a child or children starts from conception, beginning with physical development to other developmental facets viz-a vis communication and conflict resolution which sets in as the child is born and begins to relate with others.

Early exposure of children to literature is very beneficial for positive social development in children; therefore literature books should be a priority in school libraries. However, there is general observation that the reading habit of Nigerian children is quite poor. The school library which is supposed to lay the foundation for good reading and library habit for children, unfortunately, does not exist

in most nursery and primary schools in Nigeria. The few that have libraries do not see the need to stock books in generous quantity while some are biased in the type of literature to keep. As a result, children are denied the opportunity of reaping the benefits of being exposed to the world of literature at the early stages of their lives. The question here is, does children's literature in the school library have effect on the social development of the child in the areas of conflict resolution and communication? The answer to this question is the thrust of this study.

The study aims at investigating the effect of literature in the school library on the social development of children. Specifically, it intends to:

- (1) Examine the effect of children's literature on children's ability to resolve conflicts as measured by the mean scores of the participants in the control and experimental groups at pre-test and post-test.
- (2) Ascertain the effect of children's literature on children's communication skill as measured by the mean scores of the participants in the control and experimental groups at pre-test and post-test.

The following questions were asked:

- (1) What is the effect of children's literature on children's ability to resolve conflicts as measured by the mean scores of the participants in the control and experimental groups at pre-test and post-test?
- (2) What is the effect of children's literature on children's communication skill as measured by the mean scores of the participants in the control and experimental groups at pre-test and post-test?

The following hypotheses guided the study:

**HO<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the effect of literature on children's ability to resolve conflicts at pre-test and post-test.

**HO<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the effect of literature on children's communication skill at pre-test and post-test.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature is a powerful teaching tool and a valued work of art in written form that is used to expose ills of the society and at the same time to correct them. Ugboma cited in Otitigbe (2015) sees it as a universal means of communicating the emotional, spiritual or intellectual concern of mankind. It is a dynamic entity in its own right that offers its readers many avenues for pleasure, reflection, and emotional engagement (Mallan, 2017), and body of written works accompanied with illustrations to entertain or instruct young people (Fadiman, 2017) and

also encourage their personal development. The writings are meant to instruct, inform, entertain, express personal joy or pain, reflect religious devotion, glorify a nation or a hero, advocate a particular point of view –whether political, social or aesthetic. The "magic" of literature for children is necessarily bound with the nature of their development socially, physically and mentally. Literature for social development of children is used to depict real life situations and as a result is not just for entertainment but also for the development of communication and conflict resolution skill.

Communication is the act of speaking clearly and processing speech sounds, to understand others, to express ideas and interact with others. It is a fundamental building block for a child's development. The ability to communicate effectively is a key skill for better life. (Kumon Blog, 2016). As children develop, it is important to nurture their communication skills so as to enable them express themselves clearly and confidently as children and adults in future. Developing the communication skill requires developing language, thinking skills, and understanding the rules necessary for social interaction, and literature gives children one vehicle to develop these skills. Communication skill differs within age groups, and literature can re-enforce various types of communication that children come across during the day. This is because, children learn communication skills through reading, talking and books. Folklores and digital storytelling among others can also show children how to communicate in different ways. Children can learn language by reading and listening to stories, and they also can develop socially by reading books that explore social and cultural topics (Grayson, 2017). Children's Bureau (2017) expressed that book language is more descriptive, and tends to use more formal grammatical structures thus reading to a child will enable him to latch onto vocabulary and language he or she hears around him or her, introduce reading into his auditory learning and also introduce the language of books, which differs from language heard in daily life. Furthermore, Ayman (2019) discovered that digital story telling has positive effects of sparking children's imagination, providing information, and showing how other people lives. Therefore, as early as first grade, children's social skills are compelling predictors of their future success both in and out of school. Thus, as they are exposed to literature, their communication skill will be improved.

Conflict is a friction, disagreement, or discord arising when conscious beings (individuals or groups) wish to carry out mutually inconsistent acts concerning their wants, needs or obligations. Conflict, arguments, and change are natural parts of our lives, as well as the lives of every agency, organization, and nation. At home, or school, conflict between children is inevitable. They occasionally become embroiled in conflict, disagreement or a battle of wills with peers or adults. The disagreement may be personal, financial, political, or emotional

(Community Tool Box, 2016). Ashby and Neilsen-Hewett (2012) noted that studies addressing conflict within infant and toddler interactions have identified the primary cause of disputes as objects (sharing of resources or toys), with disagreements stemming from children attempting to exert control over the play environment. As ironic as it sounds, it is even desirable because some bickering and conflict in childhood help kids discover positive ways of resolving disagreements. Mar et al. (2009), in their study, discovered that there is growing evidence that reading narratives, even those explicitly labelled as fiction, is far from a meaningless leisure activity that ends when one closes the book, rather the experience gathered from reading will help a child surmount difficult situations in the future. When conflict resolution skill is instilled into an individual through exposure to literature as a child, it comes in handy at home and work place throughout life (Stephens, 2007).

Conflict resolution is a way for two or more parties to find a peaceful solution to a disagreement among them. According to Shonk (2019) it is the process of resolving a dispute or a conflict by meeting at least some of each side's needs and addressing their interests. The resolution does not eliminate conflicts but helps call for different resolution techniques (Pike et al., 2000). Teaching children constructive and specific options for resolving conflict is one strategy for raising socially skilled and well-behaved children. Children who are taught how to confront conflict with a variety of cooperative strategies will grow into adults who are better able to form and maintain close emotional ties with others (Stephens, 2006). According to an Online Study (2017), conflict resolution for kids is an important skill to learn, and books can be used in teaching this skill. In elementary school, conflicts may seem large to pupils even if they are not. The following stories can be helpful in illustrating many different types of conflicts.

- (i) Stand Tall, Molly Lou Melon by Patty Lovell – This story is all about bullying
- (ii) Enemy Pie by Derek Munson – This story is a positive example on how children can deal with their enemy.
- (iii) Simon's Hook by Karen Gedig Burnett – This book is about a young boy who learns how not to take the bait of people who make fun of you.
- (iv) Confession of a Former Bully by Trudy Ludwig – This is another book about bullying.

GoodReads (2017) outlined some children's literature on conflict resolution; they are: *Difficult Conversations: How to Discuss What Matters Most* by Douglas Stone, *Getting to Yes: Negotiating an Agreement Without Giving In* by Roger Fisher, *The Mediation Process: Practical Strategies for Resolving Conflict* by Christopher W. Moore. According to Delightful Children Books (2013), many anti-bullying books focus on what kids should not do rather than what they should do. Stronger self-esteem and better language skills can ultimately lead to a better

ability to resolve differences with peers.

## METHODOLOGY

A two phased quasi-experimental design involving pre-test and post-test was adopted for the study. The population of the study was 28,172. The exercise was conducted in DSC Model Primary School I and School II Orhuwhorun both in Udu Local Government Area of Delta State. Male and female primary four pupils were used as the population of the study. The sample comprised 63 primary four pupils. Purposive and cluster sampling techniques were used to sample 32 pupils in the experimental group one and thirty-one in the experimental group two (control group). Cluster sampling technique was further employed to draw out the two intact classes for the experiment. The pupils were asked to study the books till the end of the library period. At the end of each period, those who completed their reading were asked to exchange while those who were not capable of finishing theirs were encouraged to go home with the books. Every pupil in each group was given the literature texts. Knowledge gained was deliberated on and at the end summed up by the librarian. Data collected were analysed using mean and standard deviation, while Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The use of ANCOVA statistical tool served as a method for controlling extraneous variables and experimental contamination of subjects. The decision rule was based on the calculated f-cal against the tabulated f-tab.

### Data analysis

**Research Question 1:** What is the effect of children's literature on children's communication skill as measured by the mean scores of the participants in the control and experimental groups at pre-test and post-test?

**Hypotheses 1:** There is no significant difference in the effect of literature on children's communication skill at pre-test and post-test.

It is indicated in Table 1 that at pre test, the mean scores of the two groups (Experimental and Control) were low as 10.41 and 11.39 respectively, but at post test, the mean scores of experimental group increased to 14.78 while that of control was still minimal at 10.10. The increase in the mean score of the experimental group implies that exposure to literature is effective in the improvement of children's communication skills in primary schools. It was further indicated in the table that the f-calculated is 55.190 and its significant value is .000. This significance value is less than 0.05 level of significance, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis and concluding that there is significant difference in the effect of literature on children's communication skill as measured by the mean scores of the control and experimental groups at pre-test and post-test.

**Research Question 2:** What is the effect of children's literature on children's ability to resolve conflicts as measured by the mean scores of the participants in the control and experimental groups at pre-test and post-test?

**Hypotheses 2:** There is no significant difference in the effect of literature on children's ability to resolve conflicts at pre-test and post-test.

It is indicated in Table 2 that at pre test, the mean scores of the two groups (Experimental and Control) were low as 10.78 and 10.65 respectively, but at post test, the mean scores of experimental

**Table 1.** Sample size (n), Mean ( $\bar{X}$ ), standard deviation (S), and ANCOVA F-test statistics.

Test: Literature		Pre-test		Post-test	
Group	N	$\bar{X}$	S	$\bar{X}$	S
Experimental	32	10.41	1.52	14.78	2.98
Control	31	11.39	1.63	10.10	1.47

Tests of between-subjects effects					
Dependent Variable: Post-Test					
Source	Type III sum of squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected model	345.547 <sup>a</sup>	2	172.774	30.475	0.000
Intercept	195.928	1	195.928	34.559	0.000
Pretest	0.011	1	0.011	0.002	0.964
Treatments	312.900	1	312.900	<b>55.190</b>	<b>0.000</b>
Error	340.167	60	5.669		
Total	10492.000	63			
Corrected total	685.714	62			
<b>R squared</b>	0.504				
<b>Adjusted R squared</b>	0.487				

**Table 2.** Sample size (n), Mean ( $\bar{X}$ ), standard deviation (S), and ANCOVA F-test statistics.

Test: Literature		Pre-test		Post-test	
Group	N	$\bar{X}$	S	$\bar{X}$	S
Experimental	32	10.78	1.72	14.75	2.94
Control	31	10.65	1.64	10.06	1.46

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects					
Dependent Variable: Post-Test					
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected model	349.614 <sup>a</sup>	2	174.807	31.983	0.000
Intercept	288.806	1	288.806	52.840	0.000
Pretest	3.930	1	3.930	0.719	0.400
Treatments	348.133	1	348.133	<b>63.694</b>	<b>0.000</b>
Error	327.941	60	5.466		
Total	10434.000	63			
Corrected total	677.556	62			
<b>R squared</b>			0516		
<b>Adjusted R squared</b>			0.500		

group increased to 14.75 while that of control was still minimal at 10.06. The increase in the mean score of the experimental group implies that exposure to literature is effective in the improvement of children's ability to resolve conflicts in primary schools. It was further indicated in the table that the f-calculated is 63.694 and its significance value is .000. This value is less than 0.05 level of significance, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis and concluding that there is significant difference in the effect of literature on children's ability to resolve conflicts as measured by the mean scores of the control and experimental groups at pre-test and post-test.

## FINDINGS

The following findings were made from this study:

- (1) When children were exposed to literature there was improvement in their communication skill hence the effectiveness of literature proved significant when tested.
- (2) Exposing children to literature is effective in the improvement of their ability to resolve conflicts and when tested, the effectiveness proved significant.

## DISCUSSION

### Effect of literature on children's communication skill

It was indicated in this study that exposure to literature is effective in the improvement of communication skill of

children and when tested the effectiveness proved significant. This finding is a clear indication that as the children are exposed to literature, their communication skill will be improved. In line with this finding is Ayman (2019)'s discovery that digital story telling has positive effects of sparking children's imagination, providing information, and showing how other people live. It is also in consonance with the reasons expressed in Children's Bureau (2017) that book language is more descriptive, and tends to use more formal grammatical structures; thus reading to a child will enable him to latch onto vocabulary and language he or she hears around him or her, introduce reading into his auditory learning and also introduce the language of books, which differs from language heard in daily life. Consequently, it is clear that reading children's literature, either independently or through shared reading, helps children to develop their imagination, enhance creativity, strengthen oral language development and communicate more effectively.

### Effect of literature on children's ability to resolve conflicts

It was revealed that exposure to literature is effective in the improvement of children's ability to resolve conflicts in primary schools, and when tested, the effectiveness proved significant. This implies that when children are exposed to literature, the tendency of their developing ability to resolve conflicts will be high. In line with this finding, Mar et al. (2009) in their study discovered that there is growing evidence that reading narratives, even those explicitly labelled as fiction, is far from a meaningless leisure activity that ends when one closes the book. The researchers concluded that several exposures to narrative fiction can influence one's attitude towards various issues. However, children who are taught how to confront conflict with a variety of cooperative strategies will grow into adults who are better able to form and maintain close emotional ties with others (Stephens, 2006). Hence, conflict resolution for children is an important skill to learn, and books can come in handy in teaching this skill.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Since literature can function as children's change agent in some aspects of their human condition, contribute to their social development, and foster positive interpersonal attitudes which they can even use outside the classroom the researchers suggested that:

(1) Story hour should be an integral part of school library services because it makes the use of library more interesting and at the same time provides a platform for passing useful values to children.

(2) School administrators should employ professional librarians and train them periodically so that they will have the communication competence required to run the school library in such a way that children will gain the utmost benefit from using the library.

### CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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