Jamaican School Libraries Empowering Students with Life Skills: A Survey

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Abstract

Library activities have the potential to build in students life skills such as self-confidence, responsible citizenship and appropriate interpersonal skills. School librarians can either work collaboratively with classroom teachers to plan, implement and evaluate these library activities, or they can execute them single-handedly. A survey was carried out in several Jamaican school libraries to determine the activities that were pursued, the level of collaboration between school librarians and teachers, and students' perception of how they have been impacted by these activities. The population consisted of 20 school librarians and 400 students. The findings show that the activities empowered many high school students to attain the targeted life skills. However, they also indicated that activities with the potential to develop these targeted life skills were not utilized by several school librarians and that a collaborative approach was not the norm.

Keywords: Life Skills, Self-confidence, Responsible citizens, Interpersonal skills, School Libraries, Information Science

Introduction

Jamaican students are educated at four levels: Early Childhood (3-6 years), Primary (6-12 years), Secondary (12-17 years) and Tertiary (17+ years). Access to suitable libraries and information literacy instruction is integral to these students' all-around development. Researchers such as Lance (2013), Lance, Rodney and Hamilton-Pennel (2000), Kuhlthau and Todd (2005), have indicated that there is a direct relationship between a fully functioning school library and students' academic achievement. Their research suggests that these libraries have qualified librarians, adequate facilities and resources to provide all the required services. There is also evidence (Ross and Kuhlthau 2005; Everhart 2012; Lee, 2011) that these library programs equip students with life skills to help them gain self-confidence and appropriate interpersonal skills and make them responsible citizens who can function effectively in society. Kranich (2006, p.13) summarizes these views when he states that many libraries have programs encouraging active citizenship, as well as librarians who help students identify, evaluate, and use information essential for making decisions about the way they live, work and learn. There is also a strong acceptance that teacher librarian collaboration is essential for the achievement of program objectives.

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Purpose and Significance of the Study

This research sought to identify activities, likely to develop the life skills of self-confidence, good interpersonal relationships and responsible citizenship in students being pursued in some Jamaican school libraries. In addition, it sought to solicit students' perceptions of how these activities have impacted them.

It is hoped that the findings will place school libraries and librarians in a more favorable light in the school community and in the eyes of the Jamaican Ministry of Education, and redound to the benefit of all stakeholders. The findings can also inform the curriculum of the Departments of Library and Information Studies at The University of the West Indies, (UWI) Mona, and the Mico University College (MUC), where students are pursuing studies in librarianship. Furthermore, they should add to the growing body of literature on Caribbean librarianship.

Conceptual Framework of Life Skills

The World Health Organization [WHO] (1993) defines life skills as "the abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life" (2). According to Seth (2002, p. 3), life skills include "a wide range of knowledge and skill interactions believed to be essential for adult independent living." He cites Goodship (1990) who identifies a number of daily living skills: responsible citizenship, socially responsible behavior, good interpersonal skills and self-confidence. The following diagram, designed by the researcher, depicts three of these skills which can be acquired within the library setting of the school community.

Figure1:0 Stewart's Conceptual Framework of Life Skills – Self-Confidence, Responsible Citizens and Interpersonal Skills within the School Community

The three life skills focused on in the survey were: self-confidence, good interpersonal relationship and responsible citizenship, which the American Association of School Librarians/ Association for Educational Communication and Technology (AASL/AECT) (1998) describe as the social responsible skills of the *Information Literacy Standards for Student Learning*, Standards 7, 8 and 9.

Operationalization of Variables

Self-confidence: Having or showing confidence in yourself and your abilities (Merriam- Webster).
Responsible citizen: A person who follows the rules and laws of his country (ASK.com)
Interpersonal skills: The set of abilities enabling a person to interact positively and work effectively with others (businessdictionary.com).
Teacher librarian collaboration: The school library media specialist and teachers working together to plan for, design, teach and evaluate instructional events for students (Doll, p. 4).

Literature Review

The American Association of School Librarians/ Association for Educational Communication and Technology (AASL/AECT) (1980, pp. 5-7) has established Information Literacy Standards for Student Learning which are primarily guidelines describing the attributes of students who have attained information literacy. These are in three categories, namely "information literacy,""independent learning" and "social responsibility" (AASL, 1).

There is a seeming lack of research on social responsibility; therefore this literature review includes mainly position/professional papers written by librarians.

School Library Program Builds Self-Confidence in Students

According to AASL/AECT (1998, p. 5), social responsibility (Standard 7) is achieved when "students contribute positively to their learning community and society, recognize the importance of information in a democratic society, practice ethical behaviour and participate effectively in groups to generate information" (5). A group setting such as a literature circle, which encourages independence in information gathering, is an ideal environment to provide activities to foster the development of students' social skills including self-confidence. Sanacore, as cited in Sanders-Brunner (2004, p. 40), supports this view by stating that students become confident readers when they are encouraged to select their own reading materials. A school library program structured to develop students' self-confidence empowers them to transfer the life skills they learn to various situations. According to the Ontario School Library Association (2010), students will then view their capabilities positively and experience increased self-confidence.

School Libraries Developing Responsible Citizens

Socially responsible behavior (Standard 8) involves the practice of ethical behavior in the use of information and information technology; therefore, students should respect the principles of intellectual freedom, respect intellectual property rights and use information technology responsibly. The Ontario School Library Association (2010) posits that "society needs citizens who have respect for others and understand their responsibilities in participating in a safe and lawful society and that school library programs are designed to develop responsible citizens through the teaching of issues such as "plagiarism, privacy, Intellectual Property Right, copyright, bias, stereotyping and gender which will require deep understanding as well as reasoned acceptance or rejection" (23).

The school library is the first point of reference for teaching not only information literacy skills, but also the importance of acknowledging the work of others. For example, school librarians can demonstrate to students how to cite information used, avoid plagiarism and practice ethical behavior in relation to the use of technology. Farmer (2011, p.1) looked at the digital moral compass and concluded that teaching about information and technology is not enough, therefore it is imperative to teach learners how to be responsible and ethical users of them. The UNESCO/IFLA School manifesto confirms this role of the school library by stating that "the school library equips students with life-long learning skills and develops the imagination, enabling them to live as responsible citizens" (UNESCO/IFLA School Library Manifesto, 1).

In the 2011, *School Libraries Count!* Survey, Everhart (2012, n. p.) highlighted findings that 71% of school librarians surveyed were including digital citizenship—appropriate and responsible technology use—as part of their school or district curriculum, and 52% of school librarians were the primary teacher of digital citizenship in their school or district.

Added to this Kranich (2006),emphasizes that ever since the days of John Dewey, educators have recognized the vital role of education in teaching civic understanding and citizenship, and that when librarians facilitate the development of critical thinking, creativity and problem-solving, students learn how to be "consciously independent and, at the same time, interdependent and socially responsible"(11). She also quoted Kellie (1996, p.63) who warned that if the school librarians do not afford students the opportunity to live in and be active members of a democratic community, they will not become active participatory citizens in the wider society (11).

Muronaga and Massumura (2008, p. 1) point out that "students who have opportunities to work with diverse groups, honor diverse points of view, and model ethical behavior, live the experience of being responsible and caring citizens." This they suggest is achieved by "establishing library clubs and library monitor programs which will help students to develop sensitivity to human needs and a responsibility to serve" (p.1). In addition to this, students will be prepared for a world that values the skills of working with others and being able to make decisions based on sound reasoning and an appreciation for the well-being of others (p.14).

Lee (2011, p. 4) conducted research over a two-year period with sixteen (16) vocational secondary school students to investigate how school library reading programs were designed to engage special education students in reading. A graphic novel club was formed and it was discovered that through this program students were covertly learning to be responsible by returning books they had read overnight and selecting new ones. Lee (2011, p. 4) also indicated that there was opportunity for these students to develop leadership skills because the club was student-run.

School Libraries Developing Interpersonal Skills

Interpersonal skills (Standard 9) are evident when students contribute positively to the learning community and to society; they are also evident when students participate effectively in groups to pursue and generate information (6).Brunner-Sanders (2004) mentions that the literature circle, which encourages group interaction rather than atypical class discussion, can achieve good interpersonal skills in students as group members learn to acknowledge their own strengths and weaknesses as well as those of their teammates. Of significance is Brunner-Sanders' mention of a mixture of cultures, gender, abilities and socio-economic backgrounds in literature circles that can contribute to a culturally diverse and global community (40).

Hay and Foley (2009) commented on students' capacity building resulting from the group setting. According to them, the development in use of technology such as the Web 2.0 environment has facilitated not only resource-based learning but also the promotion of collaboration among students. School librarians can allow students to work in groups to build and revise web content, do group projects and complete problem solving tasks. Tise (2011, p.4) supported this argument by stating that students acquire important social skills and cultural competencies through group participation in the use of Web 2.0 tools.

Teacher and School Librarian Collaboration

Ash et al. (2005) stated that Information Literacy Standards for Students Learning "provides a framework within which the librarian and the teacher can share the tasks of educating students and thus facilitate collaboration"(12). This collaboration draws upon the complimentary roles of both the teacher and the school librarian as the teacher acts as a guide to the learning process, and the librarian acts as a facilitator of learning by selecting, acquiring, and organizing resources suitable for different learning styles, interests and abilities. However, for this to happen, these educators must obtain the support of the school administrators who are in charge of scheduling the meetings and class times which are important structures to facilitate collaboration.

Nored (2013) in her research on *Teacher-Librarian Collaboration: Creating Partnership that Works*, discovered that 89% of the teachers surveyed indicated that time scheduling was their biggest barrier to collaboration with teacher librarians. They highlighted the fact that any collaboration that takes place is done on the telephone or by way of e-mails just the day before the class is held. However, at any time during the year 58% of them managed to collaborate.

Swann (2013, p. 4) cites Cooper and Bray (2011), who point out that establishing a collaborative environment is important becausethe school librarians who experience the most success are those who collaborate with teachers as full partners in the teaching process. Therefore, this study set out to:

1. Ascertain from a select group of Jamaican school librarians the activities they have implemented in their school library which are likely to: develop self-confidence in students, make students responsible citizens and enhance their interpersonal skills;
2. Uncover students' perception of the value of these activities in equipping them with self-confidence and ability to be responsible citizens, and improve their interpersonal skills; and
3. Determine the extent of teacher and teacher librarian collaboration in implementing the school library activities.

Methodology

A survey-based quantitative methodological approach was used. Two questionnaires— one targeting the school librarians and the other the students—were used to collect the data. The former was pilot-tested on two school librarians while the latter was tested on five students who were representative of the sample. A letter of request which included assurance of confidentiality, anonymity and voluntary participation, accompanied the instruments. Participants were asked to return the completed questionnaire within two weeks of receipt. The data were then organized and represented using graphs and tables. Findings were analyzed according to the research questions, conclusions drawn and implications and recommendations stated.

Population and Sample

The population consisted of the 87 Jamaican secondary schools with qualified librarians.
Each of these schools had approximately 200 fifth formers, making the student population 17,400. The latest edition of the directory of secondary schools published by the Ministry of Education provided the list of schools, while the Jamaica Library Service (JLS) and the Library and Information Association of Jamaica (LIAJA) provided the lists of school libraries that were managed by trained librarians. The targeted population was fifth form students who were on the verge of graduation and who would therefore have completed five years of secondary school education. These students would have had adequate exposure to their school library activities.

The Krejcie, Robert and Morgan "Determining Sample Size Chart for Research Activities" (Powell, 75) was used to arrive at a sample size of 372. However, 400 students were selected from 20 schools to allow for absentees, unwillingness to participate and any other unforeseen circumstances. Simple random sampling was used to select 20 schools and 20 students from each school. The response rate was 20 librarians and 366 students.

Data Collection Instruments

Both questionnaires sought demographic information on the participants. That of the school librarians sought to ascertain the activities that were implemented to build the targeted life skills, and their collaborative effort with other staff, while that of the students sought their perception of the impact of these activities on their development of the targeted life skills. The school librarians indicated their responses on the three tables provided, each representing a life skill, while students made their responses on a Likert Scale by indicating strongly agree, agree, strongly disagree, disagree and does not apply.

Findings and Analyses

Findings from school librarians and students are discussed together. The following table shows the three life skills and the library activities aimed at fostering these skills.

Activities School Librarians Implemented to Build Self-confidence, Produce Responsible Citizens and Improve Interpersonal Skills, Number of School Librarians who undertook these Activities and the Number of Activities that Involved Collaboration

Activities and Social Skill— Self-confidence	No. of School Librarians who Carried out Activities	No. of Activities that Involved Collaboration	Activities and Social Skill— Responsible Citizenship	No. of School Librarians who Carried out Activities	No. of Activities that Involved Collaboration	Activities and Social Skill— Interpersonal Skills	No. of School Librarians who Carried out Activities	No. of Activities that Involved Collaboration
Library Orientation	19	9	Library Monitor	10	1	Literature Circles	4	4
Host Career Guidance Activities	12	12	Responsible use of Information Resources	11	6	Use of Social Media	4	0
Public Speaking	7	6	Record Keeping	10	6	Team work	13	0
Personal Development	7	4				Interactive Games	7	0

School Libraries Building Self-Confidence

The tableabove shows that all the school librarians included activities that were likely to develop self-confidence, responsible citizenship and good interpersonal skills among students.

Library Orientation

Figure 1.1: The Impact of Orientation on Participants' Confidence in Library Use

Library Orientation
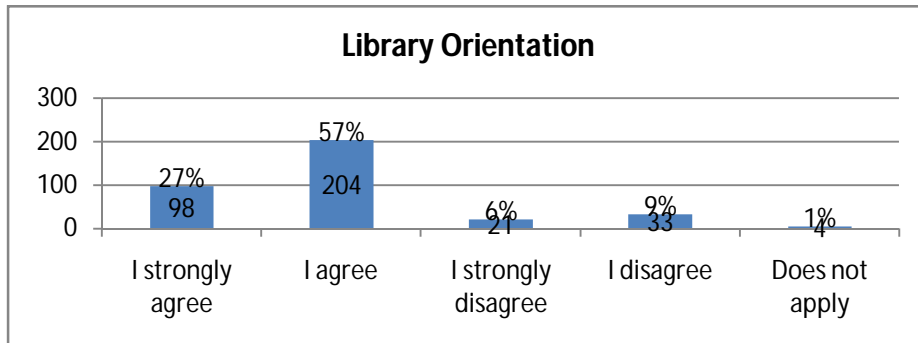
Nineteen out of 20 school librarians conducted library orientations to help students confidently use the library to access needed resources. As seen in Figure 1.1, this assumption is supported by 84% of the students (312) who strongly agreed and agreed to the statement, "I can find materials in the library on my own because of the library orientation I received." It is possible that those who disagreed were independent users of their libraries at the primary school level and transferred the skills with them to the secondary schools.

According to the United Nations' document on life skills (2003, 7-3), this orientation process would give students the coping and management skills needed to access resources in different contexts. Building this life skill was extremely important for these students as they were exiting secondary school to enter institutions of higher learning where the effective use of libraries would impact the quality of their assignments.

Based on the data in Table 1 indicating only nine cases of partnership in library orientation, collaboration in this activity could be improved. In spite of this shortcoming it is reasonable to conclude that these librarians have built students' self-confidence by engaging them in library orientation.

Choosing a Career

As a result of Careers Day activities, 60%, or 218 of the 366 students who responded became confident in their career choice, as indicated in Figure 1.2.

Figure 1.2: Confidence in Choice of Career

Career Guidance
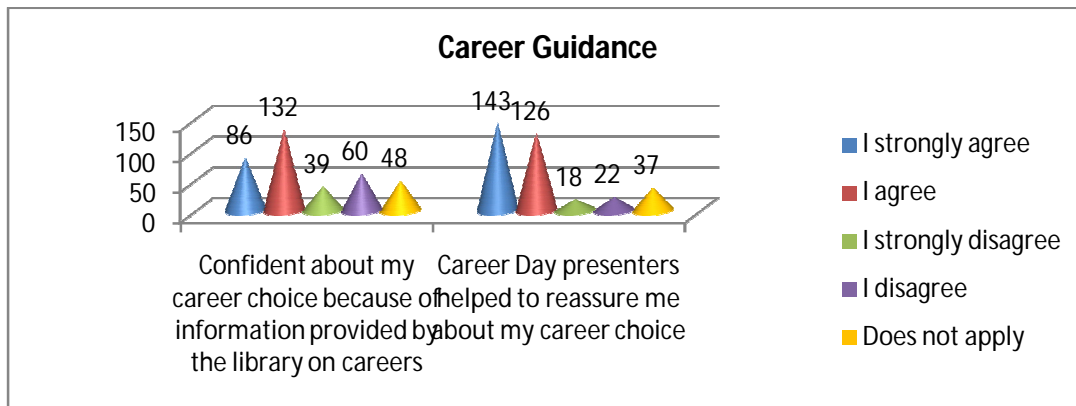
The 27% or 99 students who strongly disagreed or disagreed might already have decided on their career choices without the influence of any Career Day activities. The "does not apply" response represented those school libraries that did not undertake any activities pertaining to career awareness. It can be deduced that students who were exposed to activities offering career guidance were able to confidently decide on a career. This is significant since students had to use this same information to help them decide on an institution of higher learning. Others who planned to enter the world of work would have used this information to select and pursued subjects that would qualify them for the jobs they would seek.

Among the activities undertaken to help students develop confidence in career choices were presentations by various professionals and human resources specialists, and promotion of books relating to several careers. One school librarian mentioned that a list of careers was placed in the library along with the qualification for each, and the institutions offering programs for these careers.

Of the 20 school librarians, 12 collaborated in this area. Eight of them planned collaboratively with the schools' guidance counselor while four collaborated with classroom teachers in the planning and implementation of the Career Day activities.

Those who did not collaborate might have not developed the culture of collaboration which is likely to offer their students the greatest chance of success and to break down any barriers between school librarians and other members of the teaching staff.

Public Speaking

The ability to speak confidently and fluently in public is an important life skill. Sixteen school librarians used oral book reports and debating competitions as capacity building life skill activities for students to gain self-confidence in public speaking.

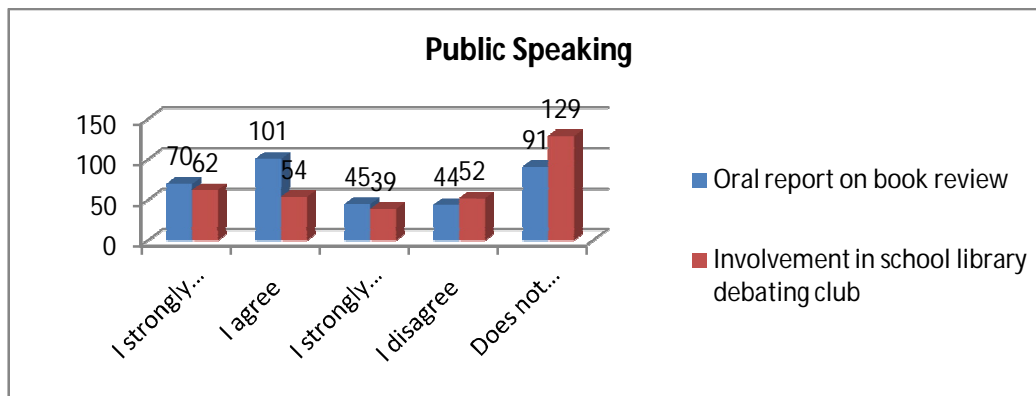**Figure 1.3: Public Speaking Activities**

Figure 1.3 shows 171, or 49%, out of 351 students indicating that they strongly agreed and agreed that the public speaking exercises gave them confidence in speaking in public. One hundred and sixteen or 33% strongly agreed and agreed that their involvement in the school library debating club was a factor that enhanced their confidence to speak in public. Those who strongly disagreed and disagreed perhaps already possessed this skill. The number of "does not apply" represents 26% or 91 students for their oral book report and 39% or 138 students for non-involvement in debating clubs. Overall, those who were exposed to these activities have gained confidence in speaking, which has prepared them for higher education or the working world where they might be required to do oral presentations.

Six school librarians collaborated with the language department to host the school debating competitions and the oral book reports. This means that these activities were collaboratively planned, implemented and evaluated. Ten librarians did not collaborate. One can speculate that while there is knowledge of the benefits of collaboration, there is not a culture of collaboration within these schools.

Enhancing Students' Personal Development and Recognizing Them for Their Good Performance in Library-Related Activities

Thirteen school librarians have hosted library-based activities that enhanced students' personal growth. These were sessions on leadership, self-confidence, motivation and career guidance addressed by external speakers as well as by the school guidance counselors. Meanwhile, six school librarians recognized students for their good performance in library- related activities which included library monitoring, best oral book reports and excellent performance on an information literacy quiz. These students were given trophies or certificates of achievement at their school award function.

Overall, the level of collaboration was low. Six librarians collaborated with the guidance counselor to facilitate the enhancement of personal development among students, while the same number of librarians collaborated with the School Award Function Committee to give recognition to students for their performance in library-related activities.

According to Jackson(2006), it is likely that providing students with incentive for their good performance will help them to think about what they did and what was achieved so that they will make sense of their experience and the effects of their actions. They will then decide what needs to be done to develop, improve and move forward (p.2).

Figure 1.4: Enhancing Students' Personal Development and Good Performance
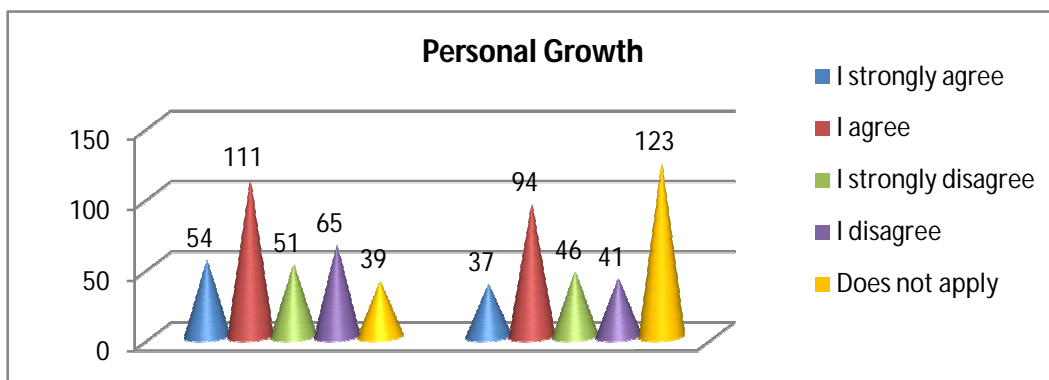
When the numbers for strongly agreed and agreed were combined (See Figure 1.5), it was discovered that 39% or 131 students' self-confidence was improved because of the library- related personal development seminars to which they had been exposed.The 25% or 87 students who strongly disagreed and disagreed that these seminars had no impact on their self-confidence may have needed more of these activities to feel a higher level of self-confidence. The data in Figure 1.5 also indicate that 52% or 165 students of the 328 who responded to this statement strongly agreed and agreed that their self-confidence had improved because they were recognized by the librarian for their good performance in library related activities. It is possible that the 36% or 116 who strongly disagreed and disagreed could be among the group of students for whom Shindler (2008) said rewards can lose their value over time if given repeatedly, as students may expect them after a while (n.p.).

It is evident that these school librarians who set out to enhance their students' personal development and recognize them for their performance have been successful in this pursuit. Therfore, these activities need to be replicated in other schools.

According to Exeter University (n.d. n.p.) the social skill of self-confidence will help students to identify their personal goals and work towards them, transfer the skills being developed to new situations and become more effective, independent and confident in their approach to studies and employability.

School Libraries Creating Responsible Citizenship

Three strategies employed to develop students' sense of responsibility were the creation of library monitors, the encouragement of ethical behavior when using the internet and proper record keeping.

Library monitor

Figure 1.5: Library Monitor's Role in Making Students Responsible
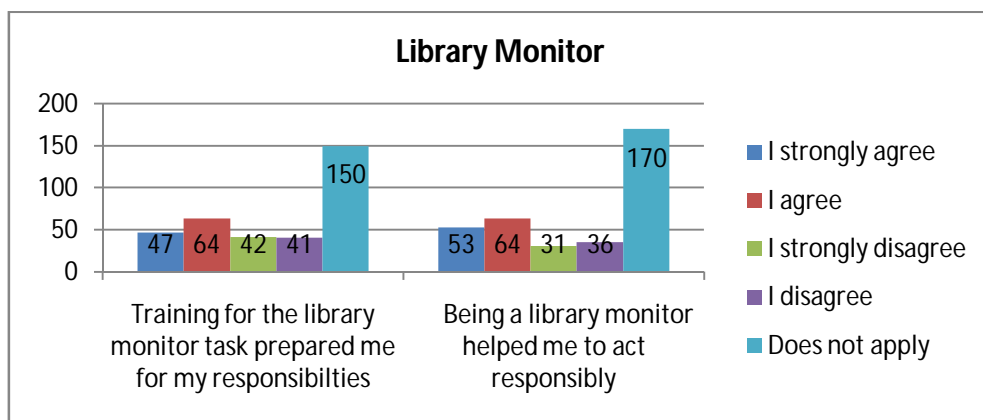

Figure 1:6 illustrates that 33%, or 111 of the 244 students, strongly agreed and agreed that their role as library monitor had made them more responsible. The 24% or 83 students who strongly disagreed and disagreed might have already possessed the desired trait and were likely appointed as library monitors because of this. It is clear that a large number, 44% or 150 students were not given the role to serve as library monitors. This activity can bring out a high level of responsibility in students and should be engaged in on a rotating basis so that as many students as possible can be exposed.

The development of the social skill of responsibility was also as a result of teaching students how to avoid plagiarism and how to use social media responsibly as seen in Figure 1.7.

Ethical behavior

Figure 1.6: Responsible Use of Information
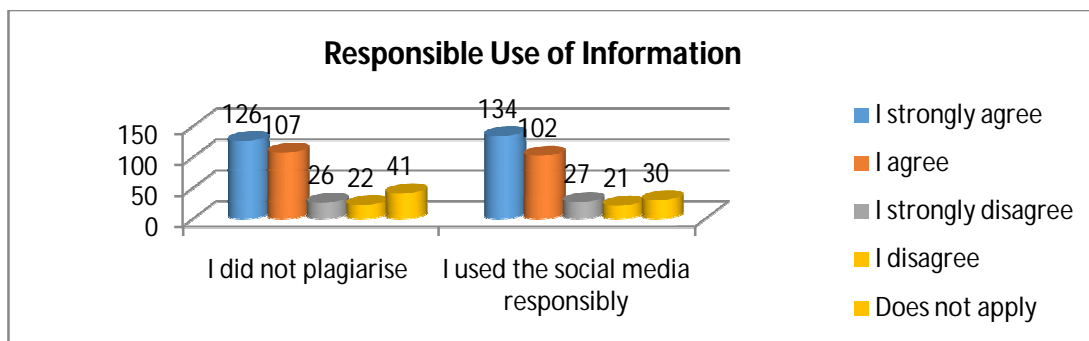
Two hundred and thirty-six of the 335 participants or 72% strongly agreed and agreed that they were not practicing plagiarism. Those who strongly disagreed and disagreed might still be practicing the unethical behavior of using other people's work and not acknowledging sources. Of concern is the 5% or 19 students who indicated "does not apply," as it seems there were no formal lessons on plagiarism in their libraries.

It was discovered that 244 students strongly agreed and agreed that they had began using the social media, Facebook, responsibly because of the lessons taught. Those who disagreed might still be using the social media ethically. It is possible that those who indicated does not apply were not using the social media.

The collaborative approach was used by only six of the 20 librarians. If these skills are to be developed adequately across the school community, activities to enhance collaboration needs to include all teachers. A school-wide approach should be used because of the ethical and legal repercussions that will result if students plagiarize and use the social media unethically. This is an important life skill for these students, especially for those who intend to go on to higher institutions where there is a serious problem with plagiarism among students.

Keeping Records

Thirteen school librarians included record-keeping in their library program.Twelve had students use a separate notebook to record the bibliographic details to be used in writing references. Twelve had students use this book to record the due dates of items borrowed from the library.These activities facilitated responsible habits in students who confirmed gaining this life skill as shown in Figure 1.7.

Figure 1.7: Keeping Record and Returning Borrowed Items on Time
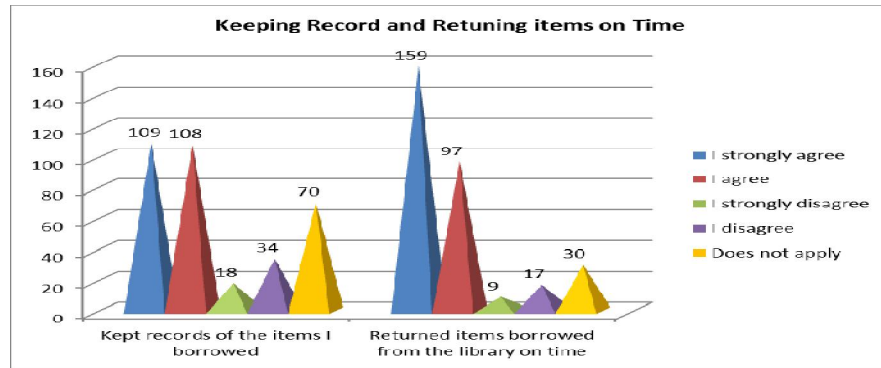
The data in figure 1.7 indicated that 64%, or 217 out of the 339 , indicated that they have developed a sense of responsibility because they have been taught to record the references while taking notes, as well as the due dates for items borrowed from the library. This responsibility developed in students is reflected in the high "on time" return rate of library resources by 251 out of 312, or 82%, of those who strongly agreed and agreed that they returned items borrowed on time. The 15%,or 54 students, who indicated that keeping records had no impact on their returning of borrowed items on time might have been those who did not need to record the items borrowed so that they would remember to return them. The high rate of "does not apply" could indicate that these students have not used the school library. Hinds (2013), indicates that there are students who do not use their school library because their school libraries lack the resources they seek. They therefore resort to using the internet at home (47).

There was no collaboration in the building of responsible citizenship. In order to avoid plaigiarism, which can bring schools and students into disrepute, librarians could have collaborated withall teachers on all their writing activities so that acts of plagiarsm could be detected and dealt with. Although the library quite likely was the only entity from which students borrowed information sources, school librarians could have collaborated with the teacher incharge of the Book Rental Scheme in relation to the record keeping of information resources to further instill a sense of responsibilty in students.

### *School Library Activities Developing Students' Interpersonal Skills*

Literature Circle

The implementation of the literature circle and cooperative learning seemed to have had a positive effect on participants (Figure 1.8). Cooperative learning is defined by Killen in Wyk's (2012, p. 1) article on cooperative learning as an instructional design that stimulates peer interaction and learner-to-learner cooperation in the process of fostering successful learning for all. Four of the 20 school librarians included literature circle as a part of their library program while 13 used cooperative learning. Three librarians indicated that their literature circle was designed to include face-to-face group work with each group member having a designated role. The cooperative learning approach was structured to give students project-oriented assignments that facilitated team work and strong interpersonal relationships. The literature circles were guided by rules and were supervised by librarians as well as teachers.

Figure 1.8: Impact of the Use of the Literature Circle
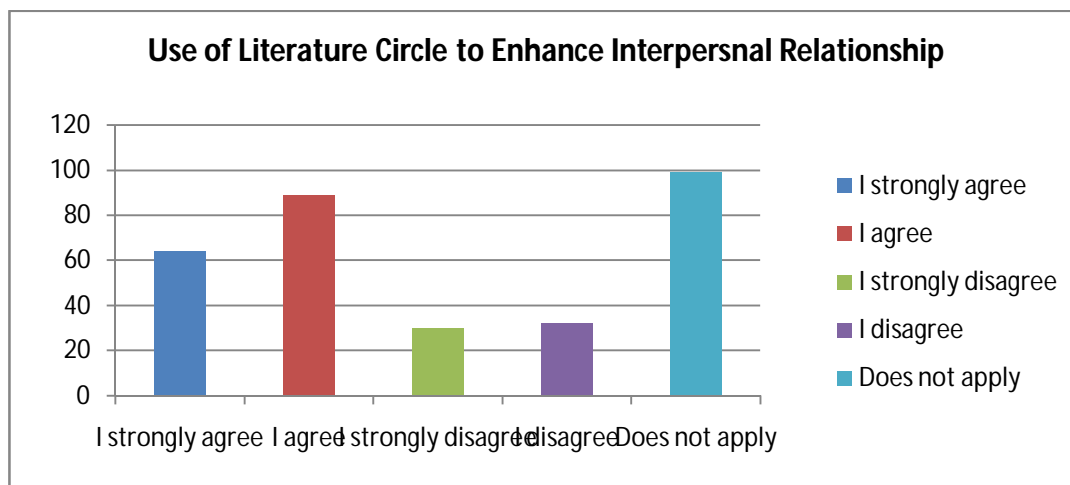
Figure 1.9: Impact of Team Work
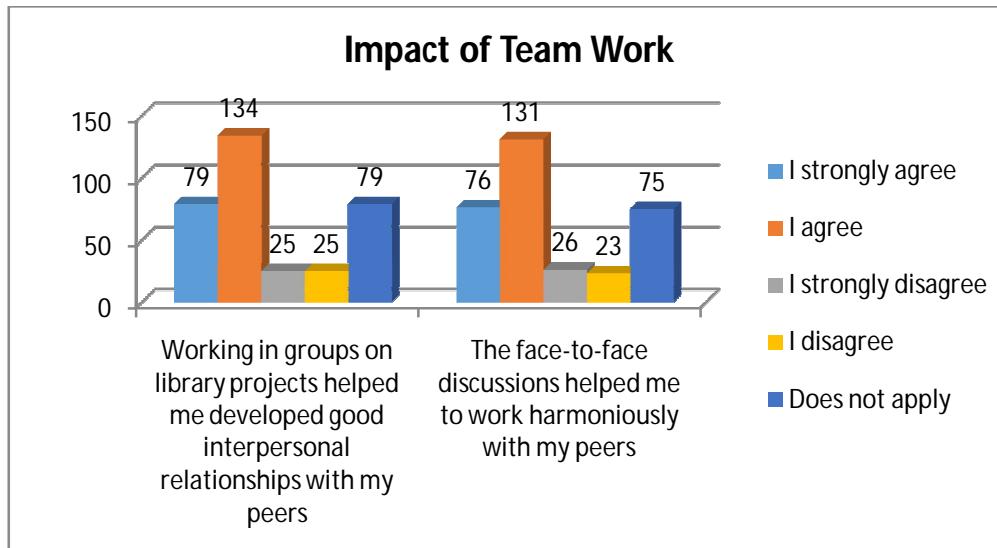
Of the 314 students a total of 153, or 48%, said they strongly agreed and agreed that their involvement in the literature circle activities had enhanced their interpersonal relationship skills. Fifty-two or 20% strongly disagreed and disagreed that this activity impacted their interpersonal skills.

The 99 or 32% who indicated "does not apply" were students who were not exposed to this activity, possibly due to librarians' time constraints resulting from the teaching load that they are known to carry.

It does appear that the literature circle activities were able to build students' interpersonal skills as they created an environment in which students were able to work together harmoniously(Brunner-Sanders, 2004, p. 4).This activity was quite likely to develop socal skills such as "waiting your turn,""listening attentively," and "speaking one at a time."According to Howard Gardner (1998), interpersonal skills is one of the eight multiple intelligences. Therefore if it was the weakest of the intelligences possessed by students, then working in groups was an excellent method of strengthing this life skill.

In Figure 1.9, of the 333 students, 213 or 62% indicated that the cooperative learning helped them develop good interpersonal relations with their peers; for instance, the discussions students had while working together on projects helped them work harmoniously. There were 50 students or 14%, and 49 or 13%, who expressed that working in groups and face-to-face discussions, respectively, had no impact on them. These students might have realized that they have not reached a satisfactory level in terms of their interpersonal relationship with peers. Another explanation could be that these students' strongest intelligence could have been interpersonal intelligence, therefore these activities did not have any major impact on this already developed skill.

Interactive Games

Interactive games were used by 10 school librarians to make difficult concepts clearer and improve students' interpersonal relationships.

Figure 2.0: Effects of Interactive Games
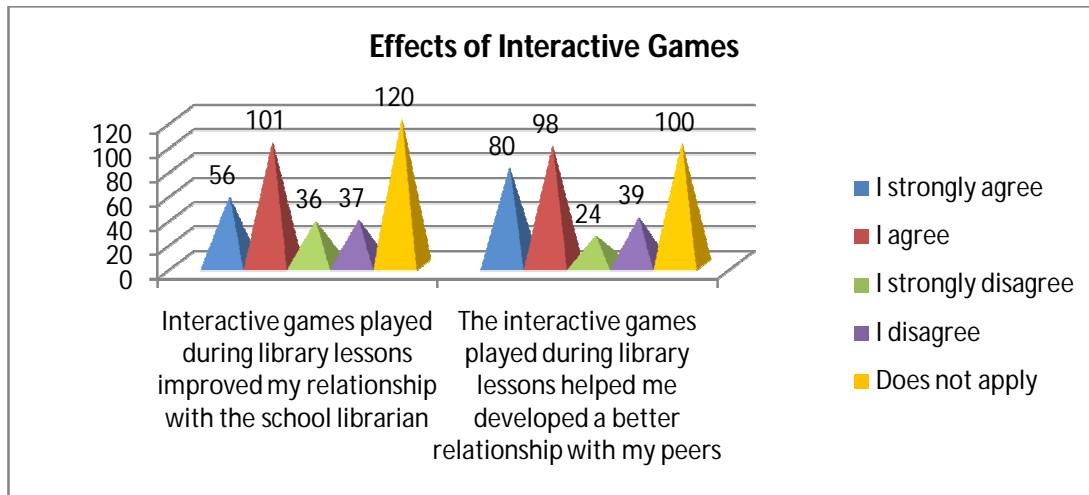
The data in Figure 2.0 show that of the 350 students participated in interactive gamesduring library lessons. 157 or 45% strongly agreed and agreed that the use of these games helped them to improve their relationship with the librarians. Using these games also helped them to develop a better relationship with their peers, as 178 or 52% of them indicated. It should be noted that a high percentage 34% and 29% responded "does not apply," meaning that interactive games were not used by their school librarians as a teaching tool.It can be inferred from the findings that the use of interactive games in school libraries definitely facilitated the improvement of interpersonal relationships among students and librarians, as well as among students and students.

Conclusion and Implications

The findings confirm that school librarians play a vital role in instilling self-confidence, building responsible citizens and improving interpersonal skills in students. In most of the responses, the majority of students indicated that they strongly agreed or agreed that the activities specified in the survey have helped them to develop the life skills investigated. Chief among these were the library orientation, career guidance, lessons on avoiding plagiarism, proper record keeping and team work. It can therefore be concluded that the social responsible category of the Information Literacy Standards for Student Learning was being achieved through library-related activities. In addition, the findings demonstrate that the role of school libraries goes beyond educational goals to empowering students to live and work confidently and harmoniously in society. Developing students in high school to be responsible citizens will redound to the benefit of the family, the immediate community and the nation.

The findings show that collaboration between school librarians and teachers was minimal, resulting in lack of reinforcement of the skills learned in the broader school community. With true school librarian-teacher collaboration, the library would be seen as an extension of the classroom, and a place integral to students' learning.

Implications

The research findings clearly imply that, in addition to improving academic performance, Jamaican school libraries can provide activities to develop critical life skills in students. They also indicate that if school libraries are well-equipped with adequate resources and qualified librarians, they are more capable of helping to achieve the mission and vision of the school.

The findings also imply that the curriculum of the library schools in Jamaica, UWI and MUC, is adequately preparing school librarians to equip high school students with the requisite life skills to function in the society.

Recommendations

As a result of the findings three critical recommendations can be made.

1. There is a clear need for greater collaboration between school librarians and teachers in the planning and implementation of activities that take place in the library to develop the targeted life skills.
2. Library schools should conduct workshops on school librarians and teacher collaboration with principals and other school administrators so they will understand the necessity of making allowance for school librarian and teacher collaboration.
3. More emphasis needs to be placed at the library school on the concept of school librarian-teacher collaboration so that greater benefits can be realised by all the stakeholders in the school community.
4. There should be continual networking among the school librarians so they can share ideas regarding activities that can be practiced by students for them to advance along the continuum of the social responsibility category of the Information Literacy Skills for Students Learning.

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