

Occupational Literacy Practices among Employees in Kwara State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study analysed occupational literacy practices among local government employees in Kwara Central Senatorial District, Nigeria. It also investigated the influence of gender, religion, job specialization, length of service, worker cadre, and location on the literacy practices of local government employees. The research type adopted for this study was a descriptive survey of the cross-sectional type. The population for the study comprised all the local government employees in Kwara Central Senatorial District, Nigeria. Three hundred and ninety-four (394) local government employees were sampled for this study, based on the selected Local Government Areas. The data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics at 0.05 level of significance. A researcher-designed questionnaire was used for data collection. The findings of the study revealed that document literacy, prose literacy, and quantitative literacy were the most common occupational literacy practices among local government employees, with document literacy as the most common one. It further discovered that gender, religion, specialization, length of service, and work cadre had no influence on their literacy practices, while there was a significant difference in the occupational literacy practices of urban versus rural local government employees. It was recommended that civil servants should be given opportunities to participate in occupational literacy programmes, such as workshops on writing journal articles, writing the memo, and further studies that would help to improve their literacy practices both for increased productivity as well as for self-improvement.

Keywords: Functional Literacy; Occupational Literacy; Job Specialisation; Literacy Practices; Employees

INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, literacy refers to the ability of individuals to read, understand and use information, as well as the ability to write at an adequate level of proficiency that is necessary for communication. Recently, however, literacy has come to take on a broader meaning, standing for a range of knowledge, skills, and abilities relating to reading, mathematics, science, and technology. This shows the widespread and deep changes that have taken place both in technology and in the organisation of work over the past few centuries. The ability to use and apply key mathematics and science concepts has become increasingly necessary across many occupations. On the most basic level, an individual is termed to be literate if he/she can read, write and make calculations in a simple way.

However, a person cannot be said to be functionally literate until he/she is able to engage in all the activities in which literacy is required for effective functioning, which will enable the person to use reading, writing, and calculations for his/her own development as well as for the benefit of his/her community and place of work effectively. This argument is supported by Lawal (2014), who states that any meaningful discussion of the roles, functions, and values of literacy for good governance or any aspect of nation-building for sustainable development must acknowledge the intricate web of interconnected literacies that are by-products of the information age. It must also be cognizant of the corollary functions of producing an emancipated citizenry that can efficiently discharge its cultural, social, economic, and civic responsibilities in the service of balance and positive transformation. Olajide (2002) concurred that genuine literacy efforts must empower individuals to cause further positive changes in their environment.

UNESCO (2009) defines literacy as the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate, compute, and use printed and written materials associated with varying contexts. It involves continuous learning that enables individuals to achieve their goals, optimize their potential and participate fully in their community and in society at large. UNESCO further added that literacy is described traditionally as the ability to read and write, a concept claimed and defined by a range of different theoretical fields. Literacy, therefore, means different things to different scholars (Olajide, 2002).

Kemiki (2016) opined that literacy encompasses a complex set of abilities to understand and use the dominant system of a culture for personal and community development. He further stressed that, in a technological society, the concept of literacy is expanding to include electronic text. In addition to alphabetic and number systems, these abilities vary in different social and cultural contexts and according to need and demand. Therefore, literacy is multi-dimensional in nature.

In spite of the recent changes to literacy due to the emergence of electronic media in our country, which has taken over the roles formerly played by the print media, it is believed that technology has not changed literacy at its fundamental level but that it has enhanced people's reach and ability to access information, and thus has fundamentally changed the ways in which literacy is taught and attained. It has also changed what utilitarian functions of literacy should be emphasised in this digital age (La'Tanya, 2010).

Bamfield Community School Association (BCSA) (2017) identified nine (9) types of literacy, namely: financial literacy, health literacy, workplace literacy, computer literacy, critical literacy, prose literacy, document literacy, numeracy, and problem-solving, which are briefly discussed thus:

- a) Financial literacy has to do with having the knowledge, skills, and confidence to make responsible financial decisions.

- b) Health literacy has to do with an individual's ability to access and use health information to make appropriate health decisions and maintain basic health.
- c) Workplace literacy skills are the core skills that are needed by employees to do their jobs successfully. These are critical to the success of modern business, and they include literacy and other significant skills, attitudes, and behaviors that are essential to the success of the workplace and high performance.
- d) Computer literacy has to do with the knowledge and ability to use technology efficiently.
- e) Critical literacy is the process of actively and skillfully applying, analysing and evaluating information gathered from observing, reflecting, and/or experiencing something.
- f) Prose literacy is the ability to understand and use information from texts, brochures, and instruction manuals.
- g) Document literacy has to do with finding and using information from specific documents, like maps, charts, job applications, medical forms, etc.
- h) Numerical literacy refers to the application of arithmetic operations to numbers contained in print materials. It includes tasks like balancing a chequebook, balancing one's accounts, completing order forms, and calculating tips in restaurants and the service industry
- i) Problem-solving is the ability to understand problems, and solutions and set goals to work through a step-by-step process to solve a problem based on planning and reasoning.

OCCUPATIONAL LITERACY AND JOB PERFORMANCE

The term 'occupation' refers primarily to a person's job or means of employment, but it can also be seen as a person's role in society, and often as a regular activity performed for payment. Hornby (2010) expressed the opinion that a job is a work for which one regularly receives payment. A job is a group of homogeneous tasks related by the similarity of functions. When a job is performed by an employee in exchange for pay, it consists of duties, responsibilities, and tasks that are defined and specific. From this definition, a job can be viewed as anything that an individual is expected to do in exchange for money, especially a specific activity done as a part of the routine of one's occupation for an agreed price (Kemiki, 2016).

Job performance examines whether a person carries out a job well. It is an important criterion for organisational outcomes and success. Campbell (1990) described it as an individual-level variable or as something that a single person does. He conceptualised job performance as a multidimensional construct that consists of more than one kind of behaviour. Job performance must be goal-relevant. Performance must be focused towards organisational goals that are relevant to the job. Despite the emphasis on defining and predicting job performance, however, it is not a single unified instruction.

There are many jobs, each with different performance standards. Campbell (1990) thus proposed an eight-factor model of performance evaluation based on factor analytic research that attempts to capture the dimensions of job performance that exist across all jobs. These factors are task-specific behaviours, non-task-specific behaviours, written and oral communication, efforts, personal discipline, helping out groups and colleagues, supervisory and leadership components, and managerial and administrative tasks. These are briefly examined as follows:

1. Task-specific behaviours are behaviours that an individual undertakes as part of his job. They are substantive tasks that delineate one job from another.
2. Non-task-specific behaviours are those behaviours that an individual is required to undertake, which do not pertain only to a particular job. For example, showing a product to a potential customer is a task-specific behaviour, while a non-task-specific behaviour of a salesperson might be to train new staff members.
3. Written and oral communication tasks refer to activities where the incumbent is evaluated, not necessarily on the content of a message, but on the adeptness with which the communication is delivered. Employees need to make both formal and informal oral and written presentations to different levels of achievement in many different jobs in the workforce.
4. Efforts are defined as aspects of an individual's performance that can be assessed in terms of activities done, either day-to-day or when there are extraordinary circumstances. This factor shows the extent to which people commit themselves to job tasks.
5. Personal discipline is included within the performance domain, i.e., individuals would be expected to be in good standing with the law.
6. Helping out the group and colleagues has to do with peaceful-co-existence between workforces. Performance in this regard might include acting as a good role model, coaching, giving advice, etc.
7. The supervisory or leadership component is an aspect of performance that relates to face-to-face interactions between workers. It involves an individual being relied upon to undertake many of the things delineated under the previous factor and in addition for being responsible for meting out rewards and punishment.
8. Managerial and administrative performance are those aspects of a job that serve the group or organisation but that do not involve direct supervision. A managerial task would be setting an organisational goal and responding to external stimuli to assist a group in achieving its goals.

Campbell (1990) further suggested several determinants of the performance component. He argued that individual differences between workers are a function of four main determinants but three are most relevant here. They are declarative knowledge, procedural knowledge, and motivation.

1. Declarative knowledge represents the knowledge of a given task requirement, in other words, knowing what to do.
2. Procedural knowledge means knowing how to do something. This has to do with cognitive, psychomotor skills, physical skills, perceptual skills, interpersonal skills, and self-management skills.
3. Motivation refers to a combined effect from three choices of behaviours, i.e., the choice to expend effort on doing something, the choice of the level of effort to expend, and the choice to persist in the expenditure of that level of effort for some time in order to achieve a certain goal. This reflects the direction, intensity, and persistence of volitional behaviours.

Workplace literacy became a focus of attention for the news media, policymakers, employers, organisations, and labour unions in the United States (US) from the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s. This was evident in the media campaigns, state and federal workplace education initiatives, corporate and union worker basic skills programmes, research reports, and 'how-

to' guidebooks that appeared during that period (Jurmo, 1998). The terms "workplace literacy", "employee basic skills" and "workplace basics" were used to describe essential communication, maths, teamwork, and problem-solving skills that employees needed for workplaces that were becoming increasingly high-tech and oriented toward individual and team-based decision-making and problem-solving (Carnevale *et al.* 1990; Department of Education and US Department of Labour, 1998;).

Much of the interest in the delivery of basic skills services in the workplace came from the adult literacy field. Nonetheless, many who worked in workplace programmes moved away from using the term "workplace literacy"; they felt that the term suggested that reading was the main issue when, in fact, employers and others were defining basic skills in a much more comprehensive way. In response to this, it was indicated that employees needed not just the traditional basic skills of reading, writing, oral English, and mathematics, but also the ability to work in teams, solve problems, track down information, and behave responsibly. The term was also avoided by many because it was feared that calling a programme a workplace literacy programme would make it anathema to employees who believed that literacy programmes were meant for people who could not read.

Those calling for investment in workplace basic skills argued strongly that employee basic skills were key factors in keeping workplaces productive, safe, and competitive. Some even argued that workers' basic skills played a role in employees' personal and professional development, such as their ability to retain their jobs, qualify for promotion, manage their benefits, earn high school credentials, and obtain higher education and training. and have positive relations with co-employees (Bhola, 1995).

From the aforementioned points, it is evident that a worker needs to be literate in order to be effectively functional in his job. This would not only be for the benefit of the workplace, but the skills would also improve the performance of the organization as a whole, and advance the employees' personal and professional development too.

LITERACY PRACTICES AMONG EMPLOYEES

Rush, Moe, and Storlie (1986) defined occupational literacy as the ability to competently read required work materials. The definition derived from Kirsch and Guthrie (1978) proposed that functional literacy be defined according to the demands of specific situations in terms of competency in reading alone, but more recent research has included listening and writing as literacy-related competencies. Spikes and Cornell (1987) explained that, beyond reading competence and with reference to the wide variety of occupations, occupational literacy is a term that should be perceived as 'fluid' in terms of individual competencies related to situations.

Hull and Sechler (1987) classified adult literacy skills needed in the workplace according to a certain types of skills. He found that, recently, higher levels of skills are needed in the workplace than were needed five years ago. The researcher suggested that, as more companies convert to using more complex equipment, employees' skills must be upgraded too. Basic literacy skills serve as prerequisites for the learning of more technical knowledge, and the knowledge is specific to the type of equipment and industry, although the underlying basic skills tend to be more generic.

The following skills have been identified as necessary for successful job entry. They include reading, writing, and counting, reading for facts and information, writing legibly, completing forms and applications adequately, signing forms appropriately, writing dates and

times correctly, using listening skills to identify procedures to follow, and speaking confidently.

Fetuga (2012), with regard to reading practices in the workplace (in other words, document literacy), expressed the opinion that 'reading of books' opens up a world of information and possibilities to those who can read, and that it is mainly through books that people enjoy personal relations and association with superior minds. This supports the precept that reading is the window through which individuals peep into the outside world. Reading practices at work could be likened to document literacy. This aspect measures how well a worker makes use of the information contained in forms, schedules, charts, graphs, letters or memos, reports, articles, journals, manuals or reference books, and catalogs to solve problems. Reading or use of information from computers by employees is the type of literacy most commonly associated with information technology. In other words, employees need certain information, which they acquire through reading, and then pass it on to someone else. Through reading and using a weather map, for instance, a worker can find out the day's weather, or by using a TV guide he/she can find out when a job-related programme begins. Information could also be retrieved from a graph through reading. Reading at work may reveal some hidden facts that could help to save the workplace. Employees who read newspapers will also be informed about what is happening in the country and in the international world.

Writing practice at work involves filling in forms, writing letters of application for leave (annual, maternity, casual, sick), writing memos, writing bills and invoices at the workplace, and filling in the daily attendance register. Writing at the workplace could also involve signing forms, writing duty reports, writing promotion exams, etc. All these activities take place in the workplace and involve writing.

Quantitative practices at the workplace involve the use of numbers on advert forms, flyers, articles, or other printed materials. This is a little different from writing and reading. It involves the use of mathematical skills in the workplace, such as adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing to get the information needed. For instance, it involves measuring objects, calculating prices or costs of budgets, figuring out how much was added to one's salary, etc. Besides the literacy practices at work, employees practice literacy outside the workplace too, which would also help in the development of their literacy skills. Such literacy skills include e-mailing, chatting on WhatsApp, and Facebook (reading text messages through these media), text messaging with the use of cellphones, reading interesting road signs, and reading religious books like the Qur'an and the Bible, tracts, and booklets. These experiences and forms of knowledge all help workers improve their reading, writing, and quantitative skills when are in the workplace.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The general purpose of this study was to analyse the occupational literacy practices of local government employees in Kwara Central Senatorial District, Nigeria. Specifically, the study intended to:

- a) identify the occupational literacy practices among local government employees in Kwara Central Senatorial District, Nigeria;
- b) ascertain the occupational literacy practices among local government employees in Kwara Central Senatorial district on the basis of gender;
- c) examine whether the occupational literacy practices among local government employees differ on the basis of religion or not;
- d) investigate whether the occupational literacy practices among local government employees vary in response to employees' length of service;

- e) determine whether the occupational literacy practices among local government employees vary on the basis of specialisation or types of job;
- f) find out if occupational literacy practices among local government employees differ across cadres of work; and
- g) examine whether or not the occupational literacy practices among the local government employees differ on the basis of the location of their workplace.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study provided answers to the following research questions:

1. What are the occupational literacy practices among local government employees in Kwara Central Senatorial District, Nigeria?
2. Do the occupational literacy practices among the local government employees in Kwara Central Senatorial District differ on the basis of gender?
3. Is there any difference in the occupational literacy practices among local government employees in Kwara Central Senatorial District based on religion?
4. Do occupational literacy practices among local government employees in Kwara Central Senatorial District differ based on their length of service?
5. Is there any difference in the occupational literacy practices among local government employees in Kwara Central Senatorial District based on the employees' specialisation or types of job?
6. Do the occupational literacy practices among local government employees in Kwara Central Senatorial District differ on the basis of cadre?
7. Is there any difference in the occupational literacy practices among local government employees in Kwara Central Senatorial District based on location of their workplace?

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The following hypotheses were tested in the course of the study:

HO₁: There is no significant difference in the occupational literacy practices among the local government employees on the basis of gender.

HO₂: There is no significant difference in occupational literacy practices among the local government employees on the basis of religion.

HO₃: There is no significant difference in the occupational literacy practices among the local government employees on the basis of length of service.

HO₄: There is no significant difference in the occupational literacy practices among the local government employees based on employees' specialisation.

HO₅: There is no significant difference in the occupational literacy practices among the local government employees on the basis of employees' cadre.

HO₆: There is no significant difference in the occupational literacy practices among the local government employees on the basis of the location of their workplace.

METHODOLOGY

This study is a descriptive survey of the cross-sectional sub-type of research. It aims to identify and analyse the occupational literacy practices among local government employees in Kwara

Central Senatorial District, Nigeria. The total population for this study comprised all local government employees in Kwara Central Senatorial District (Asa, Ilorin East, Ilorin South and Ilorin West). The target population was thus all the local government civil servants in Kwara Central Senatorial District, Nigeria (civil servants only). The proportionate sampling technique was used to select 100 employees in each of the Local Government Areas under study, thereby resulting in a total number of 400 respondents.

A researcher-designed instrument was used to elicit information from the respondents, focusing on identifying occupational literacy practices. The questionnaire items were structured into four-item Likert scales: Always (A) – 4, Often (O) – 3, Seldom (S) – 2, Never (N) – 1.

The years of work experience were classified as: 0-10 years (less experienced), 11-20 years (experienced), and employees more than 21 years in service (very experienced). This instrument was validated by some experts in the Department of Arts Education Department, University of Ilorin. Their corrections and suggestions were used to produce a modified instrument. In order to test the reliability of the instrument, the researcher employed a test re-test technique over a two-week interval. The instrument was administered to twenty (20) randomly selected respondents who were not part of the study sample, while the Pearson Moment Correlation Co-efficient formula was used to find out the coefficient of reliability at 0.76.

Research Question One was answered using mean and standard deviation. Other research questions (2-7) have corresponding hypotheses. These hypotheses were tested using inferential statistics. Hypotheses One and Six were tested using the independent t-test statistical tool, while Hypotheses Two, Three, Four and Five were tested using One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), all at 0.05 level of significance.

Answering Research Questions

This section provides answers to the research questions set out above.

Research Question 1: What are the occupational literacy practices among the local government employees in Kwara Central Senatorial District, Nigeria? Responses of the respondents to the items in the questionnaire that addressed occupational literacy practices among local government employees were collated and subjected to mean and standard deviation analyses; the output is reported in Table 1.

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation Showing Occupational Literacy Practices among Local Government Employees

S/N	Literacy Practices	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Prose Literacy	394	20.47	5.53
2	Document Literacy	394	29.86	6.34
3	Quantitative Literacy	394	16.39	4.62

Table 1 shows that Document Literacy is the most common occupational literacy practices among local government workers, with a mean score of 29.86 and a standard deviation of 6.34, followed by Prose Literacy with a mean score of 20.47 and a standard deviation of 5.53, while Quantitative Literacy with a mean score of 16.39 and a standard deviation of 4.62 was the least common occupational literacy practices employed by local government employees. This confirms that all three literacy practices are employed by the local government employees in Ilorin, Nigeria.

Testing of Hypotheses

Six research hypotheses were formulated for this study. Hypotheses One and Six were tested using the independent t-test statistical technique, while Hypotheses Two, Three, Four and Five were tested using One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), at 0.05 level of significance.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference in occupational literacy practices among local government employees on the basis of gender.

Table 2: t-test Statistics Showing Difference in the Occupational Literacy Practices among Local Government Employees on the Basis of Gender

Gender	N	Mean	Std. D	df	t.value	Sig	Decision
Male	204	68.06	13.72	392	2.07	.25	NS
Female	190	65.2947	12.71				

[*Insignificance@0.05](#)

From Table 2, it can be deduced that there was no significant difference in the occupational literacy practices of male versus female local government employees. This is reflected in the result: $df(392) t = 2.07, p > 0.05$. Since the calculated sig. (.25) is greater than 0.05, the hypothesis is retained. This implies that there is no significant difference in the occupational literacy practices among male and female local government employees.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference in the occupational literacy practices among local government employees on the basis of religion.

Table 3: One-Way ANOVA Showing Difference in the Occupational Literacy Practices among Local Government Employees on the Basis of Religion

Religion	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Decision
Between Groups	6.949	60	.116	.982	.519	NS
Within Groups	39.287	333	.118			
Total	46.236	393				

[*Insignificance@0.05](#)

From Table 3, it can be deduced that there was no significant difference in the occupational literacy practices among local government employees on the basis of religion. This is reflected in the result $F(.982), p > 0.05$. Since the calculated sig. (.519) is greater than 0.05, the hypothesis is retained. This implies that there was no significant difference in the occupational literacy practices among local government employees on the basis of religion.

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant difference in the occupational literacy practices among the local government employees based on employees' specialisation.

Table 4: One-Way ANOVA Showing Difference in the Occupational Literacy Practices among Local Government Employees on the Basis of Employees' Specialisation

Specialisation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Decision
Between Groups	170.581	60	2.843	1.002	.477	
Within Groups	944.485	333	2.836			NS
Total	1115.066	393				

[*Insignificance@0.05](#)

From Table 4, it shows that there was no significant difference in the occupational literacy practices among local government employees on the basis of specialisation. The hypothesis is thus retained. This is reflected in the result F (1.002), $p > 0.05$ since the calculated sig. (.477) is greater than 0.05. This implies that there was no significant difference in the occupational literacy practices among local government employees on the basis of specialisation.

HO4: There is no significant difference in the occupational literacy practices among the local government employees on the basis of length of service.

Table 5: One Way ANOVA Showing Difference in the Occupational Literacy Practices among Local Government Employees on the Basis of Length of Service

Length of Service	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Decision
Between Groups	42.800	60	.713	1.151	.222	
Within Groups	206.349	333	.620			NS
Total	249.150	393				

[*Insignificance@0.05](#)

It is revealed in Table 5 that the hypothesis is retained. This is reflected in the result F (1.151), $p > 0.05$, since the calculated sig. (.222) is greater than 0.05. This means that the hypothesis is retained. This implies that there was no significant difference in the occupational literacy practices among local government employees on the basis of their length of service.

Hypothesis Five: There is no significant difference in the occupational literacy practices among the local government employees on the basis of employees' cadre.

Table 6: One Way ANOVA Showing Difference in the Occupational Literacy Practices among Local Government Employees on the Basis of Employees' Cadre

Employees' Cadre	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Decision
Between Groups	27.548	60	.459	1.173	.194	
Within Groups	130.350	333	.391			NS
Total	157.898	393				

[*Insignificance@0.05](#)

From Table 6, it is revealed that there was no significant difference in the occupational literacy practices among local government employees on the basis of work cadre. This means that the hypothesis is retained. This is reflected in the result F (1.173), $p > 0.05$ since the calculated sig. (.194) is greater than 0.05. This implies that there was no significant difference

in the occupational literacy practices among local government employees on the basis of their cadre.

Hypothesis Six: There is no significant difference in the occupational literacy practices among the local government employees on the basis of the location of their workplace.

Table 7: t-test Statistics Showing Difference in the Occupational Literacy Practices among Local Government Employees on the Basis of Location

Location	N	Mean	Std. D	Df	t-value	Sig.	Decision
Urban	176	67.0227	12.76645	392	.397	.003	S
Rural	218	66.4908	13.73423				

[*Significance@0.05](#)

From Table 7, it is shown that there was a significant difference in the occupational literacy practices among urban and rural local government employees. This is reflected in the result: $df(392) t = .397, p < 0.05$. Since the calculated sig. (.003) is less than 0.05, the hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there was indeed a significant difference in the occupational literacy practices among urban versus rural local government employees.

To ascertain where the significant difference lies, the means of the two groups were compared. It is shown that urban employees have a mean score 67.0227, while rural employees have a mean score 66.4908. This implies that urban employees employ more occupational literacy practices than their rural counterparts.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

It was revealed from this study that document literacy, prose literacy and quantitative literacy are the most common occupational literacy practices among local government employees in this context. The findings further showed that document literacy was the most commonly practiced literacy out of the three literacy practices. Since document literacy is high, employees' job performance should be equally high. This is in consonance with Fetuga (2012) who argued that reading practices at workplace (document literacy) open up a world of information and possibilities to those who read, and that it is mainly through reading books that people enjoy personal relations and association with superior minds. Reading practices at work relate to document literacy. This aspect measures how well a worker makes use of information in forms, schedules, charts, graphs, letters or memos, reports, articles, journals, manuals or reference books and catalogues to solve problems, and these are the activities that the workers mostly engage in.

The second finding from this study revealed that there was no significant difference in the occupational literacy practices among male and female local government employees. This outcome is contrary to the findings of Alokun (2008) who found that the literacy level of girls and women is extremely low in Africa. In a similar vein, Lawal (1999) submitted that mothers were found to be more directly involved in child literacy development than reading literacy. He thus recommended that women should be more educationally empowered as a way of achieving sustainable national development through healthy family literacy activities. Boothby (2010) also revealed that there may be different views on the issue of boys' literacy achievement versus that of girls.

The third finding from this study shows that there was no significant difference in the occupational literacy practices among local government employees on the basis of religion. This outcome confirms the findings of Wambiu (2012) that religion is not a factor that affects adult literacy programmes.

The fourth finding of this study revealed that there was no significant difference in the occupational literacy practices among local government employees on the basis of their field of specialisation. This outcome is in line with the submission of Mikulecky *et al.* (1992) that job specialisation does not affect the literacy practices of employees. Kemiki (2016) also stressed that one of the most important aspects of job specialisation is the potential to increase employees' productivity and output through appropriate literacy practices.

The fifth finding of this study showed that there was no significant difference in the occupational literacy practices among local government employees on the basis of their length of service. This finding is in contrast with the position of Onuka and Akinyemi (2012) who found that experience is crucial in everything. They stressed further that, with many years of experience in reading and writing, an individual becomes better acquainted with literacy skills, based on the principle that practice makes perfect. The more one practices, the better one becomes. However, the outcome of this study is in contrast to Abiola (2012) who carried out a research study on an analysis of resources used for teaching English studies in Senior Secondary Schools in Kwara State, Nigeria. His findings showed that experience is not important when it comes to teachers' use of instructional resources for teaching English studies. To him, the issue of "experience is the best teacher" is not justified, because it may be better to learn consciously through gaining wisdom than through learning by experience. This means that the situation should be addressed on the basis of formal steps required by the relevant profession.

The sixth outcome of this study revealed that there was no significant difference in the occupational literacy practices among local government employees on the basis of their cadre. This finding is in consonance with the findings of Mikulecky and Ehinger (1986) who asserted that workplace literacy calls for a variety of activities, repetitive in nature and usually for the purpose of accomplishing a task. They stressed further that frequent practices will lead to successful outcomes. Therefore, work cadre could not be used as a determinant of employees' occupational literacy practices.

The last finding of this study indicated that there was indeed a significant difference in the occupational literacy practices among urban versus rural local government employees. This finding confirms the outcome of Achonye (2012) that there are very few literacy practices that workers in rural areas can carry out due to a lack of basic amenities, such as the lack of power supplies and ICT facilities.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the study have established that document literacy, prose literacy, and quantitative literacy are the most common occupational literacy practices among local government employees, with document literacy being the most common one, followed by prose literacy and lastly quantitative literacy. It was also discovered that there was no significant difference in the occupational literacy practices of male versus female local government employees, nor with regard to religion, job specialisation, length of service, and work cadre, which all indicated that there were no differences in literacy practices among local government employees. However, this study did reveal that there was a significant difference in the occupational literacy practices of urban versus rural local government employees. It was

discovered that rural local government employees have no access to the basic infrastructural facilities that are essential for providing adequate literacy practices.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It was recommended from the findings of this study that civil servants should be given opportunities to participate in occupational literacy programmes, such as seminars, journal writing, memo, and further studies that will help to improve their literacy practices both for enhanced productivity and also for self-improvement. Particular efforts should be geared towards improving their document literacy skills. Rural area employees should be supplied with the necessary basic infrastructure by the government so as to improve their literacy practices. Curriculum designers should furthermore provide the necessary information to redirect attention to the importance of occupational literacy practices in the curriculum, that is, reading, writing, and counting as a way of improving performance at work. They should also frame an appropriate curriculum and methodology for improving manpower development with a view to inculcating this in adult literacy education.

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