

Adequate Materials as Pre-Requisite for Functional School Library

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Abstract This paper attempts to examine the Concept of School Library its aims and functions, it also identified materials in a functional school library to include print and non-print materials such as, fictions, text books, reference books, periodicals and non print materials. It identified the problems of school library to include inadequate staffing, lack of information materials, infrastructures and insufficient awareness. Finally, conclusions were drawn while solutions to identified problems were recommended.

Keywords: School Library, Information Materials, Services

Introduction

The Nigeria National Policy of Education (1989) emphasized the importance of the library right from the pre-primary education to the tertiary level and it therefore advocated for proper planning of each level of education along with a functional library services.

It could be clearly seen that there cannot be any functional library services without adequate library resources in any library. In this case, the school library.

Several authors have tried to define the school library these includes, Ogunmilade (1995) school library is an organized collection of books placed in a school for the use of teachers and pupils but usually pupils. Also, Oti (2000) stated that school libraries are those libraries found in primary and secondary schools whose collections are mainly for the young people.

According to Egesimba and Ajie (2003) school library include all the libraries found in primary and post primary schools. It is usually a collection of and other resource materials that will be of use to the pupils and teachers.

Also, Gojeh (2004) defined school library as a building established in a primary or a secondary school with trained personnel, organized book and non-book materials that are provided for use by students and staff of the school.

From these definitions school libraries can be defined as the libraries found in the primary and secondary level of educational institutions with the aim of aiding the study and teaching carried out by these institutions, by making information materials needed for the same purpose available in whatever format. This is why in present day school libraries we see varieties of educational media which includes books, periodicals magazines, newspapers, film and filmstrips radio, tapes, slides, computer, study kits and realia. The content of some school libraries lay credence to how they are addressed such as: instructional media center (IMC), Instuctional Learning Centres.

Aims of School Libraries

The aims of school libraries according to Ogunmilade (1995), Udofia (1997) and Odusanya and Amusa (2004) are:

- i. To encourage the development of skill in reading.

- ii. To prompt the readers to some literary appreciation.
- iii. To be a source of subject information centre.
- iv. To be a clinic of intellectual development.
- v. To become a stimulating factor in education.

In order to achieve these aims, the school library programme must be developed to complement and reflect the need of the objectives formulated by the school, its parent body of which it is a part and therefore must assist to achieve the overall objectives of the school.

Functions of School Libraries

The functions of school libraries would be examined from the opinion of the following scholars, Davies (1969), Ebozoje (1990), Kolade (1998) and Dike (2004) respectively, these include;

- i. Participate effectively in the school programmes, by striving to meet the needs of pupils, teachers and other community members.
- ii. Providing boys and girls with the library materials and services most appropriate in their growth and development as individuals.
- iii. Working with teachers in the selection and use of all types of library materials which contribute to the teaching programme.
- iv. Encourage the use of learning resources by every student at school and borrowing them for use at home.
- v. Providing conducive environment for study which afford the students the opportunity to study independently.

The roles which the school library can play are in-exhaustive and in order to perform these functions effectively, having an adequate library collections which consist of resource materials becomes imperative.

School Library Collections

Materials in school libraries are made up of print and non-print Medias. These are all information careers. There cannot be a functional school library without adequate stock of relevant materials. Such as textbooks fictions, newspaper, films, film projector, radio, television, maps, charts, realia, tape recorders reference items and other educational materials.

According to Elaturoti (1998) learning resources for school libraries consist mainly of print and non-print media. The print media include books, periodicals newspaper, pamphlets, brochures, handbills and ephemerals. Books constitute the bulk of print materials in the school libraries. Also the non-print comprises of photographs, slides, audio tapes, filmstrips, motion films, video tapes, computer diskettes and realia.

Also Utor (2001) asserted that all primary and post primary schools must as a matter of urgency have functional libraries whose materials must include beginners' books, books in the curriculum, encyclopedias, atlases, magazines, story books, picture books and audio-visual materials like radio sets, television sets, objects etc.

Print Materials

These are book materials comprising of fictions, textbooks and reference books (Non-fictions).

Fiction

These are children's main source of popular entertainment. They provide children with opportunity for practicing reading as they contain stories that fascinates children's interest thus spurring them up for further

reading. Examples are story books.

Non-Fiction

These are materials that contain factual information they include textbooks, reference books and other information materials – periodicals, magazines newspapers and government publications.

Textbooks

These are resources recommended for use by pupils and teachers in a school for specific course of study besides, these are information books from which children can obtain various pieces of information. They are not class textbooks though they are subject oriented. They complement what has been learned in the classroom and broaden the pupil's knowledge of any given subject. Thus the textbooks cover all fields of knowledge each serving a different purpose. Examples of textbooks are Oxford English book 2, Macmillan Mathematics 3.

Reference Materials

These are materials consulted for a definite piece of information. They are broad in scope and are not limited to a particular subject area, they are not meant to be read from cover to cover. Also, they are not allowed to be borrowed out of the library. Examples of reference books include Encyclopedia, Dictionary and Directories.

Periodicals

These are materials which appear in a series at regular intervals they have distinct titles and may appear monthly, quarterly, weekly. Such materials include journals, magazines, newspapers, government publication etc.

Non-Print Materials

Fayose (1998) opined that the most important areas of new development in library resources are non book resources also; Elaturoti (1998) asserted that developments in science and technology have made it possible for information to be recorded in non book media which are relevant to the school curriculum.

Fayose (1998), Elaturoti (1998), Hughes-Hassell (2000), Agabi (2003) and Akpe (2005) respectively postulated that non-print materials make learning more concrete and real and identified non-print Medias to include: still-pictures, posters, Models, Educational games, Transparencies, Slides, Films, Audios, Motion picture, Video tapes, Computer diskettes and Realia.

Problems of School Library

Research has shown that quality school library program enhance the school setting, optimize instructions and improve student achievement yet for many Nigerian school, school libraries have not been a priority. Problems facing school library development includes:

- i. Inadequate Staffing: Lack of professional librarians at primary level is having an adverse impact on students' information literacy at higher levels.
- ii. Lack of adequate materials: Inadequate funding has adversely affected the book, periodicals and

multimedia collections in school libraries most of the school libraries collection are very old and are not in line with current syllabus.

- iii. Lack of infrastructures: Most schools house their collections in the Headmaster or Principal's office without seats or table where the users can sit comfortably to read or study.
- iv. Insufficient awareness: Most administrators of school do not value the role of school libraries in the educational process because they are not aware of their importance thus, they pay less attention to establishing school libraries or maintaining existing ones.

Conclusion

Library resources are very important as the librarian's stock in trade. This paper has attempted to justify the need for a functional library in schools by identifying and defining the contents of a functional school library, which will enable the child develop the habit of reading and love for books at a tender age. And also help to develop a good sense of judgment and become academically balanced.

Suggestions

- a. An appeal should be made to parents, philanthropists and philanthropic organization for funds which will help stock school libraries.
- b. Public libraries could be approached for help. There should be co-operations between school libraries and nearby public libraries. Mobile library service should be re-instated.
- c. Teacher librarianship should be emphasized in primary education studies and the teacher adequately trained in the skills for the development and management of junior libraries.

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