

Full Length Research

An Assessment of Information Resources and Service Provision of Staff School Libraries in Benue State

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This study was designed to assessment information resources and service provision of staff school libraries in Benue State. Four objectives were achieved and four research questions were answered. Population for this study was 78 subjects comprising 41 staff from Benue State University Staff Primary School and 36 staff from Federal University of Agriculture Makurdi Staff Nursery and Primary School and was used as sample size. Data was collected using a researcher's structured questionnaire. Data was collected and analysed using mean and standard deviation. Findings for the study revealed that 8 items were type of information resources available in staff school libraries, 5 items are ways in which information resources are acquired in the staff school libraries, 6 items are ways in which the information resources are organized in the staff school libraries and 7 items are constraining in the provision of information resources and services in staff school libraries in Benue State. The study concluded that the situation of school library resources and services in staff schools in Benue State still leaves much to be desired. It was recommended that Private organizations and NGOs should invest in school libraries and there should be provision of adequate budgetary allocation to school libraries to enhance effective library and information services.

Keywords: Assessment, information resources, service provision, staff school and libraries.

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INTRODUCTION

The library which is the hub of any educational set up, provides information and ideas that are fundamental to functioning successfully in the increasingly information and knowledge-based society. The library is, therefore, able to equip pupils and students' imagination, thereby enabling them to live as responsible citizens (Petters and Ottong, 2012).

Information services provision are the important services of library and information center. Information is regarded as a critical resource, ranking just after air,

water, food, and shelter (Osigwe, 2004). People need information for making decisions. Essentially, library information services provision are library activities with the aim of disseminating desirable information to library and information users. Library information professionals have provided a range of services including reference, circulating etc. These services facilitate the inter change of library data, promote the inter-operability of library system and support national and international networking of libraries.

These services play important role in improving user's accessibility and utilization of library resources, which are

held in the library collection, collection of other libraries or which are accessible in the world wide web (www) (Osigwe, 2004).

School library facilities and information resources and service provision refer to the equipment and other instructional and study materials in the school library meant for teaching and learning. Arua and Chidaka (2011), Adeyemi, (2010) and Adeniji, (2006) stated that school library facilities are seen as all inputs which are utilized in the library in order to provide good learning environment for students and teachers so as to be able to achieve educational goals. The school library in addition to doing its vital work of individual reading, guidance and development of school curriculum, it serves the school as a centre for instructional materials. Instructional materials include books the literature for children, young people and adults-other printed materials, films, recordings and other latest media developed to aid learning. The function of an instructional materials centre is to locate, gather, provide and coordinate school's materials for learning and the equipment required for use of these materials.

Gretes, (2013), Omera, (2013) and Onal, (2009) notes that school libraries are crucial to the development of educational skills with their provision of physical and intellectual access to the information resources and vital for learning. A school library (or a school library media center) is a library within a school where students, staff, and often, parents of a public or private school have access to a variety of resources. The goal of the school library media center is to ensure that all members of the school community have equitable access to books and reading, to information, and to information technology. A school library media center uses all types of media is automated, and utilizes the Internet as well as books for information gathering. School libraries are distinct from public libraries because they serve as learner-oriented laboratories which support, extend, and individualize the school's curriculum. A school library serves as the center and coordinating agency for all material used in the school.

School libraries provide students with the opportunity to acquire life-long learning skills so they may develop their imagination as well as critical thinking skills. As they use the school library, students acquire the habit of reading and are able to evaluate and use information appropriately (IFLA/UNESCO School Library Manifesto, 2015/2006). School libraries, as learning laboratories, allow students to interact directly with library materials and acquire research skills for future academic pursuits (Unagha, 2008). Moreover, school libraries give students the chance to read about other cultures to broaden their minds, and opportunities for voluntary reading which are crucial for the development of the enjoyment of reading, which has positive benefits on learning (Fakomogbon, 2012). Though school libraries are fundamental to the effective delivery of education, successive governments

have done little toward the provision of school libraries in all the public basic schools in Nigeria.

The role of school libraries is increasingly being recognized as essential in education provision as they provide information and ideas that are fundamental to the educational needs of the students. According to the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) School Library Manifesto, the school library offers information and ideas that are important to enable students to function fully in today's knowledge society by providing essential information materials. In this process they will become life-long learners and become responsible citizens (IFLA/UNESCO School Library Manifesto, 2015/2006).

School library supports the school curriculum by providing up-to-date information resources and services to keep staff and students abreast of new development. The library equally involves in promoting the development of reading skills and encouraging long term reading habits through listening to and viewing a variety of learning materials. Thus, the school library system is an integral part of the school and it must be run according to agreed standard. According Owate and Iorha, (2013) the aims and objectives of establishing school Libraries in Nigeria are:

1. Teaching students the necessary skills required in the use of library.
2. Complementing classroom instruction by exposing the students to a wider selection of books and other resources.
3. Inculcating in students the habits of reading for pleasure and
4. Providing users of the library with information on current issues, etc.

Materials in school libraries are made up of print and non-print media. These are all information carriers. There cannot be a functional school library without adequate stock of relevant and current information resources. These include textbook fictions, newspapers, films, film projector, radio, television, maps, charts, realia, tape recorders, reference items and other educational materials. Egesimba, Quadri, Dimkpa, and Ezebuike (2011) highlighted that the school library media centre resources include, books, periodicals, newspapers, pamphlets, brochures, handbills, and ephemeral notices, audio materials (disc, phonographic records, audio-tapes on reels and cassettes), film materials (slides, film-strips, motion picture films as well as other forms of photographic film), graphics, video materials (video-tapes on reels, cassettes and cartridges as well as video disc), Realia (toys, games, model and actual specimens) and microforms (microfilm, microfiche and micro-card).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study is to assess Information Resources and Service Provided by Staff School Libraries in Benue State. The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To identify the available information resources in staff school libraries in Benue State.
2. To find out how information resources are acquired in the staff school libraries in Benue State.
3. To examine the organization of information resources in the staff school libraries in Benue State.
4. To identify the challenges constraining in the provision of information resources and services in staff school libraries in Benue State.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research seeks to provide answers to the following questions-

1. What are the information resources available in staff school libraries in Benue State?
2. How are the information resources acquired in the staff school libraries in Benue State?
3. What are the ways in which the information resources are organized in the staff school libraries in Benue State?
4. What are the challenges constraining in the provision of information resources and services in staff school libraries in Benue State?

METHODOLOGY

This study is conducted in Benue State. There are two (2) staff Primary schools in Makurdi metropolis namely; Benue State University Staff Primary School and Federal University of Agriculture Makurdi Staff Nursery and Primary School. The population for this study was 78 subjects comprising 41 staff from Benue State University Staff Primary School and 36 staff from Federal University of Agriculture Makurdi Staff Nursery and Primary School. There was no sampling for the study. The entire population was used for the study as sample because the population size could be handled effectively by the researcher.

The instrument for the study was a structured questionnaire titled 'Assessment of Information Resources and Service Provision of Staff School Libraries Questionnaire (AIRSPSLQ)'. The instrument which was developed by the researcher was divided into four sections based on the research objectives. The questionnaire had restricted response options of highly available (HA), adequately available (A), slightly available (SA) not available (NA), strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD) with

corresponding values of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The data for this study was collected by the researcher and 2 research assistants.

Data collected was analysed using descriptive statistics precisely mean. The bench mark for this was 2.50 ($(4+3+2+1=10/4=2.50)$). The decision rule was: any items with a mean value of 2.50 or above was regarded as available or agree while any item with a mean value of less than 2.50 was regarded as not available or disagree.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Research Questions 1

What are the information resources available in staff school libraries in Benue State?

Data for answering research question 1 is presented in Table 1.

Result in Table 1 shows that out of 17 items, 9 had their mean values ranging from 1.12 to 2.42 while 8 had their mean values ranged from 2.54 to 3.38 and were above the bench mark of 2.50. This shows that 8 items are type of information resources available in staff school libraries in Benue State.

Research Questions 2

How are the information resources acquired in the staff school libraries in Benue State?

Data for answering research question 2 is presented in Table 2.

Result in Table 2 shows that all the 5 items had their grand mean values ranging from 2.61 to 3.15 and were above the bench mark of 2.50. This shows that 5 items are ways in which information resources are acquired in the staff school libraries in Benue State.

Research Questions 3

What are the ways in which the information resources are organized in the staff school libraries in Benue State?

Data for answering research question 3 is presented in Table 3.

Table 1: Mean of Respondents on the type of information resources available in staff school libraries in Benue State

S/N	Item Statement	Mean	Std Dev	Remarks
1	Films and Transparencies	3.38	0.58	Available
2	Subject book resources	3.17	0.78	Available
3	Motion picture and related projection equipment	2.20	1.85	Not Available
4	Serials	2.04	1.89	Not Available
5	Slides and filmstrips	2.05	1.69	Not Available
6	Charts and graphs	2.30	0.33	Not Available
7	Display or chalkboard	3.23	0.21	Available
8	Charts and graphs	3.22	0.09	Available
9	Television	3.22	0.75	Available
10	Tape cassette and cassette recorder	1.78	0.63	Not Available
11	Radio lessons	2.11	0.60	Not Available
12	Pictures and maps	3.18	0.84	Available
13	Computer	2.42	0.71	Not Available
14	Internet services	2.22	0.69	Not Available
15	Computer assisted instructional materials	1.12	0.84	Not Available
16	Indexes/Abstract/bibliography	1.87	0.71	Not Available
17	Video cassette and player	2.54	0.69	Available

Source: Field survey, 2019

Table 2: Mean of Respondents on how information resources are acquired in the staff school libraries in Benue State

S/N	Item Statement	Mean	Std Dev	Remarks
1	Purchase	3.15	0.66	Agree
2	Bequeath	2.77	1.82	Agree
3	Legal deposit	3.00	1.85	Agree
4	Exchange/institutional cooperation	2.61	1.89	Agree
5	Gift/donation	3.08	1.69	Agree

Source: Field survey, 2019

Table 3: Mean of Respondents on ways in which the information resources are organized in the staff school libraries in Benue State

S/N	Item Statement	Mean	Std Dev	Remarks
1	Numerical order	2.85	0.33	Agree
2	Library of congress classification	2.77	0.21	Agree
3	Subject basis	3.11	0.09	Agree
4	Departmental basis	3.01	0.83	Agree
5	Alphabetical order	3.09	0.63	Agree
6	Dewey decimal classification	2.53	0.60	Agree

Source: Field survey, 2019

Table 4: Mean of Respondents on constraining in the provision of information resources and services in staff school libraries in Benue State

S/N	Item Statement	Mean	Std Dev	Remarks
1	Lack of professional Staff	2.62	0.84	Agree
2	Inadequate funding	2.99	0.71	Agree
3	Lack of relevant materials	2.62	0.69	Agree
4	Lack of management support	2.67	0.66	Agree
5	Erratic power supply	2.56	1.82	Agree
6	There is no library hour on the time table	3.65	1.85	Agree
7	Mutilation of library materials	3.15	0.78	Agree

Source: Field survey, 2019

Result in Table 3 shows that all the 6 items had their grand mean values ranging from 2.53 to 3.11 and were above the bench mark of 2.50. This shows that 6 items are ways in which the information resources are organized in the staff school libraries in Benue State.

Research question 4

What is the constraining in the provision of information resources and services in staff school libraries in Benue State?

Data for answering research question 4 is presented in Table 4.

Result in Table 4 shows that all the 7 items had their grand mean values ranging from 2.56 to 3.65 and were above the bench mark of 2.50. This shows that 7 items are constraining in the provision of information resources and services in staff school libraries in Benue State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Research question 1 was on the information resources available in staff school libraries in Benue State. Findings revealed that films and transparencies, subject book resources, motion picture and related projection equipment, Charts and graphs, Display or chalkboard, Television, Pictures and maps and video cassette and player Dictionaries, encyclopedia, globes and atlas were the information resources available in staff school libraries in Benue State.

Research question 2 was on the information resources acquired in the staff school libraries in Benue State. Findings revealed that purchase, bequeath, legal deposit, exchange/institutional cooperation and gift/donation were

ways in which the information resources acquired in the staff school libraries in Benue State.

Research question 4 was on the ways in which the information resources are organized in the staff school libraries in Benue State. Findings revealed that numerical order, library of congress classification subject basis, departmental basis, alphabetical order and dewy decimal classification were the ways in which information resources are organized in the staff school libraries in Benue State.

Research question 4 was on the challenges constraining in the provision of information resources and services in staff school libraries in Benue State. Findings revealed that lack of professional staff, inadequate funding, lack of relevant materials, lack of management support, erratic power supply, there is no library hour on the time table and mutilation of library materials were the challenges constraining in the provision of information resources and services in staff school libraries in Benue State.

CONCLUSION

From the fore-going discussion or results, it is apparent that the situation of school library resources and services in staff schools in Benue State still leaves much to be desired. To a great extent, it is not in doubt that there exist considerable needs for improvements in this direction, if only for our educational aims and aspirations to be attained.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following are recommended

1. Private organizations and NGOs should invest in school libraries. There should be provision of

adequate budgetary allocation to school libraries to enhance effective library and information services. Functional ICT and Internet facilities should be put in place in all the staff school libraries. The school authority should make provision for purchasing of print and non-print media, and other educational media for staff school libraries to meet the required standard of modern school library.

2. The resources should be adequate, qualitative and varied to satisfy the information needs of both the students and teachers.
3. There should be provision for additional library services to make the children have more interest in using the library e.g. educational film shows, storytelling, reading competition etc.
4. Professional librarians and other assisting staff should be employed for effective and efficient services and overall smooth running of the library.
5. Teachers must be sensitized on the need to work with school librarians in developing teaching techniques to ensure the appropriate use of the school library and resources in teaching and learning.

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