JOURNAL ARTICLE

NO.7

AMBROSE ALLI UNIVERSITY LIBRARY,
EKPOMA - NIGERIA.

COMMUNICATE:
JOURNAL OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

Vol. 3 Nos 1 & 2
June - Dec. 2001

Vol. 4 Nos 1 & 2
June - Dec. 2002

Library Legislation in Nigeria: Its Impact on the Development of Libraries and Librarianship
A.L. Mbashir & J. O. Akowe

University Libraries and University Autonomy
M. E. Ojo-Igbinoba

Coping with Computer Security in Nigerian University Libraries in the 21st Century
Juliana B. Amune (Mrs)

New Approach to Successful School Library Services in the New Millennium for Effective Implementation of Universal Basic Education
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EDITORIAL

After a decade CJLIS is poised again with full strength and vigour to stand in the committee of living journals. We thank our advertisers, customers and writers for standing by us all this while. It is our earnest hope that the CJLIS will not disappear from the journals stand again.

Two volumes of CJLIS are combined in this issue to make us current. It is hoped that Vol. 5 (nos. 1&2) will be released on time this round and thus avoid any further backlog.

In Volume 3 (nos. 1&2) several common issues in Librarianship have been covered. Mbashir and Akowe wrote on Library Legislation, a neglected area in Nigeria Librarianship, University autonomy is making waves worldwide. The place and funding of University Libraries in the era of autonomy is examined by Ojo-Igbinoba. Amune presents her findings about coping with computer security while Amune and Daudu looked at the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE). Preservation of Library materials is an on going topic. Falaye and Isokpehi tackled this subject. This issue ends with the information seeking behaviour of Rice farmers in Ekpoma by Momodu.

In Volume 4 (nos. 1&2) Ajileye and Joseph looked at Research and Development in Polytechnic Libraries while Amene and Sanni looked at Human Security problems. Omera assessed the relevance of School Libraries in Education while Falaiye presented her findings on the application of Computers in Academic Libraries. Mbashir and Audu examined Library Crime and Security. A "how-to-do-it" article on Developing an A-V Library Centre is presented by Ogunloye and finally, the CD-ROM technology is discussed by Idiodi.

With these combined issues we have been able to bring CJLIS to current. Our promise is that subsequent ones will be published on schedule. Once again we thank our numerous subscribers and advertisers for their patronage.

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COMMUNICATE: Journal of Library and Information Science (ISSN 115-2664) is a journal published by Ambrose Alli University Library, Ekpoma, Nigeria.

SCOPE OF COVERAGE

The Journal will carry contributed articles of interest to practising Librarian, information scientists and readers in related disciplines, on all aspects of library and information work in Nigeria and abroad.

Conditions for accepting articles also called notes for contributors are to be published occasionally when space permits or they may be obtained free of charge with a stamped self-addressed envelope from the Editor-in-Chief.

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Letters to the Editor will be accepted provided they are (i) short and confined to topical issues (ii) comments on articles already published in COMMUNICATE: Journal of Library and Information Science.

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These are accepted for publication provided they are original and confined to recently published materials in the fields of librarianship and information science.

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Subscription for a volume of two issues will be:

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NEW APPROACH TO SUCCESSFUL SCHOOL LIBRARY SERVICES IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM FOR EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION

By

STEPEHN A. AMUNE
Deputy University Librarian
Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, Edo State

HANNA M.DAUDU (MRS.)
Institute Librarian
Institute of Education,
Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria

INTRODUCTION

The school library is integral in the educational development of the children. The importance is emphasised in the National Policy on Education 3rd Edition (1998) which states "Libraries are one of the most important educational services. Every State Ministry of Education needs to provide funds for the establishment of libraries in all our educational institutions and to train librarians and library assistants for the service"

Much has been written on school library development and services. These write-up follow almost the same approach.

To discuss this topic effectively, therefore, we decided to deviate from the traditional method of approach and use the methods which were adopted in the presentation of topical papers for Vision 2010 during the Late General Sanni Abacha's Regime. The methods were:

(a) Where we are
(b) Why we are where we are
(c) Where we want to be
(d) The way forward

WHERE WE ARE

On September 30th 1999, at Kangiwa Square Sokoto, President Olusegun Obansanjo re-launched his pet scheme. It is called Universal Basic Education (UBE)

It was exactly twenty years after launching Universal Primary Education (UPE) in the same State. During the launching of the programme, he said:

"Universal Basic Programme which we are gathered here to launch today is almost the same as the old Universal Primary Education Scheme which was launched in September 1976, exactly twenty years ago. It is free and universal like before, but is is compulsory. It extends to all children from ages 6 to 15. It will accommodate from Primary School to Junior Secondary School".

Re-emphasising the importance of the launching of the Universal Basic Education, the Minister of Education Prof. Adeniran (1999) said: "the rebirth of a more embracing scheme to cover Primary and Junior Secondary schools was necessitated by the shocking drift of our country into an inglorious past of dangerous illiteracy"

Whereas, when the Universal Primary Education

Scheme was launched in 1976, it was said that the provision of library services would be compulsory in Primary and secondary schools, the provision of school library services in primary and secondary schools became merely lip services. Free books which were hurriedly provided to pupils in secondary schools were short lived. Some of the existing secondary school libraries deteriorated. Most of the Headmasters/Headmistress of Primary Schools and Principals of secondary schools diverted the money meant for library services for other projects in the schools. Provision of library material was absolutely neglected.

In support of the above observation Ogunsheye (1998) revealed that in her recent tour of schools in Ogun State, she found some remnants of the school libraries they, in their time, struggled to establish several years ago. She observed that the school libraries had now either deteriorated or disappeared completely for lack of funds to buy new books. In some schools she claimed that the libraries had turned into new classrooms or staff common rooms.

In support of Ogunsheye, Daniel's (2000) survey on "the state of schools libraries in the Federal Capital Territory revealed the following: Out of the 32 secondary schools under the Department of Educaiton of the Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA) only four have buildings that could pass for libraries; only eight school libraries have librarians, two school libraries have 50 chairs and tables. Most of the books in the shelves are out-dated, only two audio-visual hardwares (i.e. Television and radio) were found in three libraries. Most of the books on the shelves have no access marks. Some of the buildings meant for the school libraries have been converted to staff common rooms. She concluded her write up stating that, this is the state of school libraries in the country at present"

In further support of Ogunsheye and Daniel, Ehigiator (2000) concluded his write-up on school libraries that "School libraries nation-wide are in a state of decay. Where they exist, they lack resources like books, journals, qualified staff etc."

Still on where we are, Odia (2000) revealed that in the then Bendel State, only very few schools could boast of acceptable standard libraries; there were no rooms designated as school libraries, the books were either locked up in the Headmasters'/Principals' offices or in an unconducive environment like pantry. Most of the books were antiquated. The funding of the school libraries was not the priority of the government as compared to other educational amenities like sports. He concluded that, "in Edo State today, school libraries are dead"

What Ogunsheye, Daniel, Ehigiator and Odia observed as stated above tell us exactly where we are today.

WHY WE ARE WHERE WE ARE

State Ministries of Education have consistently and persistently abdicated their responsibilities to school libraries Government after government have done practically nothing to promote the establishment and development of school libraries. This is despite the fact that the National Policy of Education has stated that "Government will provide junior library for primary school children. It will establish a school library service and ensure that teachers are given in-service training in the management and organisation of school library". The non-conformity to the demand of National Policy on Education is a prelude to why we are where we are.

Reasons advanced for why we are where we are many and most of them are known to almost every average educated Nigerian. For this, we shall discuss only the salient ones. They include:

(a) **No intensive mobilization efforts and campaigns**
There were no intensive mobilisation efforts and campaigns to get all the children in the age group to enrol in schools. Most villages were not reached and hence not aware.

(b) **Inaccurate statistics for planning**
Local and State Governments falsify their statistical submissions. Therefore there were not accurate data for effective planning. Supporting this observation, Prof. Ango Abdullahi (1986) claimed that Universal Primary Education (UPE) scheme failed because of inaccurate statistics for planning in the country. Infact, this is a big lesson to the planners of Universal Basic Education Programme. In further support of Ango, Balogun (1986) observed, "accurate statistics is vital to educational planning"

(c) **Poor Funding**
The decline in national revenue in the later part of the 1970s and the 1980s made it impossible to allocate sufficient funds for the maintenance and expansion of the education scheme. For instance, according to Adeniran (1999) "there was dramatic increase in the number of primary schools from 30,000 in 1975/76 to well over 37,000 in 1982/83. By the beginning of this decade, the

number of schools stood 35,433. Gross enrolment increased from 46% in 1975/76 to 93% in 1982/83. Later, it crumbled. Some parents withdrew their children from primary and secondary schools because of economic hardship". Supporting funding, Prof. Ango Abdullahi observed that funding Primary School libraries was a burden to most Local Government Councils as no specific fund was set aside for it. Now there is improvement in national revenue, but administrators of schools find if difficult to change. This is rather unfortunate.

(d) Political Instability

Political instability in the country lead to utter confusion concerning what priority should be given to the advancement of education at all levels. The Military Government had no programme. This resulted in a great set back on education. Currently political stability is gradually setting in. Its effect is yet to be felt.

(e) No Compulsory Education Edict

There was no compulsory education Edict. Children of school age especially in the Northern part of the country were seen roaming about the streets during school hours. Some begging for alms. According to Vice-President Atku Abubakar (1999) "the trend which encouraged children of school age to roam the streets and beg for alms instead of acquiring education must be halted since the 21st century will be an age of knowledge" supporting Abubakar, Usman Bugaje (1999) who is the Vice-President's Special Adviser on Political Affairs said, "the almajiri system whereby children were deliberately denied access to Western education must be halted immediately. The planners of Universal Basic Education should take cognisance of these important points.

(f) General Misconception of the importance of the Library

There was a general misconception that the library is a luxury and that pupils in primary and secondary schools can do without it.

Confirming this claim, R.E. Crookall (1961) a former British Inspector of Education in the then Western Region of Nigeria, who was a protagonist of School Library development identified four obstacles to the development of school library in Nigeria. They include"

(a) a general misconception that a libary is a luxury that can be dispensed with or not worthy worrying about

(b) school adminstrators are sceptical about the utility of a school library or are not adequately convinced that it can improve the quality of education given to the pupils

(c) the primary school teachers see no value in school libraries. They (the teachers) believe that the main aim of primary education is to teach the three Rs-reading, writing and solving arithmetic

(d) the older people surprisingly believe that if they could make it in life with out a school library, the present generation pupils could also make it. Most of these points are still very valid today.

Other reasons depicting why we are where we are include, lack of conducive learning environment, pupils were made to learn under the shades of big trees.

There was mass retrenchment of teachers and the poor pupils were left in the hands of unqualified teachers.

There was total lack of interest in the provision of school libraries by Principals/Headmasters/Headmistress. Funds meant for provision of books were diverted to other things in the school.

School Inspectorate Division did not include librarians who would have provided professional assistance in the provision and supervision of school libraries.

C. WHERE WE WANT TO BE

In this section, we shall highlight what individuals, organisations and the government have done or are doing for the successful implementation of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme.

In the force-front is the National Library of Nigeria (2000) which has submitted a memorandum on her role in the Universal Basic Education Programme to the Joint Consultative Council on Education. It observes that, for universal access to books and other information, the National Library of Nigeria has a branch library in every state of the Federation, such libraries can cooperate with each of the Local Government Authority to design a simple school library and offer a free consultancy service on the setting up of such a library.

In the memorandum, it states that in addition to providing research, information, decision making and recreational needs of the adult users, the National Library of Nigeria would also be specifically adopted to

meet the challenges of the UBE scheme by

(a) Stocking reading and other education aids for both UBE trainers and trainees

(b) Initiating co-operative relationship with identified departments of education that are relevant to creative efforts geared towards providing local learning aids for the UBE scheme

(c) Providing in the various State branches, basic and specialised materials in accordance with the curricula of the UBE

(d) Organising workshops, seminars and symposia on School Library Management and Adminstration as well as on library resources utilization.

(e) Fostering school library development by designing a simple library programme for the UBE scheme.

(f) donating books to equip school libraries etc.

In conclusion, all hands must be on deck to reusuciate and reinstate the School libraries and even computerise the collection so that the labour of our pioneer librarians would not be in vain.

THE WAY FORWARD

The way forward in this paper are the strategies to successful school library services for effective implementation of the Universal Basic Education.

The school library is undisputedly the bedrock of our educational system. Without school libraries it is impossible for school to make meaningful impact in the learning abilities of the pupils. Therefore, to make UBE successful, the following may be looked into:-

(a) **Permanent literacy**

Part of the objectives of primary education is contained in the National Policy on Education is the inculcation of permanent literacy. According to Elaturoti (1999) "the school library has a major role to play in attaining this objective by providing a variety of suitable and enjoyable collection of picture books, stories, novels, magazines and topic books for children to read for pleasure or for information

Children would be encouraged to develop reading habit by reading for pleasure. If the habit for independent reading is created, it goes a long way in their lives.

(b) **Improved funding**

There should be specific budget for purchase of books for libraries at primary school level. This should be closely monitored for effective utilization. Money meant for books must not be diverted. Books to be purchased should be very relevant to the need of the children.

(c) **School Inspectorate Division**

School inspectorate division which should be under the Federal Ministry of Education should include a librarian whose duties would be to professionally supervise the effective provision of books and library services in schools.

(d) **Employment of School Librarian**

We are of the opinion that trained school librarians should be employed to replace Teachers Librarian. A Teacher Librarian's attention is divided while a school librarian's function is solely the management of the library.

(e) **Standard School Library**

It may be made compulsory that the provision of standard school libraries with at least a professional staff is a pre-requisite for the government to approve the establishment of a new private school.

(f) **Infrastructure and facilities**

The Federal Ministry of Education (2000) states in the implementation guideline for the UBE programme that infrastructure and facilities which refer to the physical and spatial enablers of teaching and learning must be provided. They include classrooms, libraries, laboratories, etc. They have to be of the appropriate quantity, size and quality.

(g) **Training of School Library personnel**

There is the dearth of qualified school library personnel in Nigeria school libraries. As recommended by Elaturoti (2000) "There is the need to train qualified personel for Nigerian school libraries and at different levels too; management and assistant cadres. In the interim short-term training programmes should be organised for selected teachers to manage the school libraries"

(h) **Integration of Library use hour on School time table**

This has been a long suggestion by educationist for example, Elaturoti (2000) recommends that the school time-table should accomodate the library hour during which pupils will be given orientation to the library resources and be taught the basic library use skills that would develop long-life skills in them.

(i) Promoting library usuage among the pupils

In addition to the teaching of the basic skills in the use of the library in the primary schools, other activities like story hour, book-talk, library displays are essential in promoting library usuage among the pupils.

(j) Encouraging pupils' use of public libraries

No single school library can provide all the needed books by the pupils. The teacher librarian should therefore encourage the pupils to go to the nearest public libraries to borrow books.

(k) Provision of computer facilities

The Federal, State and Local Governments should provide computer facilities in all schools for greater efficiency and improved learning.

CONCLUSION

Let us conclude this paper with the words of Elaturoti (2000), a renowned school library specialist. "The school library is essential to every long-term strategy for literacy, education, information provision and economic, social and cultural development. As the responsibility of Local, State and Federal Government, it must be supported by specific legislation and policies. These two will make it possible for school libraries to have adequate and sustained funding for trained staff, materials, technologies and facilities and provide services free of charge to all users".

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