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ZARIA JOURNAL OF LIBRARIANSHIP: A publication of Ahmadu Bello University Library Complex

AIMS AND SCOPE

The Zaria Journal of Librarianship ISSN 1117-9918 is a publication of Ahmadu Bello University Library Complex. It is published twice a year – June and December. It is a referred journal designed to meet the needs of professional as well as nonprofessional librarians interested in the profession It is a forum to make available the wealth of our professional experiences as well as share the experiences\ of other professionals through research articles and reports of field experiences in library and information science.

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It is a publication condition that any manuscript submitted for publication, the corresponding author must seek permission from the Co-author, if any. Such article must not have been published or will not be simultaneously published elsewhere.

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Each article should be typed in triplicate, double spaced on one side only of A/4 paper with wide margin and the leaves numbered.

The article must be accompanied by an abstract not exceeding 150 words also typed doubled spaced on a separate sheet.

The title of the article should be unambiguous – the names, rank/status and the address of the author/s, should be given.

Reference (cited works) should be identified by surname of the author, year of publication and page(s) in that order and placed in brackets. All works referred to in the article should be listed alphabetically by author at the end of the article. Example of such work is described as follows:

For Books

Shera, J. H. (1965:16). Libraries and Organisation of Knowledge. Hamden, Archon Books.

For Journal Article

Momoh, K. A. (1998:1-10 "The dysfunctional consequence of Nation-wide contract"
Zaria Journal of Librarianship Vol. 2 Nos. 1 and 2.

Book Review

Review of books or any form of monograph sent for publication should be double spaced in A/4 paper and must not exceed 500 words. Full citation of the reviewed as well as its ISBN and price if any, should be stated.

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EDITORIAL NOTE

We apologise to our subscribers for not being able to live up to our promise to be consistent and frequent as expressed in our maiden volume. This issue should have been on your table by 1995, but for some unavoidable reasons, it could not be. Consequent upon this, all subscriptions for 1995-1997 will not be renewed.

This volume (Vol. 2: nos. 1 and 2, 1998) remains the successive volume to volume 1 nos. 1 and 2 1994. We promise that this break in our publication frequency will not be repeated as we undertake to publish twice a year unfailingly.

In this volume you will enjoy the experiences and research findings of seasoned librarians not only from Zaria, the homebase of the journal but from elsewhere. Like the maiden volume the volume bears a testimony of the spread of our authors from different parts of Nigeria.

Selection and acquisition of library materials constitute a professional apex of librarianship. Momoh, selection librarian to the core, appraised the performance of Federal University Library acquisition under the Nation-wide contract award. The study reveals dysfunctionality of such an uncoordinated acquisition policy.

Eric Apeji, an erudite writer on Information Technology research into the resources and services provided by the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council, Abuja. His findings will put the council on a path to fund the library.

The competence of a librarian is nothing but the evidence of a library building he has planned. P.I.J. Idachaba had this in mind when he wades into the planning factor in a library building. The study reveals that library building planners should plan with good foresight on site, finances, climate, and the library infrastructure.

Ampitan's article examines the need for training library staff in the library automation and briefly examines requirements for computer literacy programme for library staff.

Library filing is an essential component of the "Library corporate memory" (the catalogue). Seriki highlights filing efficiency in the library. He treats in detail some peculiar problems in the Name-authority-file using American Library Association Filing Rules.

The failure of Library of Congress classification scheme to comprehensively cover African materials especially Government publications has driven classifiers to devise home-made schemes for these collections. Mrs. Amune conducted a comparative study of Edo State University Library and University of Benin Library Home—Made schemes for Government publications.

Conflict in classmarks in the library shelf-list is a common phenomenon. John A. Abu picks holes on two giant classification scheme amendments – the Martel and Moys. With his experience in the use of the LC scheme he draws attention to some areas where possible conflicts occur when Martel and Moys are used to classify subjects in the social sciences.

It is often argued that many library users shy away from using library resources simply because of the uncomplimentary attitude of the staff. Mrs. Mamuna Izah documents a research she conducted on user-staff-relationship. Her findings are worth the salt.

The year 2000 was translated a magic year where Health for all, Housing for all, Mass literacy for all, were sing-song for policy makers. Mrs. H. M. Daudu delves into the contribution of libraries towards literacy for all Nigerians by the year 2000.

The survival of science and technology solely depends on research which serves as its live-wire. The researchers need authentic information to validate their findings. Mrs. Aiyedogbon carried out a well designed research into information needs of the researchers and technologists in the National Research Institute for Chemical Technology. Her findings can be useful.

Sugh Loho writes on development of school libraries in Nigeria and works on the theory that school libraries throughout the country have been poorly recognized. He identified problems and proposes way forward.

The chunk of newspapers in libraries needs to be properly managed. Igbinosa outlines the importance of newspapers in the library and proposes ways and means of preserving them for safe keep.

We feel that having whetted the appetite of our readers with the maiden issue, we should serve them something appetizing in this follow-up. That is exactly what we have tried to achieve in this issue. And we do hope we have please you.

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THE CONTRIBUTION OF LIBRARIES TOWARDS MASS LITERACY FOR ALL NIGERIANS

By

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ABSTRACT

The desire for mass literacy, suggest the existence of illiteracy in (he society. Once a society becomes conscious of it's educational gap, it usually tries to fill this gap in the shortest possible time and always in the most inexpensive way(s). The paper suggests short: and inexpensive ways of fighting illiteracy in Nigeria. Nigeria's contacts with the outside world and the effects of rapid social changes upon her over the years seem to have helped to make her realize her education gap. The paper, further, examines what Nigeria is currently doing having realized her educational shortfalls, and suggests ways of bridging the educational gap.

INTRODUCTION

The year 2,000 seems to have lots of goodies for Nigerians. The solutions to some of Nigeria's age long developmental problems may be realized come the year 2,000. It is believed that this 'magic' year shall be the year that health problems will be solved, hence health for all by the year 2,000; the year that Nigeria's housing problems shall be overcome and thus housing for all by the year 2,000; and it is the time when educational struggles shall end and so mass literacy for all by the year 2,000. The writer is concerned with the last issue. It is worthy to note that the idea that there will be education for all by the year 2,000 does not suggest inactivity between now and the dreamed year. All must be fully engaged in order to make education real for all Nigerians by the year 2,000. The library must play an active role in order to help provide education for all by the target year.

MASS LITERACY

The desire for mass literacy, suggests the existence of illiteracy in the society. Good (1959) defines an illiterate person as one who is ten years old or more and yet can neither read nor write. It is perhaps obvious that Nigeria's march towards becoming a developed country can only be achieved if illiteracy is eradicated or reduced to its bearest minimum. An observation of developed

nations shows that the level of their development has often been dictated by the level of their literacy.

Once a society becomes conscious of its educational gap, it usually tries to fill this gap in the shortest possible time and in the most inexpensive way. Books, newspapers, educational broadcasts, educational films, public lectures and the television are some of the established media for mass communication and education which are used to bridge educational gaps. Every community would make a wise choice of the means of bridging its own educational gap. Apart from the above mentioned means, Adult Education Programmes and Continuing Education Programmes, especially through their extra-mural studies, are often used to bridge the felt educational gap.

Mass literacy is a strong and very effective weapon to fight social ills such as poverty, disease and ignorance. Tanzania is perhaps only one of the African nations that may be cited as an example of a country where mass literacy has been used to improve the health of its society. The institute of Education, University of Ibadan (1982:3) asserts that Tanzania through its mass adult education programme has been able to help the society to develop good health habits by providing information about nutrition, work habits and the necessity to develop some degree of consciousness regarding productivity.

MASS LITERACY: THE NIGERIAN EXPERIENCE

Nigeria's contacts with the outside world and the effects of rapid socio-economic changes over the years seem to have helped to make her realize her educational gap. Following this realization, serious efforts have been made and are still being made to fill the gap. According to Ahmed (1992) the first national literacy campaign in Nigeria was launched in 1982 but failed for various reasons. Some of the reasons she advanced include faulty implementation strategies, lack of unified efforts and poor funding. Although, this campaign was planned to last 10 years, the government felt the need to reappraise the programme in 1987. Hence it directed each state of the federation to establish an autonomous agency for adult and non-formal education. The primary objective of the programme was eventually total eradication of illiteracy in Nigeria by the year 2,000. Specific attention was to be given to disadvantaged target groups such as women, nomads, fishermen and early school leavers. Because of the emphasis on functional literacy, the Federal Government eventually established the National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-formal Education on June 25th, 1990 by Decree No. 17 of 1990, as part of the activities for the International Literacy Year in Nigeria.

When the Commission was finally inaugurated on July 5th, 1991 it was charged, among other things, with the responsibility of Mass Literacy for all by

the year 2,000. The goal of the Commission was to make its target audience, achieve this with determination for the social, economic and political emancipation, of the people.

Similarly, the Nigerian National Council for Adult Education (NNCAE) a non-governmental organization formed in 1971 as a pressure group on Adult Education matters has been persistent in its call for a political will as a strategy for the eradication of illiteracy in Nigeria. But it appears that very little is being done by Local Government Adult Education Centres to support this noble call. For example, operational libraries are yet to be attached to these centres.

According to Enya (1992:7) in its 1987 blue-print for action the council listed the following strategies:

1. the establishment of the national commission for adult education.
2. the legal, administrative and financial support
3. mobilization of supporting staff: co-ordinators, organizers; supervisors and instructors; and
4. mobilization of learners through their local associations, local interests and local needs.

The Babangida administration may be given credit for having exhibited this desired political will by establishing the National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-formal Education. Right from its inception the administration showed interest in Mass Literacy, thus with the establishment of MAMSER in 1988, literacy programme was listed as one of the strategies for the mobilization of the clientele-grassroots. One area that must be squarely addressed is that of reading materials for illiterates and neo literates. If reading materials are not available for the new literates the evil day is only being postponed. There is need for reading materials for the success of the mass literacy campaign. 'Each one to teach one' strategy is meaningful only in the context of the availability of reading materials. So, the struggle continues. All hands must be on deck; librarians in particular who must not only provide learning materials and equipment bust also identify methods and create conducive atmosphere for learning.

THE ROLES OF LIBRARIES

It seems incontrovertible that of all the supporting institutions in adult education, libraries are the most important. The importance of libraries was recognized in literature societies even before the invention of printing, hence, libraries in general and specifically in developing countries are meant to contribute to the supply of skilled man-power, to further the educational development programme. to help those who are studying privately and to encourage all who

wish to read for a useful purpose. Libraries are thus considered useful investments.

Because of the differing levels of literacy and preferences among the Nigerian adults, library collections should cater for a variety of tastes and interests. It is the responsibility of those directing the government(s) educational agencies, of which the public library is one, to work aggressively and creatively to increase the opportunities for people of limited reading ability to reduce their ignorance and to include them among those who are reading.

It is essential under the programme of mass literacy for all by the year 2,000 that government provides make-shift libraries in the neglected and rural areas that do not enjoy the services of the conventional public libraries. These make-shift libraries should be stocked with relevant materials. Under this arrangement, mobile library units could provide book-boxes which would be made available to these neglected areas. The important point is to get library services to every nook and cranny of the country as part of an elaborate adult education programme.

Libraries must launch massive campaign efforts to reach out to all categories of adults. Perhaps the educationally advanced adults could be reached through the publication of information bulletins, bibliographies and notes on new acquisitions. It is believed that this is perhaps the best way to overcome some of the difficulties that may arise from this massive campaign. Other ways of overcoming the problems of newly literate people is inducing them to avail themselves of library services and materials, and helping them to understand their application to themselves. This method can easily work when the librarian works hand in hand with an experienced adult educator.

The adult educator must carry out lots of management responsibilities. It is in the light of this that Omolewa (1980:160) describes him as a manager who deals with his personnel as well as with a wide variety of adult population. He must be conscious of the services provided by the library. By using the library himself, he will not only learn more, render himself more competent to teach, but he will also set an example for his students and will, by becoming familiar with the working of the library, guide them in its use. He can also recommend suitable books for the library to acquire.

THE LIBRARY AND CONTINUED EDUCATION

Literacy can be permanent only when there is continuity of practicing the art after the skill has been learned. Literacy for all by the year 2,000 suggests the beginning rather than the end of education. After the year 2,000, when all Nigerians must have become literate, there is the need for them to keep the flames

of literacy glowing. Otherwise, they may soon relapse into one sort of illiteracy or another. The person who has just gone through the task of learning to reach and write will definitely, need a regular source of literature, functional literature, of course, to keep the flag flying. Fighting illiteracy can be meaningful only when there is the backing literature.

The provision of libraries will increase literacy by bringing more books and materials to more people. More books and materials means higher literacy. It also means a guarantee for a more literate society and a more efficient machinery. It cannot be over-emphasized that there is need to supplement the efforts of the mass literacy agents by making books and materials available at all stages of the programme. Posterity will not forgive present day Nigerians if they allow the mass literacy programme to fail due to lack of reading materials. Expressing this felt need, Unwaikina (1983) points out that it is disheartening to note that while there is growing awareness of the importance of education, the development of libraries as agents of education has been regrettably slow.

Needless to stress the fact that libraries should be viewed as dynamic instruments of education and hence national development. Supporting this view, Halidu (1992) submits that it is pertinent for State Governments to establish public libraries in all local government headquarters where the mass literacy directorates are situated. There is the need to extend this to district headquaters and other major towns and villages.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Establishing libraries for the sake of having them around is not enough. Funds should be made available to acquire a variety of materials which should be organized and made accessible to the target audience. These libraries should be staffed with adequate qualified personnel who will teach the public how to make effective use of such materials. Among the materials which the public libraries should provide are materials for general reference and research which will ensure a continuing educating process. As much as it is practicable, the public libraries should introduce mobile library services to cover places where the services of the conventional library cannot be reached. Be reminded that the library is the hub of all educational programmes; and the programme of mass literacy for all Nigerians cannot be an exception. In view of the important role of reading materials in consolidating literacy skills, sensitizing the new literates and creating responsive minds, it is significant that energies be directed towards the development of reading materials, creating distribution network for the materials so developed, and appealing to companies and individuals to sponsor the mass production and purchase of needed materials. Practicing librarians should endeavour to meet the challenges of their role in the mass literacy programme with a sense of

commitment and dedication to enable Nigeria realize its goals and objectives of literacy for all in the year 2,000.

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