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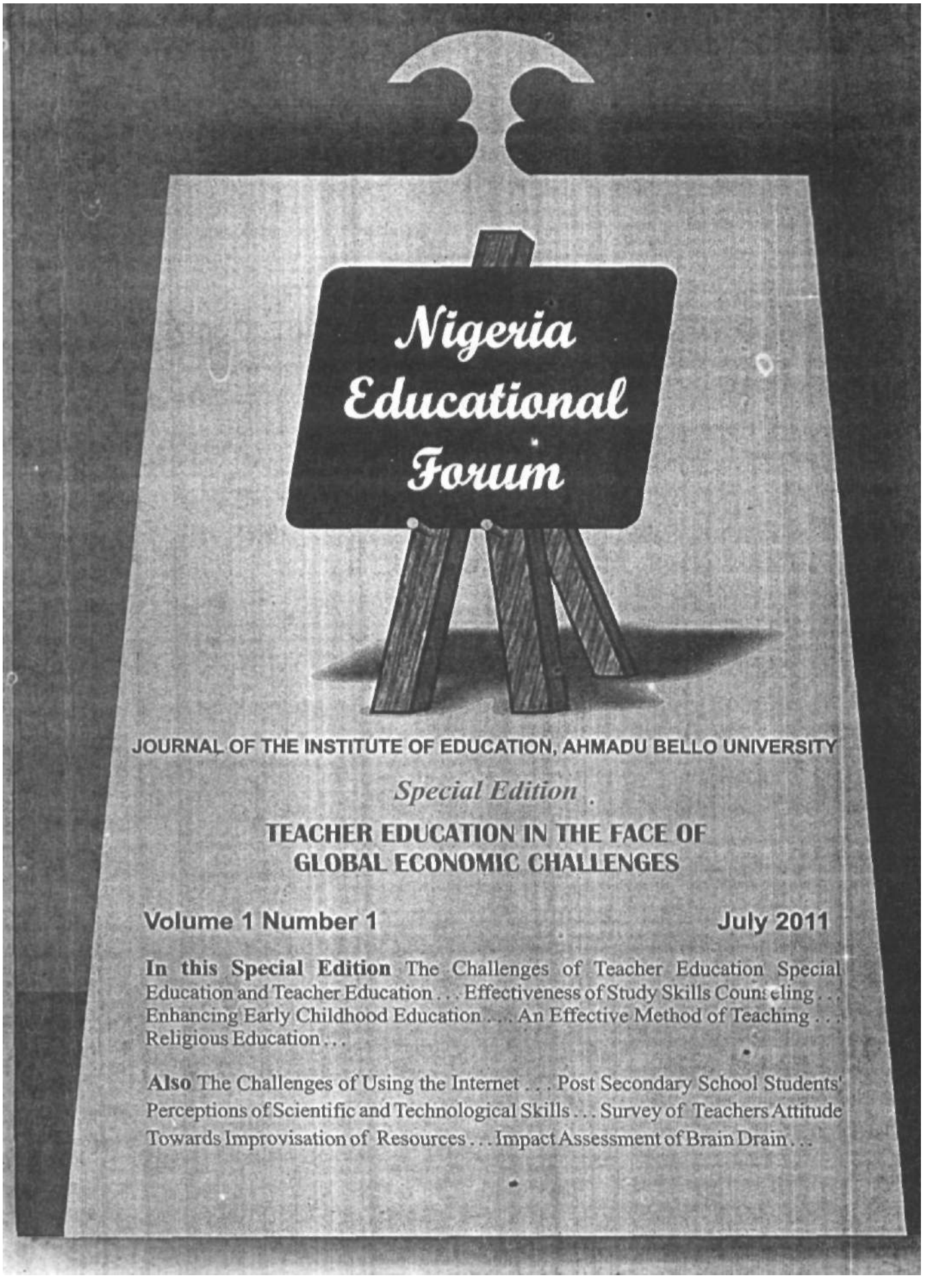

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TEACHER EDUCATION IN THE FACE OF GLOBAL ECONOMIC CHALLENGES

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In this Special Edition The Challenges of Teacher Education Special Education and Teacher Education . . . Effectiveness of Study Skills Counseling . . . Enhancing Early Childhood Education . . . An Effective Method of Teaching . . . Religious Education . . .

Also The Challenges of Using the Internet . . . Post Secondary School Students' Perceptions of Scientific and Technological Skills . . . Survey of Teachers Attitude Towards Improvisation of Resources . . . Impact Assessment of Brain Drain . . .

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SCHOOL LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES AS SUPPORT FOR EDUCATION IN THE FACE OF GLOBAL ECONOMIC CHALLENGE

Daudu, H.M.

This paper focuses on the provision of school libraries and information services in primary schools of four Local Government Areas of Kaduna State. Random sampling technique was used to select 116 schools as samples for the study out of 577 public schools in the four Local Government Areas. Questionnaire was used to collect data. The questionnaire was administered to all the' head teachers of the sampled schools. The study found that only 22 schools (18.96%) have libraries. Examining the types of materials in the libraries, textbooks ranked highest with 16 (13.79%) libraries while no library had films strips and slides. As for the highest qualification of the librarians, most libraries were managed by primary school leavers (cleaners) while some libraries had nobody directly managing them. However, two schools had Diploma in Libraiy Science holder and one school had a degree holder managing the library. The schools had very poor ways of funding their libraries. The writer recommends that primary schools need to have libraries because that is where the foundation for the use of library later in life is laid. The writer further recommends that Local Government Education Authorities as well as the schools and the old pupils associations of schools should team up to provide libraries in primary schools. In the interim, teachers who took the use of libraries course at N.C.E level should attempt introducing children to the use of library using the class library and other areas which **the paper** refers to **as "Thinking Outside** the Box."

Introduction

Support is a device that is installed to prevent a structure from falling or failing. The library could be construed as a facility capable of lifting and sustaining a satisfactory level of education in the face of global economic meltdown.

School libraries, by their calling, are libraries that are situated in Nursery, Primary or Secondary schools. They are there to play the role of teaching aids for the teacher and learning aids

establishment of libraries in the school because he stands to gain much from such a facility being available and functional in the school. The teacher uses the library to assist children acquire the skills of self directed learning because the library is concerned with creating a community of lifelong learners with skills to locate, use and evaluate information using variety of resources that an individual cannot afford to have, personally.

The development of school libraries cannot be isolated from developments in education because modern school libraries are a part of education. The demand for the modern, well-equipped, well-staffed school library has emerged from changes in education which have led to greater demand for resources in schools. Libraries are meant to provide facilities for pupils to learn effectively from. The phrase 'learning to learn' is increasingly seen in statements in education. Changes in teaching methods have led to greater freedom for pupils to develop learning and information acquisition skills while using a wide variety of resources for classroom based work or for project work in class and in the library. It was in the light of this that Lonsdale (2003) reported an outcome of a research stating that in schools with good libraries, funded and the services of a good librarian, students performed significantly better on tests for basic research skills; and they performed significantly better in reading comprehension and in their ability to express effectively ideas in relation to their reading. With this realization, the school library should be a must in all primary schools.

The value of school library and information service in Education in a Global Economic Challenge

The school library can provide learning resources for a school in the face of economic depression. Since no meaningful learning can take place without the backing of information resources, all hands must be on deck to provide materials for the school library. The cost of print and non-print materials is a barrier to teachers and pupils acquiring up to date materials for their personal use. The library provides a variety of resources including reference and rare materials which enable pupils obtain information with the assistance of the librarian.

Many international studies, one of which was conducted by Ontario Library Association (2006), have demonstrated a link between students' achievement and the presence of professionally staffed and accessible school libraries. A competent, effective librarian is the key to good library services. Because by his training he understands children and has the ability to manage and direct them, he can identify their needs and meet them adequately.

The presence of school library will provide a solid foundation for using information as children grow and mature. Libraries should hold resources that can provoke children to possess the ability to recall, summarize, paraphrase and to extend, resulting in producing children that exhibit the ability of critical thinking. Any child growing along these lines will be a sound student in the future.

Thinking Outside the Box

In spite of the negligence in the provision of library service in primary schools, there is still need for efforts to be made. While efforts are being made, teachers should do their best to introduce the concept of library service to pupils, which this paper refers to as "thinking outside the box." The teacher can provide a functional library corner with books made available for children to borrow. Any book donation that is kept in the headmaster's office as a result of the absence of a library in the school should be distributed to classes so that teachers could have them as their class library collection.

The teacher should dedicate the class reading period to practice the use of library. There would be experimental lending and borrowing, there would be reading competition using the class library resources and token gifts given to the most dedicated pupils. Arrangement could be made with the public library so that mobile library services would be provided. As books are brought to the school, the class teacher receives them on behalf of the class and does the charging and discharging. The idea is to emphasize to the children the importance of library service to their learning process.

Statement of the problem

Despite government pronouncements on the provision of school libraries and library services to support education in Nigeria, school libraries are still a mirage. Again, despite the fact that primary school is the basic level of education that libraries should be made available to, because of the role it plays in the foundation of education of the pupils, it is the most neglected area. Where libraries are established, they are scarcely available in public primary schools and where they are available, they are not functional since the managers of such libraries are not professionals. Teachers seem not to realize the role they can play in establishing libraries in primary schools and in encouraging children to utilize libraries.

Research questions

The following research questions were raised and answered:

1. Are there libraries in public primary schools in Sabon Gari, Zaria, Giwa and Soba Local Government Areas of Kaduna State?
2. What are the types of resources /materials available in the school libraries
3. What roles do teachers play in encouraging pupils to use the libraries
4. Who are the managers of the school libraries ?
5. What are the qualifications of the school librarians?
6. How do schools get funds for acquiring materials for their libraries?

Methodology

A survey method was used to study all the public primary schools in Sabon Gari, Zaria, Giwa and Soba Local Government Areas of Kaduna State. These LGAs have 54, 117, 198, 208 primary schools respectively which form the population of the study. Random sampling technique was used to select 20% of the population as the sample hence 11 schools from Sabon Gari, 23 from Zaria, 40 from Giwa and 42 from Soba LGAs were selected bringing the total sample size to 116 schools. Questionnaire was used to gather the data from head teachers of every school or their

representatives hence 116 questionnaires were administered, one questionnaire per school and simple percentages were used for analysis. The population and sample of the study are presented in table 1.

Table 1: Population and Sample of the Study

S/No.	Location	Number of Schools	Sample
1	Sabon Gari	54	11
2	Zaria	117	23
3	Giwa	198	40
4	Soba	208	42
Total		**577**	**116**

Source: SUPEB Kaduna, 2011

Results of the Research

The first research question of this study was aimed at finding out the availability of school libraries in the schools. Table 2 reveals that 22 schools (18.96%) have libraries while 94 (81.04%) do not have libraries.

Table 2: Frequency Distribution of Availability of Libraries in the schools of study

S/No	Location (LGEA)	No of schools	AV	%
1	Sabon Gari	11	4	36.36%
2	Zaria	23	7	30.43%
3	Giwa	40	5	12.50%
4	Soba	42	6	14.28%
Total	**4**	**116**	**22**	**18.96%**

Types of materials available in the school libraries

In seeking to find out the types of resources available in the school libraries, Table 3 reveals that the highest type of resources available are textbooks (13.79%), followed by fiction/story books 12 (10.34%). Only 3 schools (2.59%) in Zaria Local Government Area have computers and the computers were not found in the library.

Table 3: Distribution of types of materials in the school libraries

S/No	Items	ZLG	S/GLG	GLG	SLG	Total	%
1	Text book	5	4	3	4	16	13.79
2	Reference Materials	3	Nil	Nil	Nil	3	2.59
3	Faction books/story books	5	2	3	2	12	10.34
4	Magazines	2	Nil	Nil	Nil	2	1.72
5	Newspapers	2	1	1	Nil	4	3.45
6	Plash cards	2	Nil	Nil	Nil	2	1.72
7	Film strips	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	0.00
8	Slides	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	0.00
9	Audio tape	2	Nil	1	Nil	3	2.59
10	Radio Tapes and player	3	Nil	1	Nil	4	3.45
11	Computers	2	Nil	Nil	Nil	2	1.7

Key

ZLG = Zaria Local Government

S/GLG= Sabon Gari Local Government

GLG = Giwa Local Government

SLG = Soba Local Government

COMP= Computers

Teachers' Roles in Encouraging Library use

To find out this, the researcher interacted with the teachers and found out that many of them did not use the library themselves so they did not encourage the children to use the library either. When they were asked whether they gave children assignments to make use of the library, they said they only gave the children homework and not assignments that could be done using the library.

Qualification of the school librarian

It was revealed that most school libraries did not have qualified librarians. The highest qualification recorded was Diploma in Library Science except in Zaria Local Government where there was one (1) degree holder in Library Science. Most

school libraries were being taken care of by Primary and Secondary School leavers who were messengers or cleaners as shown on table 4.

Table 4: Distribution of School Librarians by Qualification

S/NO	Items	ZLG	S/GLG	GLG	SLG
1	Primary School Certificate	1	1	1	1
2	Secondary School Leaver	1	1	1	1
3	Grade II Teacher Certificate	1	Nil	Nil	1
4	Senior Library Assistant (SLA)	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
5	Assistant Library Officer (ALO)	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
6	Diploma in Library Science (DLS)	1	Nil	1	Nil
7	Bachelor in Library Science (BLS)	1	Nil	Nil	Nil

Sources of funds for the Acquisition of Library Materials

Responses to this question show that it was mostly the management of the schools that provided funds for the acquisition of library materials, other sources were not very prominent. Table 5 shows the distribution pattern of the sources of funds for the acquisition of library materials.

Table 5: Sources of funds for acquisition of library materials.

S/NO	Items	ZLG	S/GLG	GLG	SLG
1	School Management	2	2	2	2
2	Parents Teachers Association	1	1	Nil	Nil
3	Library Funds	1	Nil	Nil	1
4	Alumni	1	Nil	Nil	Nil
5	Philanthropists	2	Nil	2	Nil
6	Local Government	1	Nil	1	Nil
7	Private Individuals	3	1	1	Nil
8	Gift/Donations	4	Nil	3	1
9	State Library Board	1	1	1	1
10	Local Community	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

Discussion

Reference to table 2 in this study, the number of schools that have libraries is extremely low. The absence of libraries does not provide support for the teacher nor does it agree with what the National Policy on Education (2004) says. For the library to render effective service, there should be useful resources. Textbooks in school libraries are useful resources as they assist children to have access to textbooks that they are not able to secure due to financial constraints.

It is equally useful that libraries stock other resources as their presence in the school libraries complement and supplement prescribed textbooks. It is in this light that experts such as Dike (2001), Lonsdale (2003) and Jaja (2008) talked about having print and non-print resources in school libraries. Also the National policy on Education specifically states that Information and Communication Technology (ICT) facilities should be provided in all levels of education. It is not proper that children will pass through primary school without knowing what a computer is as seen in this study.

The teacher has a role to play in assisting children to make use of the library. First and foremost, the teacher should insist that there be a library period on the school time table. This can be discussed during staff meeting. When he/she takes children to the library, he should be able to introduce them to different types of books through the help of the librarian. Also he/she should give children assignments and direct them to make use of the library. This will address the problem, reported by Jaja (2008) of not allowing children from public school in the Federal Capital Territory to have access to books.

According to Herring (1986), most standards for school libraries in the U.K, USA, Australia, Canada and New Zealand recommend that the school librarian should be a qualified personnel. He/she should be a chartered librarian though this qualification is more suitable for a secondary school librarian. At the primary school level, the school librarian should possess at least a diploma and a teaching qualification. In Nigeria, a Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) holder who took library science as an elective course at the NCE level would be a good substitute for a

to supply them books for the boxes once a week. They will make the class library functional by organizing loan service for the children and also encouraging children to share what they have read from the library with the class members. This is in agreement with what Daudu (2002) suggested.

2. Improve on the types of materials in the school library by adding stories written by children to the library collection; procure reference materials for the library too.

3. Teachers should ensure that a library hour is included on the school time table. They should refer children to the library regularly to encourage them to make use of the library. Reading competition and spelling contests could be organized by teachers. This will enable children to use reading as well as reference materials such as dictionaries to prepare for this exercise.

4. At the primary school level, the school librarian should possess at least a diploma and a teaching qualification. In Nigeria, Nigeria Certification of Education (NCE) holder who took library science as an elective course at NCE level could be used as a teacher librarian. The implication of this is that schools should find out the qualification of their teachers and assign the responsibility of establishing and running the school library to those who offered library science as elective at their NCE levels. In addition, the school could sponsor such teachers to attend workshops and seminars on school librarianship.

5. Schools should explore the possibilities of using old pupils of the school to develop the school library. Where PTA is not functional, the school should ensure that a strong PTA is established and encouraged to introduce development projects such as establishing school libraries.

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