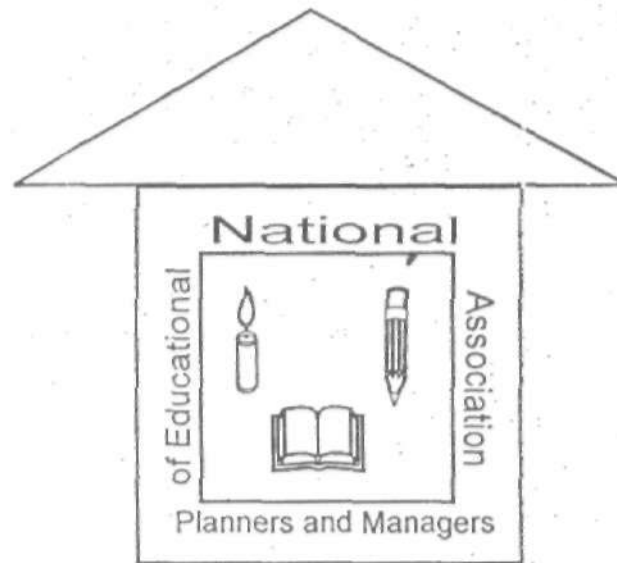


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EDITORIAL

This is the maiden edition of Journal of Educational Management and Planning (JEMP). It is very useful for theorists, practitioners and indeed all Stake holders of Education.

JEMP is published by the National Association of Education Managers and Planners (NAEMP) in collaboration with Educational Administration and Planning Section, Department of Education, ABU, Zaria. NAEMP provides regular fora for both Practitioners and theorists to meet in order to rub minds with the aim of narrowing the gap between theory and practice for improvement of practice in order to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of the educational enterprises in Nigeria and the world over.

There is a symbiosis in the relationship among theory, research and practice. Theory is refined through research and when theory, in the light of research finding, is applied to individual action or inaction, then theory is transformed into practice.

Theory is related to practice in at least three ways: in the first way, theory provides a frame of reference for the practitioners; second, the process of theorizing provides a general mode of analysis of practical events; and third, theory guides practical rational decision - making necessary for efficient practical administration. Yet, there is the yawning gulf between theory and practice. The Workshops, Conferences and Seminars which NAEMP organises as well as publication of this JEMP, will go a long way in narrowing the gap between theory and practice.

The Editorial Board received so many articles from both education Theorists and Practitioners all over the country. All were assessed by a team of competent assessors and still, many were found publishable, yet, only twenty-three articles were picked by the Board to be experimented with and used for this maiden edition. Therefore, the Board apologizes to those whose articles were accepted for publication but could not be published in this edition. It is hoped that such articles will be published in the subsequent edition, which would soon be released. Other contributors are encouraged to send in their articles for assessment, please.

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Introduction

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THE SCHOOL MEDIA RESOURCE CENTER AND THE MANAGEMENT
OF EDUCATION RESOURCES

BY
H. M. DAUDU

Abstract

The writer maintains that the modern use of the term library, has been broadened to include Media Resource Center; then the enumerates some functions of the media center and shows how stakeholders of the school system may benefit from the media center. Furthermore, the writer gives a rundown of some-basic requirements for the establishment of school libraries which include personnel, selection, acquisition, processing and utilization of material.-The paper points out- that professionals are indispensable for the establishment and. equipping of a school Library. Finally, the paper discusses the role of school library in the management of educational resources.

Introduction

Due to technological advancement, the school library has shifted emphasis from books alone. Even though the name 'library' is still seen above the doors of school libraries, the appearance as well as functions have changed. In the library are found compressive sources of information in many forms including transparencies, a bird's nest and other authentic objects, cassette tapes, microfiche, filmstrips, recordings, books, magazines, pamphlets, models, flash cards, computers and others. This has justified the change of name from school library to Media center. Elaturoti, (1990) listed the names by which the school library is called, namely, media resource center, learning resource center, or school media center, these terminologies refer to the same thing, and can be used interchangeably.

In agreement with Opeke (1994), the school media center has been acknowledged as the heart of the school around which all school programmes revolve. However, without proper management, no matter how much materials are available, the desired goals of a school library cannot be achieved. Therefore for effective management of education resources, there is need to identify the functions which should lead to the formulation of sound policy for selection and acquisition of library materials.

Functions of School Library/Media Resource Centre

According to Nickel (1975), the school library/media center functions as a vital instrument as well as basic requirement for quality education by enriching all parts of the educational process. It reflects, and supports the aims and objectives of the school. It provides a variety of book and non-book materials. The school library is a learning center where pupils find information to assist them in their school subjects and in their personal developments.

As a dynamic and integral component of the total educational programme, the school library/media center functions as a resource center, learning laboratory, teaching and service agency, coordinating center and a guidance agency.

A brief elaboration will help to make the point clearer about the functions of the school library/media center.

As a resource center, all forms of printed and audio-visual communication and their complementary technology are organized and stocked for accessibility and utilization. Then as a

learning laboratory, it makes available material, which will enrich and complement the curriculum providing materials and facilities for research and self directed learning.

As a teaching agency the school library provides students with knowledge on how to find information and encourages them to use a variety of media. Similarly it keeps teachers informed about new materials in their respective fields of specialization.

As a service agency, it is structured in such a way as to serve students and teachers, circulating materials and equipment to where and when they are needed.

Its service as a central depository for all forms of media makes it a coordinating agency. It is a place in the school where any person may come for information at any given time. As a resource center the school library serves as a guidance agency by helping students learn to study effectively and providing assistance to them to explore a wide variety of materials.

In performing the functions of a recreational center for reading, viewing and listening, it provides a wide variety of materials and gives assistance to students in selecting these materials, and also using a variety of promotional techniques to encourage the use of such materials.

The school library/media center therefore functions as a central source of all kinds of teaching and learning materials, and as an agent for change. In fact these functions portray the center as multi-dimensional.

Selection and Acquisition of Materials

The library plays a central role in the selection and acquisition of materials to support the total instructional programme that is centered around the educational life of a child. The school library according to the American Association of School Libraries (1972) has the responsibility:

- * To provide materials that will enrich and support the curriculum, taking into consideration the varied interests, abilities and maturity levels of the pupils served.
- * To provide materials that will stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literacy appreciation and ethical standards.
- * To provide a background of information which will enable pupils to make intelligent judgements in their daily life.
- * To provide materials on opposing sides of controversial issues so that young citizens may develop under guidance the practice of critical reading and thinking.
- * To provide materials representative of the many religions, ethnic and cultural groups and their contributions to their heritage.

Materials acquired to enhance quality education are of two categories, namely, print and audio-visual materials. There are criteria which guide their selection and acquisition. For print materials the criteria among others include the suitability of materials, qualifications of the author, the format of the book and the recognized value of the content.

The expedient thing to do is to make one's selection from the printed materials that one actually sees: new books and magazines on the shelves or bookshops, or the salesman's catalogue/list etc. But it is unwise and undesirable that a library restricts itself to only new and recent materials because old materials have a role to play in subjects such as History.

Among others, three criteria for the selection of audiovisual materials may be identified.

Firstly, the content should effectively fulfill the curriculum. Secondly, the content should be true to life and true to the text if it is based on writing. Thirdly, the quality of filmstrips, slides and other visual materials should be judged based on their style of presentation, originality and other



aesthetic qualities.

Ideally all materials, print and audiovisual, should be read and examined before a decision is reached. In reality, librarians rely greatly on many kinds of lists and catalogues containing materials of both types, selected and annotated by experts. The best lists, however are those compiled by librarians and subject specialists who have critically read and reviewed the books listed. The review/ annotation gives an idea of the subject matter, the target audience, the format and complete bibliographical data.

For audiovisuals, special tools are used for selection. Since there are numerous companies that advertise audiovisual equipment, it is easy to simply select the ones most attractively advertised or sold locally. But it is wiser to examine and read descriptions using selection criteria such as: performance, sturdiness, reputation, safety, provisions for service and repair etc. Also special criteria for projectors, television receivers and other items are necessary.

A perfect selection job is impossible but the use of expertly compiled lists and guides, together with slow and careful consideration of each possible title in relation to the needs of the individual school will assist in making wise selections.

To those responsible for selecting school library materials, the wealth of books, films, filmstrips, tapes, pictures and other media available is in itself a challenge. But the needs of the school is however most paramount. There are certain basic books, which nearly every secondary school needs, size or educational goals notwithstanding; for example, particular reference books. For others, the library staff would decide. Even as selection continues, opportunities will come up for finding out more closely the needs and interest of teachers and students. Changes may take place in curriculum, which may necessitate development of the library's collection in new directions.

The librarian should be aware of what he/she encounters while trying to select and acquire materials for the library. These encounters may include the format and type of materials to be acquired based on the location of the school even though this may lead to self censorship. Care should be taken that balanced collection is acquired. Balance collection include the materials the teachers want and materials that meet the needs of the curriculum which the teachers may not be aware of. In the selection process, the curriculum and the student body of the individual school must always be kept in mind. It is for this reason that the librarian/educational resource specialist must always be part of the curriculum design process. Case and Lowery (1974) opined that the librarian is not just to be presented with a complete list of curriculum design as a matter of routine; he is to take an active part in its creation because the ultimate responsibility is on him to provide the appropriate materials. There can be no talk of materials in an educational system being the backbone of quality education in the area it serves if the specialist is left out in the policy-making process.

Processing and Utilization

The materials selected and purchased by/for the media resource center are meant to be used. Yet, they cannot be used if they cannot be found when needed. To be found, they have to be logically organized. This is what cataloguing and classification are all about.

The media resource specialist needs a knowledge of cataloguing and classification mainly to understand how the basic principles can be applied and modified when necessary. All the steps in processing materials are necessary even if they serve as means to an end, that is, providing materials needed to serve the school. Processing had been made much easier through cataloguing-in-

publication (C.P.), a cooperative effort between the Library of Congress and some publishers whereby bibliographic information is provided on the verso of the title page. Machine Readable Cataloguing (MARC) is similarly made available.

School library/media centers generally use the Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) scheme, which is most suitable for them. Therefore, elaborate and detailed classification may not be necessary; hence there is no need to use more than two or three numbers beyond the decimal point. School Libraries may even create some system of classification that they find convenient by using easily identifiable symbols. Allan (1974) suggested the following:

- F - For fiction;
- SC - For story collections
- E - For easy (i.e. juvenile) materials
- R - To indicate 'Reference' with or without the classification number
- B - To generally designated biographies

Cataloguing also need not be elaborate. If the specialist considers it not necessary to go the whole hog, the first level of description may be applied where the necessary details are given thus, saving the time of the staff and preventing the process of searching from being confusing and cumbersome to the pupil. It is however desirable that subject headings be given-assigned to each item as a whole-books filmstrip, cassettes recordings etc.

Management Roles of the School Library/Media

The school library has a very important role to play in the management of education resources, which are housed in the library. According to IFLA (1999), effective and accountable operations may be achieved through the following ways:

- i. The policy on school library services must be formulated to define goals, priorities and services in relation to the school's curriculum.
- ii. The school library must be organized and maintained according to professional standards -services must be accessible to all member of the school community.
- iii. Cooperation with teachers, senior school management, administrators, parents, other librarians and information professionals, and community groups must be encouraged. For these roles to be properly coordinated, a professional librarian is required. The need for professional librarians to take charge of the school library cannot be over emphasized. It is altruism that only professionals can establish and manage school libraries effectively. The National Policy on Education (1998) recommended a professional or at least a para-professional to manage a school library.

In addition to selection, acquisition and organization of the resources, the librarian will be able to work with teachers to ensure that materials in the library are effectively utilized. Effective utilization of the library may be achieved through several ways some of which are identified and described.

- i. A library period will be created whereby it will be mandatory for students to visit the library every day.
- ii. Assignments will be given to students while teachers will work hand in hand with librarians to provide materials that would be used for the assignment.

- iii. Librarian will keep school management and teachers aware of new materials that have been added to the library through current lists and displays.
- iv. Cooperation will be established between schools in terms of materials exchange and exchange visits to one another's libraries.
- v. Story hour and book talks to motivate children to make use of the library could be introduced.
- vi. Exhibition of children's work such as paintings, storybooks and of art works could be introduced in the library to attract those who may not be keen in using the library.

The Nigerian School Library Association in realization of the importance of school libraries, aims at encouraging the establishment of school libraries. With school libraries in place, it is possible for schools to make meaningful impact on the learning ability of students.

There is no question in the mind of educationist today about the growing need and importance of the library in the education of children and the youth. It is perhaps evident that sources of information are needed today than were needed in previous years. The school library serves as the greatest of all aids to teaching because:

- It forms the sparks of information that pass from teacher to pupil/student
- It provides books and other learning materials, which individuals cannot afford.

The school library should store a wide range of books, non-book, printed and graphic materials, audio-visual software and apparatus needed for their operation, and objects such as models, specimens etc. It should have records of all materials in the school and in addition provide an information service about materials, organizations, persons and places available outside the school, which would aid the learning process.

Conclusion

The importance of libraries in schools of all kinds has been stressed in the preceding discussion. The library is capable of managing all educational resources that can facilitate teaching/learning processes provided professionals who are knowledgeable in ideals and standards are involved.

It is not enough to talk about providing libraries in schools, neither is it enough to make policy statements, there is need to take steps to bring the policy statements into action. This is done through provision of funds and consequently proper acquisition of materials and processing to make them available for use.

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