

STRONG ADVOCACY FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF LIBRARY EDUCATION INTO NIGERIAN SCHOOL SYSTEM

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Abstract

A library is a collection of materials or media that are accessible for use. It provides physical or digital access to information materials which are collected, organized, preserved, disseminated for proper use. Right from primary school into secondary school, students have shown interest in the proper use of library. There is need to introduce its study in the curriculum for better integration and for future use. Using the critical analysis, the researcher finds out that the introduction of Library science education in the school system in Nigeria will prepare the pupils for better appreciation of library use.

Keywords: Library science, Education, Curriculum, school system, library

Introduction

Education cannot exist alone in the absence of library and library has no meaning if it cannot educate. Education administration and Library use are two inseparable- indivisible concepts, both being fundamentally and synchronically related to and co-exist with each other. One cannot be separated from the other and the existence of one is impossibility without the other. Onebunne, J. (2020) defined education as *educere* meaning to lead out of ignorance and *educare* meaning the consequent act of cultivating or leading one into knowledge which is power. Education is an eye-opener to a human being; it gives adequate knowledge. It refers to the process of learning and acquiring information. Education is the process of facilitating learning or the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, morals, beliefs and habits through educational methods like teaching, training, directing etc.

Adeyemi T.O., (2009) asserts that library at the elementary stage is referred to as a collection of literacy documents, books and other materials in a depository house or building. It can also be defined as a place in which literacy and artistic materials such as books, periodicals, newspapers, pamphlets, prints, records and tapes etc. are kept for reading, reference or lending. This is the traditional library. Digital library / E- library is the collection of texts, images etc. encoded so as to be stored, retrieved and read by computer. It is the collection of documents organized in an electronic format available on the internet or on CD ROM disks with the use of computer system.

Therefore, there is need for the library science education in our school system. Library science education can be defined as the instruction, impartation of knowledge, skills, facts,

practices, perspectives and tools on how to manage and use books and other information materials to obtain knowledge and for research purposes by the students and researchers. Library science education is the branch of study that deals on how the students are taught the use of library i.e. books either physical books or digital book for their reading, learning and research to obtain indispensable knowledge. It also means learning information and acquaintance and familiarity with books and the information society.

Primary school system and secondary school system are the basic level of education system. The use of library is not prevalent in school system. No school can function without an equipped library.

Secondly, our concern here bothers on the insufficiency of the present primary and secondary schools' curriculum in bringing about the much desired objectives and nit the inadequacies of the policy guiding the operations of the system nor the clumsiness on the part of the stakeholders in making the dreamed objectives a reality. Elementary aspects of library education have not once been included primary and secondary schools' curriculum in the history of Nigerian Education. Therefore, there is need to know the importance of library in a school system and why it is fundamental to include library science education in the schools 'curriculum, integral formation of students on library use and research methodology used in library science education. (Agyekummr, B.A & Filson, 2012).

The Difference between Library and information science (LIS) and Library education (LE)

Library and Information Science (LIS) is a field that produces knowledge as well as utilization of knowledge. However, researchers in the field produce only a small amount of this knowledge. LIS is a professional discipline that attracts many forms of knowledge. The term Library Science can be traced as far back as 1807, in a book written by a German called Martin Schrettinger. It is referred in German as "Bibliothekswissenschaft" . The term is still in use and is most often replaced by "library and information science" (LIS).

Library and Information Science is defined by the American Society for Information Science (ASIS), as a body that seeks to generate, collect, organize, interpret, store, retrieve, disseminate, transform and use information, given special attention to the use and applications of modern technologies in the field. The body has two parts. The first part, inquiries into the discipline without considering the application, otherwise known as pure science or theoretical components. The other part develops services and products and is also known as applied science or practical component. As a branch of study, it is concerned with the building and structuring of scientific systems and knowledge in technological advancement, which is linked to information transfer. The impact of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and its usage is now felt in every aspect of human life. This also includes the Library and Information Science field [2]. Our today's society is evolving as a result of Information Technology with its increase in knowledge and

information explosion. This has brought a massive revolution in the Library and Information Science profession.

A library is an important source of knowledge to young minds in schools. It develops the important habit of reading among the students. Library education enlightens the library users on the library use. It involves the process of imparting knowledge, skill and the practices of the library. Sometimes, these ideas and information are learnt formally. It helps to impact positively on the academic achievement of the students. It helps the students to develop love for books and read even during examination.

The types and Branches of Library

Libraries play an important role in socio-economic, cultural and educational development of a society. The libraries strengthen literacy among the people. The library services improve the knowledge and skills of the people for positive productivity thereby contributing to national development. There are many types of library and they include;

National library: National library is the apex library of a nation. National library is defined as a library maintained out of government funds and serves the nation as a whole. They usually receive materials from legal deposit legislation and they mostly collect and preserve for posterity all the published records viz. Books, periodicals, newspaper and other printed and multimedia material of the country's cultural heritage.

Public library: A public library is a non-profit library established for the use of the general public and maintained chiefly by public funds. It provides services to citizens irrespective of one's birth, colour, sex, social, economic and educational standard without any cost. They serve the children, visually impaired persons, community citizens etc.

Academic library: This is a library that is dependent to an academic institution as a parent organisation. An academic library covers the information needs of teaching, learning and research. They are broadly divided into:

University library: A university library is a library established by a university to support and help them to achieve its aims and objectives. It is established, administered and maintained to assist the university in teaching and learning, research and generation of new knowledge, dissemination and publication of research results; conservation of knowledge and ideas in book and other formats and extension programmes. They provide information materials for students, lecturers, scholars and researchers.

College library: A college library is the library dependent on a college i.e. a higher institution for training of teachers. They are mostly responsible providing information materials for teaching, learning and research.

School library: (Abdulahi Aishatu, 1998) defines school library as the library attached to all types of schools below the third tertiary level of education whose primary function is to serve the pupils and teachers of such as school. However it may also serve the entire primary or secondary school community.

Private library: This is a library established and funded by private institutions which provide information materials for them.

Again, Libraries are broadly categorized into two branches namely; traditional library and digital library;

Traditional library

Traditional library gives emphasis on storage and preservation of physical items particularly books and periodicals those in which the librarian is the custodian of the library. Information is physically assembled in one place. Users must travel to the library to learn what is there and make use of it. A traditional library is characterized by the following emphasis on storage and preservation of physical items particularly books and periodicals cataloguing at a high level. Information materials are physically assembled and arranged in shelves.

Digital Library

A digital library also called online library is an online database of digital objects that can include text, still images, audio, video, digital documents or other digital media formats or a library accessible through the internet. A digital library is a library in which collections are stored in digital formats (as opposed to prints, microforms or other media) and accessible by computer.

Digital library is defined as “digital libraries provide users with coherent success to a very large, organized repository of information and knowledge. It is a place where you can find digital repositories, or digital collections, online databases of digital objects that may include text, images, video etc. (Fayose P.O,1995)

Education and Library: A Critical Relationship

The libraries are considered as a hub of research and information and its role can never be denied by educating the students. The basic role of libraries is helping students to get ready for new learning; provide information without the constraints about social cultural and economical impediment helping students to get the desired information in least possible time, providing information on equality basis without constraints. It provides researchers with a conducive learning environment with all facilities, information materials for teaching and learning process. The libraries provide equal opportunity for all readers regarding information and ideas. Libraries provide lifelong learning process to students, teachers, researchers and even the academic institutions itself.

Education cannot exist alone in the absence of library and library has no meaning if it cannot impart knowledge. It gives him perfect, adequate knowledge, creates civic and rational sense withdraws him from the subjection of low habits, selfish passion and ignorable pursuits and thus educes him from abysmal darkness to limpid and perspicuous enlightenment while library is an instrument of self- education, a means of knowledge and factual information, a

centre of intellectual recreation and a beacon of enlightenment that provides accumulated, preserved knowledge of civilization which consequently enrich ones mental vision and dignify his habit, behaviour, character, taste, attitude, conduct and general outlook in life.

The Curriculum and Library Science Education

A curriculum is defined as the planned interaction of pupils with instructional content, materials, resources and processes for evaluation the attainment of educational objectives. It is also the plans made for guiding learning in the schools, usually represented in retrieval documents of several levels of generality and the actualization of those plans in the classroom. The primary and secondary schools curricula arrangements represents a shift from the mere literary and theoretical subject matter that are unrelated to the background of Nigeria child to the integration of more practical and vocational experience relevant to Nigerian environment.

To have a functional and progressive educational system, there must be a continually modification to keep the pace of the dynamic society. It is high time for the inclusion of library science education in Nigerian primary and secondary school curriculum. The following are the relevant questions: why the need for library education in our school system? At what level of primary and secondary school system do we offer library education? Should be taught as a compulsory or elective subject?

It is an indispensable fact that library education as a discipline is vital and highly indispensable to all school subjects. This is due to the fact it will aid reading skills since they will be exposed to the use of library. With the injection of some elementary library education subjects in Nigerian school system, the curriculum will be richer, more beneficial to pupils and be able to meet the objectives of the primary and secondary education in Nigeria. Some of the aspects of library education that are recommended for the inclusion include: Library instruction, cataloguing, archival science, reader's advisory service, reference, preservation. These aspects of library education are necessary, essential and sufficient to form the fundamental basis and process of teaching for primary and secondary pupils. (Arua, U & Chinaka G.I, 2011)

It is our argument that library education should be included in the primary and secondary school curriculum for students to perform well in all subjects. it is necessary to expose them to the use of library and that is the reason why library education should be included in primary and secondary school curriculum. Hence, it is recommended that library science education should be taken as a basic (core) school based subject at the primary school level especially the use of library to inculcate the reading habits in the pupils, the junior and senior secondary school level-specifically at J.S.S. 3 and S.S.S. level. The J.S.S. 3 will be just the elementary aspects. It is important at this juncture to show a structured model lesson plan for the purpose of clarity and to further strengthen the basis on how library education can be taught in the school system. The justification for the inclusion of Library education in the school system lies in the fact that it can lead to self- development of the individuals and

groups at the various stages of education. Their information behaviour would be formed by support and promote all types of education that is formal, non-formal, adult and life-long. This is achieved by stocking of books and other reading material for the community and the school. Libraries enhance the level of intelligence and status of the common man in the society to a great extent; talk more of students being exposed to library education. It will increase the reading habits and changes the reading taste of the students by raising their cultural level. To make the students erudite, civilized and cultured, an effective educational system largely dependent on abundant reading material is required. Library education will promote desire for books. By promoting the reading habits, the library makes them library-minded and enables them to love books. The libraries will play a vital role in the social life of the students. The growth in the size and stocks of books, is possible by the increased desire for books by innumerable readers, giving due importance to libraries in the cultural and social development of the society. (Moruf Hawwau A. 2015)

Furthermore, with the injection of library education in schools curriculum, students will be exposed to how knowledge is being preserved. Library maintains archives of old and rare documents thereby preserving literary heritage of the society. It stores the literary remains of humanity for antiquarian research in varied physical formats. Such collections will help the students to explore into historical aspects. Library education inclusion into the curriculum will be more beneficial to pupils and more susceptible to the reality of its set objectives.

Finally, there will be a reduction in the larger numbers of teeming unemployed graduates in the labour market through the provision of liberal job opportunity for library graduated and librarians as primary school and secondary school teachers and school librarians (Salis, S.O,1996). It must be noted that they were exposed to educational courses as well. That is, they are also trained teachers. In order to be able to teach library education subjects effectively, the graduates of library science are better grounded and equipped in this field compared to the trained teachers who can just pick a library education textbook to teach.

Research Methodology and Library Science Education

Research Methodology can be defined as the specific procedures or techniques used to identify, select, process, and analyse information about a topic. Research methodology is a guide to research and how it is conducted. It provides tools for carrying out the research for advancement of knowledge wealth of human beings. It simply means methods to follow for in-depth study and better understanding of a subject which will help the students to read and think critically.

Therefore there is need that the research methodology be introduced into the school system to enable students to do thorough and systematic research in the library. Research methodology in library science education means those procedures, techniques, tools employed in teaching and learning library science education in institutions of learning. There are different research methods which can be used and they include; observations and interview with the students.

The students should be observed critically to elicit the vital information concerning how to involve the students in researches and reading in the library. The students should be taught on how to make effective research in the library. Getting the right information in information materials is usually hard, therefore the students needs to be guided properly.

Interview entails meeting face to face with the students. It is essentially a structured conversation where the students can ask questions and be guided properly on reaching out for the required information.

Survey research is defined as the process of conducting research using survey method. It is used to obtain data about practices, situation views at one point in time through questionnaire or interviews with the students.

Library tour is one of very important research techniques used. This is where the students visit the library from time to time to learn more about the library, its practices, tools, methods, different departments of the library etc. It can also be used for research reasons either for assignments. It is also used to expose the students to the background of the library materials and how to get the rightful information.

Integral Formation of Students on Library Use

This is simply the harmonious development and organisation of students for library use. This gives room for academic or classroom formation of students for the exposition of knowledge and understanding of the library. There is the popular saying that “libraries are for use”. No library is meant to be unused. Therefore, it is very important to establish strategies on how the students should be formed for library utilization. For example; Group reading should be encouraged. Integral formation encourages cooperative and interactive reading in the library. It helps them develop social skills. It also helps the student to develop thirst for knowledge and profound understanding of library and its use. It prepares the child in building confidence and enthusiasm of becoming a more responsible personality. Integral formation of students on library use makes the students more independent to books and knowledge creation.

The Importance of Introducing Library Science Education in Our School System

The importance of library education cannot be underestimated. Library science education has an immense contribution to learning; it serves as a gateway to knowledge. Library science education provides resources and services which create opportunities to learning, support literacy and education and help shape the new ideas and perspective that are central to a creative and innovative society. Library science education offers education, relaxation and access to all sorts of books, magazines, newspaper and internet which helps the children with school assignment. (Yang L. 2011). Again according to Bhatt,R. (2013) The introduction of library science education will expose the students to the world of books at an early stage. The library help the students take reference books which can make some quality notes and save time and energy.

A library science education provides a source of knowledge to young minds in schools and serves as the store house of knowledge. It imbibes the habit of reading in students and helps to promote academic achievement of the students. It facilitates the work of the classroom teacher and ensures each student has equitable access to resources, irrespective of opportunities or constraints. Library science education is an independent learning program which integrates information resources and technologies. This education equips students with the skills necessary to succeed in a constantly changing technological, social and economic environment. It is an education that helps the classroom teachers to plan, implement and evaluate critically analyse and organise information, problem-solve and communicate their findings. It also provides and promote quality fiction to develop and sustain in students the habit of reading for pleasure and to enrich students intellectual, aesthetic, cultural and emotional growth. (Edoka, B.E, 2000).

Furthermore, Library science education caters for differences in teaching and learning styles through the provision of, and equality of access to, a wide range of curriculum resources- fiction and non-fiction, digital, print, audio and video. Finally, library science education will create life-long love for the library and love for reading and learning. It will help to keep the students abreast on the current events and the latest developments in the society.

Conclusion

The primary purpose of this paper is to advocate for the inclusion of library science education in the primary school and secondary schools curriculum. This writing is attempted to expose some fundamental issues and problems identified in our present schools' curriculum. This establishes a justification that library education should be taught as primary and secondary school subjects. With the teaching of these subjects, the students will have an understanding about the importance of the library and thus; their reading habits enhanced. I strongly believe that if the inclusion of library science education in the primary and secondary schools curriculum would be considered, it will help tremendously to the growth and development of our education system.

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