Information Literacy Delivery in Nigerian Primary Schools: A Case Study of Enugu State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper discusses the findings regarding information literacy (IL) delivery in primary school libraries in Enugu State, Nigeria. The discussion is based on IL content and delivery methods, as well as their effectiveness. The study was an instrumentation research in which experiment was used to test effect of a developed IL curriculum. In order to ascertain the effect of the curriculum, pre-test was given to the whole subjects prior to the commencement of the teaching. Subjects, received teaching covering the whole topics for second term- a period of 12 weeks. A post- test was thereafter given and the hypothesis tested was that: There is no significant difference between the information literacy skills of pupils participating in library period programme and those not participating, The hypothesis was tested using t- test statistics. The study made use of mean score, standard deviation and charts to present and analyse data. Observations showed that pupils exhibited tremendous development as regard their literacy and communication skills, library use skills, and critical thinking skills during the cause of the treatment. The study also found that pupils taught with library period curriculum did significantly better in the project given than those not taught. It was therefore concluded that the library period programme (LPP) might have been responsible for the higher performance of the experimental group. This had some implications for educational policy makers, school administrators, school librarians and class teachers. It was therefore recommended that all stakeholders need to promote information literacy in order to make pupils lifelong and comfortable learners.

Keywords

Introduction

Information literacy is a vital skill for everyone, particularly children in this information age. It is the pivot on which their development rests. To be independent learners and knowledge seekers in future, there is need for children to be equipped with information literacy skills. There is need to be able to access, interpret, evaluate and communicate information in different ways. Information literacy provides opportunities that will help them to become critical thinkers, users of information, as well as lifelong learners. This is why the Association of College and Research Librarians (ACRL) (2000) emphasises that people are information literate when they, among other things, access information efficiently and effectively; evaluate information critically and competently; use information creatively; appreciate and enjoy literature and other creative expressions; strive for excellence in information seeking and knowledge generation; and participate effectively in groups to pursue and information.

According to Nghiem (2010), the notion of IL was understood as a tool for dealing with information explosions and individuals' need for using information

resources in their problem solving situation. The concern of how to communicate, generate, process, and exchange information is prioritised in the context of network and information-filled society. The importance of information literacy cannot therefore be overemphasised. Rockman (2004) notes that "individuals who are knowledgeable about finding, evaluating, analysing, integrating, managing and conveying information to others efficiently and effectively are held in a high esteem". This set of people become successful at solving problems, as well as producing new ideas and directions for the future. In other words, they are lifelong learners. With information literacy skills, people can be active users and creators of information rather than passive receivers (UNN. Department of Library and Information Science, 2007).

The National Policy on Education (Nigeria, 2004) has as its aim to inculcate the spirit of enquiry and creativity, to lay a sound basis for scientific and reflective thinking and in bringing up a generation of people who can think for themselves. Again, it stipulates as its objective for setting up primary education the need for acquisition of literacy skills. Thus, Dike (2003) agrees that these skills will encourage children in their effective use of information. In other words, they should be able to know what they need, to what purpose, how relevant it is, and how to apply the information in problem solving. This article reports the state of information literacy delivery in some n school libraries in Enugu State, Nigeria, its effectiveness in building information literacy skills of primary school pupils and suggestions of ways that can lead to further improvements of the information literacy programme.

Statement of the Problem

Information literacy skills have been seen as a very vital element for lifelong learning in children. This is because the children need to start from scratch to become aware and have skills required in finding and using information from different places. In spite of this, children are not easily developing these skills (Dike, 2003, Moore, 1997). The reason could be that the school environment is not often conducive or the teacher- centred educational system where children are taught to read textbooks for

examination. It could also be due to lack of time for teachers to dwell more on the school content. Consequently, pupils fail to exhibit these skills of information literacy before they leave schools.

Studies by Ogunsheye, Elaturoti and Kolade (2001) and Adeniyi (2005), etc, show that library period reinforces the goal of school library, to help pupils to become comfortable lifelong learners. Unfortunately, inadequate incorporation of this period by the school authorities has had a detrimental effect on the development of pupils' information literacy skills. For this problem to be solved, library professionals are conducting various programmes, which when incorporated with the period, could help to build pupils' information literacy skills.

This study was conducted to assess the information literacy programme in primary school libraries. The main objective of the study was to develop library period programme used in teaching information literacy skills in primary schools. A more specific objective of the study was to integrate library period curriculum with the school curriculum and evaluate its effect on information literacy skills of pupils.

Review of Literature

The American Library Association (2006) defined information literacy as "a set of abilities requiring individuals to recognise when information is needed and have the ability to locate, and use effectively the needed information." Individuals need to master these skills at early stage, especially at primary school level. Primary education is the foundation of all levels of education (Nigeria, 2004) and the objective of setting up primary education among other things is to inculcate permanent literacy and critical thing among pupils, and library has the potentials in inculcating this. Campbell (2006) pointed out that in some jurisdictions critical thinking, being part of the information literacy definition, is already being embedded to the elementary school curriculum. Children need to acquire the thinking skills for them to belong to the information literate society. There is necessity for critical thinking in information skills right from primary school level, which would be used in learning activities.

Information literacy is an umbrella term representing all forms of literacy skills, library use

skills as well, as critical thinking skills (Dike, 2006). Literacy skill is of great importance for information to be retrieved, for it is only with this skill that one has access to information in many forms. Literacy has to do with the ability to read and write. The skills that allow someone to perform well in the society would involve a "whole range of literacies, including visual literacy, media literacy, technological literacy, cultural literacy, computer literacy, among many others…" (Amucheazi and Dike, 2002). These skills are required for use of library are also information literacy skills. Through development of these skills, the library should no doubt be able to effect changes in attitude to learning; inculcate a spirit of enquiry; and promote the habit of seeking knowledge and information as basis for decision making. The use of library skills in learning to use information sources is now being stressed, as they involve knowing how to locate and access information from digital sources and present information in new ways such as a power point presentation (Dike 2006).

Dike (2008) noted that, among other library activities, project work is useful in developing critical thinking skills since information is relevant in problem solving and aids individuals to acquire the lifelong learning skills. The necessity for lifelong learning therefore makes information literacy vital for primary school pupils since they ought to be acquainted with these skills from scratch for assessing information for reliability and relevance and for recording and organising information (Dike, 2003). The teachers also need critical thinking skills in order to teach students the skills in finding, sifting and integrating information from a variety of sources. Because critical thinking is an important educational outcome for pupils, there is need for education administrators to find strategies to help foster critical thinking as a means to enhance information evaluation and information literacy among pupils. This will ultimately help students, both young and old, to think for themselves.

The school library is an ideal setting for development of information literate individuals. School libraries help in equipping a school child with the necessary information literacy skills needed. Udoh (2004) observes that the school library is the bedrock of education and should constitute a part of the design for any successful educational programme to ensure excellence. In other words, the school library provides significant opportunities for helping children learn how to access, evaluate and use information from variety of sources. Teachers need resources that will help them improve classroom instruction and students should also be able, with the help of the school library, to know what they need, how to find them and where to search for them. The school library provides an atmosphere for building in a school teacher or a child for that matter, the ability to identify whenever they need information and critically use it. The importance of school library cannot be overemphasised. Primary school libraries provide children with their first chance to use and enjoy a library. They need opportunities to use library materials in developing creativity and reasoning skills, and those opportunities can be provided by library periods.

Library periods are of special significance to the growth of information literacy. This is a class period carved out for school children to learn how they can use the library and its contents to gain various skills that help them in continuous learning. According to Dike (2008), it has to do with "a time set aside for pupils to learn how to use the library and its resources and by so doing acquire the skills for lifelong learning." The library period reinforces the goal of school libraries and education in other words, it helps pupils to develop information literacy skills, promotes reading, as well as provides resources in support of the school curriculum. Ogunsheye, Elaturoti, Kolade and Oniyide (2001) stated that "Education can only be deemed effective if it enables the individual to seek, discover and therefore to continue his own education." This makes it even more imperative for there to be a programme designed to guide the librarians in using this period effectively in helping pupils to learn how to locate, access and use information.

Modes of IL Delivery in Primary School Libraries

The library has different ways of delivering IL in children. These ways are: the library period, formal library instruction, story hour and project work.

Library Period

Integrating library period into the school curriculum

helps children develop their capabilities for exploring school subjects in a creative way using such information literacy skills as use of library skills, literacy skills and critical thinking skills.

Formal Library Instruction (Lesson)

Library instruction is one way of teaching students how to search for information. By so doing, there is hope that the school library will help improve the standard of student's research and acquaint them with the spirit of lifelong learning. Some of the objectives Ogunsheye, Elaturoti and Kolade (2001) listed out in their work are: to create and awareness for history and structure of the book; to identify features of a book; to introduce children to the use of an organised school library media centre; to develop the library use skills in the children, etc. This therefore calls for user education and library instruction to acquaint children with the knowledge of using the library.

Story Hour

Story hour can play an important role in the life-long education of children. This is due mainly to the fact that it helps to develop and nurture the reading habit and drive home points which have been abstract to a child (Fayose, 2003). The activities of story hour programmes are planned to build up pupils' interest in books, reading and libraries. It does not mean telling only stories; hence various activities are organised during the programme.

Project Work

Project work is one of the vehicles for developing information literacy education in primary schools the world over. This is because, as noted by Hart (2005), "Good project work adopts a constructivist approach of learning in which learners define a problem or question and then work through a process … of finding, interpreting synthesising and creating information to solve the problem. A project work is an extended and independent activity based on a given topic and resulting in a presentation of some type. The ultimate aim of any project work, whether done individuals, small group or a whole class is to provide an excellent way of developing the learning and information skills required for life-long learning in children.

Methodology

The study involved pupils from fifteen public primary schools in Nsukka Central L.G.A of Enugu State, Nigeria. At the time of the study, there were 49 state owned primary schools in Nsukka Central LGEA, and 15 of them had libraries. These are: Model Primary School I, Enugu Road Primary School I, Model Primary School II, Agu-Achara Primary School, Community Primary School I, Nru, Umuagu Primary School Nru, Central School, Nru, Hilltop Primary School, Obimo, Community Primary School, Onuiyi, Township Primary School I & II, Nsukka, Central School I, Nsukka, Community Primary School, Obimo, Community Primary School, Nguru And Umuakasi/Achara Primary School.

The purposive sampling method was used because the school libraries were developed on different level and by different organisations. Pupils in the schools used for this study were paired according to the organisation– governmental and non-governmental — developing their school libraries. The study was an experimental design hence, developed library period programme was used based on three methods of delivery: formal library instruction, story hour and project work.

The administration of the questionnaire was carried out in three phases: first, pupils were pre-tested. The aim was to ascertain their level of information literacy and make sure that all subjects were under the same condition with regard to their abilities to access, evaluate and use information effectively. Thereafter, all pupils (experimental and control pupils) were given orientation on the topic for the post- test: "marriage" before giving them the project to embark on. The aim of the post-test was to find out if any change or changes took place in the pupils' level of information literacy skills as a result of the treatment. The rating of the pupils would be based on their exhibition of information literacy skills in the post-test (project work). The skills and

Table 1: Presentation of Information Literacy Skills and the Rating

S/N	Literacy & Communication Skills	Point	Library Use Skills	Point	Critical Thinking Skills	Point
1	Listening skills	6	Visual skills	6	Planning skills	10
2	Reading skills	6	Note taking skills	6	Location & access skills	6
3	Visual skills	6	Location & access skills	6	Organisation skills	6
4	Writing skills	6	Organisation skills	6	Recording skills	6
5	Oral communication skills	6	Evaluation skills	6	Observation skills	6
					Questioning skills	6
	Total	**30**	**Total**	**30**	**Total**	**40**

the rating are presented in the table below:

It can be seen from the table that 6 points were allotted to all other information literacy skills that were developed except "Planning skills". The reason for this is that planning skill seems to give more difficulty to pupils and is more encompassing than other skills identified. Again, this skill appeared only once under critical thinking skill. The aim was then to make it have point that could be near to other skills. The table also shows that while literacy and communication skills and library use skills had 30 points each, critical thinking skills had 40 points. This was due to the reason given above that planning skills had 10 points instead of 6 others had. It also had six (6) skills while others had five (5). This increases the point for critical thinking skills.

To ascertain the worth of this experimental treatment, pupils were given the same project as those of the control groups. All the subjects were tested in three dimension- literacy skills, use of library skills, and critical thinking skills. Scores were allotted for each of the skills which pupils exhibited in their project work. Literacy and communication skills included: listening skill, reading skill, visual skill, writing skill, and oral communication skill; library use skills included: visual skill, note taking skill, location & access skill, organisation skill, and evaluation skill while critical thinking skills included: planning skill, location& access skill, organisation skill, recording skill, observation skill, and questioning skill. The whole skills were rated 6 points except planning skill (10 points) which did not appear in any other place.

The sum score for each pupil was 100 points. The performance scores of each school in the two groups of subjects are shown below as compared with the skills they were developed along with.

Observations were presented in narratives. Document analysis was also presented in tables. Mean scores and standard deviation were used to ascertain the result of the two groups. Again, charts were used to compare the performance of the schools in order to make them more comprehensive. The schools' score were presented in comparison with the schools developed along with them. The hypothesis *that : There is no significant difference between the information literacy skills of pupils participating in library period programme and those not participating.* This hypothesis was tested using t-test statistics and comparison of mean scores of two groups.

Findings

Table 2 presents the results of the post-test performance obtained for the two groups and reveals that the schools for experimental treatment performed better than their counterpart control schools, hence Model Primary School 1, Nsukka (MPS1) had a higher score of 2281 points than its counterpart school, Enugu Road Primary School1, Nsukka (ERPS1) that had 1369 points. Also, Community Primary School, Obimo (CPSOB) had a higher score of 1424 points over its counterpart school, Community Primary School, Nguru (CPSNG) that had 1078 points. This could account for the overall score of 9485 points for school A over 6962 points of school

Table 2: Presentation of Post Test Performance Scores of Two Groups of Subjects on Information Literacy Skills

No. of pupils	Experimental Group A	X_A	No. of Pupils	Control Group B	X_B
40	MPS1 (E_1 focus)	2,281	35	ERPS (C_1 focus)	1,369
40	APS (E_2 ETF)	2,239	40	MPS2 (C_2 ETF)	1,960
23	CPSNR2 (E_3 UBE)	1,248	28	HPSOB (C_3UBE)	880
40	CPSNS (E_4 Urban)	2,293	40	TPS2 (C_4Urban)	1,675
30	CPSOB (E_5 Rural)	1,424	30	CPSNG (C_5 Rural)	1,078
173	**TOTAL**	**9,485**	**173**	**TOTAL**	**6,962**

B. The comparison is further presented on a chart for a better understanding.

Key:

Experimental Group A

MPS1– Model Primary School 1,Nsukka; Aguachara APS – Primary School, Nsukka; CPSNR2 – Community Primary Schools II, Nru; CPSNS– Central Primary School 1, Nsukka; and CPSOB – Community Primary School, Obimo

Control Group B

ERPS1 – Enugu Road Primary School1, Nsukka; MPS2 – Model Primary School II, Nsukka; HPSOB – Hilltop Primary School, Obimo; TPS2– Township Primary School II, Nsukka; and CPSNG–

**Chart1: Comparison of Performance Scores of Groups A and B**

Light: Group A

Dark: Group B

Chart 1 reveals that each of the schools in experimental group A had a higher result than their counterpart schools in control group B. Model Primary School 1, Nsukka, Aguachara Primary School, Nsukka, and Central Primary School 1, Nsukka scored above 2000 points over their counterpart schools that scored below 2000 points. Despite the fact that the other two schools were fewer in number, they scored above 1200 over their counterpart school, that scored below 1200. This could be as a result of the treatment given to the former.

Research Hypothesis:

Ho: there is no significant difference between the information literacy skills of those participating in library period programme and those not participating. To test this hypothesis, the individual school's scores were merged in order to find the overall scores of the
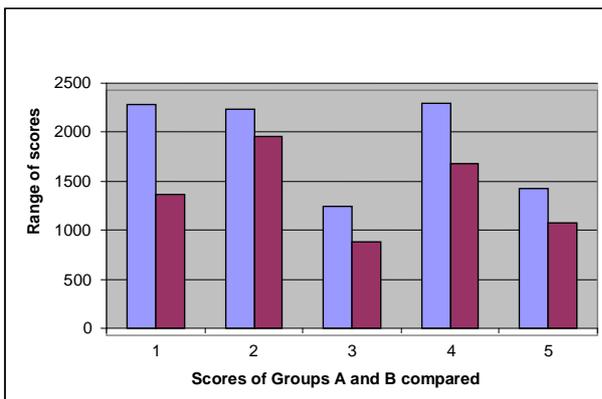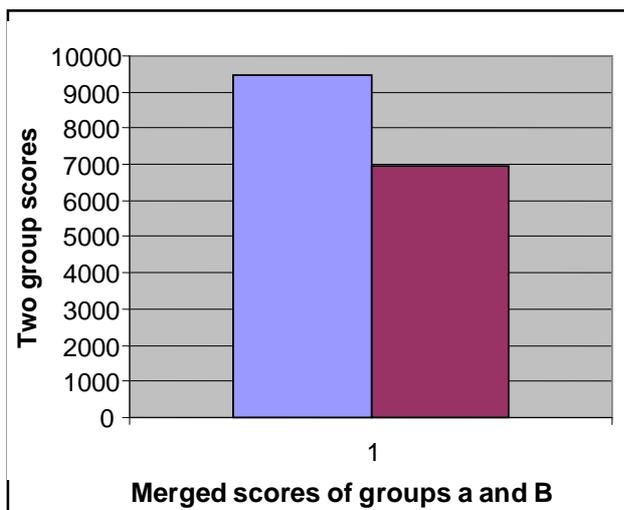
Chart 2: Overall Comparison of Treatment Group A and Control Group B

Light: Experimental Group A
Dark: Control Group B

two groups of schools. The amalgamation is presented and compared in chart 2, which reveals that following the treatments administered on primary schools pupils; the experimental group A had an overall higher score of 9485 than Control school B which has a score of 6962 making a difference of 2523. This remarkable difference was due to individual school's higher scores over their counterpart school. Statistics reveals that following the treatments administered on primary schools pupils, the experimental group had a higher result with a mean score of 54.83 and a standard deviation of 10.54 while the control group (no treatment at all) had a mean score of 40.24 with a standard deviation of 10.37.

Information literacy skills scores had its calculated values as 13.02 which was greater than the t - value of 1.96 (two tailed test) at p d" 0.05 levels of significance and 344 degrees of freedom. This indicated that there was a significant diference between the information literacy skills of those participating in library period programme and those not participating. With this result, the null hypothesis (H_O) of no significant difference in the information literacy skills of the two groups of subjects is rejected.

Effect of Library Period Programme on the Information Literacy of the Pupils

From the findings of the study, the library period programme was very effective in developing the information literacy of the pupils. Hence, there was observed development in pupils' information literacy abilities. From the findings of the study, the treatment group/pupils were continuously developing their information literacy skills through the library period programme by building their listening skills, writing skills, reading skills, communication skills, visual skills, note taking skills, location and access skills, planning skills, organisation skills, questioning skills and evaluation skills. This continuous development observed was reasonably different. The possible explanation for experimental group A's higher scores than control group B could be based on the library period programme given to them. This view agreed with a similar report by Abadina Media Resource Centre (1987), Town (2002), etc, that library period programme is a forum for developing the creative abilities lacking in many children. Information literacy is knowledge rather than simple skills which is achieved through education. This shows that those administered library period programme could possibly have higher level of information literacy than those not administered with library period programme. The implication is that the obtained result of difference in performance of subjects might be purely due to the effects of the treatments (administration of library period programme) since the pupils were subjected to the same experimental conditions.

Implications of the Study

The findings of the study have some implications for the educational policy makers, school administrators, school librarians, teachers and children, particularly in Enugu State, Nigeria in building information literacy skills of children in the following ways;

If lifelong learning is to be built in pupils, there is need for educational policy makers to include library periods in their policy and lay more emphasis on information literacy education. It is only when this happens that the aim of education in general will be attained.

Again, school administrators should allot time for the effective use of the curriculum/ programmes

developed and also have a permanent school librarian for this purpose so as to make maximum use of the period to teach this curriculum. This is because the school curriculum may not give pupils opportunities to use variety of library resources and beyond to expand their horizon of learning. If a school librarian is not allowed a period in each school to assist pupils in using this period creatively, there will be difficulty in creating a future generation who have learnt how to learn.

Furthermore, if the school librarians are to use this period effectively, there will be need to have a common standard programme that could serve as a guide and help teach children contents in the school curriculum. This will in turn fill the gap between school curriculum and information literacy education.

If teachers are to create more active and creative pupils, they will need to collaborate with the school librarian in this information literacy activity thereby giving the librarians chance to help build up children's information literacy skills with library period programme. This cannot be realised without allowing the school librarians their time when it is right and if children are taught these skills, learning will become more interesting to them since it is continuous and lifelong.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Library period curriculum is both effective and affective in pupils' learning. Pupils have exhibited great abilities to manage information from wide variety of resources. Through the use of the three vehicles: story hour, library instruction and project work, pupils develop their information literacy skills. Story hour certainly is a very powerful means of developing pupils' emotion, teaching them what they should know in a pleasant manner and re-emphasising what they already know. Projects also expose them to their wider environment and in an attempt, make them more conversant with people and things around them. The following recommendations are made.

- Educational policy makers stipulate the use of library period to develop children's information literacy skills in their policy.

- School administrators allot a library period programme in primary schools and also employ a full-time school librarian to make maximum use of this period with children in order to build their information literacy skills.

- Primary school teacher collaborates with school librarian in integrating the library period with the school curriculum in order to build pupils' information literacy skills.

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