CURRICULUM REFORMS AND IMPLEMENTATION: CONTRIBUTION OF SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA PROGRAMMES

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Abstract

The paper discussed the goals of education at non-tertiary level in Nigeria childhood, basic education, senior secondary, and technical and vocational levels. The curriculum for each level of education is also highlighted. The contribution of a virile school media programme to the effective implementation of the various curricula is also highlighted. The suggested media for instructional delivery in the recently published syllabuses by the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) are recommended as guide for resource collection development in schools.

Introduction

In the National Policy on Education (2004) there is provision for Childhood/ Pre Primary Education, Basic Education (Primary to Junior Secondary School) Senior Secondary Education SS1-3 and Technical and Vocational Education offered in post secondary institutions.

The goals of each level of education are also listed as follows:

Childhood/Pre-Primary Education

The Purpose of childhood/pre-primary education as stated in the policy are to:

i   effect a smooth transition from the home to the school
ii   prepare the child for the primary level of education;
iii provide adequate care and supervision for the children while their parents at work;
iv   inculcate social norms;
v   inculcate in the child the spirit of inquiry and creativity through the explosion of nature, the environment, art, music and playing with toys etc.

vi   develop a sense of cooperation and team-spirit

vii learn good habits, especially good health habits and

viii teach the rudiments of numbers, letters, colours, shapes, forms etc through play

Primary Education

The goals of primary education are to:

i   inculcate permanent literacy and numeracy, and ability to communicate effectively.

ii   lay a sound basis for scientific and reflection thinking

iii give citizenship education as a basis for effective participation in and contributions to the life of the society.

iv mould the character and develop sound attitude and morals in the child;

v   develop in the child the ability to adapt to the child's changing environment;

vi   give the child opportunity for developing manipulative skills that will enable the child function effectively in the society within the limits of the child's capacity;

vii provide the child with basic tools for further educational advancement, including preparation for trades and crafts of the locality.

Secondary Education (JSS 1-3, SSS1-3)

i   provide all primary school learners with the opportunity for education of a higher level, irrespective of sex, social status, religious or ethnic background;

ii   offer diversified curriculum to cater for the differences in talents, opportunities and future roles.

iii provide trained manpower in the applied science, technology and commerce at sub-professional grades.

iv develop and promote Nigerian languages, art and culture in the context of world's cultural heritage.

v   inspire students with a desire for self improvement and achievement of excellence.

vi   foster National unity with an emphasis on the common ties that unite us in our diversity;

vii   raise a generation of people who can think for themselves, respect the
      views and feelings of others, respect the dignity of labour, appreciate
      those values specified under our broad national goals and live as good
      citizens;
viii provide technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for
      agricultural, individual, commercial and economic development.

Technical and Vocational Education

The goals of technical and vocational education shall be to:
i   provide trained manpower in the allied sciences, technology and
      business particularly at craft, advanced craft and technical levels;
ii   provide the technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for
      agricultural commercial and economic development;
iii   give training and impart the necessary skills to individual who shall
      be self-reliant economically.

The School Curriculum

Since the introduction of western education in Nigeria, there has been
the school curriculum. The school curriculum consists of all the learning
which is planned and guided by the school whether it is carried out in
groups or individually, inside or outside the school (Kerr, 1968 quoted by
Orukotan 1996). A good curriculum should have the following basic
characteristics:
i   define objectives that grow out of the values held by a society or its
      representatives;
ii   learning experiences that are geared toward the realization of the
      expressed or implied objectives.
iii   periodic evaluation of the curriculum in terms of the objectives and
      the learning experiences, and constant readjustment of methods in
      the light of new experience results of experiments and research
      (Fafunwa 1974, quoted by Orukotan 1995).
      The school curriculum should pay attention to programme of studies
      i.e the school subjects programme of activities i.e experiences obtained
      through games, sports, school clubs and societies; and programme of
      guidance to ensure the effective physical, social and emotional
      development of the school child. An ideal curriculum should be so

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embracing as to cover all the learning experiences offered to the learner under the auspicious school. It should include the experiences from the class, library, school farm, excursion, clubs, football and athletics all of which contribute to the total effectiveness of any educative enterprise. Nigeria developed its first indigenous curriculum through the National Curriculum Conference held from 8th -12th September, 1969 under the auspices of the Federal Ministry of Education. The outcomes of this National Conference are significant and many including:

i   Production of a publication titled: *A Philosophy for Nigerian Education*
ii   Development of Primary, Secondary and Teacher's Colleges Curricula
iii Production of the *National Policy on Education* published in 1977 which recommended the 6-3-3-4 education system.

The Nigerian Education Research and Development Council (NERDC) has been responsible for the curriculum revision and innovation. The content of most subjects in the previous curriculum has been revised while new subjects have been added in the new curricula at the primary, junior secondary and senior secondary levels as well as technical and vocational colleges. The curricula for Lower Basic Education (Primary 1-3) Middle Basic Education (Primary 4-6) and Upper Basic Education (JSS 1-3) have been published for use in schools. According to the Executive Secretary of the NERDC, meeting of experts and several workshops organized between January and March 2006 produced the *9-years Basic Education Curriculum,* which would ensure continuity and flow of themes, topics and experiences from primary school to junior secondary school levels. The Basic Education curriculum, according to him, reflects depth, appropriateness, and interrelatedness of the curricula contents. Also emerging issues which covered the orientation, peace and dialogue, including human rights education, family life/HIV and AIDS education, entrepreneurial skills etc., were infused into the relevant contents of the new 9-year Basic Education Curriculum.

The National Policy on Education prescribes the following courses for the various levels of educations below the tertiary level to meet the goals of education at that particular level.

Primary School

The curriculum for primary school include:

i Language

   a Language of the environment   b English

   c French   d Arabic

ii Mathematics

iii Science

iv Physical and Health Educatiion

v Agriculture/Home Economics

vi Social Studies and Citizenship Education

vii Cultural and Creative Arts (Drawing, Handicraft, Music and Cultural Activities)

viii Computer Education.

Junior Secondary School

The curriculum at this level is both pre-vocational and academic consisting of core subjects and pre-vocational and non-prevocational electives.

A Core Subjects

i. English   ii French

iii Mathematics   iv Language of the environment

v One major language other than that of the environment*

vi Integrated Science vii Social Studies and Citizenship Education

viii Introductory Technology

B Pre-Vocational Elections

i Agriculture   ii Business Studies

ii Home Economics   iii Local Crafts

v Computer Education   vi Fine Arts

vii Music

C Non-Prevocational Electives

i Religious Knowledge

ii Physical and Health Education

iii Arabic

    Every student shall offer a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 13 subjects: all the core subjects and at least one subject each from the pre-vocational and non-prevocational electives.

Senior Secondary School

A   Core Subject

i   English Language   ii   Mathematics

iii   A major Nigerian Language

iv   One of Biology, Chemistry, Physics or Health Science

v   One of Literature-in-English, History, Geography and Religious Studies

vi   A vocational Subject

B   (i)   Vocational Electives

Agriculture, Applied electricity, Auto-Mechanics, Book-keeping and Accounting, Building Construction, Commerce, Computer Education, Electronics, Clothing and Textiles, Food and Nutrition, Home Management, Metal Work, Technical Drawing, Woodwork, Shorthand, Typewriting, Fine Art and Music

(ii) Non-Vocational Electives:

Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Further Mathematics, French, Health Education, Physical Education, Literature-in-English, History, Geography, Bible Knowledge, Islamic Studies, Arabic, Government, Economics and Any Nigerian Language that has orthography and literature etc.

Every student shall take all the six (6) core subjects and a minimum of one and a maximum of two (2) from the list of electives in vocational and non-vocational to give a minimum of seven (7) and maximum of eight (8) subjects.

Technical and Vocational Education

The courses at this level are wide. They include but not limited to:

i	Mechanical Trades	ii	Computer Craft Practice
iii	Electrical Engineering Trades	iv	Building Trades
v	Wood Trades	vi	Hospitality
vii	Textile Trades	viii	Printing Trades
ix	Beauty Culture Trades	x	Business Trades
xi	Leather Goods Manufacturing and others.		

School Library Media Programmes and Curriculum Implementation

To guide the provision of school library service, the International Federation of Library Association and Institutions (IFLA, 2000) listed in its manifesto the following services for the school libraries for the effective implementation of the curriculum.

- ❖ Supporting and enhancing educational goals as outlined in the school's mission and curriculum.

- ❖ Developing and sustaining in children the habit and enjoyment of reading and learning, and the use of libraries throughout their lives.

- ❖ Offering opportunities for experiences in creating and using information for knowledge, understanding imagination and enjoyment.

- ❖ Supporting all students in learning and practicing skills for evaluating and using information, regardless of form, format or medium, including sensitivity to the modes of communication within the community.

- ❖ Providing access to local, regional, national and global resources and opportunity that expose learners to diverse ideas, experiences and opinions;

- ❖ Organizing activities that encourage cultural and social awareness and sensitivity to the modes of communication within the community.

- ❖ Providing access to local, regional, national and global resources and opportunities that expose learners to diverse ideas, experiences and opinions;

- ❖ Organizing activities that encourage cultural and social awareness and sensitivity;

- ❖ Working with students, teachers, administrators and parents to achieve the mission of the school;

- ❖ Proclaiming the concept that intellectual freedom and access to information are essential to effective and responsible citizenship and participation in a democracy;

- ❖ Promoting reading and the resources and services of the school library to the whole school community and beyond.

Specific Services to be Provided by School Library Media Centre

A **Development of Media Resource Collection:**

The school library media centre should provide an organized collection of media resources relevant to the curricula contents of the school. The development of the collection should be consistent working in collaboration with the subject teachers. The varieties of media resources could be acquired through purchase, gifts and exchange or local production. To facilitate this the School Library Media Specialist (school librarian) should be working closely with the teachers to plan the scheme of work and assignments to give the pupils. This will make the school library media specialist keep abreast of the developments in the various curricula and anticipate their resource needs ahead of the time production is relevant as no school library media centre could ever have enough budgetary allocation to purchase all learning resources it needs even when they are available in the market. Hence efforts should be made to generate some learning resources locally using the available skills and facilitate to supplement the available resources. The curriculum per subject as published by the NERDC has identified and listed the learning resources needed to teach each topic. The list could guide in learning resource development in the school library media centre. The collection should be organized using the conventional library tools to catalogue and classified them. The publication: *Approach to organizing Learning resources in School Library Media Centre and other Libraries, published by the Association is recommended for use in schools and colleges.*

B **Teaching Information Literacy Skills:**

Information literary skills (library use skills) have to be taught both teachers and pupils following a well structured programme to promote effective and independent use of the library resources in the teaching and learning process.

The effective use of books and the non-book media is not a skill which comes naturally, it has to be learnt otherwise information can be missed or misunderstood, and much time can be wasted in searching for information. The skills can be divided into study skills and library skills.

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(i) Study Skills:
The pupils and other library users ought to know:
(a) how to use a book to find a particular piece of information rather than reading it from beginning to the end.
(b) how to take notes rather than copying out every word;
(c) how to compare and combine information from more than one source- one of the most important skills a school can teach.
(d) how to use the non-book media being given the appropriate hardware to extract information on subject of study including the computer and the electronic data bases.
(e) the peculiarity in the format of each information medium and their effective use in the education process
(f) ·. writing research reports following the correct format.

(ii) Library Skills
These skills are intended to make the pupils capable of using a well organized library for finding information. The pupils need to know.
(a) the purpose or nature of the library
(b) its general organization
(c) the basic idea of the classified arrangement of library collection
(d) how to use the catalogue (manual or OPAC) to trace items so as to find out what books and other items are in existence.
(e) How to use bibliographical materials and sources- hardcopy, software and online electronic sources-to find out what print and non-print media are in existence in any subject area.
(f) How to use the e-library
(g) The library culture of taking proper care of library books and other media consulted or borrowed for use.
The skills have been developed into a set of syllabuses for Information Literacy Skills in Nigerian Schools and Teachers' Colleges.

C Working with Teachers:
The School Library Media Specialist is a teaching staff in the school in addition to managing the school library media centre, teaches the basic library use skills to the pupils and teachers. He/She also plan the scheme of work with the teachers to avoid clash of interest in the use of library support resources. So also is the plan of class assignments

for the pupils. This has two advantages for the centre for effective instructional support. The school library media centre will be able to update its collection to reflect the curricula needs of the subjects resource-wise and also be of assistance to the pupils in carryout their assignment using the library resources.

As a member of the teaching staff the school library media specialist, will be attending staff meetings where issues related to the status of the school library media centre and its effective use will be discussed.

D Mounting Exhibitions to Support On-going School Programme
The school library media centre will enrich students experiences in the outside classroom programme of the school such as games, sports, football, literary and debating activities, students week (agriculture, library, health etc). the library will make exhibitions on coming programme in the varying media to sensitize the students for active participation, and provide the necessary information to keep abreast of developments, on the particular programme. The exhibition can also serve the purpose of general information of the school population. Such intervention of the school library media centre will make pupils' experiences more permanent and learning effective. An exhibition of African or Nigerian authors can make a child develop interest in writing and nurture this interest to authorship of intellectual works in the future. An exhibition of celebrated sports men and women nationally or internationally can make a child develop interest in sports and nurture it to a level of expertise. A library exhibition during a library week can improve a child's reading culture through constant library use.

Conclusion
The curricula reforms in the nation's schools call for the employment of multi-media resources in the process of teaching and learning. The need for multi-media resources has underscored the availability of virile school media centres in Nigerian School Library Media Specialists (school librarians) in the school setting for effective implementation of the curricula reforms in the schools.

Recommendations:

To create the conducive learning environment envisaged by the curricula planners, the following are necessary.   .

i   **Adequate funding:** The schools should be adequately funded to have a well stocked library media centre where the needed teaching resource materials could be acquired, organized and made available for use of teachers and students.

ii **Employment of Qualified School Library Media Specialist in School:** As teachers are employed, each school should have at least one qualified school library media specialist on the staff to develop the school library media programme. The media specialist will develop the activities earlier mentioned to support effective curriculum delivery in the school. The services of volunteers and library assistants should be hired to assist the school library media specialist in his functions.

iii **Create a Library Period on the Time Table:** A library period should be created on the school time table during which the information literacy skills (basic library use skills) could be taught the pupils. The skills will be reinforce when they come to use the library on their own to complete class assignments or read for information pleasure or other purpose. The teacher can work in collaboration with the school library media specialist to impart the skills to he students/pupils. Teacher's intervention is important in developing pupil's library use/ reading culture. The library use education syllabuses developed by the Abadina Media Resource Centre, University of Ibadand will provide a useful guide as to what library use skills to teach and the methods to adopt during the library period.

The school media centre as an integral part of the school system contributes immensely to the effective implementation of the school curriculum and should be accorded the status by all proprietors of schools. the centre should be open for use beyond the school hours and on weekends in schools that operate the boarding system to provide opportunity for students' independent use of the resource collection in pursuant of their studies. Such independent use of the centre's collection will reinforce the specific information literacy skills taught during the library periods

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