

**ASSESSMENT OF LIBRARY SERVICES AVAILABILITY IN  
SUPPORT OF NATIONAL POLICY ON EDUCATION  
IN MINNA, NIGERIA.**

**By**

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**Abstract:**

*The paper examined library services availability in support of the national policy on education in Minna, Nigeria. The research design was survey. The researcher designed a self-constructed questionnaire tagged library services to children questionnaire (LSTCQ) which after thorough validation were distributed to nursery and primary schools in Minna. The information that were got from the distributed copies of the questionnaire were presented and analyzed. The result of the research indicated the following among others: that provision of libraries in nursery/ primary schools in Minna is at very low ebb. Also, children resources are seriously neglected in Minna metropolis, especially in Minna east while that of Bosso is a bit fair. The researcher recommended the following among others: that the government at all levels should henceforth make the provision of library a pre-condition for the establishment of nursery and primary schools by various proprietors. Moreover, as a way of enforcing the national policy on education on the establishment of library in nursery and primary schools, the government at all levels should give an ultimatum of probably between two to three years for both public and private schools without libraries to either get libraries or be closed down.*

**Introduction:**

Library in any society, organization or community is akin to a heart in any living organism. As a living organism without a heart becomes lifeless, so is a society without a library. As all major metabolic activities in a living organism are being centrally co-ordinated from the heart, so will a society or organization without a library experience terrible confusion, chaos and retrogression. This is because library according to Dilli (1997) is the repository of human knowledge.

Library services for children come under the following: Public/ community libraries, school libraries and libraries organized by private individuals. The children constitute an integral part of the disadvantaged group that on most occasions cannot choose the best and appropriate library services for themselves (Library service for the disadvantaged, 1996). Oser (2006) alluded to the above assertion that babies do not have the ability to drive themselves to the library or to fill out a library card application and must compulsorily rely on their parents' willingness to get them through the library programs. Encyclopaedia of Library and Information Science (1970) and Library Services for the Disadvantaged (1996) however, affirmed that the philosophy underpinning children's services is for these toddlers to have access to the full range of library materials and services that are available to any other library customer (patron). This is because, children are the best natural resources and the hope of any nation. Thus, any productive input on them is tantamount to a huge national investment and vice versa.

Library services for children can be described as all activities that are geared towards making learning seamless with living, play and family life. In a similar vein, all activities that are geared towards charming, stimulating and fascinating the interest and love of children in reading; making reading culture part and parcel of their lives; and appreciating the world around them under the most conducive environment; can be described as library services for children. Library services

for children should be provided in a sane, safe and most conducive atmosphere. It should be given in an atmosphere where the children would experience full comfort and feel completely at home. Pictorial aids, toys and other play materials should be abundantly provided for them. Learning must be relevant, concrete and should match their age in this formative stage of their development. Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science (1970) and Fayose (2000 and 2003) while alluding to the importance of aesthetics in the environment where library services would be provided for children contended that the library environment must look attractive and inviting so that children can be lured to it. Fayose argued further that the atmosphere must not look juvenile or childish; hence children will resent such an environment. An environment that will make them feel matured and responsible is preferred. Carpeting can be provided to reduce noise and children can lie on it especially when listening to stories or looking at pictures. Picture of local and universal appeal should be hanged on the walls. Adequate furniture and enough cross ventilation and an airy atmosphere are indispensable too.

Encyclopaedia of Library and Information Science (1970) amplified the various ways and methods of presenting library services to children in a more lively, fascinating, charming and captivating way. The ways amongst others, include: the story- hour, dramatization, group discussion and reading aloud which can be presented through different media. Fayose (2003) and Oser (2006) however, observed a dearth of resources and materials in the provision of library services for babies and toddlers.

Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2006) defined a goal as something that one hopes to achieve or attain. The national policy on education (2004) enunciated the following amongst other things as the goals of education at both pre-primary and primary levels of education in Nigeria. They include:

- i. effecting a smooth transition from the home to the school

- ii. providing adequate care and supervision for the children while their parents are at work (on the farms, in the markets, offices etc);
- iii. preparing the child for the primary level of education
- iv. inculcating social norms;
- v. inculcating in the child the spirit of inquiry and creativity through the exploration of nature, the environment, art, music, playing with toys, etc;
- vi. developing a sense of co-operation and team spirit;
- vii. learning good habits especially good health habits;
- viii. teach the rudiments of numbers, letters, colours, shapes, forms, etc through play;
- ix. inculcating permanent literacy and numeracy and ability to communicate effectively;
- x. moulding the character and developing sound attitude and morals in the child;
- xi. developing in the child the ability to adapt to the child's changing environment;
- xii. giving the child opportunities for developing manipulative skills that will enable the child function effectively in the society within, the limits of the child's capacity;

The main method of teaching at this level especially at the pre-primary is through play; and the curriculum of the teacher education is oriented to achieve this (National Policy on Education (2004). National Teachers' Institute (2006)

The National Policy on Education (2004) gave a portrait of the library as the heart of the education enterprise and made it mandatory for proprietors of schools to provide functional libraries and qualified librarians and library assistants in all their educational institutions in accordance with the established standards. The policy further emphasized the indispensable and prominent role of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in advancing knowledge

and skills necessary for effective functioning in the modern world. Hence, there is urgent need to integrate it into education in Nigeria as a major and indispensable medium of instruction. Therefore, the library services that are provided for the children in Minna will be juxtaposed with the National Policy on Education for children with a view of ascertaining the extent to which the former are helping to accomplish the latter. The choice of Minna for a study like this is not accidental but reasonable. Minna is the capital of Niger state. Also, it is blessed with many and enough pre-primary and primary schools. Its proximity to Abuja, the Nations captial city is very glaring.

Finally, it is hoped that whatever information is got in Minna can be safely generalized as the possible re-occurring decimal in other parts of Nigeria. Schools in the three local governments in Minna metropolis were selected. They include Minna west, Minna east and Bosso.

**Statement of the Problem:**

Inspite, of the huge and gigantic investment in library services by government and private establishments, the performance of the pupils in line with the educational goals is nothing to write home about. Cases of falling standard of education are rampant. Depreciating and diminishing moral standard are rife too. Does it mean that the government or proprietors of schools have not done enough in terms of provision of library services for children? What effort has been spared which has not been expended in terms of provision of quality, relevant and current materials for children librarianship?

**Data collection:** The researcher designed a questionnaire tagged Library Services to children questionnaire (LSTCQ) which were distributed to primary schools in the three local governments of Minna. To enhance the validity of the instrument, and to ensure that the instrument measures what it intended to measure, it was given to experienced colleagues

for proper scrutiny and moderation. The study assumed that:

- \* there are no libraries in most nursery and primary schools
- \* children resources are neglected
- \* the available children resources are at variance with the National Policy on Education
- \* the methods of imparting knowledge are at variance with the National Policy on Education.

The researcher asked the following research questions

1. To what degree are libraries provided in most nursery and primary schools?
2. To what level are children resources neglected? .
3. To what level can it be ascertained that the children resources are at variance with the National Policy on Education?
4. To what degree can it be determined that the methods of imparting knowledge are at variance with the National Policy on Education?

The data presented and analyzed were extracts from the information given in the copies of the returned questionnaire

**Data Presentation:**

The data were presented and analyzed using simple descriptive statistical tools.

**Table 1: List of Primary Schools in Minna West.**

<b>Name of school</b>	<b>Year of establishment</b>	<b>Library presence</b>
1. Umaru Audi memorial primary school, Minna	1958	Nil
2. Tunga primary school. Minna	1986	Nil
3. Gwan Gwapi primary school, Minna	1978	Found
4. Barkinsale primary school	1978	Found
5. Limawa model school	1976	Nil

<b>Name of school</b>	<b>Year of establishment</b>	<b>Library presence</b>
6. 1,2,3 primary school, Minna	2001	Nil
7. Dr Umaru Farouk primary School, Minna	1938	Nil
8. Kuyanbana primary school, Minna	1947	Nil
9. Waziri primary school, Minna	1939	Nil
10. Marafa primary school, Minna	1929	Nil
11. Dutsen kura primary school	1988	Nil
12. Anguwa zaka primary school	1976	Nil
13. Nikangbe primary school	2000	Nil
14. Kwasau primary school	2000	Nil
15. Kwarkwata primary school	1975	Nil
16. Dibo UBE	2002	Nil
17. Barkinsale nomadic primary school	2001	Nil
18. Gidan alura nomadic primary school	2001	Nil
19. Nikangbe nomadic primary school	1998	Nil
20. Makama primary school, Minna	1947	Nil

From table 1, out of the 20 primary schools that were visited in Minna West local government, only two (10 percent ) of the 20 schools have what can be described as library presence. One begins to wonder what the remaining 18 schools ( 90 percent ) substitute for library .It is disheartening to note that schools like Umaru Audi memorial primary school, Dr Umaru

Farouk primary school and Makama primary school which were established in the last century do not have what can be described as library presence in this age of information explosion. If children are not exposed to the use of library and are not encouraged to have a passionate love for information resources in their formative age, where learning is fast and tends to be permanent, when again in their lives will they be exposed to such opportunities?

**Table 2: Presence of Children Resources in Minna West Schools.**

Name of school	Resources Available							
	Non-fiction	periodicals	comics	Reference books	Fiction other creative works	AV in Film	Charts posters & other Visual	Toys and other Play Material
1. Tunga	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Avail
2. Gwang	Nil	Nil	Nil		Nil	Nil	Avail	Nil
3. Barkissal	Nil	Nil	Nil		Nil	Nil	Avail	Avail
4. Limawa	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Avail
5. 1,2,3	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Avail
6. Dr umaru	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Nil	Avail	Avail
7. Kuyanbana	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Nil	Avail	Avail
8. Marafa	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Nil
9. Dutsen	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Nil	Avail	Avail
10. Anguwa	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Nil
11. Kwarkwata	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Nil
12. Dibo UBE	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Avail
13. Barkinsale	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Avail
14. Gidan	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Nil
15. Nikangbe	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Nil

It is crystal clear from table 2 that 15 schools (75 percent) in Minna West have what can be described as children resources. It should be noted as well that out of the 8 children resources that were listed in table 2, only three schools (20 percent) have three (37.5 percent) out of the eight listed resources. The



remaining 12 schools (80 percent) have either one or two of the listed children resources

**Table 3: Methods of Imparting Knowledge in Minna West Schools.**

Name of	Play Method	Story telling	Show ing Pictures	Relay ing on disc	Recit ing poem	Direct teaching	Book talk	Book mob. ile Serv. ice	Creat ive drama	Film Show	ICTs
1.Tunga	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
2.Gwang	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
3.Barkinsale	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
4.Limawa	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
5.1,2,3	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
6.Dr Umaru	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
7.Kuyanabana	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
8.Marafa	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
9Dutse	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
10.Anguwa	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
11Nikagbe	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
12.Kwasau	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
13.Kwarkwata	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
14.Dibo	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
15.Barkan	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
16.Gidan	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
17.Nikan	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No

In table 3, 17schools (85 percent) use one method or the other in imparting knowledge to the children in minna west schools. The remaining three (3) schools are not imparting knowledge through any of the 11 methods that are listed in the table. It is not clear the type of methods or media of instruction that are being used by the affected schools. Moreover , none of the 17 schools relay information on the disc neither do they engage in book mobile services nor use ICT in imparting knowledge to the children. Only 8(47.1 percent ) schools use play methods. This is not too good .The essence of nursery and primary school

education is to ensure that education is seamless to normal life. The normal life of children is playing and any educational method of instruction that does not take cognizance of playing as a way of winning the hearts of children is most likely to record little or no success at all. Moreover, the aim of nursery/primary education is to ensure a smooth transition from home to school (National Policy on Education, 2004). For children to feel at home in school and to see school as their second home they must be encouraged to come to school in a friendly, joyful, playful and attractive manner (Babalola, 2007).

Story telling is another powerful method by which the attention of children can be diverted to school life at this stage of their life. In fact when children listen to stories, they tend to pay rapt attention and if possible to devote the whole of their lives to it. In the process of telling stories, restive children are likely to sleep off. However, only 11 schools (64.7 percent) use story telling method. In addition, since most learning at this stage of life takes place by what children see; showing of pictures, display of posters, use of audiovisual (AV) etc ought to take topmost priority in these schools. Thirteen schools (76.5 percent) use pictorial aids.

In this age of information explosion where Information and communication technologies (ICTs) has been accepted as a proficient, a second to none and a corrective formula in the impartation of knowledge; it is not too pleasing to note that none of the schools make use of ICT. If the development programme of "one laptop per child" vision of the United Nation is to be effective in Nigeria, one begins to wonder how the children who are not exposed to ICT at all would cope.

**Table 4: List of Primary Schools in Minna East.**

<b>Name of School</b>	<b>Year established</b>	<b>Library Presence</b>
1. Angwan Kaje primary school, Minna	1984	Nil
2. Madaki primary school, Minna	1946	Nil
3. Chiroma primary school, Minna	1964	Nil
4. IBB primary school, Minna	1936	Found
5. Niger Baptist primary school, Minna	1911	Found
6. Nakariya comprehensive nursery and primary school, Minna	1992	Nil
7. Total child nur/prim top med Tunga	2001	Nil
8. Crown International Nur & Prim, Maitumbi	1989	Nil
9. Goldmath Nur/Prim schl, Agwan Kaje	1999	Nil
10. OBEM Nur/prim schl, Timber shed	1994	Found
11. St.Andrews nur/prim schl, Sabogari	1952	Nil
12. Hudal islam Angwan daji	1990	Nil
13. Hope Nur/Prim schl, Minna	2000	Nil
14. Ahmadu bahago Islamic institution bye-pass	1995	Nil
15. Nural islam (MSMS) Nur/prim Schl, Kuta Rd	1994	Found
16. Madrasatul hayatul Islamic school	1990	Nil

In table 4, four ( 25 percent ) out of the 16 schools in Minna East have what can be described as library presence. It is pathetic to note that Madaki primary school and Chiroma primary school that were established in 1946 and 1964

respectively have nothing that depicts a library. In this information age, when we now talk of “virtual” “Wallless” and “paperless” library, schools that do not have ordinary structure that is akin to physical library now, how will they be able to cope in the unfolding information scenario of the World Wide Web (www).

**Table 5: Presence of Children Resources in Minna East Schools.**

Resources available								
Name of School	Non Fiction	Periodicals	comics	Reference books	Fiction and other material	AV in film visual	Charts, poster & other material	Toys & other play
1. IBB	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Nil	Nil	Nil
2. Niger	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Avail	Nil	Nil
3. OBEM	Avail	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Avail	Nil	Nil
4. Nurul	Avail	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

In table 5, it is obvious that out of the 16 schools that were listed in table 4, only four (25 percent) have what can be regarded as children resources. Out of the eight children resources that are listed in table 5, IBB primary school and Nura Islam (MSMS) Nursery/Primary School each have just one (12.5 percent) of the resources. Niger Baptist Primary School has two (25 percent) while OBEM Nursery/Primary School has three (37.5 percent) of the resources. It should be stated that the children resources in these four schools are grossly inadequate in terms of quantity talkless of quality.

**Table 6: Methods of imparting knowledge in Minna East Schools.**

Name of School	Methods										
	Play Method	Story telling	show ing picture	Relay ing on	Reci ting poen	Direct teach ing	Book talk	Book mob service	Creat ive drama	Film show	ICTs
1. Niger	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
2. OBEM	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
3. Nurul	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No

In table 6, Only three (18.8 percent ) of the 16 schools that were listed in table 4 impart knowledge through one method or the other . Both Niger Baptist School and Nural Islam (MSMS) Nursery/Primary School impart knowledge through just one method (9.1 percent) out of the 11 methods or means of imparting knowledge that are listed in table 6, OBEM, Nursery/Primary School, however, impart knowledge through two (18.2 percent) out of the 11 listed methods. One begins to wonder the mode of impartation of knowledge in the remaining 13(81.3 percent) schools, If they are not using any of the 11 methods that are listed in table 6. It is also important to emphasise that the other three schools that are using one or two methods in imparting knowledge are under utilizing the various media of instruction to children. It should be noted that the 11 methods that are listed in table 6 are not exhaustive, neither is it an absolute list. But, if out of the 11 methods, a school is employing just one medium or two media of instruction, it is rather too poor, in view of the gamut of opportunities and methodologies of imparting knowledge to toddlers and youngsters in this information age.

**Table 7: List of Primary Schools in Bosso.**

<b>Name of school</b>	<b>Year of Establishment</b>	<b>Library presence</b>
1. Best way N/P school	1999	Nil
2. Tundun Fulani Primary School	1978	Nil
3. Topaz International School	2004	Found
4. Zarumai Model School	1976	Found
5. Ferma school	1995	Nil
6. Tundun Fulani Gaba, UBE Pry Sch	2000	Found
7. Solid Foundation	1988	Found
8. Quality Nur/Pry Schl	1988	Found
9. University Staff School	1987	Found
10. Abu Turab Islamic Schl	1994	Found
11. Wasika Nur/Pry Schl	1985	Nil
12. Unity Nur/Pry Schl	1989	Nil
13. Dr Yahaya Bawa Pry Schl	1950	Nil
14. Hasha Nur/Pry Schl	1996	Found
15. Kinkin Nur/Pry schl	2001	Nil

In table 7, Eight( 53.3 percent ) of the 15 schools that are listed have structure that can be described as library presence. It is strange to see that a school like Dr yahaya Bawa Primary School that was established more than five decades ago does not have what can go by the name library.

**Table 8: Presence of Children Resources in Bosso Schools**

<b>Name of School</b>	<b>Non fiction</b>	<b>Periodicals</b>	<b>comics</b>	<b>Reference book</b>	<b>Fict and other creative work</b>	<b>AV in film</b>	<b>Chart poster Other visual</b>	<b>Toy &amp; other Play material</b>
1. Best way	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Nil
2. Topaz	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail
3. Fema	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail
4. Tudn F.UBE	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Nil
5. Solid Fou	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail
6. Quality	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail
7. University	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail
8. Abu Turab	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Avail	Nil	Avail	Avail
9. Dr Yahaya	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Nil
10. Hasha	Avail	Nil	Avail	Avail	Avail	Nil	Avail	Nil
11. Kinkin	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Avail

In table 8, 11 schools (73.3 percent) of the 15 schools have one form of children resources or the other .It is very encouraging to note that 5 schools (45.5 percent) of the 11 schools have all the eight children resources that are listed in table 8. The schools are Topaz, Ferma, Solid Foundation, Quality and University Staff School. Bestway Nursery/Primary school, Tundun Fulani Gaba, UBE Primary School and Dr Yahaya Bawa Primary School each have just one (12.5 percent) of the eight children resources that are listed. This is grossly inadequate in quantitative terms

**Table 9: Methods of Imparting Knowledge in Bosso Schools**

Name of	Method										
	Play Meth od	Story tell- ing	show ing pict-	Relay ing on disk	Rc. iting poem	Dire ct te	Book talk ach	Book mobi le serv ice	Crea rive dra ma	Film show	ICTs
1. Best way	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
2. Topaz	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
3. Zarumai	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
4. Fema	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No
5. Tudn F.UBE	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
6. Solid Fou	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
7. Quality	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
8. University	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
9. Abu Turab	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
10. Unity	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
11. Dr Yahaya	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
12. Hasha	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
13. Kinkin	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No

In table 9. 13 schools (86.7 percent) use different media in imparting knowledge to the children .University Staff school uses all the methods that are listed and comes first with percentage score of 100. This is very heartening.

Quality Nusery /Primary School uses 10 (90.9 percent) of the 11 listed methods. Both Best Way Nursery /Primary and Dr Yahaya Bawa Primary School use only three (27.3 percent) of the 11 methods . This is rather too poor. All other schools are averagely okay in their media of instruction and knowledge impartation.

**Discussion of Findings:**

From the data presented and analyzed, the following discussion and point of reasoning are justifiable.

It is not only absurd but disheartening too to note that in this age of information revolution in which the use of information communication technologies (ICT) in the



dissemination of messages is ubiquitous, only one school (1.96%) out of the total 51 (15+16+20=51) nursery/ primary schools that were served with copies of the questionnaire avails itself of the ample opportunities of the electronic age. The question then is this, when will the remaining 50 schools catch up with the electronic revolution that has pervaded almost every sector of this modern age? At the age when United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has embarked on the project of one laptop per child in developing countries, such schools that are not making use of ICT at all have a great and, arduous task before them; if they will not be left behind completely in the wave of electronic revolution that is presently driving the whole world. (The Librarian, 2006). Moreover, those 50 schools without ICT equipment are not in any way helping to fulfill the National Policy on Education in Nigeria which has identified the indispensable role of ICT in the dissemination of instruction in all tiers of education. If those 50 schools and all elementary schools in the same category in Nigeria will not be dropped behind in the pace of development in the emerging electronic information age; then urgent, radical and practical steps should be taken to pre-empt reversion to dark age and retrogression in the educational sectors especially at this formative stage of life of the children who are the potential leaders of tomorrow.

Out of the 51 nursery/primary schools in Minna that returned completed questionnaire only 11 (21.6%) have structures that can stand in place of libraries. This confirms the findings of Babalola in 2007. One begins to wonder what the remaining 40 schools will do to fulfill the condition for the establishment of standard libraries as enunciated in the National Policy on Education. The National Policy on Education unequivocally pictured the library as the heart of the education enterprise and consequently mandated proprietors of schools to provide standard and functional libraries. It is not out of place too to ask whether the schools that have libraries are of standard. Are the libraries up to date in terms of services being

rendered and the materials that are available in the libraries? It is regrettable to see schools that have been established since 1929, 1939, 1947, 1950 etc to still remain without a library whether functional or not after long decades of their establishment (Table 1, 4 & 7). A situation where the classroom of a teacher or the office of the headteacher is designated as a library simply because of some parochial collections is not only unacceptable but is also anti-progressive and retrogressive. In schools where pupils are made to have the library services under trees, such schools are quite far away from the established library standard as enunciated in the National Policy on Education. Mabawonku (1988) affirmed this dearth of infrastructural facilities in many of the Nigerian elementary and secondary schools. It should be added further that the schools that are without libraries in Nigeria will find it difficult to ensure the smooth transition of children from home to school especially when their parents are at work as enunciated in the National Policy on Education. For example, when babies and toddlers are made to carry books at their formative age, they tend to forget themselves in the library because of the deep love that they have cultivated for reading.

In the three local governments of Minna that were covered in this study it is obvious that lack of most of the children resources is rife. While the situation is the same in Bosso local government, it is however fair compared with the remaining local governments. How will it be possible to inculcate social norms into the children as enunciated in the National Policy on Education when the resources are not available? It is not possible either to inculcate the spirit of inquiry and creativity through the exploration of nature when there are nothing for the children to see, touch, observe, visualize etc. this is because children learn more through concrete and practical means at this stage of their lives. To teach children good health habit, rudiments of colours, letters, shapes etc. through play-way method will be an impossible task where there are no fascinating, captivating and inviting

posters in their environment that are pointing toward this. Since the National Policy on Education has described education as an instrument “par excellence” for effecting national development, if Nigeria is going to become a just and egalitarian society and a land full of bright opportunities for all citizens as stated in the document, the provision of qualitative, virile, educative, beautiful, inviting and fascinating materials and environment for children at this stage of their lives is a right step in the right direction.

**Conclusion:**

From the foregoing discussion, it is safe to conclude as follows:

1. The provision of libraries in both nursery and primary schools in Minna metropolis is at a very low ebb.
2. Children resources are seriously neglected in Minna metropolis, the situation is worst in Minna East while that of Bosso is a bit fair
3. The available children resources in most of these nursery and primary schools in Minna are nothing to write home about talkless of juxtapositioning it with the provision that are enunciated in the National Policy on Education.
4. Finally, the methods of imparting knowledge at this elementary level of education in most schools in Minna are anti-thetical and at variance with the National Policy on Education. The methods used are not child-friendly, productive, teacher-centered and authoritarian in nature.

**Recommendations:**

In view of the foregoing discussion, the following recommendations are made:

1. The government in all tiers should henceforth make the provision of library a pre-condition for the establishment of nursery and primary schools by various proprietors. Such libraries should be functional with librarians and library

assistants as enunciated in the National Policy on Education.

2. As a way of enforcing the National Policy on Education on the establishment of library in nursery and primary schools, the government in all tiers should give an ultimatum of between two to three years for both public and private schools without libraries to either get libraries or be closed down. This will force many schools to have libraries. In fact, the Parents Teachers Association of the affected schools can assist in the position of libraries.
3. The present effort by the Education Trust Fund (ETF) in providing library building in most elementary schools is highly commendable. More of this good gesture should be extended to nursery and primary school within and outside the cities of Nigeria. This will go a long way to bridge the gap between the pupils that go to school in cities and those that go to school in rural areas of Nigeria.
4. As a matter of policy, an intensive preservation and conservation programme of all the available children resources in all elementary schools in Nigeria should be developed. The main problem in Nigeria is lack of maintenance culture. If the meagre children resources that are found in the elementary schools can be preserved, the nation is already building a befitting heritage of good artifacts for the future generation. Hence, the available children resources should be stored and conserved under the best atmospheric condition devoid of both natural and artificial disaster.
5. The Non-Governmental Organization (NGO), the philanthropic groups and all lovers of children should be called upon to generously donate current, up-to-date, adequate, informative, and relevant print and non-print materials to nursery and primary schools across the country. Up to date computer systems with all associated devices can be generously donated too. This will help the

babies and toddlers in our schools to meet up with the challenges of the electronically-oriented information age in which we are living.

6. It is strongly recommended that further researches should be carried out on children librarianship with a view to identifying the complex problems of the babies and toddlers and thereby proffering an adequate and appropriate solution to meeting them at their points of needs. This will make the work of children librarian a bit lighter, easier and less cumbersome.

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