

# The Justification for the Inclusion of ‘Library Education’ in Nigeria Secondary School Curriculum

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**Abstract** The paper attempts to establish and posit justification for the inclusion of Library Education as a subject in Nigeria secondary school curriculum. Library is a power house of Education and should be seen as a compliment and an adjunct to schooling. It aids teaching and learning process and even reading. According to American Library Association, reading is a foundational skill for 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Learners, ‘guiding learners to become engaged and effective users of ideas and information and to appreciate literature requires that they develop as strategic readers who can compare, analyse, and evaluate text in both print and digital formats, it observes. The research adopted expository and analytical methodology. The expository character will expose some basic elements of Library Education which can be taught in secondary schools to increase the reading and learning ability of pupils and usefulness of library. The paper points some branches of library which are necessary and essential to form the foundational basic and process of librarianship for secondary school students. The paper argues that the teaching of Library Education will help in equipping students with an effective way of using the library and what librarianship entails. Furthermore, the problem of reading will be solved and there will be the establishment of reading club. In addition, the paper establishes that if library education is taught in secondary schools, it will provide job opportunities for some library officers and librarian in the school library. Finally, the study of library education will also assist in other subject. That is, it will help the students to develop reading and studying skills.

**Keywords** Justification, Inclusion, Library Education, Secondary School, Curriculum

## 1. Introduction

The report of the committee approved by the Federal Government came out early in 1981 as a new White Paper entitled National Policy on Education (Revised). With it twenty-five years of operation, the 6-3-3-4 system is on a better scale of assessment as its credits and shortcomings are evident for everyone to evaluate. Apart from the Introduction of the national policy on Education, there is a 49 page document consisting of thirteen sections.

Our concern here bothers on the insufficiency of the present secondary schools’ curriculum in bringing about the much-desired objectives and not the inadequacies of the policy guiding the operation 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 for once been included in secondary schools’ curriculum in the history of Nigeria Education. In order to pursue this thesis to a logical conclusion, some fundamentals

questions may be asked: What is library? What is curriculum? What are aims and objectives of secondary school education as seen in the revised National Education Policy? Why is there a need for library education at the secondary school level? At what level of the school curriculum do we offer Library Education? Will it be taught as a school-based subject or in combination of existing relevant school subject? What are the library concepts to offer at this level of education? What aspects of library education are to be included in secondary school curriculum? These questions and related one will serve as our guide in this paper.

## 2. Objectives of the Study

This study aims to critically examine the justification of inclusion of library education in Nigeria Secondary School Curriculum. Specifically, the study aimed to identify the importance of library to students in the secondary schools and to improve the reading and study skills of students.

## 3. Methodology

The research design adopted in this study is the expository and analytical in nature. The expository character will expose some basic elements of Library Education which can be

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taught in secondary schools to increase the reading and learning ability of pupils and usefulness of library.

## 4. Literature Review

### The Concept of Library

The word Library comes from a Latin word 'liber' which means 'a book'; equating the library with an assemblage of books in a room or as a bookstore. The term 'library' means different things to different people depending on where they stand on the enlightenment spectrum. To some, it is a bookstore; a building where books are kept for safe custody over-seen by a stern-looking watchman in the name of a librarian, essentially ensuring that the books are not tampered with unduly. To many, the library is a place of reading and studying; where examination-writing candidates make their second homes to read their textbooks and notebooks in preparation. This explains why many libraries have seasonal uses as their patrons have a well-known pattern of visits and usage, which are at the designated examination periods. Few others conceive library as an organization of information resources meant for use. The above perceptions underpin the justification for a variety of definitions of the library by different people. Even though these conceptions of a library are not completely wrong in themselves; they however provide the foundations upon which the highly misrepresented and misconceived idea of what library entails. Based on this, some definition given by some scholars will be examined.

Shera (1976) in Satija (1999) sees a library as "an organization", "a system "designed to preserve and facilitate the use of graphic records". This definition is very instructive. The points to note in this definition are the terms "organization" and "a system"; both of which imply elements of co-ordination of inter-related units/parts all of which are geared towards same ends. The ends to which the "organization" or "system" would be targeted are "preservation and facilitation of the use of graphic records". Thus, the system here is expected to evolve devices with which information materials could be presented and facilitated for use. The term "graphic records" used in this definition is an all-inclusive perspective covering all kinds of formats of communication media from the past to the present and even the future. Thus, this definition does not delimit as to what particular kinds of material are to be found in a library.

Also in line with the first definition is a more elaborate and explicit approach adopted by Sharr in defining a library as "an organization of one or more trained people who use carefully selected and organized books, periodicals and other familiar materials as a means of giving to those who may appropriately use it, to the fullest extent of their needs or desires, the information, enrichment and delight which is to be had from the written words". A careful look at this definition reveals that not only did it also underscores the 'use' component but went further to touch on library

professional personnel, duties and responsibilities, among others. This organization, as far as Sharr was concerned, comprises "one or more trained people" (referring to professional personnel), whose material stocks have been "carefully selected", (acquired) and organized. Then is the variety of information materials to be found in the library ranging from "books, periodicals and other familiar materials" (i.e. unlimited and unrestricted in coverage).

Furthermore, Harrod's Librarian's Glossary and Reference Book defines 'Library' as: (1) A collection of books and other literary material kept for reading, study and consultation. (2) A place, building, room or rooms set apart for the keeping and use of a collection of books, etc. (3) A number of books issued by one publisher under a comprehensive title as the 'Loeb Classical Library', and usually having some general characteristic, such as, subject, binding, or typography. (4) A collection of films, photographs and other non-book materials, plastic or metal tapes, disks and programs. In line with the above definition, Librarian Glossary also define a library as "a collection of books and other literary materials kept for reading, study and consultation", "a place, building, room or rooms set apart for the keeping and use of a collection of books".

According to the Oxford Companion to the English Language – "Library is a collection of books, periodicals and/or other materials, primarily written and printed." In view of the above definitions, a library is defined as: a. A place in which literary and artistic materials, such as books, periodicals, newspapers, pamphlets, prints, records, tapes and artefacts are kept for reading, reference, or lending. b. A collection of such materials, especially when systematically arranged. c. A room in a private home for such a collection. d. An institution or foundation maintaining such a collection. The library, thus, is a social organization and a necessary unit of the society. It is organized for transmitting knowledge and experience of society to individuals. This is done through books and other material like the maps, charts, phono-records, microfilms, etc.

The father of library science sees library as a public institution or establishment charged with the care of collection of books and the duty of making them accessible to those who require using them. (Ranganathan. S. R). Therefore, it could be derived from the above definitions that a library is an organization of records of human thought. These records are in a physical form, i.e., human thoughts embodied in the form of useful manuscripts, books, periodicals, audio-visual records, microfilms, graphs, charts, etc. These are arranged, stored and preserved in a physical functional structure for effective utilization by the potential users in future.

### Branches of Library

For the purpose of better understanding of what library entails, it is the necessary to explain further the branches of library. It should be noted that the aggregate nature and meaning of these branches constitutes will help in the meaning and also the subject matter of library.

- **Archival Science:** An Archive is a collection of historical documents or records providing information about a place, institution, or group of people. Now it can be in form of system storage on line and off line, but it began with the drawers and the shelves. This is the agency responsible for selecting, acquiring, preserving, and making available archives. It is also known as an archival agency, archival facility or archives; sometimes referred to as an archival repository.
- **Cataloguing** is the process of creating entries for a catalogue. In libraries, this usually includes bibliographic description, subject analysis, assignment of classification notation, and all the activities involved in physically preparing the item for the shelf, tasks usually performed under the supervision of a librarian trained as a cataloguer. (**ODLIS**). It simply means describing a book or any library materials in a way that such materials can be searched for and identified in the library collection. It is the listing of library materials in a definite order.
- **Library instruction:** This term is interchangeably used as ‘library education’, ‘library orientation’, ‘client education’, ‘reader education’, ‘user education’ ‘user assistance’ ‘bibliographic instruction’ and so on. Bibliographic instruction has been used on a large scale before the Internet age. This term refers strictly to user training for locating information in a library. Bibliographic instruction consists of instructional programs designed to teach library users how to locate the information they need quickly and effectively”. A broader term than bibliographic instruction is user education, defined as ‘all the activities involved in teaching users how to make the best possible use of library resources, services and facilities, including formal and informal instruction delivered by a librarian or other staff member one-on-one or in a group’. Bell defines library literacy as following: „In the academic setting, library literacy refers to the acquisition of a range of skills relating to identification of and familiarity with sources and information seeking processes, usually through formal bibliographic instruction and informal user education”. So, bibliographic instruction, user education and library literacy are terms referring to the use of information resources available from library.
- **Preservation:** Preservation includes all the protection, maintenance and restoration of information materials. Preservation according to Vol. 2 of World Bank Dictionary 9. 1996 is the act of preserving, keeping safe. Maravilla (1994) states that preservation includes all the managerial and financial considerations including storage and accommodation provisions, staffing levels, policies, techniques and methods involved in preserving library and archival materials and the information contained in them. Edem and Feather (1997) in a study carried out on preservation and conservation arrives at the conclusion that preservation

is a cord that runs through the activities of a library. Preservation involves direct and indirect actions. Smith (1994) sees preservation as a major concern for librarians and document lists. Preservation and conservation of information materials ensure continued supply of information essential for documenting the history of a nation and also aiding research. Information materials are sources of reference, research illustrations, effects etc. Their re-recording may be impossible as certain actions and events cannot be re-enacted, the dramatic personnel involved may die, particular material may be the only one available in a given geographical area and the cost of preservation may be "peanuts" compared to the cost of replacement. Man, the creator of recorded information is mortal. Similarly, the deterioration of information materials is inevitable. All that is intended in conservation is to delay the inevitable so as to satisfy the information needs of users.

- **Readers' advisory service:** is a service which involves suggesting fiction and nonfiction titles to a reader through direct or indirect means. This service is a fundamental library service and includes:

- Finding the right book for the right person at the right time
- Helping readers find the best, most enjoyable reading that matches their needs, interests, and reading level
- Connecting readers and authors/writers.

Readers' advisory training publishes bibliographies of readers' advisory resources has pushed readers' advisory services onto the Internet. Most libraries have extended readers' advisory services to the web by producing and distributing materials and resources electronically. The New York Public Library, one of the first major public libraries to offer readers' advisory services, provides a wonderful collection of readers' advisory resources. There is a law that guides the ideal service and organisation of the library. This is, **Ranganathan's Five Laws**. The Laws states that:

- Books are for Use
- Every Book Its Reader
- Every Reader his Book
- Save the Time of the User
- Library is a Growing Organism

These maxims apply to librarianship in general and also guide our work providing readers' advisory services. Readers' advisory is sometimes described as connecting readers with books, but you can also think about this service as connecting readers with writers. The thoughts and art of one person made relevant to another, creating meaning or context, challenging or supporting current views, or providing information necessary to accomplish a goal. There is a need for the readers' advisory skills, which entails willingness to read widely to become familiar of genres both fiction and non-fiction, knowledge of customers and mastery of the readers' advisory interview.

- **Reference:** The word ‘reference’ is derived from the verb ‘refers’ meaning to turn to for information.

Reference materials by their nature, are consulted for specific items of information and permit speedy location and extraction of such information. Users can only consult a section of a reference material to retrieve needed information because reading the whole document or publication will serve no useful purpose and spaces are provided in the reference section where users can conveniently sit and consult the often voluminous reference materials. There are two types of reference materials. The first type contains needed information such as encyclopaedias, atlases, handbooks, dictionaries, gazetteers while the second type are the ones that direct the clientele to where the information could be located such as indexes, abstracts and bibliographies.

### **Secondary Schools Curriculum: Aims and Objectives**

Secondary school education according to the revised National Policy of Education (1981:16) is the forms of education children receive after primary education and before the tertiary stage. In a sense, the task of defining the concept of curriculum is perhaps the most difficult of all, for the term curriculum has been used with quite different meanings ever since the field took form. (Indiana Department of Education, 2010.) Simply, Curriculum means the planned interaction of pupils with instructional content, materials, resources, and processes for evaluating the attainment of educational objectives. (Indiana Department of Education, 2010). It is also the plans made for guiding learning in the schools, usually represented in retrievable documents of several levels of generality, and the actualization of those plans in the classroom, as experienced by the learners and as recorded by an observer; those experiences take place in a learning environment that also influences what is learned. The secondary schools curricula arrangements represent 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. (Indiana Department of Education, 2010).

According to Achuonye (2007:87) secondary education, as the name implies, comes second; that is the second level of the three-tier system of education in Nigeria Federal Republic Journal of Teacher Perspective 37. Nigeria defined secondary education as; the education children receive after primary education and before the tertiary stage. In fact, the missionaries introduced secondary education in Nigeria and it started in the late 1850s. It is the spring board from where all the students of higher education take off and all primary school leavers must pass through it to become useful to themselves and society. This importance of secondary education made the Federal Government to come up with the broad aims of secondary education as stated above. The present secondary school students cannot think for themselves or respect the views and feelings of others. They have no iota of dignity for labour except for things that will give them quick money. The increase in the population of

these non-useful secondary products is posing great social and moral threats to the society. Another area of problem observed in the secondary education is inability of majority of the students at this level to read fluently or write letters of application. Supporting this view is Osaghae's (2002) contribution in his problems of standard currently in secondary education. The system of education which comprised three stages: primary, post primary and further education. The duration of primary education varied from region to region; however, the secondary components were similar (Sasnett & Sepmeyer, 1967). The variants of secondary schools included the middle school/secondary modern school, the grammar school, the technical college and the sixth form of the secondary school Technical education was offered throughout the regions through the Departments of the Federal government and regional Ministries of Education (Odukoya, 2009).

The Federal Government of Nigeria has clearly spelt the aims and objectives of secondary education in the country to include preparation for: (a) Useful living within the society; and (b) Higher education. In Specific Terms Secondary Education Shall (a) Provide all primary school leavers with the opportunity for education of a higher level, irrespective of sex, social status, religious or ethnic background. (b) Offer diversified curriculum to cater for the differences in talents, opportunities and future roles, (c) Provide trained manpower in applied science, technology and commerce at sub professional grades, (d) Develop and promote Nigerian languages, art and culture in the context of world's cultural heritage, (e) Inspire students with a desire for self-improvement and achievement of excellence, (f) Foster national unity with an emphasis on the common ties that unite us in our diversity, (g) Raise a generation of people who can think for themselves, respect the views and feeling of others, respect the dignity of labour, appreciate those values specified under our broad national goals and live as good citizens; (h) Provide technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, industrial, commercial and economic development.

In order to achieve the stated objectives, the secondary education is in two tiers each of three-year duration. The first segment is the junior secondary (J.S.S) which is both academic and pre-vocational. The curriculum is a composition of core subjects, prevocational subjects and non-vocational electives. The core subjects at this level includes: Mathematics, English, two Nigerian languages, science, social studies, Art and Music, practical Agriculture, Religious studies, physical Education and two prevocational subjects (wood work, metal work, Home Economics, Business studies, local crafts, and Mechanics). Non-vocational electives include Arabic studies and French. The second segment is the senior secondary (S.S.S). It is designed for students to go into the Arts, Science or Commercial class. Every student in the system is expected to study six core subjects comprising English, one Nigerian language, mathematics, one of the social Art subject-literature- in English, History and Geography, Agricultural

science or a vocational subject. In addition, the student has to study three elective courses depending on his intended area of specialization. One of the subjects may be dropped in the last year.

The above stated aims and objectives of secondary education give a sense of direction as to what secondary education should be in Nigeria. There is no doubt that these objectives are likely achieved. For instance secondary schools have remained the recruitment grounds for tertiary institutions in Nigeria while absorbing the end products of the primary education. What is alarming is the rate and quality of the products produced nowadays when compared and contrasted with the yesteryears. It appears secondary schools do not meet up with the societal demand in terms of quality. It appears that secondary education is bedevilled by a lot of challenges that are pulling down the system at a faster rate. It is interesting to note that both primary and secondary schools had undergone series of transformations or changes partly due to changes in leadership in the country. There is no denying the fact that education in Nigeria has passed through varying degrees of problems in the process of planning and implementation. In some cases these problems defy solution, for instance explosive demand for education and the apparent lack of preparation and plan to cope with the situation have combined to aggravate the problems associated with the process of education in the country.

**Poor Primary Education** Primary education is the recruitment ground for secondary education. If this section of education is weak it will affect the secondary education in the country. The Universal Primary Education (UPE) was launched in 1976 to boost primary education in Nigeria. This was a good scheme but did not last due to premature way it was launched. There is no doubt that the UPE programme, had it been that it was properly given some time and adequate preparation for the implementation, it would have been one of the best programmes that Nigeria education ever had. And now the Universal Basic Education [UBE] has been introduced, the society is yet to see its success or failure. Consequently, the products of primary education could not prepare adequate grounds for quality production of secondary education products. Another problem is that of frequent changes in school curriculum. Both primary and secondary education suffered unnecessary changes in curriculum, the reason being that every in-coming administration would like to effect a change whether positive or negative. The moment there is a change in primary school curriculum it will definitely affect the secondary education. To buttress this point further, it is important to examine the structural flowchart of the National Policy on Education (NPE). The structure or flow chart of NPE does not help matters much. If there is anything worthwhile, the structure did not minimize the problem the education sector is now experiencing. For instance, education in Nigeria is heavily geared towards the acquisition of certificates and nothing more than that. A Close look at the flow-chart of the NPE shows that the beginning of the entire major segments of education invariably terminate at the university level.

For example the base line of our education is the new 3-3-secondary school system. There are at least five possible routes that can be followed after the three years of junior or three-year senior secondary school to get university education. Other Possible Routes to University: i. Route 1 through NCE for a 3-year or 2-year degree programme ii. Route 2 through the senior School certificate (SSCE) 4-year degree programme iii. Route 3 through remedial including schools of Basic Studies 3 or 4-year degree course IV. Route 4 through HND for a 3 or 4-year degree programme V. Route 5 through OND a 4-year degree course (Source: Adamu 2002: 9). In summary, the aspiration of the products of each level of education ladder is to finish up at the university.

## 5. Discussion

### **The Justification for the Inclusion of Library Education in Nigeria Secondary Schools Curriculum**

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

It is an indisputable 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 to be exposed to the use of library. With the injection of some elementary library education subjects in Nigeria secondary schools, the curriculum will be richer, more beneficial to pupils and be able to meet the objectives of the secondary education in Nigeria. Some of the aspects of library education, that are recommended for inclusion include: Library Instruction, Cataloguing, Archival Science, Readers' advisory service, Reference, Preservation. These aspects of library education are necessary, essential and sufficient to form the fundamental basis and process of teaching for secondary pupils.

It is our argument that library education should be included in the secondary school curriculum. For students to be intelligent and 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 secondary school curriculum. Hence, it is recommended that library education should be taken as a basic (core) school based subject at both 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 our argument on how Library Education can be taught at the J.S.S.3 level with it attendant applicability for useful and richer curriculum.

**Table 1**

WEEKS	CHOSEN LESSON TOPICS	BEHAVIOURAL OBJECTIVES
Week One	What is Library?	Introducing students to the various meaning/definitions of Library, purpose and functions of Library
Week Two	Types of Library	Students should be able to list and explain the various types of Library.
Week Three	Sections in the Library	Students would be introduced to some of the sections in the Library such as circulation section, reference section, serials section to mention but few.
Week Four	Library History	Students would be able to trace how Library came into existence
Week Five	Librarianship	Students would be informed who a Librarian is, functions of Librarian, how and where to study Library Studies.
Week Six	Library Collections	List and explain Library materials and limit them to those that aids teaching such as textbooks, maps, atlas ,dictionaries etc.
Week Seven	Library and Book relationship	Definition of Book, Parts of Book, Purpose of Book, Importance of Books.
Week Eight	Reading habits skills	Students would be introduced to steps to take in developing good study skills, explanation of SQ3R reading method and establishment of reading clubs.
Week Nine	Role of Libraries in Society and Education	Students would study how Libraries play an important role in the socio-economic, cultural and educational development of a society. The role of libraries in modern society and education.
Week Ten	Preservation of Library Materials	Definition of Preservation, agents of deterioration of Library materials, rules and regulations guiding the use of Library.
Week Eleven	Information Centres	Definition of Information Centres .Forms of Information Centres, difference between a Library and an Information Centre. Libraries and Information Centres of Information Age.
Week twelve	Library Orientation/ Education	Short explanations of Library Orientation/ Education should be given and there must be visit to any kind of Library i.e. Excursion.

## 6. Results

The justification for the inclusion of Library Education in the secondary schools curriculum lies in the fact that it can lead to self-development of the individuals and groups at the various stages of education. The students start the university life with a baggage of knowledge acquired along his previous experiences, either in their scholar or personal experience. 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 less of the students being exposed to Library Education. It will also increase the reading habits and change the reading tastes 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 the desire for books. By promoting the reading habits of the students, the library makes them library-minded and enables them to love books. The libraries play a vital role in the social life of the students. The growth in the size and stocks of books, is made possible by the increased desire for books by innumerable readers, giving due importance to libraries in the cultural and social development of the society.

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 students to explore into historical aspects. With all reasons mentioned above, students will be exposed to the various branches of library. Given the rationale for inclusion of Library Education in Nigeria secondary schools curriculum; this will make the curriculum richer, more beneficial to pupils and more susceptible to the reality of its set objectives. There will be reduction in the larger numbers of teeming unemployed graduates in the labour market through the provision of liberal job opportunity for library graduates and librarians as secondary school teachers and schools librarians. Libraries provide means for self –development for individuals and groups at various stages of education. This closes the gaps between individual and recorded knowledge.

It is possible that some critics might want to raise objection as to the competency of library studies graduates with respect to being secondary school teachers. 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 studies are better grounded and equipped in this field compared to the trained teachers who can just pick a library education textbook and just teach.

## 7. Conclusions

The primary purpose of this paper was to make a case for inclusion of library education in secondary schools curriculum. The intention of this paper was to make the curriculum richer and beneficial to students. It has attempted and exposition of some fundamental issue and problem identified in our present secondary school curriculum. The paper further establishes a justification for why Library education should be taught as a secondary school subjects. With the teaching of this subjects, students will have understanding about the importance of the library and their reading habits will be developed. It is my belief that with the analysis for the inclusion of Library Education as a subject in the secondary school curriculum, the concerned authorities and stakeholders of education would come to realize the significance of this paper.

**Notes:** The lesson model plan designed could not contain more than that of the first term, given the nature of this paper, which is made up of thirteen weeks and twelve weeks was provided. Although there are some weeks which compromises of little topics. The duration is to be forty minutes per period. At the end of the first term, provision would be made for library tour (excursion) to any of the libraries the teacher wishes.

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