
Strategic Assessment of Media Resources Developing in School for Future Education in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

There will be pressure on educators to direct media resources more strongly toward classroom teaching than is currently the case. There is a belief that the form of learning material affects the learning process and can in fact influence not only what is learned but the way this information is connected with the rest of the knowledge structure that the learner had developed. Out of this belief comes the movement toward resource based-learning where the burden of transferring knowledge was to shift from the teacher to the resource. Such learning approach will discourage learners from rote learning, this implies that there has to be a rich and constant supply of learning resources or instructional materials to the learning environment. This calls in part for cost effective strategies of media development and management for sustained media utilization in secondary schools. This paper which strategically assesses the media Resources Developing in School for Future Education in Nigeria outlines the instructional values of having learning resources at close proximity to the learning environment. It gives the theoretical basis for an organized resources collection in secondary schools and attempts the analysis of factors to be considered in developing learning resources collection generally. The study concluded that many of the students are still not computer-literate and one of the future challenges in media development will be in designing learning resources that will attract those with no strong interest in technology. It was therefore recommended that to ensure resource availability in school for any meaningful resource-based learning, a media production team consisting of practicing teachers, educational technologists and curriculum experts should be constituted at the Local Government and state levels and that this team should be monitored through an institution such as the National Educational Technology Centre.

KEYWORDS: Instructional Values, School Resources, Learning Environment, Media Selection.

INTRODUCTION

Learning resources could be used for instruction in two identified patterns thus- They could be used to supplement classroom teaching. This pattern of use entails using them in direct relation of the curriculum but they carry just a minor part of the teaching/learning responsibility. -They could also be used as the core material carrying the primary task of teaching supplementary. Such use could also extend learning opportunities beyond the confinement of a classroom or school. With such use processes, learning resources are given the front line role and they are made an integral part of the teaching/learning processes. This is a more progressive use

pattern. Learning resources do play active roles in the transfer of knowledge and in the provision of different types of motivation to the learner. This was why the pre-independence teacher took delight in making their learning environment attractive and message packed. It was rare then to see empty classroom. The bareness of today's classroom and the dryness of most teaching/learning sessions are clear indications of the pressures on the school system to expand beyond reasonable limits within a very short period of time but without a matching expansion in learning resources provision. It is worth noting that systematically developed learning resources are often not selected for use purely to stimulate learners, but because they are structured integral approach to instruction by themselves.

A full catalogue of the instructional values of media resources reveals that when they are properly utilized in instruction, learners are encouraged to participate better; novelty, which stimulates learning, is also introduced into learning situation. There is a consensus that if all human and administrative barriers are removed and media resources are used by learners, they could assist teacher to reach their instructional objectives and teach with increasing effectiveness at all levels. There is evidence from literature to prove that the use of systematically developed learning resources in teaching/learning processes can produce significant gains in learning when compared with conventional teaching (Schramm, 1977; Ogunsheye, 1987; Ajewloe et al, 1996). Nigerian educators should ensure that these instructional values do not elude classroom teachers and learners through lack of those resources in our learning environment and poor management of available learning resources.

Theoretical Basis for Learning Resources in Schools

Educators/Educationists who care about the quality of productions from the school systems have realized that a sound media programme in schools is a prerequisite for high quality education in any nation. It is well known fact that the quality of the out-put from any production process depends to a very great extent on the quality of the input of the resource. There are four basic principles involving learning which have remained unchanged over the years and which have dictated the need to developed and organize learning resources in all types of schools. These, according to Mickle and Young (2012), are the facts that:

- (a) Human beings learn as individuals
- (b) They learn at various rates
- (c) They learn using different styles and patterns, and
- (d) Education is a continuous process.

The implication of these principles of the human learning system is that learning environment ought to be richly prepared to facilitate individualized learning in schools and even after formal schooling. This approach to teaching requires that students have easy access to a large variety of pre-selected learning resources. Various attempts to translate these principles into practices have led educators in the more developed nations to pursue many new teaching strategies and resource organizational patterns that break with traditional modes. An example of such strategies have been the widespread adoption of unified media programmes administered through school library media centre and the association of visual and verbal message for concrete learning (Gillespie and Spirt, 1973; David, 1998).

The diversified nature of secondary school curriculum following the introduction of the 3-3 system, and the knowledge explosion exemplified in the amount of literature published daily are strong indications that both teachers and learners should have access to properly organized sources of information. Educationists can testify to the fact that there is no universally accepted truth in education. Teachers are no longer seen as custodians of knowledge neither are learners seen as empty vessels to be filled. Every learner needs some flexibility in his learning approach so that he may be more effective in developing high order skills which are required for better information handling in future.

Besides, the recent curricular reforms in Nigeria Educational system, newly evolved instructional strategies are making it increasingly necessary to maintain learning resources in schools to help improve the quality of education and to facilitate self-instruction. It is noteworthy that the condition under which learning takes place have equally changed, hence learning environments should also be modified to meet the changing needs. Percival and Ellington (1988) looking into the future of secondary education at the end of this century maintained that there will probably be much less emphasis on conventional face-to-face teaching than is the case currently.

In a study in 1987 Tucker (ed.) asked twenty countries which took part in the study how they perceive the development and use of educational resource collection in their countries in their responses each country indicated a perceived trend in the area of better organized resources in future. All the respondents suggested that a modernization of resources and media will definitely occur. They perceived as increased use of the micro-computers in schools for direct teaching and in other learning situations to provide information about learning resources available to teachers and students.

Nigeria requires these facilities at this period of its educational development/expansion more than ever before. Deliberate attempts must be made to introduce quality into the mass education provided since the 1976 UPE scheme. The use of media to communicate information and skills frees teachers to play new and exciting role like helping students to understand themselves and their goals and to recognize and use the most effective means of reaching these stated goals. These resources are quite useful for today and tomorrow's schools due to the teeming population eager to receive formal education and the dearth of trained teachers. Educational planners in Nigeria may have underrated the usefulness of a resource collection within the learning environment. For, in the National Policy on Education it is stated:

“Educational Resource Centre will be established at state and federal levels...Audio visual Aids Centres will be set up under the auspices of the federal and state governments and there will be close cooperation and constant consultation between the centres and all educational institutions for their development and effective utilization” (NPE, 1981, p.42).

For effective utilization of media resources in teaching learning processes, teachers/students require more than “close cooperation and constant consultation” with audio visual aids centres outside the school environment. In Tucker's report of 1987, lack of organized learning resources collection within the schools was cited by the respondents as one of the major barriers to media utilization and motivation to learn. It should be noted that motivation to learn is in part

a function of what resides within the individual and in part a function of what resides within the individual and in part a function of the external world he encounters. Hence effort should be made at organizing all available resources for maximum use.

Factors to be considered in Developing School Resources for Future Education in Nigeria

In the present existence, media contributes an important part in the socialization of young people, a phenomenon which has been attaining an impetus (Kapur, 2018). Media development and administration is crucial to learning. To ensure an effective and sustained media utilization in secondary schools at least four basic factors must be given due attention. These are:

- (a) Availability of resources
- (b) Media selection procedures
- (c) Accessibility of resources to users
- (d) Personnel factor

Availability of resources in the learning environment:

Lack of resources has too often been cited as a hindrance to media utilization in teaching/learning processes by Nigerian teachers. Ibe-Bassey (1988) in his study with some 89 Nigerian teachers noted that textbooks are the most frequently available materials in his study group while projected and audio materials are the least available. To some teachers that finding means such learning environment is bare. The mid-sixties (Mid-1960s) was seen as the era when secondary schools gradually found themselves face-to-face with the problem of providing effective teaching/learning materials for classes of children with widely different abilities. During this period also teachers found the commercially produced materials inadequate to meet their specific instructional and learning needs. Hence, most teachers began to design and produce huge quantities of their own materials. Gibson (1981) reports that these forces produced a fever of activity and experimentation in some key school's in United Kingdom and subsequently attracted the attention of educationists all over the world. It is worth noting that despite the current high profile given to the more technologically complex media (the high tech. instructional media like micro-computer, video, tape programmes, etc.). it is the simpler media such as paper-based items or audio/cassettes and slides which are in greatest supply in these developed countries. There is no evidence from the literature to prove that students learn from certain media and fail to learn from others. Nor is there any evidence to show that the low technology media are greatly inferior to the high technology ones in any given project which they have the physical properties to carry out.

Sehramm (1977) however did acknowledge the fact that the "bigger" and newer media like the computer-assisted-learning (CAL) materials, films, television and video programmes may attract learners' attention and perform better functions than the smaller media like video or graphics. What teacher should therefore concern themselves with in future should be to ensure that there are facilities for modification of existing resource to suit local needs and for the local production of additional resources to supplement few available high technology media. It is quite disappointing to note that less than 20% of secondary schools in Nigeria have such facilities (Ekpo, 1989). One is left with the impression that many teachers are expected to produce new learning resources in their own time and at home probably using their personal funds. Hence, to ensure a provision of a high quality learning resources to secondary schools in

future, the services of the National Educational technology Centre (NETC) in Kaduna and the various state Educational Resource Center (ERC) should be enhanced. Presently, National Educational Technology Centre produces print media, graphic materials, radio and television broadcast programmes for dissemination to both primary and secondary schools in the country. Broadcast technology is acknowledged as the cheapest and most cost effective of educational media services because production and transmission cost do not relate to audience size. A lot more of the services of National Educational Technology Centre should be explored in future. Utilizing the Centre's broadcast programme could be an effective way of delivering low cost learning resources to the schools at affordable cost and on continued basis.

Media Selection Procedure

In all resource collection development, availability of learning resources, on a continual basis must be ensured. Each school's collection is dictated by its curricular need, the capability and interest of the students, educational methodology employed and so on. Hence, while it may look uniform to have a centrally pre-selected collection for all newly established schools to cover broad range of topics as some states do, it is not the best approach to build a media collection for specific school programme.

Ideally, if funds were made available to all schools as it should be, collection development ought to be carried out in phases. During the final phase, a team of media specialists in conjunction with teachers and students should be involved to ensure a building of an impartial collection. Collection development beyond the initial stages definitely calls for a constant assessment of students'/teachers' need in relation to curriculum, existing collection and the market availability of media. Ekpo (1988) identified gifts, exchange and purchase as the three commonly used system of developing school collection in this country.

Accessibility of Resources to Users

Media utilization in Nigeria schools is a sporadic event due to teachers and student's inaccessibility to learning resources. Virtually all authors in resources collection development (Gillespie, 1980, and Tucker (ed.), 1987) have stressed the point that access to the resources promotes use. In a survey of the twenty member countries of International Council for Education Media (ICEM) conducted by Tucker, it was noted that more than 60% of both primary and secondary schools within the sample area allowed their users (the pupils) access under the supervision of their teacher (Tucker, 1987, p. 16). As many as 34.7% of secondary schools and 17.3% of the primary schools he surveyed allowed learners access without the supervision of a teacher. Surprisingly as much as 30% of the sample allowed pupils no access to learning resource collection, there can be little chance of effecting the desired fundamental change, which is a rapid move towards resource-based-learning in schools for better academic attainment and the development of high order skills.

Personnel Factor

Trained media personnel are crucial to the development of any school resource collection and effective media services. The training of student teachers during their initial preparation in resources is highly advocated. But sufficient exposure of teachers in media development, and selection principles could be a strong impetus in future media development for Nigeria schools.

According to Frau-Meigs (2006), there can be no viable resource collection in schools if there is no consistent supply of resources. Hence, all identified talents in media development found within initial teacher training institutions ought to be financially supported and encouraged. Some trained teachers versed in media development should be withdrawn from the classroom on periodic basis on secondment to work with the staff members of their various state Educational Resource Centre's in the media production unit to constitute a media production team. According to Udouo and Ojo (2016), a training programme should be evolved between this team with the existing schools needs in view. This team should be encouraged to design learning materials that are curricular-based in their specific subject areas. These prototypes could then be tested in few schools, evaluated and reproduced for a wider circulation. Such planned visits to the schools to test the designed prototype materials will give the team members the opportunities of interesting with regular close teachers and sharing their experiences.

The team members could therefore be catalysts in media development. If such action-research-approach to media development is adopted, prompt availability of learning materials in all learning environments with the minimum of time-consuming logistical barriers will be ensured and competently trained media development and managers will gradually be produced for the system. Leadership factor does play significant role in resource development as well. In a survey of some British resource centers, Ekpo (1989) observed that in schools where the head teachers were directly involved with the resource collection, the resource, swelled with time. This was because these heads being the chairman of their internal school funds and finance sub-committees were in position to facilitate acquisition of relevant equipment and materials with less bureaucratic bottle neck. Though fully aware that the schools budgeting system in Nigeria differs from the one reported above, an administrator of a school who does not format for instructional use cannot cry loud enough to be heard by school proprietors. One needs to know where he is going to be a good leader.

CONCLUSION

Today's young people are quite familiar with image-based information and this is why various computer games are finding their way into Nigerian market. Feeney and Shirley (eds) 1997 stressed that in developing future learning future learning system this need should be reflected. Many of the students are still not computer-literate and one of the future challenges in media development will be in designing learning resources that will attract those with no strong interest in technology. Hence, future emphasis will be more on flexible learning, and children would want to develop their learning materials themselves, and teacher's/students' roles will definitely change.

Modernization of learning resources will definitely occur and more resources will find their way into the learning environment. In support of this projection, Adimorah (1995) observed that the progress in information technology and communication is rapidly changing the way we live, the way we work and the way we will work in the future. It is the writer's opinion that the future of education in Nigeria hangs on the educators, and policy makers to initiate and sustain changes and on the learners to be willing to adopt progressive changes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To ensure resource availability in school for any meaningful resource-based learning, a media production team consisting of practicing teachers, educational technologists and curriculum experts should be constituted at the Local Government and state levels. This team should be monitored through an institution such as the National Educational Technology Centre.
2. To adopt the suggested media organizational structure there must be a definite government involvement. I recommend as a starting point that, a policy statement establishing the minimum standard of media provision in all secondary schools be officially made by the three tier governments.
3. The policy has to be practically enforced with the provision of appropriate collection of print media, essential production and presentation hardware resource for the full utilization of the broadcast programmes.
4. Heads of secondary schools should be given special training in the principles of resources development/management to as to encourage them to create a positive awareness, of resources in their schools and its consequences for education.
5. Both award and non-award earning in-service training programmes should be planned for teachers to equip them for the future challenges in resources based learning.
6. All schools should essentially be advised to devise and use a media selection policy – a sensible plan of action as would be reflected in their media selection.

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