

THE IMPACT OF THE UTILIZATION OF RESOURCE CENTRES FOR EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY IN NIGERIAN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT: *This paper examined the impact of utilizing a resource centre for effective service delivery at the primary school level using descriptive survey design. Schools from Epe and Ikorodu Local Government Education Areas (LGEA) were sampled. These schools were randomly selected. Primary 1-6 teachers were sampled, with a total of 200 teachers. Questionnaire was formulated and validated to test hypotheses. The data collected were analyzed using chi-square statistical tool and decisions were taken at 0.05 level of significance. The result of the findings shows that utilizing resource centre has a positive effect on service delivery of qualified, unqualified, as well as experienced and inexperienced primary school teachers. Therefore teaching and learning without resource material is said to be ineffective. This means that utilization of materials in the resource centres would improve the quality of instruction and make education more productive. Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that resource centre should be created within the fore-walls of the classroom for easy accessibility of resource materials by both the pupils and the teachers so that education can become more meaningful and productive.*

KEYWORDS: Resource Centres, Learning Materials and Service delivery

INTRODUCTION

The desire for both qualitative and quantitative education has multiplied the problems of providing an effective learning/teaching environment in Nigeria. According to Imogie (1976), the phenomena of increased enrolments coupled with shortages of qualified teachers and teaching materials have increased the potential contribution of Educational Technology in the improvement of the learning/teaching environment. According to Awoniyi (1975) (as cited in Oputa, 2005) more often than not, there is a great gap between the teachers, the taught and the content of teaching. From the observations of Imogie and Awoniyi, much teaching goes on in many classrooms though little learning takes place. The immediate problem is how to achieve successful teaching and effective learning in the classroom. It is clear that successful teaching brings about effective learning. Effective results can be achieved when the learning environment (the classroom) is well equipped with teaching and learning resources. Thus, for Educational Resources to be properly utilized and used for effectiveness, their use must be properly planned and organized. This can be achieved through the establishment of a Resources Centre that would be within the reach of both the teachers and the learners.

Ngoka (2005) identified a resource centre as a service area, providing for the use and distribution of information to students and teachers in multi-media forms to facilitate the teaching and learning process. Eze (2002) opined that a resource centre is a building in or outside the school system with adequate space, staff, software and hardware materials, where learners may go and study either individually or in a group, where facilities exist for

determining individual differences and where instructional materials tailored to meet the individual differences of learners can be produced, utilised and disseminated for easy retrieval when needed.

Ajelabi (2000) noted that educational resources centres play a prominent role in the designing, planning and implementing instructional process as part of educational technology. He therefore defined educational resource centre as a setting or place where teaching/learning materials, tools and equipment are designed, created, developed and utilized, distributed borrowed and stored. The central function of a resource centre is to raise the quality of education through a better and more co-ordinated use of various resources, through improvement in curriculum development activities, in the teacher's performances and in the environment in which teaching and learning takes place.

Kinder (1959) as cited in Oputa, (2005) stated that the problem of the teacher is centred on how he can bring the world into the classroom. Supporting the above, it is observed that teachers will ensure the use of any material or techniques to make it possible in order to foster learning. One major challenge to improving the use of educational resources to bring about a rewarding teaching and learning is to bring down a resource centre to the school level in fact classroom level so that instructional materials can be within the reach of both the teachers and the learners for effective usage. Abimbade (1997) maintained that a school Resource Centre helps individual learners and teachers with skills and competencies in the design, production, utilization and distribution of resource materials, helps in ameliorating the classroom from learning materials, guarantees learners immediate access to materials as well as provide access by teachers and public to a wide variety of instructional materials.

Educational Resource Centres are established to house different forms of resources meant for educational growth (Sheu, 2007). It is in line with this fact that the National Policy on education (FRN, 2004) section 11, under educational services, has called for the establishment of educational resource centres at the federal and state levels. The establishment of ERCs in the south west states is in line with the provision of the National policy in Education (FRN, 2004), which stipulates that state and local governments shall establish Educational Resource Centres whose activities shall be multi-disciplinary. It is expected that for improved quality of teaching and learning, there must be effective provision for the use of ERCs by the schools and populace. However the result of various performances of students at all levels of education showed the poor quality of the products as a result of poor quality of teaching and learning. It therefore implies that ERCs established across the federation have not lived up to its expectations. According to Tolorunke (2003), although some states have their audio visual media centre but many of them are nothing to write home about. Thus, there are lots of problems facing the establishment and the running of educational resource centres in Nigeria most especially at the primary school level.

The task before school in recent times is so broad in scope and complicated in character that teachers must utilize every available method to ensure that learning takes place. In this manner the teacher needs to be encouraged and equipped with necessary educational materials or resources. The development of school resource centres demands the encouragement of school administrators and decision makers. Since the problem of school resource centres is that of space, how to organize the materials, storing them and making them available for use. Teachers therefore need to rise up and undertake the production of teaching materials as well as create a resource material corner within the fore – walls of their classroom for pupils to have easy access

to resource materials and be able to participate actively in instructional process so as to reduce verbalism to the barest minimum.

Statement of the Problem

Teaching and learning using resource materials is of utmost importance in ensuring that learners or pupils participate effectively in the instructional process. However, it is obvious that most teachers do not have access to resource materials largely because resource centres both at the national, state, local and even at school levels are not effective due to lack of funds. It is believed that teaching is a great task without teaching resources which means that the use of appropriate resources or media in the classroom will make teaching and learning a reality. This can only be possible when a resource centre is easily accessible by teachers and learners. This research therefore sought to find out the impact of utilising a resource centre on effective service delivery with regards to teachers' qualification as well as teachers' performance.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this paper is to investigate the impact of utilizing a resource centre on effective service delivery in Nigerian Primary Schools. Specifically, this study collected and analysed data relating to the impact of utilising a resource centre on:

- experienced and inexperienced primary school teachers service delivery
- qualified and unqualified primary school teachers service delivery

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised:

- What is the impact of teacher's experience on the utilisation of resource centre for effective service delivery?
- What is the impact of teacher's qualification on the utilisation of resource centre for effective service delivery?

Research Hypotheses

H₀₁: there will be no significant difference in the utilization of resource centre by experienced and inexperienced primary school teachers

H₀₂: there will be no significant difference in the utilization of resource centre by qualified and unqualified primary school teachers

LITERATURE REVIEW ON EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE CENTRES

The enhanced status given to Educational Technology as a discipline in the school system has automatically given enhanced attention to educational resource centres. Learning Resource Centres (LRC), Educational Resource Centres (ERC), Instructional Material Centres (IMC), Educational Technology Centres (ETC), Instructional Technology Centres (ITC), and so on, are various terms used for the same thing. Educational Resource Centre is a place used primarily for the storage, supply and utilization of learning resources that have been organised

into an integrated collection of materials of all types (print, auditory, visual, kits, and games) along with any devices and special settings (Ogunsanya, 2002).

Ajelabi (2000) defined Educational Resource Centre as a setting or place where teaching - learning materials, tools and equipment are designed, created and developed, utilised, distributed and stored. According to him Educational Resource Centre varies in terms of its arrangement, ranging from a classroom corner to an entire building complex, depending on the objectives, curriculum emphasis and financial ability of the proprietors of the institution. Nwakoby (1988) on the other hand opined that the task of a teacher is to arrange a learning environment that will encourage production, interactions and give the students the learning experience they need.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population of the study was made up of all twenty (20) local government education areas in Lagos State. According to the State Primary School Education Board, there are about 20,000 public primary school teachers in Lagos State, thus this study covered all. However, two LGEA were purposively sampled, one from rural and one from urban centre. In each LGEA, ten (10) public primary schools were also randomly sampled, and in each school, ten (10) teachers were randomly sampled. This gave a total sample size of 200 teachers.

Research Instrument and Instrumentation

A questionnaire was constructed as the research instrument to elicit information on the impact of utilisation of resource centre by primary schoolteachers for effective service delivery. It has two sections A and B. Section A has five items for collecting personal information about the background of the teacher. Section B contains two (20) items bordering around teachers feelings and experience with the use of Resource Centre. Their response was rated on a four point likert scale, viz: strongly agree, agreed, disagree and strongly disagree.

Validity and Reliability of Research instrument

The draft of the instrument was given to three educational technology experts to validate and their suggestions were appropriately considered. A pilot study was conducted on twenty primary school teachers using the instrument. After about two weeks, the instrument was administered on the same pilot group. The test-retest method was used in assessing the consistency of the research instrument and it gave a reliability coefficient of 0.75

RESULTS AND PRESENTATION OF DATA

H₀₁: there will be no significant difference in the impact of utilization of resource centre by experienced and inexperienced primary school teachers

Data collected from the responses were tabulated as shown on table 1

Table 1: Response of experienced and inexperienced Teachers

	SA	A	D	SD	TOTAL	-- X	DF	LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE	X ² CA L	X ² TAB
Experienced	133.5	70.5	32.5	34.5	271	67.75	3	0.05	2.95	7.815
Inexperienced	42.5	34.0	13.5	10.0	100	25.00				
	176.0	14.5	46	44.5	371					

Table 2: Contingency table

	O	E	O-E	(O-E) ²	$\frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$
C1 ₁	133.5	128.56	4.94	24.40	0.19
C1 ₂	70.5	76.33	-5.83	33.99	0.45
C1 ₃	32.5	33.60	-11	1.21	0.04
C1 ₄	34.5	32.51	1.99	3.96	0.12
C2 ₁	42.5	47.44	-4.94	24.40	0.51
C2 ₂	34.0	28.17	5.83	33.99	1.21
C2 ₃	13.5	12.40	1.1	1.21	0.10
C2 ₄	10.0	11.99	-1.99	3.96	0.33
					$\Sigma 1.9$

As presented in table 1, the calculated χ^2 is less than χ^2 tabulated i.e. 1.9 is less than 7.815 at 0.05 level of significance therefore we accept the null hypothesis one, which states that there will be no significant difference in the impact of utilization of resource centre by experienced and inexperienced primary school teachers. The interpretation of this result is that both experienced and inexperienced primary school teacher benefits by utilizing the materials at the resource centre. The table also shows that the mean (67.5) of experience teachers' utilisation of resource centre is greater than the mean (25.00) of inexperienced teachers.

H0₂: there will be no significant difference in the impact of utilization of resource centre by qualified and unqualified primary school teachers.

Data collected from the response were tabulated as shown on table 3

Table 3: Response of qualified and 'unqualified primary school teachers

	SA	A	D	SD	TOTAL	-- X	DF	LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANT	X ² CA L	X ² TAB
Qualified	152.0	85.0	36.0	36.0	309.5	77.38	3	0.05	6.284	7.815
Unqualified	30.0	24.5	17.0	8.5	80	20.00				
	182	109.5	53.5	44.5	389.0					

Table 4: Contingency table

	O	E	O-E	(O-E)²	$\frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$
C1 ₁	152.0	144.36	7.64	58.37	0.40
C1 ₂	85.0	87.01	-2.01	4.04	0.05
C1 ₃	36.5	42.51	-6.01	36.12	0.85
C1 ₄	36.0	35.36	0.64	0.41	0.01
C2 ₁	30.0	37.38	-7.38	54.46	1.46
C2 ₂	24.5	22.49	2.01	4.04	0.18
C2 ₃	17.0	10.99	6.01	36.12	3.29
C2 ₄	8.5	9.14	0.64	0.41	-0.04
					$\Sigma 6.284$

As presented in table 3, the calculated χ^2 is less than χ^2 tabulated i.e. 6.284 is less than 7.815 at 0.05 level of significance therefore we accept the null hypothesis two, which states that there will be no significant difference in the impact of utilization of resource centre by qualified and unqualified primary school teachers.

This result shows that the impact of utilising resource centre is positive on qualified and unqualified primary school teacher's performance. The table also shows that the mean (77.38), of qualified primary schools teacher utilisation of resource centre is greater than the mean (20.00) of unqualified primary school teacher utilization of resource centre.

DISCUSSION OF RESULT/FINDINGS

The result of the findings in table 1 shows that the performance of primary school teachers as a result of utilizing resource centre is not dependent on experience. Both the experienced and inexperience primary school teachers would perform or deliver effective service when they utilise resource centre. This is in collaboration with Lamar (1994) as cited in Oputa (2005) that learning resource centres can add, simulate, encourage and support innovations in teaching irrespective of the experience of the teacher. Thus a resource centre has a positive impact on the performance of an experienced teacher and the performance of an inexperienced primary school teacher. Effective utilization of resource centre by primary school teachers would allow learners to actively participate in instructional process so as to reduce verbalism to the barest minimum. This agrees with Aremu (2002) that through the use of visual aids, students learn up to 35% work in a given period of time and remember up to 55% longer. Aremu further stated that 83% of what is learnt is from sight 11% from sound, 3.55 from smell, 1.5% from touch and 1% from taste.

The result of the findings in table 3 shows that the performance of primary school teachers as a result of utilizing resource centre is not dependent on qualification. This means that both qualified and unqualified primary school teachers would perform or deliver effective service when they utilise resource center. Kinder (1959) in Oputa (2005) stated that the problem of the teacher is centered on how he can bring the world into the classroom supporting the above; it is observed that teachers will ensure the use of any material or techniques to make it possible in order to foster learning. Therefore, teachers must utilize every available method to ensure

that learning takes place. In this manner, the teacher needs to be encouraged and equipped with necessary educational materials and resources.

CONCLUSION

From the findings of this study the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Utilizing a resource centre improves the teaching skills of both qualified and unqualified primary school teachers.
2. Based on the above findings therefore, teachers should plan and create a small corner within the fore-walls of the classroom where resource materials can be kept and used to improve teaching.
3. Resource materials is of paramount importance in the teaching - learning process and for these teaching materials resources should be within the reach of both the teachers and the learners, it has to be located within the four walls of the classroom.
4. There is need for the school authorities to equip each classroom by assisting teachers with materials needed for teaching the various subjects in our primary schools.

Implication for classroom instruction

The implication for classroom teaching with reference to the response of teachers is the following:

1. Pupils participate actively in class when resource materials are used.
2. There is easy accessibility of materials for both the teachers and the pupils when there is resource centre located within the fore-walls of the classrooms
3. A resource corner will help learners to participate actively in class
4. It exposes the pupils and teachers to a resourceful learning environment. Thus making the classroom a place where pupils are longing to stay.
5. Pupils learn to express themselves and communicate by familiarizing them with the materials and tools.

RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. There is urgent need to establish a resource centre at the primary school level.
2. Teachers at this level should be exposed or enlightened more on the need to inculcate the habit of using teaching resources.
3. The resource centre in question should contain teaching materials that can readily be improvised and accessed

4. Pupils should be actively involved and encouraged in the production of simple resource materials since this will create a sense of belonging in them.
5. The school authorities need to assist teachers with materials in order to create a resource corner within their classrooms.
6. Classroom should be well spaced to accommodate a resource corner

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