Full Length Research Paper

Factors militating against school library development in Aguata L.G.A of Anambra State

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Abstract

This study sought to find out factors which militate against school library development in Aguata Local Government Area of Anambra State. The research design was a survey. Six research questions guided the study. The accessible population comprised five secondary schools and five primary schools in Aguata Local Government Area of Anambra State. Data was collected through questionnaire. The responses were summed and their frequency and percentage obtained. The percentages were used to answer the research questions. Findings of the study showed that factors which hinder school library development include among other things paucity of funds, poor facilities, management by unqualified personnel. All these have a direct bearing on the teaching and learning in Aguata local government area. Recommendations were however made in this regard.

Keywords: School libraries, library development, teacher librarian, pupils, students, Aguata local government.

Introduction

The school library belongs to the category of libraries found in primary and secondary schools. The school library is the academic nerve centre of the school system. Daniel cited in Busayo (2011) likened an educational institution without a library to a motor car without an engine and a body without a soul. It is the backbone of functional education without which academic excellence cannot be achieved. Busayo stated categorically that both the library and the school are inseparable twins that one ceases to function well without the other. The development of reading habit and love for books no doubt starts from the two levels of education-primary and post primary school levels. The indispensable means of achieving this ideal is through the establishment and development of libraries in schools. The educational aims of school libraries according to Idiegbeyan-Ose and Okoedion (2012) include:

- To stimulate and enhance the reading habit, promoting lifelong learning
- To develop in children the ability to read for information
- To help pupils to increase and improve their knowledge of reading, speaking and writing
- To train children to care for books and make good and intelligent use of the library
- To enhance children's reading and communication skills
- To provide children with information both current and retrospective
- To provide recreation

They further pointed out that the school library prepares both the teacher and students to achieve sound and quality education by all or any of the following:

(a) The improvement of teaching by enabling the teaching staff to make reference to current books in the preparation of lessons.
(b) Providing information for teachers and pupils on current affairs.
(c) Providing supplementary reading for teachers, enriching class work.
(d) Serving as laboratory where all books on all disciplines encourage self reliance, good use of leisure time, and arouses interest in reading.

The effectiveness of school library was succintly summarized by the School Library World (2009) as follows: it is accessible to the total school community; it is cost effective because one book is used by many; it provides flexible scheduling and timely access to the collection by all students, a broad range of materials; add new resources throughout the school year to keep collection dynamic; create a sense of ownership that is shared by the entire school community.

School libraries are ideally manned by teacher-librarians. Teacher- librarians are professionals who hold professional qualification in the art of teaching and also in librarianship. Unfortunately school libraries in Anambra State in general and Aguata Local Government Area in particular have not been given the priority it deserves. They are still far from being developed. Aguata Local Government is one of the oldest Local Government in Anambra State. This local government area has been in existence even before the creation of Anambra State in 1991. It is made up of fourteen autonomous communities namely, Ekwulobia, Achina, Uga, Aguluezechukwu, Igboukwu, Isuofia, Ezinifite etc. Aguata Local Government Area benefited from western education as early as 1940. This led to the building of its first primary school in 1940 at Ekwulobia and its first secondary school at Achina in 1960. In spite of this early contact with western education, school library development in this part of the state is poor.

Statement of the Problem

The present learning environment especially at the primary and secondary levels of education in Nigeria is worrisome. This may account for poor performance of students in both internal and external examinations. The environment here could be viewed in terms of library facility. Each school consists of blocks of classrooms while library facilities in most of the primary and secondary schools especially in Aguata local government area do not receive such attention. The near absence of school libraries in these schools may have denied children in these schools the rare opportunity of cultivating good reading habit and love for books from an early stage in life. Consequently, poor reading skill and lack of adequate reading materials affect their academic performance. This study is therefore set at finding out those factors which militate against school library development in Aguata Local Government Area.

Purpose of the Study

The study sought to find out the following:

1. The extent to which insufficient fund militate against school library development in Aguata L.G.A.
2. To find out whether lack of qualified teacher librarians affect school library development in Aguata Local Government Area.
3. The extent to which the attitude of local dwellers affect school library development in Aguata L.G.A
4. The extent to which the state government support school library development in Aguata L.G.A
5. The extent to which accommodation problem affect school library development in Aguata L.G.A.
6. The extent to which poor school library development affect teaching and learning in Aguata L.G.A

Research Questions

The following research questions were designed to guide the study:

1. To what extent does insufficient fund militate against school library development in Aguata L.G.A.?
2. Does lack of qualified teacher librarians affect school library development in Aguata Local Government Area?
3. To what extent does attitude of local dwellers affect school library development in Aguata L.G.A?
4. To what extent does the state government support school library development in Aguata L.G.A?
5. To what extent does lack of accommodation affect school library development in Aguata L.G.A?
6. To what extent does poor school library development affect teaching and learning in Aguata L.G.A?

Literature Review

In Nigeria the concept of school library service could be traced to the period of British administration when formal education in schools started. A lot of emphasis has been placed on qualitative education as a pre-requisite for the growth of our national consciousness in Nigeria. The educational programme and scheme must take into serious consideration the role school library play in the learning process. Far back in 1972, Moris stated that

> A good library adds a new breadth and depth to learning. It can enlarge a teacher's teaching and give the pupils the means of following up their queries actively and so offer learners the ability to select, appraise and criticize what they read. It provides opportunities for developing personal reading and discovering the pleasure and enchantment of life that reading bring.

Stressing the importance of school libraries, the American Library Association (2015) said that schools with a strong library program and a certified school librarian ensure their students have the best chance to succeed. It further stated that strong school library programs help all students do better academically. The ALA outlined the benefits of school library programs as follows:

- School library programs foster critical thinking, providing students with the skills they need to analyse, form and communicate ideas in compelling ways.
- School libraries are places of opportunity. They are learning hubs and homework help centers where students use technology and the latest information resources, preparing them to succeed in our global, competitive economy and the ever-evolving workplace.
- Strong school library programs instill confidence in reading in multiple formats, which is fundamental to learning, personal growth and enjoyment.
- School libraries foster a safe and nurturing climate during the day and before and after school. They are often the one place in the school that is open to all students, and where a school librarian cares and can support students across grade levels and subject matter.

Certified school librarians make the whole school more effective. They teach students how to learn and help teachers drive student success. Highlighting the role of the teacher-librarian, the ALA pointed out that:

- School librarians work with every student in the school, teaching them to think critically, providing the resources and support learners need in school and beyond, and nurturing their creativity.
- They are essential partners for all teachers, providing print and digital materials that meet diverse needs and collaborating to deepen student learning.
- They are leaders in the school, helping to develop curriculum and representing the learning needs of all students and teachers.
- School librarians connect other educators to current trends and resources for teaching and learning.

Many lament the poor state of school libraries in Nigeria. Elaturoti (1983) surveyed the state of secondary school libraries in Oyo, Ondo and Ogun states of Nigeria. He reported that that the state of these school libraries is very poor. According to him, there are very few or no staff to manage the school libraries in these states. This is similar to the findings of Aniebo (2006) in which he reported that that school libraries in Imo state lack accommodation, materials, and funds, as well as trained staff to manage the libraries in Imo State. Idiegbeyan-Ose and Okoedion (2012) in a study they carried out on the state of school libraries in Benin City, Nigeria made the same observation. In that study, they recommended that school libraries in Benin City need urgent attention. They should be provided with the necessary facilities so that students can have access to what a functional library offers and the students can compete with others in a larger society.

Methodology

This study is basically a survey research. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 5 secondary schools and 5 primary schools in Aguata Local Government Area of Anambra State. Respondents comprised of 200 students and 5 teacher librarians in the 5 secondary schools while 5 teachers librarians were selected from the primary schools. The instrument for data collection was questionnaire. Two sets of questionnaire were designed- one for the teacher librarian and the other for the students. Both questionnaires had multiple choice questions where the respondents were expected to tick the correct answers or to say "yes or no" where applicable. Questionnaire for teacher librarians was designed under the following subheadings. Funding, qualification of teacher librarian, attitude of local dwellers and accommodation. The data collected were organized and analyzed using frequency and percentage rating. All the items which certified a particular research question were analyzed. The data were arranged in tables on under six headings, each corresponding to the six research questions.

Results:

Research Question 1: To what extend does insufficient fund militate against school library development in Aguata Local Government Area?

Teacher Librarian's Responses:

Table 1: Funding (Through what sources do you derive fund in your school?

		Yes	%	No	%	Total	%
a.	Fees from students	1	12.5	-	-	8	100
b.	Fees from state government	5	62.5	-	-		
c.	From philanthropist	2	25	-	-		
d.	All of the above	1	-	-	-		

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	Yes	%	No	%	Total	%
1. Do students pay library fee?	2	25	6	75	8	100
2. What do you do with the fees collected?						
a. For library development	1	12.5	-	-	8	100
b. Other projects	3	37.5	-	-		
c. None of the above	4	50	-	-		

Responses from table 1 shows that out of 8 questionnaires completed and returned from the 10 primary and secondary schools 1 or 12.5% of the respondents indicated that they derive their fund from students; 5 or 62.5% from the state government; 2 or 25% from philanthropists. None indicated that they derive their fund from the 3 sources. Also from the table, it can be seen that 1 or 12.5% indicated that the money collected was for library development; 3 or 37.5% for other projects in the school. 4 or 50% indicated that the money was not used for any of the projects.

Research Question 2: (Are there enough qualified teacher Librarians for school library administration in Aguata L.G.A?)

Table 2: Qualification of Teacher-librarians

	Yes	%	No	%	Total	%
3. In your school, do you function as a Teacher-librarian?	5	62.5	3	37.5	8	100
4. Which of the following qualifications do you have?						
a. B.Sc Lib/Sc	-	-	-	-		
b. B.Ed.	1	12.5	-	-	1	
c. NCE	5	62.5	-	-	5	
d. TC II	2	25	-	-	2	
5. Do you have library hour in your school time-table?	2	25	6	75	8	100

The cluster of questions in table 2 were meant to answer Research Question 2 which sought to find out whether there were enough qualified teacher librarians to man the school libraries in Aguata L.G.A. From the responses, 5 schools have teacher librarians while 3 schools do not have. Also from the result, none of the teacher librarians have B.Sc. in Library and Information Science. Only 1 respondent has B.Ed. Out of the other seven, 5 were NCE holders. The other remaining 2 have TC II qualification.

Responses to the 3rd question in this cluster shows that only 2 schools have library hour in their school time table. Out of the 8 respondents 6 indicated that they do not have library hour in their school time table.

Research Question 3: To what extent do attitude of local dweller affect school library development in Aguata L.G.A?

Table 3: Local dwellers attitude on School Library Development in Aguata L.G.A?

	Yes	%	No	%	Total	%
6. Are rural dwellers aware of your school library?	1	12.5	7	87.5	8	100
7. If no, have you ever discussed library matters during the Parent/Teacher Association Meetings in your school?	4	50	4	50	8	100
8. If yes, do they give support in terms of money or book?	2	25	6	75	8	100

Table 3 shows that 1 or 12.5% of the respondents indicated that rural dwellers are aware of their school library; while 7 or 87.5% indicated that they are not aware. Also from the table 4 or 50% indicated that they have

discussed library matters with them while 4 or 50% indicated that they have not. Also from the table, 2 or 25% indicated that they have received support from the rural dwellers while 6 or 75% indicated that they have not received any support from them.

Research Question 4: To what extent does the state government support school library development in Aguata L.G.A?

Table 4: Government support for School Library Development in Aguata L.G.A?

	Yes	%	No	%	Total	%
9. Is the state govt. aware of your school library?	8	100	-	-	8	100
10. Does your school library get any support from state govt. in terms of money or equipment	2	25	6	75	8	100

	Yes	%	No	%	Total	%
11. If yes, how often do you receive this kind of financial support?	11	12.5	-	-	8	100
a. Once a year	-	-	-	-		
b. Twice a year						
c. Once in 3 years	7	87.5	-	-		

Table 4 shows that 8 or 100% of the respondents indicated that the state govt. were aware of their school library. Also from the table, 2 or 25% indicated that they do receive support from the state govt. while 6 or 75% indicated that they do not receive any support from the state govt. Also, 1 or 12.5% indicated that they receive this kind of support only once a year; 7 or 87.5% indicated that they receive such support once in 3 years.

Research Question 5: To what extent does lack of accommodation affect school library development in Aguata L.G.A?

T**able 5:** Accommodation for School Library Development in Aguata L.G.A?

	Yes	%	No	%	Total	%
12. Do you have a separate building for your library?	2	25	6	75	8	100
13. Do you have enough seats in your library for students to use the library?	3	37.5	5	62.5	8	100
14. Can your school library accommodate a class at a time?	2	25	6	75	8	100

From table 5, 2 or 25% of the respondents indicated that they have a separate building for their library while 6 or 75% indicated that they do not have. Also from the table, 3 or 37.5% indicated that they have enough seats in their library while 5 or 62.5% indicated that they do not have. The table also shows that 2 or 26% indicated that their library can accommodate a class at a time while 6 or 75% indicated that it cannot.

Students Responses:

Table 1: Response on whether they have school library

	Yes	%	No	%	Total	%
1. Do you have a library in your school?	72	100				
2. Do you pay library fee?	1	29.83	57	79.17		
3. If yes, do think these levies are judiciously used to equip your library	6	8.33	66	91.67		100

Table 1 shows that 72 or 100% of the respondents indicated that they have a school library. 1 or 29.83% indicated that they pay library fee while 57 or 79.17% indicated that they do not. 6 or 8.33% indicated that the monies collected were used to equip their library while 66 or 91.67% indicated that it was not used to equip their library.

Table 2: Response on whether they have teacher librarian

	Yes	%	No	%	Total	%
4. Do you think that the staff in your school are qualified enough for the job?	25	34.72	47	65.28	72	100
5. If yes, do they teach you how to use the library?	17	23.61	55	76.39	72	
6. Are you allowed to borrow books from the library?	65	98.28	7	9.72	72	100

Table 2 shows that 25 or 34.72% indicated that they have qualified teacher-librarian while 47 or 65.28% indicated no. From the table, 17 stated that they were taught how to use the library while 55 or 76.39 indicated that they were not taught. Also 65 were allowed to borrow books from the library while 7 or 9.72 indicated the opposite.

Table 3: Responses on whether local dwellers were aware of their library

	Yes	%	No	%	Total	%
7. Do your parents support your library in terms of money or books	16	22.22	56	77.78	72	100
8. Do your parents or sponsor allow you to visit library during non-school hour?	20	27.78	52	72.22	72	100

Table 3 shows that 16 or 22.22% indicated that their parents do support their library while 56 or 77.78% indicated that they do not. Also 20 or 27.78% indicated that their parents or sponsors allowed them to visit library during non-school hours while 52 or 72.22% stated that they do not allow them.

Table 4:
Response on whether the State Govt. supports School Library Development

	Yes	%	No	%	Total	%
9. Does the state govt. support your library in terms of money or equipment?	31	43.06	41	56.94	72	100
10. If yes, how often do you receive this kind of support?						
a. Once a year	15	20.83				
b. Twice a year	30	41.67				
c. Once in 3 years	27	37.5			72	100

Table 3 shows that 31 or 43.06 indicated that the state government does support their library while 41 or 56.94 expressed the opposite. 15 or 20.83% indicated that they receive this support once a year. Again 30 or 41.67

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indicated twice a year and 27.37.5 indicated once in 3 years.

Table 5: Response on whether accommodation facilities militate against School Library Development

	Yes	%	No	%	Total	%
11. Is your library housed in a separate building?	18	25	54	75	72	100
12. Do you have enough seats in your library?	19	26.39	53	73.61	72	100
13. Can your library accommodate a class at a time?	30	41.67	42	58.33	72	100

Table 5 shows that 18 or 25% indicated that their library is in a separate building while 54 or 75% do not. 19 or 26.39% indicated that they have enough seats in their library, while 53 or 73.61 stated that they do not have.

Again 30 or 41.67 indicated that their library can accommodate a class at a time while 42 or 48.33 indicated that it cannot.

Table 6: Response on the effect of poor school library development on teaching and learning process in Aguata L.G.A.

	Yes	%	No	%	Total	%
14. How often do you go to library?						
a. Daily	10	13.89	-	-	72	100
b. Once in a week	55	76.39	-	-		
c. Once in two weeks	7	9	72			

	Yes	%	No	%	Total	%
15. Of what importance is library to you as a student?						
a. I can lay my hands on books I do not have	20	27.78	55	72.22	72	100
b. I can borrow books from the library and use them at my spare time at home	25	34.72	47	65.28	72	100
c. I use library books for my homework	22	30.56	50	69.44	72	100
d. It is a place for relaxation during my leisure time	2	2.78	70	97.22	72	100
e. All of the above	3	4.17	69	95.83	72	100

Table 6 shows that 20 or 27.78% of the respondents affirmed that library is important to them because they lay their hands on the books they do not have while 25 or 34.72% borrow books from the library. 22 or 30.56% use library books for their homework; 2 of 2.78% use it is as a place for relaxation while 3 or 4.17% stated that the library is important to them because they use it for all of the above purposes.

Discussion of Findings

Poor Funding

Analysis of the result on funding shows that:

I. Greater percentage of these libraries were funded by the state government.
II. A greater percentage of students do not pay library levy for the development of school library in Aguata local government area.
III. A greater percentage of fund collected were not used for school library development. This result further revealed that funding was a major factor that hinders school library development in Aguata local government area.

Funding is important in school library development just as in every other human enterprise. For the progress of a library, there must be enough funds to provide the facilities, pay the staff and maintain the administrative cost. The reliance of these libraries on the state government as their only source of revenue in view of the current economic reality in Nigeria will not favour school library development.

Item 2, " payment of library fees by students" received low rating with a percentage of 25 as shown in table 1. Basically, students are not supposed to pay library fees. There are other ways of building library fund like donations from philanthropists. Also Item 3 in the instrument revealed that greater percentages of the money received by these libraries were not used for library project. It was believed that most of raised for the development of their library were diverted to other projects in the school.

Lack of qualified teacher librarians

In Table 2, the analysis of the result shows that all the items were perceived problems that hinder school library development in Aguata local government area. The analysis shows that none of them had B.Sc in library science. Leaving the management of the school library in the hands of unqualified staff could be likened to a blind man leading a blind man.

Item 6 indicate that 75% of these libraries do not have library hours in their school time-table. This is an indication that the so called librarians in charge of these librarians were not properly informed about their duties and responsibility. All libraries need a qualified staff to guide, direct and stimulate users' interest to read and make better use of the library materials. Qualified staff should create the awareness on the importance of the school library to rural dwellers. A teacher librarian who lacks the necessary knowledge and skills for school library management and its objective will never be a veritable instrument for the development of school library. The employment of trained teacher-librarians to manage the school library will greatly improve the quality of school library services.

Attitude of local dwellers as a factor that militate against school library development in Aguata Local Government Area

Items 7, 8 and 9 were designed to answer research question 3. These 3 items were negatively rated with 50%, 87.5% and 75% respectively. The result in item 8 revealed that 87.5% of them indicated negative attitude as revealed in table 3. This problem was attributed to lack of qualified school librarians whose duty it is to educate these local people on the importance of school libraries and the need for its development. To improve school library services, local dwellers must be enlightened on the objectives of school libraries and its importance as support services in teaching and learning in Nigeria as a whole and Aguata local government area in particular.

Support from the State Government

Items 10, 11 and 12 were designed to find out the extent to which the state government supports school libraries financially. Item 10 in table 4 revealed that government was aware of the existence of these libraries with 100 percent rating. Item 11 rated negatively with 75% revealed poor financial support from state government. Item 12 confirmed this when 87.5 percent indicated irregular support of state government to school libraries.

Cumulative response in this cluster shows that non-supportive attitude of the state government was a contributory factor in the poor development of school libraries in Aguata local government. The result in item 12 revealed that although teacher librarians/students agree that they receive the state government support, it was not regular. It was on account of this that Rosenbery (2000) rightly observed that education is a government responsibility and whatever the model of information provision, it must have both the endorsement and active support of government while making importance references.

Effect of poor School Library development on teaching and learning process in Aguata Local Government Area

Research question 6 was designed to find out the effect of poor school library development on teaching and learning in Aguata local government area. Item 14 which concern the attitude of students to use of the library rated negatively with a percentage of 76.39. This result shows that students visit the library once a week. This will invariably not enhance their reading habit, and use of library materials. Ideally the school library should offer the student the opportunity to read independently instead of waiting for the teacher to teach him everything. This agreed with the view of Fayose (1995) that "the method of education where the students are made to believe that notes given by the teacher contain everything they need to believe is the easiest way out for lazy students who may not want to be burdened.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusion was drawn.

Factors which militate against school library development in Aguata local government area of Anambra State have been identified as follows:

i.   Funding: these libraries rely solely on the state government as their main source of funding. Sometimes, these financial supports are irregular.
ii. A greater percentage of local dwellers have negative attitude towards school library development. Unawareness was identified as a cause of this.
iii. School libraries were predominately managed by unqualified teacher-librarians.
iv. Most of these libraries have no accommodation facility. They use classroom accommodation for their libraries. The findings also reveal inadequate storage facilities, seats and reading tables.
v.   Poor school library development has a negative effect on teaching and learning process. Students were not encouraged to the visit library. They were made to rely solely on what the teacher teach them thereby discouraging carrying out an independent study and research. This situation gives room for examination malpractice and mass failure in both internal and external examinations.

Implications of the Study

The findings of this study have implications for school administrators, teacher librarians, students and the Nigerian society at large. These were outlined as follows:

i. One of the results of this study revealed that these librarians relied only on one source of revenue for the development of their libraries. By implication, the reliance of these libraries mainly on government will not favour the development of school libraries as the state government has other projects to cater for.

ii. It was found that these libraries were managed by unqualified librarians. These may lead to poor management of fund, library resources and the library users.

iii. The study revealed that a greater percentage of local dwellers were not aware of the importance of school libraries and the need to develop them. By implication, this will affect their attitude towards school library development. They may also not encourage their children or wards to visit the library during non-school hours.

Recommendation

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made;

i. Adequate funds should be allocated to school libraries to enable them to embark on serious school library development.

ii. Seminars, workshops and in-service training should be organized by stakeholders in library administration such as the Nigerian Library Association,Nigerian Association of School Libraries and other organizations. Through such forum, the school librarians will be enlightened.

iii. Both federal and state government, the Tertiary Education Trust Fund and other donor agencies should rally round and revive these school libraries in terms of finances information resources, and equipment.

iv. Enlightenment programmes, such as public lecturers, cultural programmes and book exhibition should be organized from time to time to educate the local dwellers on the importance of school library in teaching and learning process.

v. Library use education is necessary to teach students library use skills and knowledge which will help them to make effective use of the library facilities. By this, they will learn from an early age the habit of reading and carrying out research on their own. This will help to reduce examination malpractice and mass failure in both internal and external examinations.

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