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The Journal of Education and Allied Psychology is a reputable and standard multi-disciplinary journal with high quality that accept from researchers original theoretical and empirical articles that are incline to advancement of knowledge, contemporary issues, findings, innovations, inventions and discoveries.

The current articles in this edition, volume 10, number 1, March, 2025 have satisfied the quality and spread in scholarship. A combination of education and psychology comes with a unique lace of intellectual challenges that the Department has brought to the academia. Hence, readers and invited researchers should find whatever issues that deserve intellectual discourse. It must be clear that adequate editorial assessment was carried on the articles for publication. There is no doubt that the articles have been thoroughly researched, and documented along stipulated guidelines for high academic and professional standards. However, opinions, observations and citations are credited to the author(s) and the Editorial Board carries no responsibility

The Editorial Board wishes to congratulates all the author(s) for finding time to share their worth of research and academic experiences in this publication. The Board remain indebted to its assessors and its editorial members for a good job toward the successful publication of this journal.

We do hope that the readership will experience rewarding intellectual journey.

Consequently, further invitations are hereby extended to our esteem researchers and academic fellows for the next edition of this journal.

Prof. Frank C, CAREW, Ph.D (Iowa),
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March, 2024

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PROMOTING LITERACY AND READABILITY LEVELS AMONG ADULT LEARNERS THROUGH LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES IN NIGERIA

By

Abdulsalam Oladimeji, SHOLAGBERU¹
sholagberu.ao@unilorin.edu.ng 08033790861

Boman Achi, AFINIKI²
afiniki@yahoo.com 08135600890

&

Zainab Shekwobagu, BASHIR USMAN³
Zeebashusman@yahoo.com

¹Department of Adult and Primary Education University of Ilorin, Ilorin

²National Commission for Mass Literacy Education

³Bayero University, Kano

Abstract

It has become evident that libraries are not passive repositories of books but dynamic hubs of learning and knowledge dissemination. Thus, this paper focuses attention on the roles of library in promoting literacy level among adult learners in Nigeria. It discusses the need to promote literacy to tackle insecurity, the imperative role of library in promoting literacy and readability culture among adults for them to be aware of issues around them and finally, some challenges faced by libraries with regards to literacy promotion were discussed. It was established from the study that libraries serve as an agent of 'information dissemination and as inevitable tools for promoting literacy they sustain the nation. Also the impacts of library services in promoting literacy level are high they have the tendency of improving the reading culture of users One of the recommendations made was that libraries should invest in digital resources, e-books, and online databases to ensure students have access to a wide range of materials, especially in the digital age. Also, relevant library materials which include electronic resources should be made available for users as this will go a long way to enhance each user's literacy level.

Key words: Promoting Literacy, Readability Levels, Adult Learners Library and Information Services

Introduction

Education is the art of teaching and training of the young ones. It is the aggregate of all the processes through a young adult develops the abilities, attitudes and other forms of behavior of positive value to the society in which he/she lives. Therefore, the purpose of acquiring education is to gain and share experience from direct or induced contacts for any meaningful development and individual socio-economic empowerment to take place in the society, needed education must be acquired (Aladenusi, 2018). In view of this all education programme and libraries are partners in progress. It is pertinent to ensure that the library is established and maintained and complement the education process, no matter the level, so as to achieve the desire objectives as stated in the National Policies on Education. Olorunyomi (2019) observed that library can

promote the development of reading habit and contribute to academic achievement in every subject.

Libraries have long been recognized as the cornerstone of education and the champions of literacy. In Nigeria, the role of libraries in promoting literacy among students in tertiary institutions is of immense significance. Literacy, the ability to read, write, and comprehend, is not only a fundamental life skill but also a gateway to academic success, critical thinking, and personal development. In a country as diverse and dynamic as Nigeria, libraries serve as invaluable hubs for nurturing literacy skills and expanding the horizons of knowledge for students in higher education. Libraries offer services beyond just lending books, including computer access, community events, and educational programs. Libraries play a pivotal role in promoting literacy among students in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

The library is the nerve center of any educational institution, especially colleges, polytechnics and the universities. It is also a crucial unit in the educational development of man, at any level of human development. Libraries are information centres which promote academic activities taking place in any education setting; indeed a library is a living and active part of the whole effort towards promoting peace and security in Nigeria. To support this motion, the National Policy on Education (2013), on the aim of a library states: encourage the development of skills in reading, prompt the readers to some literacy appreciation, be source of subject information and be a clinic for intellectual development

Hence, in promoting literacy habit, there exist, a peaceful co-existence where there will be no commotion, violence, destruction and destabilization while there will be peace, calm or being free from disturbance. It refers to anti-strife, unity, harmony and friendly relationship or to experience a crises-free atmosphere. According to Moshood (2022), literacy is the ability to understand and use symbols that are culturally specific, such as alphabets, numbers and visual for learning and development. Literacy, broadly and properly conceptualized, goes beyond reading and writing and emphasis. The acquisition of values of decency, togetherness, respect for others, irrespective of class ethnic origin, creed and other differences. A literate person avoids all antediluvian, predispositions and demonstrates that he/she is a man or woman of culture, repute and discipline. Olajide (2017) opines that, to be literate, then, accords one the opportunity to get involved in thought sharing through the written page, i.e the literate person is endowed with a bi-dimensional instrument of either sharing his own expressed thoughts or those of others as put down on papers, on screen or any other vehicles for conveying the written word. Literacy is an essential ingredient for building and developing reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. To establish the connection between literacy and reading habit in communities, one must look at the culture of the community members in terms of the culture of writing, sending, speaking, watching and listening so as to encourage reading habit.

In a society that is illiterate, they cannot read, they will be prone to violence and that society will never know peace because peace and war will depend on what people are reading, watching and saying. All these bring about insecurity in our society; literacy is the most singular factor in the upliftment of an Individual. Therefore, there is a great concern for the prevention of illiteracy in various communities so that the youths will be useful members of the society. Literacy is a

complex term and is described in many ways by different scholars and authors. Orisawayi (2018) views literacy from two levels: micro and macro literacy. He believes that Micro literacy embodied initial or basic literacy and functional literacy derivable from basic education. This he said is concerned with the use of skills of listening, understanding, speaking, writing translation in whatever language of the nation. Macro-literacy is equated to good balanced education of the individual, that is, what enables him or her to attain self-fulfilment and self-actualization, and therein- gaining full integration into the society. Literacy is the foundation and pillar for development; it is the engine for sustainable and continuous development of the individual and society.

Literacy is a basic need in every society and it can be defined as the act or practice of a person to acquire knowledge through reading or studying of books (Fosudo, 2018). Literacy takes place when the reader understands what has been encoded. The ability to have a certain literacy level facilitates the learning process and requires the use of complex thought procedures to interpret printed symbols as meaningful units, and comprehend them as a thought unit in order to understand a printed message (Aina, et al., 2019). In the view of the researcher, literacy is the ability to know something that is vital and important to a person's educational, political, socio-economic and general life. Literacy will make a person to be effective in his or her dealings. Literacy can be seen as the ability to understand something. A person's level of understanding of something is that person's level of literacy in that very thing.

Concept and Meaning of Literacy and Literacy Promotion

According to UNESCO (2023) Literacy is now understood as a means of identification, understanding, interpretation, creation, and communication in an increasingly digital, text-mediated, information-rich and fast-changing world. Literacy is a continuum of learning and proficiency in reading, writing and using numbers throughout life and is part of a larger set of skills which include digital skills, media literacy, education for sustainable development and global citizenship as well as job-specific skills. Alberta Education (2023) defines literacy as the ability, confidence and willingness to engage with language to acquire, construct and communicate meaning in all aspects of daily living. Language is explained as a socially and culturally constructed system of communication. Literacy is the ability to read, write, speak and listen in a way that lets us communicate effectively and make sense of the world (National Literacy Trust 2023). Literacy is the mainstay of any nation's development hence, any nation that fails to prioritize literacy is doomed to fail. "Literacy affects labour quality and flexibility, employment, training opportunities, income from work and wider participation in civic society" (Musingafi & Chiwanza, 2018). UNESCO (2016) revealed that "the World Literacy Forum estimates the cost of illiteracy to the world economy as 1.2 trillion dollars." Murphy notes that "Illiteracy is essentially a personal tragedy ... It is a failure of the individual (usually through no fault of his own) to achieve his full potential and to escape the confining prison of ignorance and poverty" (Murphy, 2016).

On this note, UNESCO and other concerned international organizations and agencies have launched aggressive literacy campaigns aimed at raising literacy rates across the globe. However, report of recent literacy survey in Nigeria revealed that preponderance of Nigerian

citizenry is illiterate. This development calls for drastic measures. In the prevailing circumstance, libraries which are eminently and conspicuously positioned to champion the course of literacy promotion should rise to the challenge by adopting more inclusive strategies and a broader vision to promote literacy in Nigeria and this calls for impactful role of library.

The term "literacy" has been conceptualized by many schools of thought. It is "the state or condition of being "literate" (New International Webster's Comprehensive Dictionary of the English Language, 2019). UNESCO (2019) defined a literate person as "someone who can with understanding both read and write a short simple statement on his/her everyday life." Learning which is necessary for an individual to attain a certain level of literacy is endless; otherwise, a relapse may occur. Therefore, "literacy involves a continuum of learning in enabling individuals to achieve their goals, to develop their knowledge and potential, and to participate fully in their community and wider society" (UNESCO, 2019).

In the modern society, basic literacy is considered inadequate for an individual to function effectively and efficiently hence, the need to attain a high level of literacy referred to as "functional literacy". Taking this into consideration, while the term "literacy" is discussed, its functional consequence, applicability or impact is considered as well. In view of this, Murphy (2016) declared: ... the single most important consideration in defining literacy is its functional significance. The ability merely to read and write at low levels of proficiency does not qualify a person effectively to meet the practical needs of daily life. Within increasing complexity of modern societies, the individual must be able to read simple instructions, write a legible letter, and engage intelligently in contractual relationships. This level of competence is referred to as functional literacy and the failure to achieve it is functional illiteracy.

Functional literacy, according to UNESCO (2019) suggests the literacy level an individual should attain so as to operate effectively in a complex industrialized society. Moreover, mathematical or numerical skill is considered an important skill a literate individual should possess. However, Murphy (2016) regretted that "almost all definitions of functional literacy have concentrated on the ability to read and write, ignoring another important aspect of mathematical ability". Possession of mathematical literacy provides an individual with the knowledge of personal financial management and the ability to engage positively in business-oriented activities. The value of illiteracy constitutes a big mishap to an individual and a society at large. This is why Bakare (2019) stated that "people who are illiterate are far more likely to live in poverty, facing a lifetime marred by poor health and social vulnerability." Concerned about functional illiteracy, Uwasomba, (2022) lamented that it is a serious problem that needs urgent attention, otherwise it could adversely affect living conditions in the developed countries. Considering this, Youngman (2020) in Musingafi and Chiwanza (2021) warned: "for great majority of people, if life in modern society is to be lived to the full, they must be released from the bondage of illiteracy if they are to make their best contribution to their families, the communities and the nation."

The term 'promotion' means "advancement, furtherance, or encouragement" (New International Webster's Comprehensive Dictionary of the English Language, 2010). Library is conspicuously positioned to promote literacy, considering the important roles it plays in the cultivation of a

healthy reading culture necessary for independent and lifelong learning. Libraries literacy programmes have always been channeled towards encouraging people on how to read in order to become literate and be relevant in the societies they belong to. Libraries and literacy promotion Literacy is the ability acquired through learning, usually in educational setting. This confirms Uwasomba's (2022) declaration that "literacy is not an inborn human characteristic, but rather an ability that is learned, most often in schools." Although schooling is very critical for literacy to flourish, it is not enough. It is unthinkable to achieve a modern and literate society without libraries, which according to IFLA (2019) "are uniquely situated to promote literacy".

Concept of Library

A library is a collection of books, and possibly other materials and media that are accessible for use by its members and members of allied institutions. Libraries provide physical (hard copies) or digital access (soft copies) materials, and may be a physical location or a virtual space, or both. A library's collection normally includes printed materials which can be borrowed, and a reference section of publications which are not permitted to leave the library and can only be viewed inside the premises. There may be other physical resources in many formats, such as commercial releases of films, television programmes, other video recordings, radio, music and audio recordings on DVD, Blu-ray, CD and cassette, besides access to information, music or other content held on bibliographic databases (Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, 2023).

A library in the community serves the generality of the public without any surcharge. Akanwa (2019), citing Emenalor defined the public library as a library that provides library resources, services and recreational outlets for the generality of the citizenry, namely, the young, the old, the literate and the non-literate. Aina, cited in Iwhiwhu and Okorodudu (2012) also noted that while other types of libraries are meant for a specific group of users, the public library is not restricted to any group of users. It is expected to serve all kinds of people including young children, people with disabilities or even people who for one reason or the other are incapacitated. In relation to the foregoing, e-library is a library that is controlled electronically. It is enabled through the use of network and computer system. E-library houses materials in digital or online forms that can be accessed through the use of computer, CD ROM, or other electronic applications (Akanwa, 2019). Most public library users are connected electronically which makes them carry out online services. Public libraries are predominantly used by people in a locality to access information that affects their daily activities in the area of education, employment, health, politics, economics, religion and agriculture.

It is established supported and funded by the community, either through local, state or national government or through some other forms of community organizations (Iwhiwhu & Okorodudu, 2012). Ebiwolate (2010) affirmed that the fundamental aim of libraries is to provide timely, accurate, pertinent, and reliable services for its users at the right time and in the right format. The services of the public libraries according to Ebiwolate (2020) are information consultancy, internet services, indexing and abstracting services, current awareness services (CAS), user education services, reference services, resource sharing services, lending services, selective dissemination of information services (SDI), book loan services, photocopying services, binding services, online services, computer typesetting services, CDROM searching and publishing services among others.

Imperative Roles of Library in Promoting Literacy and Readability among Adult Learners

The basic philosophy of the library is that it encourages learning and serves as a place where learning materials are stored for use (Popoola, 2019). Therefore, a good library must have abundant and varied collection of books, periodical, tape recorder graphics like charts, maps, posters, graphs, globes, filmstrips to be shown to the population. Libraries are also a tool for promoting through communication network centres which transfer knowledge from a host to the user. That's why Dr. Goodluck Jonathan, President, Federal Republic of Nigeria, on December 2010 launched a programme tagged "Bring back to Book Initiative" which geared to bringing back the culture of reading and increasing the level of literacy in Nigeria.

Library serves the following purposes:

- i. Library serves as the first exposure of human to the world of information as it creates appropriate international relationship that links everybody and through library, thus, creates a forum for the exchange of ideas.
- ii. It encourages continuing education and mobilizes professionals' consciousness by making professionals aware of current publications.
- iii. Library promotes literacy by providing learning materials that will facilitate the development of mutual awareness and appreciation among all racial and cultural groups.
- iv. Library helps to reflect fully the reality of religion and cultural diversities of a community.
- v. Library must acquire materials which foster positive feeling and attitudes towards the cultural diversity. Library has great role to play in promoting literacy it helps an individual to learn how to live with one another after reading about other people's culture.
- vi. Library also help the populace to be literate and when the society is literate, ignorance is relatively reduced and people will not be pushed to war, because it is assumed they knows the implication of war. Library enlighten user through publicity, book review, book fairs, observation of book weeks, library weeks and other celebrations on what goes on around them.

A literate society is likely to develop very fast because citizens can easily have an understanding of government's programmes. They can express their opinion, thereby participating in governance to create a peaceful society which is a prerequisite to development. The library also performs its social responsibility to people by providing them information related to existing job vacancies in the society. The libraries help to break information barriers and empower the nation developmental stride through economic transaction and improved social relation among the people.

There are several ways librarians can promote literacy among adult learners, besides more interactive story time session. For instance, getting involved with Reach Out and Read programmes that work with state and local library systems can allow librarians to create book lists, coordinate environment more conducive to reading, work on joint grant applications to

further literacy efforts and train volunteers to better promote adult literacy in the community (Lawal, 2020). Inculcation of reading habit among adult learners will help create peaceful co-existence by exposing individual adults to various issues and happenings within their immediate environment and give them proper understanding of the world around them.

Libraries carry out the role of education by identifying reading problems of individual adults and guide them on essential material that would support their livelihood status (Musingafi and Chiwanza, 2019). Libraries encourage non-literate adults to acquire literacy as well as follow up the literate ones so that they do not relapse to their former state. On this note, Kong (2021) commented: "library-based adult literacy programs are major contributors in the education of adult learners in urban and suburban communities ... the public library is a little explored organization where adult literacy services are provided for free".

On this note, Kong (2021) commented library-based adult literacy programs are major contributors in the education of adult learners in urban and suburban communities. The public library is a little explored organization where adult literacy services are provided for free". Foreigners or migrants are usually considered elements of an illiterate society due to language barriers. Libraries therefore make provisions for them to adapt successfully to their host communities and contribute meaningfully to their socio-economic development by assisting them in learning the major or official languages of their host communities. "Libraries create connections to local institutions and build English language skills for immigrants and non-native speakers" (Kong, 2021). Public libraries also extend literacy programme to adults who are not adequately skilled in use of official languages such as English Language so as to accommodate learners from different cultural backgrounds.

Nigerian libraries need to be in strong collaboration with the existing literacy-promoting organizations like the National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-formal Education, Agency for Mass Literacy, and others to provide comprehensive and all-inclusive library and information services to the needy population. Furthermore, attention should be focused on the disadvantaged groups and communities where literacy rate is reportedly low. The National Bureau of Statistics (2017) in Ajibola (2017) reported Nigeria's literacy index as of 2017. According to this report, "the states where majority of people can neither read nor write are those in the Northeast, Northwest, and Northcentral" (National Bureau of Statistics, 2017 in Ajibola, 2017).

Library is therefore a veritable instrument for the promotion of inclusive literacy. Public libraries play vital roles in giving the citizenry a chance to acquire literacy by providing access to information materials and services. By encouraging reading and promoting literacy through inclusive library and information services, public libraries contribute immensely to the development of individuals and the society at large. Considering the significant functions of libraries in cultivation of widespread literacy, the world's largest library organization-IFLA in support of the UNESCO's development agenda on literacy, has held several congresses focused on fostering literacy through public and school libraries, where they also proposed guidelines which provide helps in promoting library services to support literacy works.

Library is undeniably essential for the accomplishment of any community-wide literacy

programme. Exposing children to reading at early stages in life is one of the surest ways of nurturing literacy. This is one of the essential roles of libraries in literacy promotion. Storer (2015) acknowledged the significance of library in promotion of childhood literacy when he argued: "...while it's true that literacy typically begins with family, libraries have a vital role to play." This suggests that librarians should create ways of getting children develop interest in reading at early stage so as to sharpen their literacy skills.

Challenges Libraries Face with Regards to Literacy Promotion

Previous studies have shown that libraries encounter myriad of challenges in literacy promotion crusade. Some of these challenges are:

1. **Fiscal constraints:** One major issue on which many other problems depend is fiscal constraint. Nigeria is yet to recover from a serious economic difficulty. While in recession, governments are unable to meet their financial obligations to the ministries or agencies which depend on them for funding. Unfortunately for the library, it is a service-based institution, and not revenue generating one. During serious economic conflicts, libraries compete unfavorably with revenue-yielding institutions for the limited monetary allocations from governments. This grossly affects inclusive library services for literacy promotion.
2. **High cost of library resources and services** Nigerian has, for the past years experienced series of currency devaluation which has always placed the exchange rates on the high sides. This invariably leads to high cost, and subsequent scarcity or shortage of books and other reading materials, commonly described as "book famine". The general consequence of economic related challenges is the adoption of fee-based library services for cost recovery. This sometimes discourages patronage, especially in developing countries where need for library services seem not to be ranked among the essential or immediate needs. This constitutes a challenge to library-based literacy programmes because "there is an evident connection between lack of books and illiteracy" (Uwasomba, 2022).
3. **Financial misappropriation:** David Cameron, the immediate past Prime Minister of the United Kingdom once described Nigeria as "fantastically corrupt" even though he was, under pressure, made to retract this statement. Although Nigerians vehemently criticized Cameron for this statement, it is a common knowledge that Nigeria is seriously infested with corruption. At the time public libraries lament on poor funding, finances earmarked for equipping public libraries are in most cases misappropriated by those at the helms of library management.
4. **Dearth of trained and committed staff:** The library personnel who should participate in library-based literacy promotion crusade are required to possess necessary trainings. IFLA (2015) noted that such trainings could be obtained through "preprofessional education, in-service training or as continuing education".
5. **Absence of relevant information materials or resource Materials** used for library-based literacy programme must be tailored to the needs of the selected populace. In most cases however, the appropriate materials are either lacking or insufficient resulting in providing the populace with irrelevant materials. Use of materials haphazardly selected might discourage the inhabitants of a selected locality from participating in literacy programmes especially when materials do not meet their needs.

6. Problem of partnership: For a successful library-based literacy programme, libraries are expected to be in close partnership with educational, cultural, religious, and community-based organizations and institutions that are engaged with education and literacy promotion. However, such partnership, if at all exists in Nigeria, seems to be rather weak.

7. Poor state of Nigerian public libraries Public library in Nigeria is one of the institutions that suffer serious neglect from the governments. Most public libraries in Nigeria are currently in deplorable conditions due to governments' inattentiveness on issues relating to library development.

Conclusion

Information is a vital tool for education; it has played a vital role in the acquisition of knowledge and skills. Information improves the level of literacy of people and can improve their performance in their daily activities. Therefore, library plays a prominent role in the readability and information which improve and promote their literacy level. Information plays a very important role in the economic and social development of a nation. This facilitates all round development of an individual. Citizens' capability to acquire information will enable them to attain their educational goals. It is pertinent to note that library facilitates and promotes the literacy level of an individual.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion drawn, the following recommendations were made:

1. Develop a variety of literacy programs that caters for different interests and skill levels, including book clubs, writing workshops, and information literacy sessions and encourage collaboration between libraries, academic departments, and faculty to integrate information literacy into the curriculum and promote reading across disciplines.
2. Create inclusive and comfortable spaces within libraries to accommodate students with diverse needs and learning preferences. Also, extend literacy initiatives beyond the campus by partnering with local schools and communities to promote a culture of reading and lifelong learning. Encouraging early literacy by providing necessary reading materials and services. Libraries, especially public and school libraries are in position to assist individual adults to achieve functional literacy.
3. Cooperation with other literacy promoting organizations when they cooperate with other concerned stakeholders. There are many groups who provide different types of cultural, information and literacy services to the community. Similarly, libraries need to collaborate with schools and adult education centers, study organizations, local groups and societies; mass media such as local radio stations, local press and television and other assistance needed for literacy promotion.

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