

Involvement of Library Professional Associations in Development of Primary School Libraries in South East Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study is on the involvement of library professional associations in the development of primary school libraries. The aim is to examine the factors and successes in South East Nigeria. The population of this study comprises all the library professional associations in South East Nigeria. It uses structured interview and document analysis schedule to generate data. The twenty key players in the professional associations purposively sampled participated in the study. Data are presented using the thematic order of reporting, which provides the themes for the content analysis. It indicates that professional associations were very active in the development of primary school libraries in the 1980's to early 1990's. The activities that were in place were awareness campaigns, training of teacher librarians, placing of jingles, lobbying of government and collaboration with other agencies. These activities helped in school library development, but dwindled from 1990 as a result of creation of new States, retirement of key players in the associations from civil service. It concludes that selfless and dedicated efforts on the part of professionals is believed to have the power to rekindle the development of primary school libraries in South East Nigeria.

Keywords: *Primary school library, professional associations, teacher librarians, school development*

INTRODUCTION

Libraries are very crucial in any educational institution, especially primary school which is the foundation for all levels of education. Well equipped school libraries support the curriculum and provide teachers and pupils with adequate learning resources for teaching and learning. Hence it becomes imperative for school libraries to be recognized and

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developed. Recognition of the role of the school library and the movement for its development gained grounds in the 19th century with a new educational trend propounded by John Dewey. This new trend advocated for resource based learning, active learning, learner centered and hands-on approach. These ideas led to educational reforms in many countries in 1950s-1970s (Gaver, 1989). Nigeria embraced this idea and reflected it in the Nigerian policy of education in 1970, 1980 and in the revised edition in 2004. The policy recognized libraries as an instrument for achieving the goals of primary education (FRN, 2004). The new trend spurred many governments into developing the school libraries. Certain constructs were in the mind of these developers. Such areas were policy via legislation, development, personnel, infrastructure, programs and funding.

School libraries have developed in different ways in different countries. Oberg and Wright (1991) report that in Canada, library development was fostered by government agencies. The ministries of education made way for new curricular programmes and training of teachers to become teacher librarians to take charge of the library. School libraries have also been developed through international associations such as International Association for School Librarianship (IASL); this was achieved by networking, cooperation and collaborations (Tawete, 1991).

The development of school libraries in Nigeria was first advocated by library professional associations, beginning with the West African Library Association (WALA) in 1954; they made some recommendations on the development of school libraries. Later on WALA gave birth to the Nigerian Library Association, of which the Anambra State School Libraries Association (ASSLA) was a section. This section began in 1963 as the Eastern Nigeria School Libraries Association, changing its name when East Central State and later Anambra State were created (Dike, 1991).

Public libraries have also been involved in school library development through the library boards. The UNESCO seminar of 1953 held at Ibadan assigned some school library functions to public libraries. The UNESCO pilot public library project for Africa based in Enugu State funded the Eastern Nigeria Library Board to develop children's library services to schools, using book boxes and book mobile services provided by the board (Elaturoti, 2010). Obi (2002) also reports that the Anambra State Library Board and the Bendel State Library Board rendered services such as staff training, and development, supply of books and other materials through book depots and book mobile services, inter-library loan service and, consultancy services. From the 70s, most states in Nigeria had library boards enacted with responsibilities to provide library materials to schools (Elaturoti and Udoh, 2002). Ogbonna (2006) reports that the result of the three national assessments of pupils in primary schools on

level of competency in numeracy, literacy and life skills by the Federal Government, the United Nations International Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nation for Economic and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) between 1996 and 2003 reveal that there was a very low level of achievement in literacy skills. This state of affairs may be connected to the poor state of libraries in primary schools. This may have accrued from the lack of documentation and emulation of the library professional Association's effort over the years, which would give insight for the future growth and development of school libraries. It is therefore important to look at these school library associations which had given rise to functional libraries at a time. This will help in the improvement of primary school libraries that are presently in poor condition. The aims of this study therefore are:

1. To examine the factors of school library associations in South East Nigeria.
2. To find out the major contributions of library associations in the development of primary school libraries in South East Nigeria.
3. To ascertain the major challenges of library associations in developing primary school libraries in South East Nigeria.

Emergence of school library associations in Southeast Nigeria

The development of school libraries in Nigeria was first advocated by library professional associations, beginning with the West African Library Association (WALA) in 1954; they made some recommendations on the development of school libraries. Later on WALA gave birth to the Nigerian Library Association. According to Obi (2002), a resolution to have a sub-committee for the School Libraries Section in Eastern Nigeria was taken from the preliminary meeting on March 2, 1963 of the Eastern Nigeria division of the Nigeria Library Association. This occurred after two teacher-librarians became members of the executive committee and made school libraries a matter of concern. The new association held several conferences for teacher librarians at that period. They also initiated library fees in both primary and secondary schools. The Association held its final training course in August, 1966, just before the Nigerian Civil War.

In 1967, the name Eastern Nigeria ceased to exist, as there were twelve States in Nigeria. The libraries of the State division met and inaugurated on May 22, 1971 the East Central State Division of the Nigeria Library Association and the School Libraries Section was inaugurated on August 13, 1971. The creation of additional States for Nigeria in 1976 led to the members' decision to divide the association into the Anambra State School Libraries Association, and the Imo State School Libraries Association.

It was these two associations that fell into the time frame of this study as their activities were within the purview of the 1980s and made landmark achievements in the development of school libraries. They held joint activities until 1980, ending with a refresher course at Alvan Ikoku College of Education in April 1980, but then had to separate to follow the new State government structure. The Anambra State School Library Association (ASSLA) continued as a section of the Anambra State Nigerian Library Association (NLA), while the Imo State Association became a branch of the Nigerian school library Association and hosted its annual conference in Owerri in 1980.

Another round of State creation in 1991 led to further division and decline of the association, this time into Anambra and Enugu states. The ASSLA met in 1993 to try to divide assets and published one last issue of the school libraries bulletin, but after that, the association ceased to exist. The Nigerian School Libraries Association (NSLA) was formally launched in October, 1977 at the University of Ibadan following the 6th Annual Conference of the International Association of School Librarianship (IASL) held in July, 1977. Among other objectives, the Association aimed at promoting the interest of school libraries and media resource centres in Nigeria, providing a forum for persons interested in school libraries/media resource centres, and stimulating and promoting the effective utilization of libraries. Most of it aimed for the development of school libraries in all ramifications. The Association worked for the development of school libraries at national and branch levels. Another role of NSLA was the preparation and submission of guidelines for Nigerian legislation for school libraries/media resource centres to Federal and State Ministries of Education and related parastatals. The NSLA also experienced a lull in the 1990s, following States creation in 1991 and during the economic recession of that decade, no conference was held between the Sokoto conference of 1991 and that held in Ibadan in 1997.

The Anambra State School Libraries Association was resuscitated as a branch of NSLA in October 1997, in preparation for the hosting of the 14th Annual Conference of NSLA in 1998. This was initiated by Virginia Dike of University of Nigeria, Nsukka and the Anambra State library Board under Ekweozor. Likewise, C. C. Ude, Director of the Enugu State Library Board called together those who would form a temporary executive for Enugu State. The new branches both had strong ties with the State Universal Basic Education Boards (SUBEBs) in their States, as well as with the public library and Nigeria Library Association (NLA) State chapters. The conference was held in Cana house, St. Patrick's cathedral premises at Awka on 16-18 February, 1998, with the theme improving the State of Libraries in Nigerian Schools". The conference was very successful as it was reported in the association's report that about two hundred teacher-librarians attended. The Association had a general meeting of all the members

in July 1997 and February 1998 at Awka, Anambra State. It was there that an anniversary conference tagged NSLA at 21 was agreed to be held in October at the University of Ibadan. Again, these meetings helped them to champion the cause of librarianship in schools. The Awka conference of the NSLA brought the case for school libraries to the attention of the government. It was also instrumental to the rebirth of the two State branches which had been dormant since 1993. Enugu State hosted the NSLA conference at the University of Nigeria in 2000, and the branch hosted another conference in 2006. Thereafter, the association again became inactive in the State.

METHOD

The study adopted historical research design. This is because the study intended to find out past efforts geared towards the development of primary school libraries in the South East States of Nigeria. The study is conducted in the Southeast States of Nigeria comprising Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo. The targeted population for this study comprises all the agencies involved in the development of primary school libraries from 1980-2010. The accessible population comprises twenty key players who have worked or are still working in the agencies and have been very active in the development of primary school libraries during the past thirty years. These consist of key functionaries in those agencies involved in school library development, key individuals associated with the development of primary school libraries, professional associations, and nongovernmental organizations involved in Primary school library development. Fifteen agencies were identified to involve in Primary School Library Development in South East States of Nigeria between 1980 and 2010. The agencies are classified into government (4), Public libraries (library boards) (5) and professional associations (6). The sample size for this study consists of twenty people. These people have worked or are still working in the fifteen agencies identified as having played a part in the development of primary school libraries in the five states of South East Nigeria. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the number of respondents that made up the sample size for this study. This sampling technique is mostly used when specific elements which satisfy some pre-determined criteria are selected. This criterion was determined by the researcher because only those who participated in primary school library development from 1980-2010 in the agencies under study would have the required information relevant to attaining the aim of this study.

The instruments employed for collection of data include structured interview schedule and document analysis schedule. The interview schedule was a twenty-one item instrument. It was designed in 12 clusters so as to cover the research questions

for this study. The first cluster covered questions on the factors that led to the development of primary school libraries in Southeast Nigeria from 1980-2010. While the second and third cluster dealt on the contributions of these agencies in the development of primary school library. The fourth and fifth cluster were on the successes and the problems that hampered the developmental efforts of the agencies. The interview was held with individuals who have worked or still working in the agencies identified as having played a major role in Primary school library development. These people must have held strategic positions in the agencies so as to give accurate and detailed information on the issue. They include government functionaries in charge of school libraries in government agencies, key officers in professional associations and nongovernmental organizations.

The document analysis schedule was organized in such a way that the researchers perusal of the agencies document will be in line with the purpose of the study. The intention was to find out from the agencies document, their activities, programmes and projects embarked in the development of primary School Libraries in the past and present, and also find out resolutions of meetings held, contributions of the agencies in terms of donations, activities, funding etc. In addition to that, areas of collaborations were also identified with this guide. The document analysis guide helped the researcher into finding out information that one cannot get from interview.

The interview schedule and document analysis schedule were face validated by four experts in measurement and evaluation in Faculty of Education and the Department of Library and Information Science at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The validators were asked to look at the appropriateness of the wordings of the instruments, coverage and other issues as they deemed it fit for a study of this nature and to make their suggestions. Documents were subjected to external and internal criticism. This was to make sure that the documents were genuine and the information found were correct and valuable for the work. The observations and suggestions of the validators were used to produce the final drafts of the instruments.

Data were collected through examination of the agencies documents and face to face interview or telephone interview with key players in the agencies involved in primary school library development. This method was suitable as primary and secondary information is essential for this study. Data were presented using the thematic order of reporting. The purpose provided the themes for the content analysis of the data collected. This is because no issue will be left behind as the themes on the development that took place during those periods will be given good treatment.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Contributions of the school library associations to the development of primary school libraries: The school library associations worked in different capacities in the development of primary school libraries in the southeast states of Nigeria. The major areas of contributions of the school library associations were: awareness and advocacy, training, development of standards, funding, programmes and services.

Awareness and advocacy: The professional associations worked very well in the area of awareness and advocacy. Personal communication (2011) in an interview with a respondent indicates that they embarked on an awareness campaign in the 80s, this campaign took the form of readership campaign involving the use of posters, distribution of fliers to schools, giving out posters to people in the streets and even traders in the market, all to awaken the need for books and reading in the minds of people. The awareness campaign also took members to the village chiefs in some communities of Enugu State and Ebonyi State, for instance; this led to the village chiefs' donation of lands, and money as a way of helping build and equipping libraries. In addition to that, there were donations by the then Commissioner for Education, Professor Nduka Eya; these efforts were informally made by the members of the association.

In addition to these, they embarked on competitions of different types such as the best school library competitions, reading promotion campaigns, jingles and logo competitions. A respondent notes that awareness campaigns in the form of jingle and logo competitions through advert on radio and television was a very good means of establishing in the minds of people the need for libraries. The interviewees report that the then Ministry of Information sponsored the jingles after considerable persuasions by some members of the association. The researcher found in the Anambra State School Libraries's Association's minutes of meeting held in August 1980 that announcement were sought from the Ministry of Information concerning campaigns for the promotion of school libraries (ASSLA, 1992). Through these, the professional associations spread the message of the need for school libraries and their role in education. In the report from Onitsha Zone, Henry Nwokedi reports in the ASSLA Newsletter that the awareness campaign successfully saw to the establishment of forty-five (45) primary schools in Onitsha Local Government Area.

The ASSLA according to a respondent kept the cause of school libraries before the eye of governments; through lobbying and constant visitations during conferences. Apart from this, two respondents add that they conducted annual refresher courses, workshops in different zones of the association and also brought out regular

publications that covered the reports of the association's activities in the zones. This made them cover many schools even in the rural areas. In fact the association went down to the local level in the development of school libraries.

At Onitsha primary schools for instance, the Zonal Organizer, Henry Nwokedi was given assignment and relieved of classroom teaching so as to enable him carry out supervision of school libraries. He worked closely with the superintendent Clement Agunwa, and together they persuaded the Parents Teachers association (PTA) of several schools to build or set up school libraries. The Onitsha Divisional Library also was reported to have cooperated, closely on training. Publishers based in Onitsha gave book donations while individual philanthropists donated money as usual. This was the aftermath of the awareness campaigns held in the communities.

Training of personnel: The Anambra State School Library Association developed school libraries by training personnel. This was done through refresher courses which were done almost annually so as to equip the teachers to man the school library very well. These courses were held for the teachers and teacher librarians to get them acquainted with the rudiments of librarianship so that libraries would be taken charge of and also used in teaching classes. The ASSLA coordinated organization of courses with assistance from the host institutions such as the Anambra State Library Board, British Council, Alvan Ikoku College of Education and the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, as well as Publishers and Education Authorities. These institutions provided financial support, resource persons and programmes for the courses.

The State government sponsored participants while British Councils and publishers often donated bags, stationery and refreshments for the conference. The conferences helped to rekindle the spirit of professionalism and quest for library development among the teacher librarians and librarians as well. There were several instances of these refresher courses. For instance in 1980, there was a refresher course for teacher librarians organized by the Imo State Library Board in collaboration with Anambra and Imo States School Libraries Association. In 1982 there was another refresher course jointly organized by the Anambra State Library Board and the Anambra State School Libraries Association with additional support from the British Council, Enugu. Conferences were also held in 1980, 1988, 1991, 1993, and 1994 with themes such as "school library, centre for life-long learning", teaching of information skills "developing of reading habits and training teacher librarians for Nigerian school libraries". Some of these conferences were held in the Faculty of Education, and the Children's Centre Library, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, the British Council, and the State Central Library. These refresher courses and conferences were geared towards empowering

teacher librarians to man the school libraries with ease. Zonal refresher courses were also held during the 1980s. In the minutes of the ASSLA of 1982, it was discovered that in 1980, there were zonal refresher courses held in St. Paul College Awka (ASSLA, 1982). In the minutes of the associations' joint meeting of 1980 and subsequent years, it was reported that there were refresher courses held by the association in 1981 at University of Nigeria, Nsukka, 1982 at Enugu Campus of the University of Nigeria. Others are at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka in 1986, 1987, 1988 and 1989. There were also zonal non-residential refresher courses held in Abakaliki, Onitsha, Enugu, Nsukka and Awka zones.

These annual refresher courses were supported by the Anambra State Library Board and The British Council. The Public Library helped out by providing venue/hall and personnel for the refresher courses while the British council also assisted with accommodation, donation of library materials used for the refresher courses and other exigencies. According to personal communications with an interviewee, the refresher courses were to teach the teacher librarians the rudiments in librarianship, including cataloguing and classification, circulation, organizing of knowledge, library administration, how to set up libraries with a small budget, among others. The resource persons were invited from the public libraries, the Libraries of University of Nigeria, Nsukka and Alvan Ikoku College of Education, Owerri and lecturers in these universities. In support of the refresher courses, Obi (2002) provides a manual called *A Manual for School Libraries on Small Budgets* as a textbook for refresher courses and a manual for use in organizing school libraries. Mr. Onebunne in an interview commended Dorothy Obi for making the manual available in most of the schools free of charge. Other publications were the Anambra and Imo States School Libraries Association Bulletin, which was edited by V. W. Dike. The Bulletin helped to document the activities of the organization publish papers from refresher courses and promote its activities to the public.

The period of 1980's recorded an increased participation by primary school teacher – librarians in refresher courses and also an increased sponsorship of these teacher librarians by the government as well as the Association. Report from Onitsha zone indicated that 1980 saw an increased participation of teacher librarians in workshops. Henry Nwokedi in a survey of primary school libraries in the zone praised the achievement of the association in the development of 23 school libraries in the zone. The refresher courses helped the head teachers and teacher librarians to demonstrate what they have learned in their various schools.

The association also lobbied for staff to operate school libraries. Another respondent notes that in the 1980's that the association having known the importance of personnel in every establishment, lobbied the government, particularly, the State

School Board, into adopting the association's recommendation that full-time library assistants be appointed and posted to those schools with a library. During this period the Ministry established a school library section in the Ministry of Education so that the needs of the school library would be championed there, says, another respondent.

The ASSLA also lobbied government on creating a duty post for teacher librarians with an extra allowance as with games masters and others and giving half teaching load so that they would have time to manage the library. In addition to that, the association also made sure that the State government accepted library studies as an approved course to which serving teachers might use study leave to get a degree or even sponsorship. A follow-up to this is the issue of having a good library school. Part of the problem at that time was that only the University of Ibadan Library School existed then, so in order to have more librarians, the Association fought for the introduction in 1982 of Library Science as a course of study in the three post-secondary colleges of education in Anambra State. More so, the Association lobbied for the establishment in 1983 of the Department of Library Science, Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, offering a first degree course combining Library Science with an academic subject in the arts, sciences, or social sciences. This giant stride by the Association had gone a long way in producing more librarians. It has also helped in providing more resource persons for the annual refresher courses held by the association.

Development of standard: The association worked in this area through the development of a manual for school libraries. This manual was developed by Dorothy Obi and other members. According to Onebunne in an interview, these manuals were freely donated to schools. This was done to make sure that libraries developed during that period were of standard. The association in order to maintain standard went into Best School Library Competition which involves using standard criteria to check the best library, this exercise helped other libraries who did not win the competition to try hard and come up to the standard as was required then. In addition to these, the association in collaboration with the Ministries of education supervised these libraries. Through these ways standards were maintained in these libraries.

Funding: On the issue of funding, the most important thing the Association did was to lobby for a library fee from students; the attraction of gifts from collaborative agencies and hosting of activities like the school library competitions which had attracted money for the schools. The Association for instance wrote letters to agencies such as the British Council, publishers, Parents Teachers Associations, local government authorities; education authorities and some village heads for sponsorship.

The professional association lobbied the government into the re-introduction of the payment of annual library fee by pupils in both primary and secondary schools in 1981. This was given administrative backing by the Anambra State Library Board. It was at that time that there was a resolution by the Association to the government to ensure that a school library is established in every primary school and as a result approved a minimum levy of 50k per child per term, that is to say, 150k per annum. This was to be subscribed by each primary school pupil. This led to the then Anambra State government resolution in 1987 that with effect from the 1987 school year, heads of schools might retain ₦1 out of ₦3 library fee paid by each student per annum in order to make sure that library equipment was maintained. The money given to the heads of schools was not for the provision of library building and expensive infrastructure; instead it was meant for library furniture repairs, buying books and news papers and other running costs. It was through this library levy that the Anambra State Library Boards came in a cordial cooperation with the professional associations in embarking on different programmes, like the operation of Book depot services, the mobile library services and the book club among others. It was envisaged that libraries should be stocked with adequate reading materials collected from library levy during this period.

Collection development: Personnal communications with the respondents indicate that the Association occasionally donated materials to the schools. This was usually done after refresher courses as a way of making up what the schools already had. The Association's collaborations with agencies and institutions also attracted book donations to the schools on several occasions. For instance, the public libraries with the support of the ASSLA engaged in exchange programs with universities. Two respondents report that the exchange programmes were very active in the 1990s and that books gotten from exchange programmes were donated to schools thus helped boost the school library collection. A case in point is the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, which in the 1990's was vibrant in donating books to schools through the public library.

Programmes and services: The ASSLA and the Public Library joined hand to have readership campaign among schools. This was meant to promote the use of library by pupils; the winning schools were awarded prizes. There was also the campaign for the promotion of school libraries in 1988; this according to Obi was made possible by a ₦10,000.00 grants to the association from the commissioner for local government in 1988. This included competitions for campaign slogan/jingle in 1988 and association logo in 1990 and a number of radio and television broadcast.

The aftermath of this campaign was that a 10,000 library complex was launched

by junction primary school Nkalagu. In the launch, the chairman of Isieniu Local Government Area, Chief Felix Ezeke pledged 10,000 worth of books and construction of shelves while the Enugu State Library Board and Abakaliki Zonal Library donated books. On the same note, the Nigerian Primary School Nkalagu also in Ishielu local government area launched N30,000 library complex in 1993, and Niger Cement Plc donated N100,000 to the primary schools while the chairman donated 10,000.00 worth of books and the Enugu State Library Board donated a carton of assorted books (ASSLA, Minutes of meeting). There were other activities held by the ASSLA. Such was the supervisory role played by the association during the period, these entailed visiting the schools to check the state of the school libraries, such were supported by the Ministries of education as a way of making them place sanctions on deterrent officers. An interviewee says that the professional associations went to Ministries to get government backing for such exercise.

Apart from this, some members of the association went to schools and formed young readers club. For instance, in Abakaliki and Enugu, such was formed in 1980, and it was very useful in making pupils use the library. Another activity embarked on by these members was the “reading made alive and “plant a tree”. An interviewee states that some of the members encouraged children to buy books through their Parents after which their names were written on a list of donors, this strategy helped in developing the collection of the school library. Another respondent explains that the “reading made alive” was like a form of interactive forum between the pupils and some members of the association, the programme involved making the children read for 10 minutes after which each discusses what he or she read, this helped them in vocabulary development and in making use of the library resources. These services helped in the development of libraries in the States most especially in promoting good reading habit among children and also involving parents somewhat in library development, in order words, raising awareness on the need for libraries among parents and pupils.

Apart from the activities of the Professional Associations, it is imperative to note that some government agencies like the Public libraries were also in the limelight this early period in the development of libraries, but most of them especially the public libraries worked individually and collectively with professional associations in making sure that libraries were well developed. The Nigerian School Library Association also contributed to the development of school libraries in Southeast Nigeria. The Association was involved in creating awareness on the need for libraries in schools. They did this through the Organization of annual conferences on different themes related to school library development. Conferences were held for teachers at the national and state level. The Anambra State branch of NSLA was resuscitated in October 1997; it had

several meetings including executive and general. The association hosted the 14th annual conference in Cana house, St. Patrick's cathedral premises at Awka on 16-18 February, 1998 with the theme Improving the State of libraries in Nigerian Schools". The conference was very successful as it was reported in the association's report that about two hundred teacher librarians attended. The Anambra State branch of NSLA created room for institutional membership so that primary and secondary schools will benefit in all the programmes done nation wide. The association had a general meeting of all the members in July 1997 and February 1998 at Awka. It was there that an anniversary conference tagged NSLA at 21 was opined to be held in October at the University of Ibadan . Again, these meetings helped them to champion the cause in librarianship especially in schools

The NSLA Awka conference brought the case for school libraries to the attention of the government. It was also instrumental to the rebirth of the two state branches which had been dormant since 1991.

The Association held another conference in 2000 in Children's centre Library, University of Nigeria Nsukka from 23-26 February. In the conference, it was resolved and recommended to the government that a good library development policy be put in place to guide school library development in the area of infrastructure, funding, collection personnel and capacity development. Since experience all over the world has shown that where there is a viable library development, there is need for this policy in Nigeria (NSLA communiqué, 2000) .It was also resolved that library curriculum should be part of all teacher education programmes from pivotal to bachelors in education programmes.

In 2004, the Nigerian School Library Association Enugu State chapter solicited and appealed to the library unit teacher training and Curricullum Development Department, State Primary Education Board for assistance in the development of library services in Enugu State Primary and post primary school system. They also solicited to universities, publishers, churches politicians for such. The help given, to some extent, help the association in organizing seminars for teacher librarians. Also, in 2004 the Enugu State branch of NSLA had Annual meeting/seminar, the topic was on book processing while the target audience were teacher librarians of primary and post primary institutions, librarians and education officers in charge of libraries and post primary Education Zonal Office levels. The association wrote letters to SPEB, PPSMP and appealed for the sponsorship of these education officers in charge of libraries at the Local Government Education Authority (LGEA) levels to attend conferences of the association. This helped to awaken in them the need for libraries in the school system.

Another activity embarked by this organization is the organization of library

week, workshops and seminars for teachers. This helps in the training of personnel for school libraries. It was gathered from the interview that there was low response from primary schools during the 1990 library week. Respondents state that the members of this association appeal to individuals, philanthropist to fund school libraries. A good example is that of University of Nigeria Primary School Enugu campus which received donations from philanthropists and had been seriously funded by individuals including the Parents Teachers Association courtesy of the efforts of the interviewee.

Another role of NSLA is the preparation and submission of guidelines for Nigerian legislation for school libraries/media resource centre's to federal and state ministries of education and related parastatals. The next is the participation in the National conference on implementation of the National policy on education in 1979 which necessitated the statement on provision of school libraries, development in section 10 of the policy. The association also helped in Sponsoring publications in the field of school librarianship. For instance, the Nigerian School Library Journal, Association's Newsletter and many others. The association had gone to a higher level in keeping in touch with the international community by their membership in the International Association of School Librarianship (IASL) and affiliation with the Nigerian Library Association and Nigeria Union of Teachers.

Some of the interviewees state that the associations have been inactive in the late 2000, part of the reason being the inability of the members to understand one another. It was also found from the perusal of the association's documents the complaints by some officials of the association on who holds a particular office. These problems made the association inactive. There are other challenges that disrupted the associations' efforts during their time.

Challenges of school library associations in the development of libraries

The end of the decade (1990s) saw the decline of activities of the Anambra State School Libraries activities. According to one respondent, conditions were less favourable especially with the introduction of structural adjustment programme when money was diverted to other sectors like agriculture and less attention was paid to education. This crippled the financial grants to the school libraries association and this led to the non-sponsorship of teachers to refresher courses, in addition, officers were stopped giving transport money to attend meetings.

Another major blow was the creation of States in 1991. This disorganized the organs of government and the library association. This was because most of the members especially the executives went back to their States and as a result meetings could not hold as usual. As was stated by Dike (1991), meetings held was only for asset sharing.

This situation disrupted the association's activities. Assets (both material and human) were divided among the States to the extent that it affected the work force as government workers were asked to go to their States. This disrupted school library development, and according to Dike this gradually killed the Association. This situation was what led to not having any professional association activities in the former Anambra State between 1991 and 1994 when states were created except for few meetings for asset sharing.

Another factor that declined the activities was the disbandment of National Primary Education Commission (NPEC). The politics that led to disbanding of NPEC and handing over of primary school education to local government authorities also contributed. This was because teachers' salaries were held for months and they were deprived of other benefits which resulted in loss of interest to partaking in any activity that will not yield income. In addition to these, personal communications indicate that most of the key players retired from service such like Dr. Mrs. Dorothy Obi, Mr. Nwokedi, Bar. Onebunne among others. These people and many others were the life wire of the association. Their retirement from office affected the association so much as new people were not forthcoming. These problems affected the exco members so that the last exco meeting had according to Dike (2001), where the ones held is 1991 and 1993 (just for dividing assets) but that was all heard about the organization until 1998 when the two directors of library board put together new temporary executive committees for the 1995 and 1998 NSLA conference in Awka. The conference was the last ever had. As the public libraries worked hand in hand with these professional associations during the period, the public libraries were also affected in most of their activities.

The efforts of the Library Boards started declining too when the professional association's activities started dwindling. It was a period that people no more believed in selfless service, at this period there was no library fees, so the Library Boards had declined interest in the service without money. More so, in the recent period people lack interest in anything that will not benefit them in fact it was when materialism became the order of the day. All these attributed to the decline in the public libraries activities. The former director of Enugu State Library Board who served in the 1980s and 1990s was of the view that the service of the Public Library started declining when there was fire disaster at the library which got the library displaced. The library fee which was the life-wire of the services was stopped by the Ministry and government was not financing them directly, this single act stopped these activities at that time. The problems facing Nigerian School Library Association (NSLA) in developing primary school libraries are many. First is the non-payment of the association's dues by members, this crippled the activities of the association. In addition, Achebe, the Chairman, Nigeria Library

Association, Enugu State, First Vice President, Nigeria School Library Association in September 2012 in an interview lamented the poor implementation by teachers and teacher librarians of what they learnt from workshops. This has caused a lot of challenges for them in carrying on with their activities. Again government non-challant attitude to library development also set back development of libraries especially primary school libraries. At times during conferences the associations resolutions are sent to government but these communiqués were not implemented which, according to Charles Okeke hampered the association's efforts. Another problem was the non-attendance of teacher – librarians to conferences due to lack of sponsorship. The poor attendance of teachers and teacher librarians makes it impossible for the aim of the conferences to be achieved. Adding to this, is the non-challant attitude of library supervisors in Ministries of Education also sets back the organization's target. This may be due to non-library experience of these supervisors and the quest for materialism which leads them into not being thorough in their supervisory works.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is evidence from the study that primary school library development in 1980s and 1990's was very progressive due to the interest of individuals in professional associations. It brought about individuals who donated and spent time for library development; in spite of the little fund that was available that time. The interest of government and collaboration of non-governmental agencies and government parastatals helped a great deal in the development of primary school libraries. It is imperative to note that during those periods, many strategies were in place. Such strategies as campaigns for awareness on the role of libraries in the society, cooperation and partnership with different agencies, constant training of personnel and lobbying of the government. The professional associations worked very well in the area of raising awareness. This helped people at that time to appreciate the role of library. They partnered and cooperated with other agencies in carrying out most of their programmes. An example is the lobbying of government to sponsor teacher librarians for conferences, lobbying for the payment of library fees, lobbying for the establishment of another library school. The agencies during the period did not solve the issue of fund and legislation, as even the fees they lobbied for were banned but they did much in the training of personnel in the area of collection development. It was the public library that did a great deal through book loan services, book depot, book mobile and exchange service. The professional associations did not do much here. The Children's Centre Library contributed much in the area of collection development, and training of personnel.

Having seen the strategies used by different agencies, there is needed to reintroduce the strategies that worked in the past, so as to develop primary school libraries. Librarians need to join hands and renew viable associations such like the ASSLA, the NSLA and other non governmental associations to reawaken this dream. The government agencies need to create units for library matters and involve professional associations in most of their activities for libraries.

Based on the findings in this study, the study recommends that School library associations be revitalized so that they will emulate their predecessors in their efforts at developing school libraries. It is also suggested that School library associations should lobby and get their members at the hem of affairs in government so that libraries can benefit more.

- i The issue of legislation must be readdressed as this will help the development of libraries. It will make fund available for primary school library development because without fund and human capital development will be impossible as nothing will be done in the end. Therefore, professional associations should work more on that.
- ii Workshops and conferences should be organized yearly for all teachers so as to train them in using library resources in teaching and learning. This will make learning resources based and add value to libraries. Utilization of the resources in the library makes the library serve its purpose.
- iii Throughout the study, it has been discovered that lobbying the government and awareness campaign helped a great deal in developing school libraries. It will be advised that both governmental and non-governmental organization have a common ground and engage in such as it will help in developing libraries the more.

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