

The Roles of Libraries in Sustaining Quality Education in Secondary Schools: A Concept Paper

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ABSTRACT The library is the backbone of all educational institutions that provides a wide range of information resources and the right type of information resources that empowers the educational institutions to generate extremely resourceful individuals to influence progressively on nationwide advancement. This paper aims to examine more about the responsibilities of school libraries in sustaining quality education. This paper provides an overview of the roles of school libraries in sustaining quality education for secondary students. The researcher recommended that libraries should be developed in the communities so as to enhance the learners' access to the wide range of library resources. Learners will be motivated to develop the culture of doing their school work in the course of the day at school instead of studying at home merely at night.

INTRODUCTION

Kumar et al. (2015) and Ani et al. (2016) indicated that libraries and librarians can definitely link to improve the retrieval to information resources as well as services by means of the employment of ICTs in the libraries. Starting from Foundation Phase level, learners are more reliant on educators however, at High school level, students are supposed to have developed to become self-reliant and self-regulated learners. The more self-reliant the pupil is, the improved the learner. The more distinctive the learning is, the more advanced the learners become. The library enables crucial reading and it offers sufficient information to assist the learners comprehend more. Libraries offer the opportunity that assists learners develop self-determining learners (Kumar et al. 2015; O'Kelly et al. 2015).

What Library Entails

According to Islam (2004), the definition of the library is "an instrument of self-education, a means of knowledge and factual information, a centre of intellectual recreation, and a beacon of enlightenment that provides accumulated pre-

served knowledge of civilization which consequently enriches one's mental vision, and dignifies his habit, behaviour, character, taste, attitude, conduct, and outlook on life."

Library Services

According to Valenza (2010), the school library collections and school librarian should always be ready for an extensive variety of contemporary and constantly transforming technologies. To support quality education, the library resources must be various concerning the subject content so as to sustain the information and reading needs of all students as well as attracting existing and new users. In as far as books are concerned, the library should have both fiction and non-fiction of various reading level to cater to all ability groups ranging from gifted to less gifted students.

The teacher librarians role is in supporting quality education of students with the transformed and extended library services; assisting student in searching and locating materials as well as providing answers or the sources of the answer when a student come out with any information query (Kuhlthau 2004; Ani et al. 2016). The teacher librarian also play a far more strategic role in the knowledge environment, including how learning takes place and working cooperatively with both students and educators to create an environment conducive to learn (Hart 2006). The teacher librarian also play an impor-

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tant role of organising and selecting the library resources that is interesting and at the level of the students in order to encourage quality education in students (Braxton 2008).

Library Access

The library orientation to student is of utmost important in facilitating and enhancing the effective use of libraries. It is of paramount importance that students are offered library instructions so as to enable ease of access to the library collection as a whole. The libraries should change their services to accommodate the needs of their users that is, the traditional forms of the library be upgraded to virtual and automated libraries to increase access to the library resources by the students of modern days who are used to and understand technology (Jankowska et al. 2006).

Library System Support from the Education Authorities

In the school, the school manager is regarded as having a crucial responsibility in the promotion of a school library (Hartzell 2012). The principals' are supposed to be responsible for allocating the budget for purchasing library resources, library building, and employing qualified library professionals who will be able to maintain the library. On the contrary Hartzell (2002: 1) is of the opinion that *"Many principals have overlooked school libraries and school librarians' contributors to improving learners' achievements because they have not been educated to library [...]."* As a result, school managers frequently leave library capacity unused. Moreover, the development of policy has been an extensive and challenging procedure for the South African School Library professional (DOE 2002).

The Role of the Librarian

The librarians play an important role in assisting students to acquire the skills on how to utilise the school library and the information resources. Most students are not aware of the services provided in the library that can help them to achieve quality education (Jankowska et al. 2006). Many students need and want the help of the librarian to find their ways through

the library. As a result, the teacher librarians have a duty to recognise the perception of independence, meaning the capability and the request to direct the library and all its documented and electronic resources, independent of library staff (Lincoln 2002).

Library Functions and Responsibilities

According to South African Department of Basic Education (2012), both the school library and information services is responsible for providing a wide range of services to students that will be able to support their school work. For quality education to be achieved, there needs to be various information services, proper library infrastructures, facilities as well as a wide range of library resources to support the school curriculum for quality education. According to the Department of Basic Education (2012: 4), *"School library and information services should support dynamic learning programmes in the information age. They may begin in schools without libraries, but should be developed as rapidly as possible to offer relevant support to the process of teaching and learning."*

The school library and information services can be offered on various levels to enhance quality education for all namely; school library and information services at school level, at district level, at provincial level as well as at national level (DBE 2012).

Quality Education

According to Research Libraries (RL) (2011), quality education is the core of education at all the school levels. Libraries are regarded as the second class for students as a result of the responsibilities attached to the library. Quality education is multi-dimensional education, aiming at cultivating student creative spirits and achieving student's all-around development in morals, intelligence, physical, and aesthetics (Research Libraries (RL) 2011). *"Quality education is the core of college education. Its contents include moral education, scientific and cultural education, professional technology education and comprehensive quality education. Quality education means to not only enlarge students' scope of knowledge but also train their innovative abilities. Quality education is to stimulate peoples inner potentials, give full play to*

play to students initiative spirits, and develop students” (Research Libraries (RL) 2011).

Quality education goes hand in hand with the library. Libraries plays an important role in enhancing quality education. Libraries are the place with gathered human cultural information resources, and collected intelligence and experiences, and the place beginning scientific and technological improvements (Young 2011). Quality library results in quality education. For libraries to provide quality library services to its users, students should be kept up with user expectations.

According to the KwaZulu-Natal, the main library collection that the school should be provided with in order to necessitate quality education in students and learners should include dictionaries, encyclopaedia, subject literature fiction, non-fiction, charts, maps, globes, DVD’s, electronic resources (KZN Department of Education 2009).

Circumstances for Quality Education

Developing a Quality Library Collection

The library collection should be made up of various resources that is, print and non-print material. In as far as print material it will include books, such as graphic novels, comics that will be attractive enough to attract to the library both, gifted and less gifted learners. On the other hand, non-print resources should also be purchased to add value to the libraries. The non-print materials should also be relevant to support the quality of education for students.

These non-print material should include magazines, newspapers, computers, audio-visual items such as audiobooks, ebooks, DVD’s, music. Electronic resources, digital resources etc. for effective quality education to prevail the library collection should be readily available for students (Bolan 2009).

Marketing Library Services

Marketing library services is an integral part of library service because it has much to do with the fundamental principles of librarianship, which is concerned with developing good collection and user-oriented services. Information marketing skills can also be used to satisfy the needs of students (Madhusudhan 2008). The

aim of marketing is to identify the client base, as well as to determine and fill its needs, wants and demands by designing and delivering appropriate products and services. The libraries and other non-profit organization have only currently become aware of the need to market their products and services and are now being recognised as a commodity that can be bought, sold, exchanged, lent and transmitted. The library products and services should be given wide publicity making use of different marketing methods (Madhusudhan 2008). An efficient literature review was implemented in this paper by utilizing a mixture of both the background and theoretical review methods.

METHODOLOGY

The paper is a concept paper on the roles of libraries in sustaining quality education in secondary schools and its aim was explored as a result of a consistent and rational literature review. A combination of both the contextual and conceptual review methods were utilized in this paper. The researcher was able to compile this study with the help of a thoughtful and knowledgeable review of appropriate literature.

OBSERVATIONS AND DISCUSSION

It is hard to envisage an educational institution deprived of a library. A compulsory stop on campus excursions, the library is the touchable appearance of the fundamental standards and undertakings of scholarly existence. The extent of the library collection is utilised as a gauge of educational quality. Therefore, despite the fact that the contemporary years have not essentially been compassionate in as far as budget assistance is concerned, the library’s crucial role in the educational society remain unchallenged. It is also practically unorthodox to question (granted the library’s iconic position as a sign of educational standards), but just what does the library contribute to student learning, broadly defined?

As a result, libraries are the instruments for dissemination of information in each and every sector for the people. Okiy (2006) confirmed that it is understanding that permits individuals to participate importantly to nationwide advancement. She pronounced that the library is crucial to the delivery of the accurate kind of informa-

tion sources that inspires the academic organisations to yield extremely resourceful individuals to influence constructively on national development.

Most of the school libraries are now utilizing even out-of-date and unproductive procedures for preventing book losses. In as far as quality education is concerned in schools, the negligence of the protection regarding school library resources will affect the quality of the school activities. Moswela (2010) stated that “with poorly equipped libraries, students will graduate wanting in terms of knowledge and information, as there is a limit to the quality of education a teacher can provide to students in the classroom.” Moreover a well-equipped library is able to sustain the quality education as well as developing the reading culture in students (Moswela 2010).

The school librarians are responsible for maintaining the library, keeping the records of library resources borrowed, books returned as well as book losses. The librarians can also provide more than what was expected of their expert roles in libraries (Bogdan and Biklen 2003). This is consistent with literature that the library is supposed to be the centre of the school that is, dynamic and inviting in which various school or library activity related to the school curriculum takes place (Bolan 2009).

Most of the literature that focus on school libraries in the United States and Australia, describes how the roles of the school library has changed over time. The library shifted from being a place where students had access to a wide range of information and reading sources to a place in which the student/learner is the focus. School libraries are no longer depositories of information but transformational spaces where information is not only accessed, shared and stored, but challenged and created (Erikson and Markuson 2007).

CONCLUSION

A list of recommendation is suggested for the establishment of a dynamic school library service for rural schools in Thohoyandou that will be able to sustain quality education to all students. It is envisaged that a proper library service will contribute to a large extent to sustain quality education among secondary students in rural areas and give them an equal chance to develop lifelong learning skills.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is suggested that every school should be provided with a school libraries which are well equipped with a wide range of information sources. Moreover, libraries should also be developed in the communities so that the learners will be able to find a place where they can sit quietly and do their school work. More community libraries should be established to supplement poor school library services to sustain quality learning which in turn will result in quality education.

LIMITATIONS

The research on the importance of libraries, that is the school libraries, public libraries community libraries are undertaken and the recommendation are indicated but the implementation of what is being recommended is not that visible.

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