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Staffing Patterns of State Colleges of Education Libraries in Nigeria

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Introduction

The College of Education system is one of the tripods of tertiary education in Nigeria and it has the primary role of training teachers who will be awarded the minimum teaching qualification of Nigerian Certificate of Education (NCE). This certificate qualifies one to teach in junior secondary schools and technical colleges in Nigeria and it takes three years to complete. These teachers' institutions were formally known as Advanced Teachers' Colleges and were affiliated to different universities in Nigeria. They were later transformed into Colleges of Education under the supervision of one umbrella body known as the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) established in 1989. There are 64 colleges of education in Nigeria, classified according to their ownership; hence, we have 20 federal, 39 state, 1 military and 4 private colleges of education. The state colleges of education are established and funded by their respective State governments. (NCCE, 1996, NCCE, 2002).

Literature Review

Education has been described as the bed rock of every society and the tools for nation building, therefore for qualitative education to be achieved; the supply of teachers must be adequate in quantity and quality (Adegbesan 2010). Ukeje (1995) emphasized that education unlocks the door to modernization, but it is the teacher who holds the key to the door. In corroborating this, Gambo (1999) argued that "the Nigerian teachers must be intellectually, conscientiously, highly motivated and professionally sound individuals that are capable of discharging their professional obligations to the nation. As a result such individual must be ever learning, up-to-date in knowledge, skills and ideas and very adaptable to changing needs and situation.

In recognizing the vital roles of teachers, the Federal Government of Nigeria stated in its National Policy of Education that teachers' education will continue to be given a major emphasis in all the nation's educational planning efforts (Federal Republic of Nigeria 1989). Jekayinfa (2010) traced the origin of teachers' education to the beginning of western education in Nigeria when the first teachers' college known as 'The Training Institution' was established in Abeokuta in 1859 by Church Missionary Society. The school was later moved to Oyo to become the St Andrew College and later upgraded to be the Oyo State College of Education. Later on the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) was established by Act 3 of January 1989 and was amended by Act 12 of 1993 as a completion of tripod of excellence in supervision of higher education in Nigeria (NCCE online 2010). This commission provides accreditation services for Colleges of Education and maintains standards through periodic accreditation visits.

Sanusi (2006) observed that the Colleges of Education can not accomplish their tasks without the back-up of relevant and functional libraries. Hence, the National Commission for Colleges of Education mandated all the Colleges of Education to have functional libraries in order to achieve their academic purpose. These libraries have the goals of assisting their colleges by providing learning and reading resources in order to achieve the objectives of producing well molded teachers in their chosen disciplines. However, to be functional and successful in its operations, a library needs skilled, qualified and adequate human resources to make up the staff (Egunjobi 2006). Arugbayi (2009) also corroborated that the strength of a good educational programme is not the beautiful buildings, adequate equipment/facilities, sound curriculum but the quality and quantity of the staff. In other words, staff that will build up and maintain the collection of a library as well as provide various services to the students and academic staff of a college is indispensable in a library. Oriowo (2001) contended that the success or failure of a library depends on the skill and abilities of people who make up the staff. Hence, staff must be sufficient in number to meet the demand made upon it, and it should have the right mixture of qualifications and experience in order to perform to users' expectation.

Staff in colleges of education libraries is categorized into professionals (librarians), sub-professionals (library officers) and non-professionals. The duties of these three categories of staff are different but interwoven and any laxity on the part of a given group will affect the duties of others (Egunjobi, 2002). This emphasizes the importance of adequate staffing in a library both in term of quantity and quality. Egunjobi (2006) observed that the number of staff needed by a library is usually determined by the number of population to be served as well as the collection of the library, by implication whenever the number of library staff is inadequate both in number and quality, there may be tendency to over-stretch those on ground and the quality of services provided may not be adequate for the population they are meant to serve.

According to the National Commission for Colleges of Education standard for running libraries, the posts in the college library were divided into professional, sub-professionals and non-professionals posts. The NCCE standard also specified that the professionals are those who have acquired the skills and training in librarianship and processed at least a first degree or its equivalent in library and information studies and are employed on the career cadre of 'librarianship' in the college system. The sub-professionals are library officers who hold diploma certificates in librarianship; they assist librarians in the technical and service functions of the library while the non-professional posts comprise the library assistants. The professional staff of the library is also treated as academic staff in terms of appointment, promotion and other conditions of service (NCCE 1994). Although, this recognition did not come until after a protracted battle and subsequent agreement between the Academic Staff Union of Universities and the Federal Government (Egunjobi 2001).

Sequel to the above Egunjobi (2006) claimed that librarians in the college system

could not be left out in research activities; nevertheless, the librarians have lived up to expectations, competing favourably well with their teaching counterparts in publishing their research work. However, Agboola (2000) generally declared that academic libraries are the most developed in terms of funding, staffing, stock and services in Nigerian librarianship. The NCCE standard also stated that a college library shall operate with not less than three professional staff and it shall maintain a staff ratio of 1:5 (i.e., one professional to 5 non-professional staff).

Statement of the Problem

Staffing in a library set up is very important. However, as important as it is, staffing is often taken for granted or ignored in some colleges of education libraries, such that staff vacancies may not be filled, while those on ground are often over-stretch thereby making the services of the library inadequate for the community they are meant to serve. Hence this study set out to examine the staffing pattern of State Colleges of Education libraries in Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The objective of this study is to examine:

- The number of professional and paraprofessional staff in Nigerian State Colleges of Education Libraries
- The number of librarians as against the number of population served as well as against the volume of collection the libraries; and
- The quality of professional staff in terms of qualification in Nigerian state colleges of education libraries.

Scope

This study is limited to staffing patterns in state colleges of education libraries in Nigeria. The state colleges of education in Nigeria are those which receive funding from their respective state governments. Clerical and other administrative staff is not included in this study.

Research Questions

1. What is the staffing pattern of State Colleges of Education in Nigeria?
2. Are there more professional than sub professional staff in State Colleges of Education libraries in Nigeria?
3. What is the ratio of librarians to the population served and to collection of their libraries?
4. What proportions of the professional librarians are male?
5. What proportions of the professional librarians are female?
6. What is the most common qualification held by librarians in the college libraries surveyed?

Methodology

The survey method was used for this study. Questionnaire was used as the main instrument of data collection. 39 copies of questionnaires were directly mailed to the heads of libraries in all state colleges of education. The state colleges of education were selected for this study because a similar study had been done by

Egunjobi and Oyewole (2006) in Federal colleges of education in Nigeria. In order to evaluate the face and content validity of the questionnaire, the draft copies of the questionnaire was given out to four chief librarians in the college system to assist in evaluating content. The corrected and final questionnaire was sent out with self address envelopes in June 2009. However, other copies of the questionnaire were sent out to the same audience in January 2010 when the earlier ones were not returned. The items of the questionnaire addresses issues such as the number of professionals and sub professionals in each library, the qualification of the professionals, student and academic staff population, total number of staff undergoing in-service training and the types of training. Out of the thirty nine questionnaires forwarded by mail to the college librarians, only twenty copies were returned by September ending 2010. This forms 51.2% of the questionnaires sent out. The returned questionnaires were analyzed and used for this study. Data was analyzed using simple percentage calculation.

College Libraries under Survey

Twenty College of Education Libraries were examined in this study. Their date of establishment shows that all of them had being in existence for at least ten years. This reveals that they are not new establishments and therefore they are suppose to have attain a certain level of development in term of adequate facilities which including adequate and quality library staff. Their date of establishment ranges from 1970 to 1997 as shown in the table below:

Table I: List of Libraries Surveyed

	College	Year of Establishment
1	Shehu Shagari COE Sokoto	1970
2	Adeniran Ogunsanya COE, Oto-Ijanikin	1973
3	Kwara State COE, Ilorin	1974
4	COE Akwanga	1976
5	COE Katsina-Ala	1977
6	Kashim Ibrahim COE, Maiduguri	1977
7	Kaduna State COE, Gidan Waya	1977
8	COE, Ikere Ekiti	1978
9	COE, Oro	1978
10	Ogun State COE, Omu	1978
11	COE, Ekiadolor	1980
12	COE, Agbor	1980
13	COE, Gindiri	1980

14	Nwafor Orizu COE, Nsugbe	1981
15	Oyo State COE, Oyo	1983
16	COE, Hong	1983
17	Isha Kaita COE, Dustin-Ma	1991
18	COE, Oju, Oturkpo	1991
19	Adamu Augie COE, Argungu	1996
20	FCT, COE, Zuba	1997

Findings and Discussion

The College librarians were asked to indicate the volume of their collection, numbers of student and staff, number of librarians and number of library officers, number of library sections headed by professionals and sub-professionals as well as professional training opportunities available. Their responses to these issues were analyzed to answer the research questions generated earlier in this study.

Table II: Number of Professionals and Sub-Professionals

	College Library	No of Prof	%	No of Sub.-Prof.	%	Total
1	SS, COE, Sokoto	2	40	3	60	5
2	AO, COE, Oto-Ijanikin	5	84	1	16	6
3	KS COE, Ilorin	5	50	5	50	10
4	COE, Akwanga	5	27	8	73	11
5	COE, Katsina-Ala	5	19	11	81	16
6	KI, COE, Maiduguri	5	56	4	44	9
7	KS, COE, Gidan Waya	4	40	6	60	10
8	COE, Ikere-Ekiti	7	58	5	42	12
9	COE, Oro	3	50	3	50	6
10	COE, Omu	7	64	4	36	11
11	COE, Ekiadolor	3	60	2	40	5

12	COE, Agbor	8	44	10	56	18
13	COE, Gindiri	4	36	7	64	11
14	COE, Nsugbe	4	44	5	56	9
15	COE, Oyo	5	56	4	44	9
16	COE, Hong	4	57	3	43	7
17	COE, Dustin-Ma	4	29	10	71	14
18	COE, Oju, Oturkpo	5	83	1	17	6
19	COE, Argungu	3	30	7	70	10
20	COE, Zuba	3	100	-	-	3
	Total	91	47	99	53	190

Percentage of Professional and Sub-Professional Staff

Data collected revealed that in all the 20 colleges of education libraries surveyed, 91 (47.9%) librarians and 99 (52.1%) library officers were employed. This shows that on the whole, there are more sub-professionals in these libraries. Further examination showed that 8(40%) of the libraries have higher number of professionals than sub-professionals. This is in sharp contrast to the findings of Egunjobi and Oyewole (2006) which reported the reverse of this result. The study also revealed that while the number of professionals in the libraries surveyed range from a minimum of two to a maximum of eight persons, the sub-professionals range from a minimum of one to a maximum of eleven persons. The issue of more library officers (sub-professionals) than librarians in the state colleges of education libraries may be as a result of shortage of fund to employ more qualified staff as most Nigerian state governments are battling with economic melt down which is in turn having effect on their educational institutions. A closer look at the data also reveals that wherever the number of sub-professionals is high, there are usually a lower number of professionals. This indicated that some sub-professionals staffs may likely be assigned to perform professional duties due to shortage of professional staff which may not be in the best interest of the library and the library users. Moreover, going by the NCCE standard for the college libraries, which stated that a college library shall operate with not less than three professional staff and it shall maintain a staff ratio of 1:5. The interpretation is that where there is 3 librarians there must be 15 paraprofessional librarians and the total number of staff should be 20. Though, only 1(5%) of the libraries is operating with less than three professional but non of the libraries is able to maintain the recommended ratio. This shows that most of the college libraries are operating with inadequate number of library staff. In fact only the College of Education Agbor has the correct number of staff but not in the recommended ratio.

Librarians Ratio to Patrons Population and Collection Volumes

Out of the twenty colleges involved in this survey, only nineteen responded to this aspect of the questionnaire by producing data on the total volume of their

COE Zuba	5090	NS	134	NS	3	1:1696	NS
COE Nsugbe	NS	5090	264	5354	4	NS	1:1338
COE, Oyo	20404	11000	315	11315	5	1:4080	1:2263

From the table above, while eighteen libraries provided information on total collection in volumes and student population, seventeen provided information on the academic staff population. The total number of students and academic staff is taken to be the estimated total number of population served by the library. The ratio of librarians to the volume of books collection in the college libraries range from 1 librarian per 1338 volumes of books to 1 librarian per 22,779 volumes of books. In the same vein, the population served by a librarian range from 530 persons to 3110 persons. Though there is no specific standard set by the supervisory body in this regard but Agboola (1994) stated that the National University Commission recommended the ratio of one librarian to two hundred full-time equivalent students in the university libraries. Consequently, Arubayi (2009) discovered that the computed lecturer /students ratio in state colleges of education is 1:27 in 2002/2003 session. If this is so for lecturers, it is quite obvious that having one librarian serving 530 students is inadequate while having one librarian for a collection of about 22,779 volumes and 2,248 persons as in the case of Shehu Shagari College of Education, Sokoto is rather highly inadequate. The librarian will not be able to serve the population adequately and the students may not be able to access important information sources and might be missing out vital information that could have made them better equipped for the task ahead of them.

Gender Distribution

Out of the total of 91 professionals (librarians) working in the twenty colleges libraries surveyed, 63 are male while 28 are female. This is shown in the table below;

Table IV: Gender Distribution of Librarians

Library	Male	%	Female	%	Total
CEO Sokoto	2		-		2
COE, Ijanikin	1		4		5
COE Ilorin	4		1		5
COE Akwanga	5		-		5
COE Katsina-Ala	5		-		5
COE Maiduguri	3		2		5
COE Gidanwaya	3		1		4
COE Ikere Ekiti	6		1		7

COE Oro	3		-		3
COE Omu	4		3		7
COE Ekiadolor	-		3		3
COE Agbor	3		5		8
COE Gindiri	3		1		4
COE Nsugbe	4		-		4
COE Oyo	2		3		5
COE Hong	2		2		4
COE Dustin-Ma	4		-		4
COE Oturkpo	4		1		5
COE Argungu	3		-		3
COE Zuba	2		1		3
Total	63	69.2	28	30.8	91

From Table IV, while 69.2% of the librarians are male, only 30.8% are female. This indicates that librarianship in Nigerian Colleges of Education is dominated by men. In fact, seven (35%) of the colleges surveyed do not have females among their librarians at all and on the other hand, 1 (5%) of the colleges libraries do not have a male among its librarians. This implies that there is gender imbalance in staffing pattern of the state colleges of education in Nigeria. This result corroborates Arubayi (2009) report that only 21% of the lecturers in State Colleges of Education were female. In a library where only male librarians are employed it is likely that the operations of the library might be too strict and this may not attract users. On the other hand, women are known to be more passionate and through their passion may be able to relate more effectively with their users. However, a library would need the services of both the female librarians as well as that of the male librarians to provide quality services to their users more over, this will make the library more interesting.

Common Qualification held and Type of In-Service-training

Analysis of the qualifications held by librarians in the colleges indicated that 43 (47.3%) librarians have Bachelors Degree in library science, 46 (50.5%) held a Masters Degree in librarianship (MLS) while 2(2.2%) held a Doctor of Philosophy Degree. This is presented in Table V.

Table V: Qualifications Held by Librarians

Library	BLS	MLS	PHD	TOTAL

COE Sokoto	1	1	-	2
COE Ijanikin	2	3	-	5
COE, Ilorin	4	1	-	5
COE Akwanga	2	2	1	5
COE Katsina-Ala	4	1	-	5
COE Maiduguri	3	2	-	5
COE Gidanwaya	2	2	-	4
COE Ikere Ekiti	1	6	-	7
COE Oro	2	1	-	3
COE Omu	2	5	-	7
COE Ekiadolor	1	2	-	3
COE Agbor	5	3	-	8
COE Gindiri	2	2	-	4
COE Nsugbe	-	4	-	4
COE Oyo	1	3	1	5
COE Hong	2	2	-	4
COE Dustin Ma	2	2	-	4
COE Oturkpo	2	3	-	5
COE Argungu	2	1	-	3
COE Zuba	3	-	-	3
Total	43	46	2	91

It is quite commendable that majority 48(52.7%) of the librarians in the state Colleges of Education had masters degree in librarianships. This may be due to the fact that most Colleges of Education in Nigeria now require a minimum of Postgraduate degrees for lectureship and since librarians are accorded the same status with their teaching counter parts, it is compulsory for them too to acquire Postgraduate degree. Further analysis of the data reveals that out of the 48 librarians that have masters' degree, 25 (52.1%) have their background in education, 10 (20.8%) have theirs in arts/humanitarian studies, 8 (16.7%) in social

science while only 5 (10.4%) have in sciences. However, 43 librarians that have only first degree, obtained it in library science, this may be due to the fact that most of them rise through the ranks and therefore have to go through diploma program in librarianship which was made possible through in-service training. Only two librarians according to the data have doctorate degree, however, there is the tendency for more staff to progress on courses leading to the award of PhD in librarianship because librarianship in Nigerian academic libraries keeps on evolving.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study reveals that the state colleges of education libraries in Nigeria employed more paraprofessional librarians than the professionals, though none of them is operating with less than three librarians which is the minimum professional staff requirement for a college of education library, the number of librarians in most libraries is grossly inadequate for the number of collection as well as population served by such libraries. As a result, these librarians may be overstretched in performing their duties and may not be able to perform at their optimal. Also the gender gap appears to be too wide and worrisome as librarianship in state colleges of education libraries in Nigeria is highly dominated by male librarians.

In term of quality, majority of the librarians have masters degree qualification, however, there is the likelihood of an increase in the number of staff enrolling for doctorate degree since librarianship in Nigerian academic libraries is assuming a new dimension with the recent change in the status of the university librarians which make it possible for them to become professors. The study also reveals that many of the libraries staff are developing themselves through in-service training. There is no gain saying that proper staffing is essential for effective library services in state colleges of education library. It is therefore recommended that:

1. State colleges of education should try and run their libraries according the NCCE standard i.e each library should not employed below 3 professional staff and should maintain the ratio of 1professional staff to 5 para-professional staff.
2. The gender imbalance in the employment of male professional librarian should be corrected by employing more female librarians.
3. Librarian having bachelor degree should be encouraged to proceed for their master's programmes. This is important as a master's degree is now been use in Nigeria an entry point to rise through the academic career ladder in the colleges of education.
4. There is also the need to encourage the master's degree holders to proceed on PhD programme as this will help them stand shoulder to shoulder with their teaching counterparts as academic staff, and also to expand the frontier of librarianship in academic environment.

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