

**CHILDREN LIBRARIANSHIP, A RARE AND  
A UNIQUE CALLING; A CASE STUDY OF  
NURSERY & PRIMARY SCHOOLS  
IN MINNA METROPOLIS.**

**BY**

**G. A. BABALOLA**

**DEPARTMENT OF LIBRARY AND  
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY,  
FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY  
MINNA,  
NIGER STATE,  
NIGERIA.**

**E-mail: [gaboft@yahoo.com](mailto:gaboft@yahoo.com)**

## Abstract:

The paper examined children librarianship through a questionnaire tagged "children librarianship; a rare and a unique calling questionnaire" (CLARUCQ). Fifty one Nursery and Primary Schools in the three Local Governments within Minna Metropolis were used for the nursery. The findings show that there is no single qualified librarian in all the schools. It also shows that more males are involved in the running of the libraries. The paper recommends that the Government should henceforth make the establishment of library a pre-condition for the registration and approval of nursery and primary schools in the country and that libraries and other information professionals would enjoy enhanced salaries.

## Introduction:

A librarian put succinctly, is an individual that is professionally trained and called to mediate between the information resources (such as print and non-print materials) and the users (patron). A children librarian can be described as an individual who is professionally trained as expert in child development and parenting role; who at the same time plays the role of a guide between the information resources (print and non-print) and the children.

Oxford Advanced learner's Dictionary (2006) defines a child as a young human who is not yet an adult; a son or a daughter of any age. However, for the purpose of clarity, a child will be defined in this paper as a young human of between two months and 10 years old.

Children exhibit some behaviour that make working among them an arduous task. Some children will be excessively quiet; that will be difficult to know what is in their mind or what they really want to do or what they need. Such children normally put their guide, teacher, counselor or librarian in a very difficult and tight corner. Other children would engage in excessive weeping without any cause. The teacher or the guide may be provoked to punish them when all avenues of peace have been exhausted. Some children are naughty, stubborn, rude and hard to please. However, a few are loving, kind and pleasant. Some of these highlighted characteristic features that children exhibit make working among them not only difficult but a rare and a unique calling. In religious circles, people hardly want to surrender themselves to work in the children section. Also in secular institutions like the nursery and primary schools, it is hard to find people who can endure enough and be empathic with the children's situation. The case is not different even in the families. Many parents prefer sending their children to school than keeping them at home. Such parents are of the view that there would always be peace at home when their children leave for school. Others would still send children out during holidays for holiday coaching. Some go to the extent of putting toddlers in schools in form of boarding house (for these growing children). To such parents, asking children to leave home would give them some breathing space at home. It should, however, be stated that the teacher and the librarian that such children are being sent to are also human beings. If they are not loving, caring and have little knowledge about the needs of the growing children, what happens to such children that their own parents have abandoned in the hands of librarians and teachers in secular schools? Therefore, it goes without saying that children's librarian and others who are saddled with the responsibility of working among children should possess some special qualities which others may not have possessed. This is because their assignments are tasking and need special and unique attention.

For the children's librarian to have success story in his given assignment it is mandatory for him to possess the following qualities amongst others. He (she) should be somebody who can maturely pocket his own myriads of problems and cheerfully attend to the varying needs of his (her) clients (children). The children's librarian who preferably should be a woman must possess the mother's heart. She (he) must be caring and deeply in love with the children to the extent that the children may find it difficult to get the dividing line between the parental care that they enjoy at home and the parenting role of a trained children librarian. Also, the librarian must see his (her) assignment as a great challenge which requires total commitment and dedication. He (she) must be conscientious, diligent, versatile and not easily worn out. He must be a good listener who can painstakingly and lovingly attend to myriad of complaints from his clients (children). He should be able to maturely treat issues as they come, in such a way that the children would not only know that he loves them but would ensure that love radiates among the children too.

A playful character and disposition are indispensable. He must not be self-centered but child-centered; not easily angered, not easily provoked, not easily irritated but always smiling and tolerant. He must be childish in heart though mature in mind. He should be an epitome of love, and patience.

He must be a good example for children and a role model. He should be a good teacher; and a matured counselor who is apt to instruct, explain, teach, illustrate etc. Finally, he should genuinely and sincerely empathize with the children's condition and situation.

Encyclopedia of library and Information Science (1970) while alluding to the sterling qualities that children librarians must possess opined that specialist in library work with children, must have a background in child psychology and an understanding of the educational programs; a wide knowledge of children's books and other library materials as well as a sincere and unsentimental interest in the child as an individual.

ALSC (1999) while alluding to some indispensable and fundamental qualities which a children librarian must possess as pre-requisites for effective library services outlined the

following. Effective library services entail a broad range of experience and professional skills which have been broadly categorized into the following areas: Knowledge of the client group; administrative and managerial skills; communication skills; materials and collection development; programming skill; advocacy, public relations and networking; and professionalism and professional development.

Anagbogbu (2002) while unfolding the inalienable sterling qualities of a children counselor and by implications a good children librarian, identified the following. A good children counselor must be: kind, friendly, patient, cheerful, trustworthy, humble, reliable, responsible, honest, open, disciplined, hardworking, warm, intelligent, sensitive, tolerant, empathic, genuine and accommodating.

Fayose (2003) while contending on the indispensability of personnel as the bedrock for the success or failure of children librarianship opined that their personal qualities and vision of life as well as their educational background will go a long way to affect their success in the job. Fayose (2003) argued further that the services need one who understands and loves the children. The services need somebody who is loving, pleasant and firm; and who at the same time can rationally, effectively and wisely combine academic knowledge, good personal attributes with demeanour.

Oser (2006) sums up the new trend of children librarianship by placing the children's librarian in daily position of a child- development expert and parenting expert.

The researcher designed a questionnaire tagged children librarianship awareness and a unique calling questionnaire (CLARUCQ), copies of which were distributed to pre-primary and primary schools in Minna.

The research assumed the following.

1. There are no children's librarians in most nursery and primary schools in Minna.
2. There are no female children's librarians in most schools
3. There is a dearth of professional librarians in most schools
4. There is lack of vision for children librarianship in terms of provision of the infrastructural facilities, materials and methods of imparting knowledge.

The following research questions are asked.

1. In what quantity are children librarians found in most nursery and primary schools in Minna?
2. To what level are there female children librarians in most schools?
3. To what degree can it be ascertained that there is a dearth of professional librarians in most schools?
4. To what degree can it be determined that there is lack of vision for children librarianship in terms of provision of infrastructural facilities, materials and methods of imparting knowledge?

**Statement of the Problem:**

The children of today will become the adult of tomorrow. The tiny, minute and insignificant children of today will become the power brokers, decision makers and mighty leaders of tomorrow. If the adult should say because of the troublesome nature of the children, they will not work among them nor provide any virile library services for them, are the adult not mortgaging the future of our nation? Therefore, training our little ones especially in the use of library resources is going to help them later in their adult life. Therefore, selecting the best human and material resources for library services for the children is an arduous task that must be done. Our failure as individuals and as a nation in this noble assignment can bring colossal, permanent and irreparable damage to the educational fortunes and overall development of our country.

## Data presentation:

The data are presented and analyzed with simple statistical tools like tables and percentages.

Table 1. List of schools in Minna West.

Name of School	Date of establishment	Presence of Library	Qualification of librarian	Sex of Librarian
1. Umaru Audi memorial school, Minna	1958	Nil	Nil	Nil
2. Tunga primary school, Minna	1986	Nil	Nil	Nil
3. Gwan Gwap primary school, Minna	1978	Found	NCE	MALE
4. Barkinsale primary school, Minna	1978	Found	OND, Lib. sc.	MALE
5. Limawa model primary school	1976	Nil	Nil	Nil
6. 1,2,3 primary school Minna	2001	Nil	Nil	Nil
7. Dr Umaru Farouk primary school, Minna	1938	Nil	Nil	Nil
8. Kuyanbana primary school, Minna	1947	Nil	Nil	Nil
9. Waziri primary school, Minna	1939	Nil	Nil	Nil
10. Marafa primary school, Minna	1929	Nil	Nil	Nil
11. Dutse Kura primary school,	1988	Nil	Nil	Nil
12. Angwan Zaka primary school	1976	Nil	Nil	Nil
13. Nikangbe primary school	2000	Nil	Nil	Nil
14. Kwasau primary school Minna	2000	Nil	Nil	Nil
15. Kwarkwata primary school	1975	Nil	Nil	Nil
16. Dibo UBE	2002	Nil	Nil	Nil
17. Barkinsale nomadic primary school	2001	Nil	Nil	Nil
18. Gldan Alura nomadic primary school	2001	Nil	Nil	Nil
19. Nikangbe nomadic primary school	1998	Nil	Nil	Nil
20. Makama primary school Minna	1947	Nil	Nil	Nil

Table 2- Children resources that are available in Minna West Schools

Name of School	Resources							
	Non-fiction	Periodicals	Comics	Reference books	Fiction & creative work	Charts, posters & visuals	AV in film	Toys & play materials
1. Umaru	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
2. Tunga	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Nil	Avail
3. Gwang	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Nil	Nil
4. Barkissal	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Nil	Avail
5. Limawa	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Avail	Nil	Avail
6. 1,2,3	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Avail	Nil	Avail
7. Drumaru	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Nil	Nil
8. Kuyanba	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Nil	Avail
9. Waziri	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Avail	Nil	Avail
10. Marafa	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Nil	Nil
11. Dutsen	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
12. Anguwa	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
13. Nikangbe	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Nil	Nil
14. Kwasau	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Nil	Avail
15. Kwarkwata	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Nil	Avail
16. Dibo UBE	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Nil	Avail
17. Barkinsale	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Nil	Nil
18. Gidan	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Nil	Nil
19. Nikkangbe	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Nil	Nil
20. Matama	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

Table 3- Methods of imparting knowledge in Minna West schools.

Name of School	Methods										
	Play method	Story telling	Showing pictures	Relaying inform disc	Reciting poem	Direct teaching	Book talk	Book mobile services	Film show	Creative drama	ICTs
1. Umaru	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
2. Tunga	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
3. Gwang	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
4. Barkinsale	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
5. Limawa	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
6. 1,2,3	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
7. Dr Umaru	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
8. Kuyanba	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
9. Waziri	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
10. Marafa	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
11. Dutsen	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
12. Anguwa	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No
13. Nikangbe	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
14. Kwasau	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
15. Kwarkwasa	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
16. Dibo	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
17. Barkin	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
18. Gidan	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
19. Nikkan	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
20. Matama	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No



Table 4- List of schools in Minna East

Name of School	Year of establishment	Presence of library	Qualification of librarian	Sex of Librarian
1. Angwan Kaje primary school, Minna	1984	Nil	Nil	Nil
2. madaki primary school, Minna	1946	Nil	Nil	Nil
3. chiroma primary school, Minna	1964	Nil	Nil	Nil
4. IBB primary school, Minna	1936	Found	Schl. Cert.	Male
5. Niger Baptist primary school Minna	1911	Found	Schl. Cert.	Male
6. Nakariya comprehensive nurser and primary school Minna	1992	Nil	Nil	Nil
7. total child nur/prim top med Tunga	2001	Nil	Nil	Nil
8. crown international nur & prim, maitumbi	1989	Nil	Nil	Nil
9. Goldmath Nur/Prim schl, Agwan Kaje	1999	Nil	Nil	Nil
10. OBEM Nur/prim schl, Timber shed	1994	Found	OND Lib. Sc.	Female
11. St. Andrews nur/prim schl, sabogari	1952	Nil	Nil	Nil
12. Hudal islam Angwan daji	1990	Nil	Nil	Nil
13. Hope Nur/prim schl, Minna	2000	Nil	Nil	Nil
14. Ahmadu bahago Islamic institution bypass	1995	Nil	Nil	Nil
15. Nural Islam (MSMS) Nur/prim schl, kuta rd	1994	Found	Schl. Cert	Male
16. Madasutul hayatul Islamic school	1990	Nil	Nil	Nil

Table 5- Children resources that are available in Minna East

Name of School	Resources							
	Non-fiction	Periodicals	Comics	Reference books	Fiction & other Material	Charts, posters & other visuals	AV in film	Toys & other play materials
1. Angwan	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
2. madaki	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Nil	Nil
3. Chiroma	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Nil	Nil
4. IBB	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Avail	Nil	Nil
5. Niger	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Avail	Avail	Nil
6. Makaiya	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Nil	Nil
7. total	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Avail	Nil	Nil
8. Crown	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Avail	Nil	Nil
9. Goldmath	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Nil	Nil
10. OBEM	Avail	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Avail	Nil
11. St Andrw	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Avail	Nil	Nil
12. Hudai l	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Nil	Nil
13. Hope	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Nil	Nil
14. Ahmadu	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Nil	Nil
15. Nurul	Avail	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Nil	Nil
16. Madas	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Nil	Nil

Table 6: Methods of imparting knowledge in Minna East Schools.

Name of School	Methods										
	Play method	Story telling	Showing pictures	Relaying inform disc	Reciting poem	Direct teaching	Book talk	Book mobile services	Creative drama	Film show	ICTs
1. Angwan	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
2. madaki	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
3. Chirom	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
4. IBB	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
5. Niger	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
6. Makariy	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
7. total	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
8. Crown	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
9. Goldma	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
10. OBEM	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
11. St And	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
12. Hudai	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
13. Hope	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
14. Ahma	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
15. Nurul	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
16. Madra	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No

Table 7- List schools in Bosso

Name of School	Date of establishment	Presence of library	Qualification of librarian	Sex of Librarian
1. Best way N/P school	1999	Nil	Nil	Nil
2. tundun Fulani primary school	1978	Nil	Nil	Nil
3. topaz international school	2004	Found il	NCE	Female
4. Zarumai model school	1976	Found	AL	Female
5. Ferma school	1995	Nil	Nil	Nil
6. Tundun Fulani Gaba, UBE pry sch	2000	Nil	Nil	Nil
7. Solid foundation	1988	Found	Teacher	Male
8. Qualit Nur/Pry Schl	1988	Found	Nil	Nil
9. University staff school	1987	Found	School Cert.	Male
10. Abu Turab Islamic schl	1994	Found	B. Ed..	Male
11. Wasika Nur/Pry schl	1985	Nil	Nil	Nil
12. Unity Nur/pry schl	1989	Nil	Nil	Nil
13. Dr yahaya Bawa pry schl	1950	Nil	Nil	Nil
14. Hasha Nur/pry schl	1996	Found	Nil	Nil
15. Kinkin Nur/Pry schl	2001	Nil	Nil	Nil

Table 8- Children resources that are available in Bosso Schools

Name of School	Resources							
	Non-fiction	Periodicals	Comics	Reference book	Fiction and other creative work	Charts, posters & other visual	AV in film	Toys & other play materials
1. Best way	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Nil	Nil
2. Tundun Fula	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
3. Tipaz	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail
4. Zarumai	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail
5. Ferma	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Nil	Nil
6. Tudn F. UBE	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
7. Soil Fou	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Avail	Avail	Nil	Avail
8. Quality	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail
9. University	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail
10. Abu Turab	Avail	Nil	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Nil	Avail
11. Wasika	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
12. Unity	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Nil	Nil
13. Dr yahay	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
14. Hasha	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail	Avail
15. Kinkin	Nil	Nil	Nil	Avail	Avail	Avail	Nil	Nil

Table 9- Methods of imparting knowledge in Bosso Schools.

Name of School	Methods										
	Play method	Story telling	Showing picture	Relaying info on disc	Reciting poems	Direct teaching	Book talk	Book mobile services	Film show	Creative drama	Use of ICTs
1. Best way	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
2. Tundun Fula	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
3. Tipaz	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
4. Zarumai	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
5. Fema	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
6. Tudn F. UBE	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
7. Solid Found	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
8. Quality	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
9. University	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
10. Abu Turab	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
11. Wasika	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
12. Unity	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
13. Dr yahay	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
14. Hasha	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
15. Kinkin	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No

## Analysis of data:

From the data presented above the following analysis can be made. In Minna West, out of the 20 nursery and primary schools considered only two (10%) have libraries; only one out of these two schools has a librarian who has Ordinary National Diploma (OND) in librarianship; the other person has National Certificate in Education. The two Librarians are male (table 1).

None of the schools in Minna West made provision for children resources in form of non-fiction, periodicals, comics, reference books, audiovisuals in films. 15 (75%) out of the 20 schools made charts, posters and visuals available; while only nine (45%) make toys and other play materials available (Table 2.).

None of the 20 schools in Minna West imparted knowledge to the children through disc, book mobile service and Information Communication Technologies (ICTs). 11 (55%) out of the 20 schools imparted knowledge through story telling & creative drama; 13 (65%) imparted knowledge through direct teaching while eight (40%) engaged in play way method (Table 3).

In Minna East out of the 16 schools used only four (25%) have libraries, and one out of those four have a librarian with Ordinary National Diploma. The remaining three are holders of School Certificate. Three out of these four school Librarians are male. (Table 4)

None of the schools in Minna East made provision for children in terms of periodicals, comics, reference books, toys, and other play materials, only 2 (12.5%) out of these 16 schools that were served with copies of questionnaire made non-fiction materials available while only 3 (18.8%) out of the 16 schools made fiction and other creative works available. (Table 5)

None of the 16 schools in Minna East imparted knowledge through: relaying information on disc, reciting poems, direct teaching and use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). Only three (18.8%) out of the 16 schools made use of playway method, four (25%) engage in story telling while only one (6.3%) showed pictures. (Table 6)

In Bosso Local Government, out of the 15 schools that were used seven (47%) have libraries, five out of these seven schools that have libraries have librarians. But, none of the five librarians have any relevant certificate in librarianship and information science. Out of the five librarians three are male while the remaining two are female. (Table 7)

Six (40%) out of the 15 schools in Bosso made materials available for children in form of comics, non-fictions, five (33.3%) made materials available as information in audiovisual, while seven (46.7%) made children materials available in form of toys and other play materials (Table 8)

10 (66.7%) out of the 15 schools in Bosso imparted knowledge through playway method; 11 (73.3%) engaged in story telling and showing of pictures, 7 (46.7%) made use of book talk while only 1 (6.7%) use Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in impartation of knowledge (Table 9)

### **Discussion of Findings:**

From the data presented and analyzed in this paper, the following discussion can be made.

Out of the 51 schools that were served with copies of the questionnaire only 11 (21.6%) have libraries and librarians. Out of the 11 librarians only two (18.2%) have Ordinary National Diploma in Librarianship. In fact, those two cannot be regarded as librarians. They are just library officers. They lack professional training and other attributes that professional librarians must possess.

In Nigeria, the minimum qualification for admittance into librarianship is a Bachelor's Degree in Library Science from any recognized university in the country. In America, a Master's degree is the minimum qualification for admittance into librarianship. (Nwalo, 2000). In other words, none of the 51 nursery and primary schools have qualified librarians according to the Nigerian Library Association yardsticks. Those two schools only have library officers whose knowledge and experience are limited. The remaining nine schools that have people that go by the name "librarians" do not have any librarians. The qualifications of the "so called" librarians are at complete variance with the Nigerian Library Association Standard. For example, those with National Certificate in Education and Bachelor Degree in Education are better placed in the classroom than library. Those who have school certificate would have been given the job of library attendants or clerical staff in the library. In essence, if we go by the full import of the terms Librarian and librarianship as enunciated by Nwalo (2000), Thirmoorthy (2000)

and Small Library Management Training Program (2004). None of those people that are saddled with the responsibilities of overseeing books in the 11 libraries are librarians.

Out of the 11 people that are saddled with the responsibility of looking after books only three (27.3%) are female while the remaining 8 (72.79%) are male. It is saddening to observe that at this formative age of the children in nursery and primary schools, where they need parental care most, majority of the people that are willing to work with children are men. It should however, be emphasized that though both paternal and maternal care are important, in the life of a growing baby, that of the mother outweighs that of the father in all respect. It would have been a thing of joy and an encouraging development if most of the people that take up children work with the children in our elementary schools are women. However, according to Fayose (2003) such women must have been gifted and have a genuine calling and conviction to work among children whatever be the odds.

If education will be made seamless to play, and normal family living for these babies and toddlers in this crucial and sensitive stage of their lives, library services for them must of a necessity be placed in the hands of mature, and loving mothers who though advanced in age are child-like in disposition. Children at home normally embrace their mothers than fathers. In the same vein, placing the work of children librarianship in the hands of genuine and loving mothers in the schools cannot be over emphasized. In all other nursery and primary schools all over Nigeria, if library services for our children would thrive and if the country is going to bequeath a befitting legacy to her future generation, library services for children ought to be placed in the hands of kind, gentle, loving and mature women who not only have training in librarianship but have deep interest in the children themselves. The fact that few women (27.3%) are saddled with the responsibility of providing library services for children attest to the assertion that children librarianship is a unique and a rare calling. This authenticates the above claim of Fayose (2003).

Moreover, the fact that there are only 11 schools with libraries out of the 51 schools confirms the claim that there is little or no vision for library services for children in these nursery and primary schools. But, it should be asked if the 11 schools that have libraries are of standard as enunciated in the National Policy on Education (2004)? If the library is portrayed as the heart of the education enterprise in the National Policy on Education, then those schools without library buildings at all are like bodies without hearts; lifeless and dead.

The fact that many of the nursery and primary schools in Minna do not have toys and other play materials contradicts the National Policy on Education which stipulates playway method as an indispensable means of passing instruction to those babies and toddlers especially at this sensitive stage of their lives. All other nursery and primary schools in Nigeria where toys and other play materials are not available are doing a great dis-service to the educational system of our country, Nigeria. They are also mortgaging both the educational and overall developmental goals of our country, Nigeria rather than engaging in simple methods like playway, story telling, showing pictures, relaying information on disc etc which are methods of fascinating, captivating and arresting the interest of these toddlers and the babies. Most of the schools that were used for this research engaged in direct teaching. It should be emphasized that direct teaching is anti-thetical to the laid down methodology of passing instruction at this elementary stage of life as enunciated in the National Policy on Education. It is only through play and love avenues that children can learn and explore the limitless possibilities in their environment. The National Policy on Education also emphasized the indispensability of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) as veritable means of passing current and up-to-date information in this electronic age. It also portrayed the virtual library as a platform for sharing knowledge which is aimed at rejuvenating Nigerian schools through the provision of current books, journals and other information resources. But, how will those 40 schools and all other nursery and primary schools in Nigeria that are presently without visible libraries fare in this electronic information revolution that has pervaded almost all activities of mankind in the present millennium. How can pupils that have not got access to physical library building and collection have access to the virtual library? It would have been better to allow these children to go from simple to complex, concrete to abstract known to unknown etc. Therefore, those schools that are still engaging in old style of passing knowledge which is teacher-centered ought to have known by now that the world is operating on a new and better pedestal where children's interest is central to all programmes, activities and planning in the education sector. All teachers and librarians should embrace the playway method as veritable means of kindling the educational light of our elementary schools in Nigeria.

## **Conclusion:**

From the foregoing discussion it can be concluded as follows.

1. The survey has revealed the inadequacy of library provision in most of the schools used.
2. Library officers and other staff members whose professional callings have no bearing with librarianship were saddled with the responsibilities of children's librarianship in few nursery and primary schools in Minna; whereas the whole services were not committed into the hands of anybody in most schools
3. Few women are saddled with the responsibility of children's librarianship compared with their men counterparts who are more in number
4. There is lack of vision for children librarianship in Minna metropolis as evidenced in lack of infrastructural facilities in terms of library buildings, dearth of materials for children services and out-dated methods of imparting knowledge.

## **Recommendations:**

From the foregoing discussion the following recommendation can be made.

1. The Government at all levels should henceforth make the establishment of library as a pre-condition for the registration and approval of nursery and primary schools in the country. It is important for the Inspectorate Divisions of Education Ministries to visit sites where new schools are to be approved so as to ascertain that there are provisions for standard libraries before any approval for such schools are given henceforth. Old schools that are without libraries should be given a deadline of say two to three years to either have libraries or be closed down. The Government should place librarians on equal salary scale with other professional colleagues like doctors, lawyers, architects etc. In fact, in the present information age when the role of librarians and other information managers are in the limelight than ever before it is not out of place if librarians and other information managers are placed on a special salary scale far and above other professionals like doctors, engineers, architects etc. This is because, it is not easy to do anything in this age without information; and librarians are mediators of this crucial and indispensable commodity (information).



The donation of library buildings into our elementary schools in Nigeria Education by the Education Trust Fund is a welcome development. This gesture is good and should be extended to all nursery and primary schools in Nigeria. Philanthropic organizations and Non-governmental organizations who love children should also give generously towards establishing libraries in our elementary schools.

3. More personnels should be encouraged to go and take up children's librarianship as a profession. Specifically, women who are loving, kind-hearted and caring should be given all round encouragement to go and take up the services of children librarianship. The Government and private groups can give financial backing to such women as a morale booster on their chosen noble assignment. Men who are kind and who are gifted in children librarianship and children counseling should be encouraged likewise to take up work among children.

4. The Parents-Teachers Associations, the old students, lovers of school and children and all other interested groups should generously donate current and up-to-date children resources into our nursery and primary schools in Nigeria. This will help to reduce to the bearest minimum the problem of dearth of children resources in our elementary schools in Nigeria. These resources range from print to non-print media.

5. Training of librarians and other information professionals in the country should be treated as a matter of urgent national importance. The dearth of professional librarians in most nursery and primary schools in Minna and by extension in the whole country calls for immediate and massive training of librarians. More library schools should be opened and more capable professionals should be employed to train these students. This will go a long way to solve the problem of dearth of librarians in our schools within a short period of time.

6. Nation wide re-training of head-teachers and librarians in nursery and primary schools is strongly recommended. Since the above category of people are saddled with the responsibility of nurturing and training these young babies and toddlers, their training should be handled with all seriousness that it deserves than ever before. They should be exposed to the fact that their role is like that of a farmer who by any slightest mistake can destroy the tender but precious flower in the garden. The children of today are the precious flowers in the national garden of development and advancement. Any stupid mistake that is made in this formative stage of their lives can be fatal, total, colossal and irreversible. Hence, training of children at this level should be handled with utmost care. Exposing head teachers, teachers, teacher librarians and librarians in primary schools to practical courses on child psychology and making them go through periodic workshop and training will go a long way to mould the lives and methods of these life-moulders. The recently concluded nation wide re-training of primary school teachers which emphasized the need for: a change of methodology, approach, orientation; better interaction between teachers and children; and the use of abundant instructional resources etc is a right step in the right direction. (National Teachers Institute, 2006) such training should be done annually to keep the experience fresh in the minds of the trainees. This will go a long way to affect the materials that are used as media of instruction and the methodology of imparting knowledge.

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