Teachers and the Use of Textbooks in Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State: Implications for Quality Assurance

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Abstract

At all levels, teachers are known to take the center place of educational endeavors. Recommended textbooks with the accompanying curriculum form a major resource for their success. With the textbooks the teachers keep in focus prescribed learning experiences and subject contents required to meet set academic standards and assure quality. The study examined the extent to which recommended textbooks were being adhered to in the teaching of core subjects in senior secondary schools in Rivers State. A sample of 100 teachers was selected using stratified random sampling technique, from a population of 268 schools. A validated 16-item self-developed questionnaire with a reliability coefficient of 0.85 was used for data collection. Means and simple percentages were used to answer the seven research questions. The alternate hypothesis was accepted. The findings showed up to 60-87% adherence to recommended textbooks in the schools. Closer

instructional supervision was recommended to ensure compliance in all the schools.

Keywords: teachers, recommended textbooks, implications, secondary schools and quality assurance

Introduction

Every formal educational endeavor is always guided by planned activities. The programme of activities describes what the school is attempting to teach and consist of the lessons/academic contents to be taught or covered during the planned period. This document is referred to as the curriculum. It consists of the totality of all planned student experiences arranged in a sequence of steps or stages for teaching and learning of the specific contents. Where the educational programme is in stages, and participants are to progress from one stage to the other, the curriculum is also compartmentalized in the same manner. Each part of the curriculum document that outlines everything to be covered in a class or stage is referred to as a syllabus. A syllabus is a serious document which guides both instructors and learners alike on the expectations, depth and requirements of a subject or course. It clearly spells the duration and the various engagements/involvements that are required of the operators and participants of the programme. A non-adherence to its provisions is likely to affect the implementation and ultimately not assure the quality of the outcomes or products of the programme. Thus a syllabus is a plan that states exactly what students should learn in each subject. It is expected that every school programme should have a syllabus and its content should reflect the body of knowledge that would produce or provide mastery of the skill, subject or profession to be learned.

Curriculum and syllabus are designed by experts. Oates (2010) has explained that a full curriculum defines aims, content, pedagogy, assessment and evaluation. In designing curriculum and syllabi, experts select and organize various learning experiences relevant to the age, needs

and aspirations of the targeted learners and also recommend resources necessary for the effective implementation of the design. One of the foremost of the resources for effective implementation of the curriculum and syllabus are the textbooks recommended by the designers. This has made the textbook one of the commonest resource in the classroom. Jabberwocky in TeacherVision (2019), has defined a textbook as a collection of the knowledge, concepts and principles of a selected topic or course. It is usually written by one or more teachers, college professors, or experts who are authorities in the specific field and is considered to be a collection of the knowledge, concepts, and principles of a selected topic. Most textbooks are accompanied by teacher guides, which provide the teacher with suggestions about areas of emphasis, examples, and activities for the benefit of learners all through the academic year. Oates (2010) further described the structure of the textbook as a physical manifestation of the educational system and structure of knowledge, which has starting and ending points but is arranged by themes. Some of the identified benefits of the textbooks in literature include that:

- textbooks are especially helpful to beginning teachers because the materials in the syllabus are covered and the design of each lesson are carefully spelt out in details.
- textbooks provide organized units of work. They give all the plans and lessons one needs to cover a topic in some details.
- they provide a balanced and chronological presentation of information.
- they give a balanced sequence of teaching procedures that says what to do and when to do it, thus having everything spelt out.
- details in textbooks are usually based on the latest research and teaching strategies in the subject.
- textbooks are useful to the learner and even parents. It is also an extremely necessary resource to the instructors and their instructional supervisors.

The need for the use of text books as a resource in the teaching and learning process in schools is thus synonymous with education itself and so cannot be overemphasized.

These benefits notwithstanding, students and even teachers have been known to reject some textbooks, claiming that they are uninteresting and fail to arouse their interest. Typically, textbooks are known to be compendiums of large masses of data or volume of information, this sometimes make students find them difficult to understand both the content and the relevance of such to their personal lives. Similarly, when teachers over rely on textbooks, they do not consider other aids which could make their lessons monotonous. Some teachers however, reject a textbook approach to learning, claiming that textbooks are outdated or insufficiently cover a topic or subject area. Curriculum experts usually overcome this limitation by constantly reviewing curriculum and accompanying textbooks. Other weaknesses of textbooks that have been identified include that:

- Where used as a sole resource, students may only see one perspective of the concept or issue.
- If textbooks are old and outdated information shared with students will not be current and relevant in present day situations.
- Students tend to see learnings from textbooks as simple collections of facts and figures.

Textbooks in themselves as has been shown are not perfect but non-the-less, are very important tools in the teacher's arsenal. Teachers should continue to see them as the blue prints, guides and outlines that curriculum experts meant them to be for their class engagements.

Research has shown that different countries have different approaches to the use of textbooks. Comparing some countries, Oates, explained that in countries like Finland and Singapore, it is mandatory to use the State textbooks. Textbooks are much more central to the educational system of these two countries and their teachers are trained to understand the underpinning learning model upon which the textbooks are based.

Their position being that textbooks help pupils understand the totality of and progression in each area of their education as it spells out what they have done and what more needs to be done. In the UK on the other hand, research has shown an "anti- textbooks-feeling". Oates, explains that this may be due to the digital age where some persons regard textbooks as obsolete. He went on to present evidence of undergraduates accessing more information digitally but remembering less of such information. Adding that this easy access to obtaining information maybe resulting in less effort to retain them. Making a case for textbooks, he added further that information from digital sources have a far less tangible structure than textbooks and students may find it more difficult to mentally construct their mental map of a discipline. In the Nigerian educational system, textbooks are recommended as part of the curricular provisions. To encourage their usage, teachers' guides are produced and distributed free of charge to schools by the appropriate agencies of government.

As good as textbooks do appear on the surface, many authors do agree that they do have their short comings as discussed, therefore, teachers as part of their training have to learn to make decisions about how they are to use them. Textbooks as highlighted are part and parcel of the syllabus, curriculum and learning process. Neglecting its use or non-adherence to the ones that have been prescribed by curriculum experts, could impede the successful implementation of school programmes. In the wake of increased online information searches by some teachers currently, fear is being entertained by some stakeholders that ill-informed teachers may abandon recommended textbooks and rely solely on sources obtained on the internet to prepare for their class engagements. Such practice if not closely monitored could jeopardize curriculum provisions and depth of knowledge prescribed therein and ultimately impact on the quality of the products at this level. Thus if the use of textbooks is relegated to the background, it could have damaging effect on quality assurance of the programmes. With the constrain of time necessitated by pressures to prepare students for external examinations and the lure to appear modern

by using the evolving technology and current access to World Wide Web (WWW) to surf information, teachers must strike a balance about the use of textbooks and not be seen to abandon its use to appear modern in the eyes of the society. To be well positioned to pass the exams, students must be helped to cover the prescribed areas covered in the examinations. The textbooks are the foremost resource to achieve this objective. Additionally, using the evolving technology and the new communication systems requires discipline and expertise and it is doubtful that current servicing teachers have what it takes to achieve this balance. This unavoidably requires that teachers' activities continue to be closely monitored to espouse best practices that will assure quality at this level.

Having in mind the reason or purpose for the use of textbooks and the basis for selecting the materials to help learners achieve the objectives of their study is very important in the learning process. Each subject has organized content spanning several topics and for each topic to be learnt, there are specific concepts expected to be understood and applied in the everyday lives of the learners. For teaching and learning objectives to be achieved by both the teacher and the learner, it is important that the textbooks recommended by professionals be properly put to use and not deviated from. Knowledge is easily assimilated when the right tools for learning are used. This study attempts to investigate how well and appropriately teachers especially in the senior secondary schools use recommended textbooks as a teaching resource, taking cognizance of information made available for achieving the set objectives and the effect of non-adherence to the recommended textbooks on quality assurance.

Background

For many learners who find themselves in a formal learning environment, textbooks are an integral part of their educational experience. This is because there is an underlying assumption that learners, who make use of textbooks as learning materials more often than not, are more enriched in their academic experiences and demonstrate improved class performance

than those who do not. According to Skinner and Howes (2013) multiple benefits are experienced by learners who make use of assigned textbooks, which includes an increase in the baseline understanding that learners exhibit in class. Darwin (2011) found out that the correlation between learners completing assigned reading and class performance is positive. Similarly, Bushway and Flower (2002) found that when learners are motivated to read texts given to them, their overall performance in the class improved.

However, Berry, Cook, Hill, and Stevens (2010) found out that textbooks are not as widely read as teachers might hope. In his survey of 264 students taking finance courses he found that only 18 % of the students reported that they frequently or always read before coming to class while in contrast, 53 % reported that they never or rarely read their textbooks before coming to class (p. 34). While textbooks are generally seen as very important learning materials, an increased access to them alone does not ensure the success of learning outcomes because accessing them without having the basic knowledge on how to use them will amount to futility.

Statement of Problem

Over the years, persistent disparities have been observed in the expected learning outcomes and the actual learning outcomes of students in the senior secondary schools especially among the Senior Secondary students. Students' actual outcomes at the end of a school year appear not to correspond with the expected performance based on the curriculum provisions. It is expected that the provisions in the curriculum, buttressed by the learning experiences in the recommended textbooks and other class activities should lead to the standard of behavior planned for and demonstrated in the learning outcomes. Curriculum as well as recommended textbooks to be used by schools are provided by the State government for all schools (Public and Private) in the state and are expected to be used for teaching in all schools. However, it has been observed that despite the fact that all schools (Public and Private) in the state are given

the same tool (curriculum) for initiating positive learning outcomes, not all students reflect the expected learning outcomes at an acceptable standard. This concern has given rise to the need to delve into the factors that could be responsible for this anomaly. The researchers suspect that non-adherence to textbooks recommended by experts who designed the curriculum maybe a major factor for the low performance. The thinking is that the books were selected based on the fact that they adequately covered the content provisions for the curriculum. Some teachers are known to prefer other textbooks other than the ones recommended. Some of these teachers' preferred texts could be sub-standard and may not adequately cover the subject content as provided for in the curriculum. The effect of this would be that the students end up not covering the subject contents and thereby are ill prepared for examinations, particularly the external one. This could be one of the reasons for the low performances observed.

Purpose of the Study

The study therefore sought to determine to what extent the recommended textbooks in some core subjects in the secondary schools are being adhered to. It investigated if the recommended textbooks are being substituted with other textbooks in these subjects. The study also determined to what extent the textbooks were being substituted, the reasons they were being substituted and if the level of non-adherence to the use of recommended textbooks was adequate to impact quality assurance. Thus the study specifically sought to determine:

- The level of adherence to recommended textbooks by teachers of senior secondary classes
- The level of non-adherence to recommended textbooks by teachers of senior secondary classes
- The level of teachers' involvement in the selection of textbooks for the senior secondary classes
- The factors responsible for non- adherence to recommended textbooks by teachers of senior secondary classes

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. To what extent are the recommended textbooks in English Language being adhered to in the senior secondary classes?
2. To what extent are the recommended textbooks in Mathematics being adhered to in the senior secondary classes?
3. To what extent are the recommended textbooks in Biology being adhered to in the senior secondary classes?
4. To what extent are the recommended textbooks in Economics being adhered to in the senior secondary classes?
5. To what extent are the recommended textbooks in Civics education being adhered to in the senior secondary classes?
6. What is the opinion of teachers on the selection of textbooks for senior secondary school classes?
7. What are the factors responsible for the substitution of recommended textbooks for others that are not officially approved?

Hypothesis

The following hypothesis guided the study:

Ho1: Adherence to recommended textbooks of up to 60% will assure quality.

Hypothetical Conjectures

The textbook has been found to be one of the most common resources in the classroom as it tends to be very valuable especially to a new teacher because it serves as a guide on the steps to take in lesson delivery. It also serves as an outside-the-classroom teacher for the learner. It is widely said and believed that, the best way of helping learners is to bring them in close proximity with the learning resources. Textbooks are useful resources for both teachers as lesson planners (facilitators) and learners as beneficiaries (assimilators) of the planned lessons in the teaching and learning process and plays an essential role in the process of acquiring knowledge.

The textbook for a teacher, provides a robust understanding about the particular topic to be taught and what educational goals it aims to emphasis. The teacher is therefore expected to coordinate the classroom activities or educational transactions in line with the directions in the textbooks and the provisions in the curriculum. For students, it is also very essential because it gives elaborate understanding about the subject matter and guides learners to focus on learning that is expected at their level. In the light of this, the textbook provides a platform for self-assessment as a yardstick to monitor learning progressive and learning outcomes. According to Bouska and Gallonay (1991), while 10% of what is heard is retained, the other 90% of retention comes from what is heard, seen, and done. Textbooks provide learners opportunities to take part in all three experiences as in the books are exercises for practice activities, pictures to see and portions to read or to be read to. Therefore, one of the foremost contacts a learner should have to embark on the learning process especially at the secondary school is the textbook. There is no doubt that performing the learning activities provided in textbooks help the learners understand the world better and challenges them to become lifelong learners.

Beery and Buktenica (1997) realized the immense influence which a textbook with the right concept has on the learner and explained that using recommended textbooks in teaching is very important in education. According to Altalef (1994) recommended text books are needed to make the best use of appropriate information at a given point in time to address the objectives of a particular topic. Recommended text books in the opinion of Bellow (1999) are various resource materials with instructional values used concurrently with the teacher's voice during the teaching and learning process. He argued that students retain more of what is learnt when they use both their auditory and visual sense organs simultaneously.

For greater efficiency in lesson delivery as well as proper assimilation of concepts, the use of recommended textbooks in not just core

subjects but all subjects taught in school are as vital to the teaching and learning process as blood is vital to the existence of life. Here it is very important to note that the use of recommended textbooks is not limited to only the teacher in teaching but also to the learner in learning because they are as important in learning as in teaching if not more important. However, it is also important to note that for the desired objectives to be achieved from the use of these recommended text books, the teacher will have to understand the rudiments of the objectives of each topic expected to be achieved by the end of the course duration. With this the teacher will be able to synchronize the lesson to the objectives at hand and the learner in turn will have an understanding of what is expected of him in course of the learning process in order to assess when the teacher is deviating or not making the desired impact. Therefore, the use of recommended textbooks is indispensable to both the teachers and the learners alike.

Quality assurance is the process of ensuring the achievement of the specified standards in educational undertakings. It is the collective term used by educational bodies for monitoring reliability, consistency and the maintaining of fair and high standards of performances. Duff, Hegarty, and Hussey (2000 p. 15), defined quality assurance as a process of demonstrating excellence, accountability and value for money. Educational institutions utilize quality assurance processes to convince themselves and stakeholders that their teaching, learning and other services consistently work to reach a standard of excellence that has been set. Quality assurance therefore, incorporates all the processes internal to the school organization, whereby quality is evaluated, maintained and improved HEQC (2000 p. 28). Quality assurance is a continuous process of evaluation by way of monitoring, assessing, maintaining, guaranteeing as well as improving the quality of education given by teachers and received by learners in the course of teaching and learning hinged on objectives achieved and revealed through positive learning outcomes. The activities involved in ensuring quality assurance depend on the existence of the necessary institutional mechanisms preferably sustained by a solid quality culture. It is also the

means by which an institution of learning confirms that conditions set for learners to achieve the standards set by the school are in place. It is a planned and systematic review process whereby an institution or program determines the maintaining and enhancement of an acceptable standard of education.

Research according to Akkinson (1999), had shown that using recommended textbooks in the teaching of concepts is more effective in providing the needed information for the achievement of set objectives by both the learner and the teacher than mere use of words or verbalization. This is because recommended text books have already been designed to convey the intended message to the learner as he receives, understands and applies the experience gained from it to real life situations. In addition, the use of recommended textbooks is known to help memory retention. Judging by the significant role recommended textbooks play on learning outcomes, Bouska (1991) recommended that teaching activities in the classroom should involve more of problems that are resourcefulness oriented because resourcefulness is a basic quality for a successful life. Textbooks are resourceful oriented and usually recommended on the bases of their contents most of which are in line with the objectives for the learning outcomes. Therefore, not using a recommended textbook could rob the learner of the expected learning outcome. The practice of using the recommended textbook could indeed enhance learning outcomes and in turn assure quality and standards that have been set.

Methodology

The population of the study was made up of 268 senior secondary schools in Rivers State. 10 schools were purposively selected from 3 LGAs (4 from Obio/Akpor, 3 from Phalga and 3 from Ikwerre LGA). Using stratified random sampling technique, 100 teachers were selected to form the sample for the study. A 16-item self-developed questionnaire titled Questionnaire on the Use of Recommended Textbooks for Core Subjects in Senior Secondary Schools (QURTCSSSS) was the instrument for the study. Some

Lecturers in the department of Educational Management of Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt validated the instrument. A reliability coefficient of 0.85 was obtained using Pearson-Product moment correlation with the test-retest method using 10 teachers outside the sample area. The data obtained were presented on frequency tables. Means and percentages were used to answer the research questions. The direction of the hypothesis was determined by comparing with a criterion referenced percentage of 60%.

Results

Table 1: Percentage adherence to recommended textbooks in the core subjects

S/N	Item	Recommended		Substituted	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%
1	To what extent are the recommended textbooks in English Language being adhered to in the senior secondary school classes?	8	67	4	33
2	To what extent are the recommended textbooks in Mathematics being adhered to in the senior secondary school classes?	9	60	6	40
3	To what extent are the recommended textbooks in Biology being adhered to in the senior	10	83	2	17

	secondary school classes?				
4	To what extent are the recommended textbooks in Economics being adhered to in the senior secondary school classes?	7	87	1	12
5	To what extent are the recommended textbooks in Civics education being adhered to in the senior secondary school classes?	6	67	3	33
			72.8		27.2

Table 1 showing item 1 with 67% indicates that teachers of English Language to some extent adhere to the use of recommended textbooks in teaching. The respondents here find the recommended textbooks to be in accordance with set objectives for the learners of the subject. Therefore, in response to research question one, to a reasonable extent, recommended textbooks for the teaching and learning of English language are adhered to in the senior secondary schools.

For the teaching of Mathematics, the result of 60% also shows a reasonable level of adherence as respondents affirmed that the recommended textbooks to a large extent, address the set objectives for the learners of the subject. In response to research question two, it can be said that teachers of

Mathematics to a great extent adhere to the use of recommended textbooks in the teaching and learning process.

Furthermore, the result of 83% for Biology indicated a high level of adherence to the use of recommended textbooks by teachers. Respondents opined that to a great extent, the textbooks recommended for the teaching of the subject actually gave credence to set objectives for the learners. So to answer research question three, teachers to a great extent, adhere to recommended textbooks in teaching learners.

Similarly, the result of 87.5% for Economics indicated that teachers of Economics to a great extent adhere to the recommended textbooks in teaching. According to the respondents, the content of the recommended textbooks for this subject really tackled the objectives set out to be achieved in learning it. On that note, the level of use of recommended textbooks by teachers of Economics in senior secondary schools is very high.

Civic Education shows a result of 67% level of adherence, also above average. Respondents here agreed to the use of the recommended textbooks but appear to add other texts though not recommended. This according to them is because the recommended textbooks address the set objectives only to an extent but not fully. Therefore, in answer to research question five, the level of adherence to the use of recommended textbooks in Civic Education is just above average.

S/N	Item	VGE	GE	LE	VLE	Mean	Decision
1	To what extent did you take part in the selection of the recommended textbooks for your subject this session?	32	20	7	9	3.10	Great extent

2	To what extent do you believe that these textbooks are good enough for the category of your students?	45	22	2	-	3.16	Great extent
3	In your assessment do you accept that the recommended textbooks cover the content of your subject area adequately?	38	22	6	1	3.50	Great extent
4	To what extent do you agree that the language use and information in the recommended textbooks suit your students' needs?	29	36	3	-	3.38	Great extent
5	To what extent do you agree that subject teachers in senior secondary schools should be a part of the team to select and recommend textbooks for use in the schools?	52	14	3	-	3.71	Very great extent
	Grand Mean 3.37 Great extent						

Table 2: Showing the opinion of teachers on the selection of textbooks for senior secondary classes.

Table 2 item 6 showing mean score of 3.10 indicated that teachers took part in the selection of recommended textbooks for their subjects in the current

session. This is in contrast to practice in the Nigerian Educational sector. It is a widely known fact that teachers in this part of the globe are never given the opportunity to contribute to the selection of textbooks. It is either that the respondents did not understand the question or choose to make a false claim. For item 7, with a mean score of 3.16, the result showed that teachers believe that the recommended textbooks are good enough for the category of students they are provided for. Again, item 8 having a result with a mean score of 3.50 indicated that teachers in their own assessment accept that the recommended textbooks adequately covered the content of their subject areas. Furthermore, item 9 with a mean score of 3.38 showed that teachers agreed that the language use and information in the recommended textbooks suit the students' needs. Also, having a mean score of 3.71, result obtained in item 10 revealed that teachers are of the opinion that subject teachers in senior secondary schools should be part of the team to select recommended textbooks for use in the schools. Finally, with a grand mean of 3.37, the result in Table 2 clearly showed that respondents are of the opinion that teachers in the senior secondary classes should be involved in the selection of recommended textbooks for their classes

Table 3: Showing the opinion of teachers on factors responsible for substituting recommended textbooks in the schools.

S/N	Item	VGE	GE	LE	VLE	Mean	Decision
1	Scarcity of the recommended textbooks	16	19	19	14	1.60	Disagree
2	High cost of the recommended textbooks.	5	25	25	10	2.38	Disagree
3	Obsolete nature of the information in the recommended	20	21	9	18	2.63	Agree

	textbooks						
4	Lack of local content in the recommended textbooks.	16	16	16	18	2.45	Disagree
5	The difficulty level of the content of the recommended textbooks.	10	18	20	21	2.62	Agree
6	The difficulty level of the language used in the recommended textbooks.	13	12	23	21	2.75	Agree
	Grand Mean 2.41 Disagree						

Table 3 showing item 11 with a mean score of 1.60 revealed that teachers do not agree that scarcity of recommended textbooks is a factor responsible for the substituting of texts. In their opinion other factors such as the need to be technologically trendy makes teachers to substitute recommended textbooks for information on the internet. Also, a mean score of 2.38 obtained for

item 12 shows that high cost of the recommended textbooks is not considered a factor for substituting recommended textbooks with others texts not recommended. However, result obtained for item 13 having a mean score of 2.63 indicated that teachers agreed that the obsolete nature of information contained in the recommended textbooks is a possible factor responsible for the substituting of some textbooks. Teachers are of the opinion that more current information can be surfed from the internet than from the recommended textbooks; hence the substituting.

On the contrary, a mean score of 2.45 obtained for item 14, indicated that teachers did not agree that lack of local content in the recommended textbooks is a possible factor responsible for substituting the texts. In their opinion, it is actually the lack of global content in the recommended textbooks that gives rise to substituting because according to them, learning has gone beyond the local context so learners should also be provided with textbooks with global content. Item 15 having a mean score of 2.62 can be interpreted to mean that the difficulty level of the content of the recommended textbooks is considered as a factor responsible for some of the substitution of recommended textbooks. Teachers believe that because of the simplified content in other sources of information on same subject matter, content of recommended textbooks are sometimes difficult for the age cohort of the learners. Again, with a mean score of 3.75 the result obtained for item 16 indicated that teachers agreed to the fact that the difficulty level of the language used in the recommended textbooks is indeed a factor responsible for the substituting of the texts. According to them the language used in some recommended textbooks does not suit the level of learners. Finally, the grand mean of 2.41 obtained in this section, indicated that the level of acceptance by teachers of items 11 to 16 as factors responsible for the substituting of recommended textbooks is low.

Hypothesis

With an adherence level of 72.8% to recommended textbooks by teachers in senior secondary schools in Rivers State as shown on Table 1, it can be said that the teachers to a great extent adhere to the use of recommended textbooks in teaching. Therefore, the hypothesis which states that adherence level to recommended textbooks of up to 60% will assure quality is accepted.

Discussion of Findings

Table 1, showing the level of adherence to recommended textbooks with a grand mean of 72.8% (adherence) against 27.2% (non-adherence), indicated that teachers teaching the core subjects in senior secondary schools in Rivers State do actually adhere to the use of recommended textbooks in teaching their students. The teachers accepted that the achievement of set goals is embedded in the use of recommended text books which eventually assures quality. The position of the respondents is sided by Akkinson (1999) stating that using recommended textbooks in teaching of concepts is more effective in providing the needed information for the achievement of set objectives by both the learner and the teacher. This is because recommended text books have already been designed to convey the intended message to the learner as he interacts, understands and applies the experience gained to real life situations. Besides, recommended textbooks are available for learners to carry everywhere.

Showing the opinion of teachers on the selection of textbooks for senior secondary classes, Table 2 with a grand mean of 3.37 reveals that teachers want to be a part of the team to select textbooks for learners. This they argued is on the basis of the fact that they are the ones directly involved with the learners, have a better knowledge of the learners' needs and so better placed to select the texts with the right content for each category of learners. This is in line with Bouska (1991) who recommended that teaching activities in the classroom should involve more of problems that are resourcefulness oriented because this is a basic quality for a successful living. Textbooks are recommended on the bases of their contents being in line with the objectives for learning outcomes.

With a grand mean score of 2.41, the result on Table 3 shows a low acceptance of items on the table as factors responsible for the substituting of recommended textbooks with other sources. The position of the respondents indicates that enforcement of recommended textbooks by teachers will not necessarily assure quality if the information provided in the recommended textbooks are obsolete, lack global content, have

insufficient information and are expressed in language too difficult for the category of learners in senior secondary schools. This is in agreement with Berry and Buktenica (1997) who discussing about the immense influence of textbooks with the right concepts, explained that using them in teaching is very important in education but such textbooks must be selected to meet the needs of the learners. Altalef (1994) also agreed that recommended text books are needed to provide appropriate information at when needed to address the objectives of particular topics.

Conclusion

A textbook is made up of a collection of knowledge, concepts and principles of a selected topic or course. Curriculum experts usually recommend them as a major resource for the implementation of school programmes. When properly used, textbooks are particularly useful to beginning teachers, learners and parents alike because they provide elaborate explanations and information on the areas that need to be covered in the curriculum or school syllabus. In the wake of the current emphasis on surfing the internet for information, there has been fears in some quarters that teachers in senior secondary schools in Rivers state may abandon recommended textbooks and focus only on materials surfed on the internet for class lesson activities. The fears had been founded on the fact that quality assurance of the school programmes could be compromised. This study however, found among other things that recommended textbooks were still highly adhered to by teachers in the senior secondary schools. The paper called on curriculum planners to ensure that curriculum is not static and urged teachers on the need to wisely add other resources to strengthen their practice while continuing to regard recommended textbooks as a major resource.

Recommendations

Based on the above findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Principals of schools and Supervisors from the Ministry and Supervisory boards should ensure that teachers in senior secondary schools in Rivers State use the recommended textbooks and

accompanying teachers' guide since the use of recommended textbooks has a strong bearing on quality assurance of the school programmes. Recommended textbooks should be seen as major teaching resource as provided for by the experts who designed the curriculum. Other resources should be treated as additional and not a substitute to the recommended texts.

2. Government and other associated agencies should ensure that recommended textbooks are made available and accessible to both students and teachers to facilitate their usage in the schools.
3. There should be a closer monitoring of teachers' instructional activities in the schools, to ensure that they are on top of their duties and have the pre-requisite skills to carry out assigned tasks effectively.
4. Training programmes should be organized for teachers to acquire skills on how to surf the internet for additional resources and be able to make informed decisions to prevent overburdening students with unnecessary details.

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