Need Of School Librarian – A Study

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Abstract: In India functioning of school libraries is very poor especially in Kerala State. The present study conducted in Higher Secondary Schools under Corporative of the Corporate Educational Agency, Archdiocese of Thalassery to know the need of school librarians in higher secondary schools. There is no proper guidance and assistance given by librarian due to the lack of well trained library staff. The responsibility of the library is given to any of the language teachers. None of the teacher-in-charge of the library is given any type of training in the management of the library. Each of the library functions according to the style preferred by the teacher-in-charge of the library. The service of the librarian is available only for a very limited period of time. The librarians are not concerned about the satisfaction of the users. No user study has been conducted in any of the school libraries under concern. Library orientation programme is not conducted in most of the schools. Majority of the students do not ask any kind of assistance from the librarian.

Keywords: School library, Librarian, Higher Secondary School, Library orientation programme

I. INTRODUCTION

Libraries have an important role in all stages of education, especially in Secondary and Higher Secondary education. Secondary and Senior Secondary education, in the words of Ahmad, is the "basic foundation on which the edifice of higher education is built." "The school library provides information, inculcates ideas and develops knowledge that is so essential to functioning successfully in today's information and knowledge based society." Developing in students life long learning skills is one of the important objectives of schools libraries. They also help to develop in students the skill of creative thinking and imagination. All these will ultimately enable the students to be more creative and more productive and to live an ideal and responsible life. In other words, school libraries help in the overall formation of an individual.

Recognizing the importance of school libraries, different Commissions and Committees appointed by the Central and State Governments in India have emphasized the need of good libraries in the schools. For example, Mudaliar Commission says, "The library will be the hub and the centre of the intellectual and literary life of the reorganized school and play the same part vis-a-vis all the other subjects as the laboratory plays for science subjects or the workshop for technical subjects." But unfortunately, studies conducted in this field reveal that, majority of the schools in India still lack school libraries and good librarians. Well functioning of libraries and thus growth of student is achieved only through the good librarian who is capable for giving welcoming atmosphere in library and providing information.

The Higher Secondary School libraries have their separate identity and importance. It is in the year 2001 the Pre Degree courses, which were conducted by the universities, were totally separated from colleges, and Higher Secondary or Plus Two classes were started in schools all over Kerala. Before separation, the students doing their Pre Degree course had the opportunity to use the sources and services of the big libraries of the college in which they study. Many of the college libraries in Kerala hold a good collection of documents and offer better service. With the separation of the Pre Degree Courses it became the responsibility of the Higher Secondary School libraries to provide these services to the students. They are expected to fulfill all the requirements of the young students for learning and the teachers for teaching. Hence, comparing to the other school libraries, Higher Secondary School libraries have a more serious role to play. This study can reveal to what extent the Higher Secondary School libraries satisfy the information needs of the students.

The present study is an attempt to know status and attitude of librarian and expectation of students from librarian

in the Higher Secondary Schools under the Corporate Educational Agency, Archdiocese of Thalassery. It tries to examine whether there are librarian in these schools, and if there are librarian, how effectively they satisfy the information needs of the students.

OBJECTIVES

✓ To know the library orientation program conducted by librarian
✓ To know the expected assistance from librarian for students
✓ To know the type of assistance expected from librarian

II. METHODOLOGY

The population taken for this study is the Plus Two students of the ten Higher Secondary Schools under the Corporate Educational Agency, Archdiocese of Thalassery. The total number of Plus Two students in these schools is 1915. Since the size of the population of students is very large, a sample of 750 students (39.16%) is taken for this study. Proportionate number of students from each school and each subject were randomly selected for this study.

The methods used for data collection are mainly literature review, questionnaires, observation and checking the office and library records. Before beginning the data collection an extensive review of literature was undertaken. Many of the recently published literature in the topics related to the present study were reviewed. The results of the previously undertaken studies help to have a better understanding of different aspects of the topic presently undertaken. Studies conducted local, national and international level were reviewed in order to prepare a sound background for the present study.

III. DATA ANALYSIS

LIBRARY ORIENTATION PROGRAMME

Sl. No	Answer	Number of Respondents
1	Yes	115 (16.69%)
2	No	574 (83.31%)
	Total	689(100%)

Table 1: Library Orientation Programme

To the question whether their school library conducted any library orientation programme, only 115 respondents answered that there was library orientation programme in their school in the beginning of the academic year. The library orientation programme was conducted by the teacher-in-charge of the library

ASSISTANCE FROM THE LIBRARIAN

The results of the question about the assistance from the librarian in using the library, is given in Table 2.

Sl. No	Asking Assistance from Librarian	Number of Respondents
1	Yes	277 (40.20%)
2	No	412 (59.80%)
	Total	689 (100%)

Table 2: Assistance from the Librarian

It is found that majority of the students (412, i.e., 59.80%) do not ask the assistance of the librarian for any purpose. Only 277 (40.20%) have so far asked assistance from the librarian regarding the library resources and services.

TYPE OF ASSISTANCE ASKED FROM THE LIBRARIAN

Those who seek assistance from the librarian were asked to indicate the type of assistance they ask from the librarian according to the order of priority. The results are given in Table 3.

Sl. No	Type of Assistance Asked	Order of Priority				Total
		1	2	3	4	
1	To get a particular document	244 (35.41%)	29 (4.21%)	4 (0.58%)		277 (40.20%)
2	To know about important documents related to a particular topic	32 (4.64%)	219 (31.79%)	26 (3.77%)		277 (40.20%)
3	To clear doubts regarding a particular subject	1 (0.15%)	29 (4.21%)	247 (35.85%)		277 (40.20%)
4	To know about the recently published books and other publications	0			277 (40.20%)	277 (40.20%)
	Total	277 (40.20%)	277 (40.20%)	277 (40.20%)	277 (40.20%)	

Table 3: Type of Assistance Asked from the Librarian

FIRST PRIORITY

Most of the respondents (i.e., 244, which is 35.41% of the total sample) primarily seek the assistance of the librarian to get a particular document. To know about important documents related to a particular topic is given as first priority by 32 (4.64%) and to clear a doubt regarding a particular subject is given as the first priority by only 1 (0.15%) respondents.

SECOND PRIORITY

Second priority in asking the assistance of the librarian is given in the following order: to know about important documents related to a particular topic (by 219, which is 31.79%), to get a particular document (by 29, i.e., 4.21%), to clear doubts regarding a particular subject (by 29, i.e., 4.21%).

THIRD PRIORITY

Third priority is given to clearing doubts regarding a particular topic by majority of the respondents (247, which is 35.85%). To know about important documents regarding a

particular topic is given third priority by 26 (3.77%) respondents. To get a particular document is shown as the third priority by only 4 (0.58%) respondents.

FOURTH PRIORITY

All the 277 (40.20% of the total sample population) respondents considered here say that their fourth priority in asking the assistance from the librarian is to know about the recently published books and other publications.
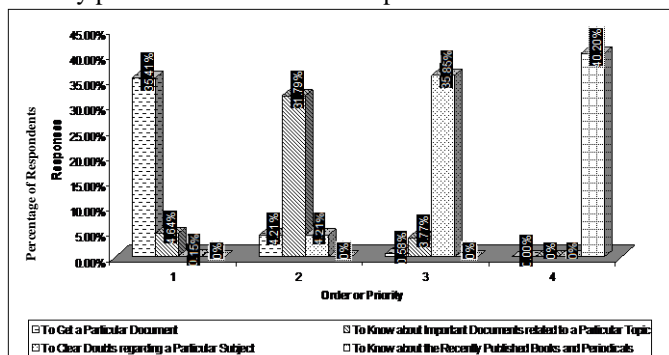

Figure 1: Type of Assistance Asked from the Librarian

IV. FINDINGS

✓ There is no trained full time librarian in any of these schools. The responsibility of the library is given to any of the language teachers.

✓ None of the teacher-in-charge of the library is given any type of training in the management of the library. Each of the library functions according to the style preferred by the teacher-in-charge of the library.

✓ The service of the librarian is available only for a very limited period of time.

✓ The librarians are not concerned about the satisfaction of the users. No user study has been conducted in any of the school libraries under concern.

✓ Library orientation programme is not conducted in most of the schools. Majority of the students do not ask any kind of assistance from the librarian. Those who ask the assistance of the librarian do so mainly for getting a particular document. No other support is either asked to or given by the librarian.

✓ Absence of trained full time librarian, work over load and lack of interest of the teacher-in-charge of the library, lack of training to the librarian, absence of standards in classification, cataloguing, etc., reading room space and arrangement, inadequate funding, lack of attention from

the authorities, etc. are some other important problems which were found from the data collected from the librarians and from the personal observation of the investigator.

V. SUGGESTIONS

✓ It is necessary to conduct library orientation programme for the students in the beginning of the course. Many of the students may be using a library for the first time in their life. Therefore they must be taught how to search, select and use a book. Different library rules must be explained to them. An introduction to the different services also must be given to them in the beginning of the course itself.

✓ User education programme must be conducted as and when needed by the librarian.

✓ Different extension activities such as book week celebration, formation of readers clubs, reading and writing workshops, book talks, quiz and other competitions, etc. can be easily conducted in the libraries in order to attract more students to the library. The help of different subject teachers can also be sought for these activities.

✓ There should be written rules for all the libraries. The important rules must be displayed in the library visible to all users. All the rules must be printed in the school diary or handbook and be distributed to all users.

✓ The librarian must periodically conduct users studies in order know the user needs and satisfaction. This will help the librarian to make necessary changes or additions in the library services.

Different awards and prizes can be arranged for the best library, best librarian and best user in the Corporate Educational Agency level for promoting more attention in the arrangement and use of libraries. Best library user awards can be given also in the school level.

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