STATUS OF HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL LIBRARIES IN THIRUVALLUR DISTRICT

By

SEENIVASAN. M *   **N. ASHOK KUMAR ****

* Research Scholar, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli.
** University Assistant Librarian, Tamil Nadu Physical Education and Sports University, Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

ABSTRACT

Libraries are the main sources of knowledge. They play a major role in fostering reading habit among school children. Hence, it is deemed interactive to study the status of higher secondary school libraries in Thiruvallur District, Tamil Nadu. For the Analysis 50 Higher Secondary Schools were selected randomly comprising of Government Higher secondary school, Government Aided Higher Secondary School, Private Matriculation Higher Secondary School and Kendriya Vidyalaya from Thiruvallur District. Questionnaires were distributed to the Headmasters/Principals of those schools who participated in the survey. The collected data has been tabulated and analyzed using Simple Parentage Analysis. The result showed that 35 schools (70%) have libraries; where as 15 schools (30%) don't have libraries in their schools. It is also found that only 27 schools (54%) have appointed fulltime librarians, but 23 schools don't have qualified librarians. From the results, it has been concluded that the school libraries functioning in Kendriya Vidyalaya's and Private Matriculation Higher Secondary Schools are in a remarkable state, where as Libraries in Government Higher Secondary Schools and Government Aided Higher Secondary Schools are in a poor state.

Keywords: Status, Academic Libraries, School Libraries, Tamil Nadu

INTRODUCTION

Thiruvalluvar's moral doctrine emphasizes "the necessity to acquire a sound knowledge first and then act accordingly". Education system in India, particularly in ancient times, was taught by the saints and it is called 'Gurukula' system. These types of schools were mostly residential in nature, where sishyas students lived along with the guru teacher. The guru imparted knowledge on the following subjects namely philosophy, literature, warfare, statecraft, medicine, astrology and history. During this period, guru taught the lessons first and insisted the sishyas to read later and approach the guru for clarifications if needed. This shows that teaching and learning practice started from the ancient period itself. Later the education system underwent several changes. After independence, providing education to Indian citizen become the responsibility of the respective states. Today, Indian school education system stands as the world's second largest. Even though Indian education system is the oldest, today it has 37% of the world's illiterate adults. To reduce the number of school dropouts and to increase the student's enrollment ratio, Government of India has amended the Right To Education Act (RTE) [3] during August 2009. This shows that due to the memorandums given by the external agencies like UNESCO, the Central Government implements several acts and allocates huge amount of funds for providing quality school education. Education For All (EFA) [5] global monitoring report states "It must ensure that all children and young people are learning the basics and that they have the opportunity to acquire the transferable skills needed to become global citizens". For that its necessary to set goals that are clear and measurable, to allow for the tracking and monitoring that is so essential for governments and donors alike, and to bridge the gaps that remain.

In India, different types of schools are established on the basis of the administering bodies (i.e. central, state and private funded) which impart education at different levels, Elementary level (Class 1-V), Secondary level (Class VI-X) and Higher Secondary level (Class XI-XII).The Mudaliar

Commission Report (1953), suggested to the Central Government that, "In the first place it must be clearly understood that, according to the best modern educational thought, curriculum in this context does not mean only the academic subjects traditionally taught in the school but it also includes the totality of experiences that pupil receives through the manifold activities that go on in the school, classroom, library, laboratory, workshop, playgrounds and in the numerous informal contacts between teachers and pupils. In this sense, the whole life of the school becomes the curriculum which can touch the life of the students at all points and help in the evolution of balanced personality". So, to attain a balanced personality, every school should have a well equipped library in the campus. Amjad Ali (2004) [2] defines school libraries as "a library in secondary school that serves the information needs of its students and the curriculum needs of its teachers and staff, usually managed by a school librarian". School library collections usually contain books, periodicals and education media suitable for the great levels served.

Several academicians have stressed the need for having a well equipped library in schools. But, even after sixty six years of independence the status of the school libraries in India, when compared to other Asian countries, is in a poor condition. To know the status of school libraries, only very few research studies have been carried out so far. To fill the research gap in the area of school libraries, this study was initiated to explore the status of school libraries in Thiruvallur district, Tamil Nadu. Thiruvallur district is located in Northeast of Tamil Nadu and adjacent to the city of Chennai. This district has about 245 Government Higher Secondary Schools, 22 Government Aided Higher Secondary Schools, 38 Private Matriculation Higher Secondary Schools and 5 Kendriya Vidyalayas. out of which the author has selected randomly 50 Higher Secondary Schools for this study. The questionnaire method has been adopted for collecting the data from the schools. The questionnaires were distributed to all Headmasters/Principals of Higher Secondary Schools and Kendriya Vidyalaya.

Objective of the Study

- To know whether the schools have library in their campus.

- To know whether professionally qualified librarians manage the school libraries.

- To find the total number of books purchased annually.

- To find frequently used library resources by the students.

Hypotheses

- The status of Kendriya Vidyalaya and Private Matriculation Higher Secondary Schools are significantly better than that of Government and Government Aided schools.

- Most of the Kendriya Vidyalayas have appointed professionally qualified librarians.

Review of Related Literature

Trehan, G.L (1965) [4], is study clearly picturised the status of school libraries in India. In his study he has questioned a number of school teachers' attitude towards usage of library. A shocking finding shows that the libraries were not used for enhancing teaching skill. Too much emphasis is placed on prescribed text books or class notes given to us. We are also alive to the fact that an adequate collection of well selected books in a school library within the reach of teachers and students will certainly make the class work more simulating and rewarding. The author in his study presented the status of school libraries in India.

Falodun, R.L (1984) [1], study states that the library is accepted as a teaching agency, whose major objectives should be, to acquire books and materials that will meet the needs of the curriculum of students and to organize the materials for effective use; to guide students in their choice of books and other materials of learning for private and curriculum purpose; to develop in students, the skill and resourcefulness required for a profitable use of books and to cultivate them in the habit of individual investigation; to establish a variety of significant interests in students; to provide aesthetic experience for students and to develop in them a sense of appreciation of the arts and to encourage a life-long education through the use of library resources.

Wools (1990) [6], in his study explained the role of school libraries in solving the problems of literacy and that it can do much to solve the problem of adolescent literacy and

aliteracy, or people who can read but do not. The school library can help to solve the problem of both illiteracy and aliteracy by providing reading opportunities.

Research Design

A questionnaire based survey was done in Thiruvallur District to know the status of Higher Secondary School libraries which include Government Higher Secondary School (GHSS), Government Aided Higher Secondary school (GAHSS), Private Matriculation Higher Secondary School (PMHSS) and Kendra Vidyalaya (KV). Respondents were Headmasters / Principals of the selected schools.

Analysis of Data

The collected data is tabulated and analyzed using Simple Percentage Analysis technique.

Table 1 shows that 35 schools (70%) have libraries and the results are summarized as follows: all four (8%) Kendriya Vidyalayas, 23(46%) Private Matriculation Higher Secondary Schools, 7(14%) Government Aided Higher Secondary Schools and only one (2%) Government Higher Secondary Schools have libraries in their campuses. It is also found that, 15 schools (30%) do not have libraries in their campuses, 13(26%) Government Higher Secondary Schools one Government Aided School and one Private Matriculation Higher Hecondary school do not have libraries in their campuses. From the table, it can be concluded that, Kendriya Vidyalaya and Private Matriculation Schools provide the library facilities to their students on compulsory basis. On the other hand Government Higher Secondary Schools functioning without libraries reveal that the students are deprived of the basic facilities to equip themselves on all relevant knowledge resources.

From Table 2, it can be observed that, out of 50 schools selected, 27(54%) schools have appointed school librarians; i.e. all the four Kendriya Vidyalayas, 20 (40%) Private Matriculation Higher Secondary Schools and 3 (6%) Government aided Higher Secondary Schools have appointed fulltime professionally qualified librarians to render library service for the teachers and students. Whereas 23 (46%) schools do not have qualified librarians: i.e. 14 (28%) Government Higher Secondary Schools, 5 (10%) Government Aided Higher Secondary Schools and 4 (8%) Private Matriculation Higher Secondary Schools have not appointed qualified library professionals.

From Table 2 it is revealed that, 28% of Government Higher Secondary Schools has not appointed librarians. Without the librarian's role, the academic programme has been completed for several years.

Table 3 shows the average number of books purchased during the year 2012 for the libraries. Kendriya Vidyalayas have purchased 41.4% of books on different subjects which is far ahead of other schools. Followed by this, Private Matriculation Higher Secondary Schools purchased 30.3% of books, Government Aided Higher secondary schools purchased 18.7% of books and Government Higher Secondary School showing the very less percentage of

S.No	Schools with/without Library	GHSS	GAHSS	PMHSS	KV	Total
1	With	1 (2%)	7 (14%)	23 (46%)	4 (8%)	35 (70%)
2	Without	13 (26%)	1 (2%)	1 (2%)	NIL	15 (30%)
	Total	14 (28%)	8 (16%)	24 (48%)	4 (8%)	50 (100%)

Table 1. School's with/without Library in Campus

S.No	Schools with/without Librarian	GHSS	GAHSS	PMHSS	KV	Total
1	With	NIL	3 (6%)	20 (40%)	4 (8%)	27 (54%)
2	Without	14 (28%)	7 (10%)	4 (8%)	NIL	23 (46%)
	Total	14 (28.0%)	8 (16.0%)	24 (48.0%)	4 (8.0%)	50 (100%)

Table 2. School Libraries with / without Qualified Librarians

S.No	Year	GHSS	GAHSS	PMHSS	KV	Total
1	2012	120 (9.6%)	235 (18.7%)	380 (30.3%)	520 (41.4%)	1255 (100%)

Table 3. Average number of Books purchased during 2012

S.No	Type of Resource	GHSS	GAHSS	PMHSS	KV	Total
1	Textbook	2 (4%)	2 (4%)	10 (30%)	3 (6%)	17 (34%)
2	Magazine	1 (2%)	1 (2%)	9 (18%)	2 (4%)	13 (26%)
3	Newspaper	1 (4%)	1 (4%)	3 (6%)	2 (4%)	7 (14%)
4	Story books/General Books	1 (2%)	2 (4%)	8 (16%)	2 (4%)	13 (26%)
	Total	5 (10%)	6 (12%)	30 (60%)	9 (18%)	50 (100%)

Table 4. Resources frequently used by the Students in Libraries

books 9.6% purchased. From this table it is elucidated that the number of books purchased during 2012 is diminishing from Kendra Vidyalaya to Government Higher Secondary Schools.

From Table 4, it is found that, among the different resources available in library, the frequently used resources are the textbooks prescribed rather than the other resources.

Summary of findings

From the results, it can be concluded that the status of Higher Secondary school libraries in Thiruvallur District is classified into two categories. First category, Higher Secondary school libraries available in institutes funded by central government and private management are in a remarkable state, i.e. they are provided with well equipped libraries and appointed professionally qualified librarians and they purchase books at regular intervals.

The second category, the schools instituted by State Government Higher Secondary Schools and Government Aided Higher Secondary Schools are in a poor state. This reveals that most of the schools do not have libraries in their campus and the posts of librarians have been lying vacant for several years.

Recommendations

• In India, most of the academicians suggested the Central and State governments to impart compulsory school education for all citizens and that education should be all rounded, which means that education should not only be curriculum-based, but also it should provide an all round development. Hence, most of our educated youth are unable to get an employment opportunity for their qualification. This shows that the students lack sound knowledge; Hence the education system should cultivate reading habits among the student community.

• To cultivate such type of activity, schools should compulsorily provide good opportunity to establish well equipped libraries in their campus. Since the library resources bridge the gap between the ancient medieval and modern literature.

• The Government should provide more financial assistance to school libraries. in order to provide separate school library building with all facilities.

• The Teacher/librarians must encourage the students to develop reading habits, and extracurricular activities.

• Dr. S.R. Ranganathan suggested that the State Government of Tamil Nadu, for the growth and development of school libraries in the State shall be adopted immediately to improve the status of School libraries in Tamil Nadu.

Conclusion

From this study, it is observed that school education system in this state provides only curriculum based teaching practices in their Schools. The Tamil Nadu Government has to seriously consider the development of school libraries, especially in Government Higher Secondary School and Government Aided Higher Secondary Schools. On a happy note it should be mentioned that Tamil Nadu government has allotted Rs 106 cores for Educational Department (2014-15), for enhancing the status of rural school and public libraries development. This may prove beneficial to all the Government and Government Aided schools to establish libraries. Due to enormous growth of science and technology, we must implement the innovative learning methodologies to the students in the school education level. The appointment of school librarian is very important to fulfill the completion of these requirements.

References

[1]. Bello, A.A., (1978), *The school library in the learning process.*

[2]. Dr.B. Ramesh Babu (Ed.), Paper Presented at *Information, Communication Library and Community Development,* New Delhi: B.R. Publishing Corporation, pp 221 – 229

[3]. Ali Amjad. (2004). *Glossary of library and information science,* V.2 1st Ed. New Delhi: Ess Ess publications, pp177.

[4]. India. Ministry of Human Resource Development: Department of school Education and literacy. (2009). Retrieved from www.mhrd.gov.in/rte

[5]. Trehan, G. L. (1965). *Administration and organization of school libraries in India,* New Delhi: Streling Publication.

[6]. UNESCO. (2011). Education for all Global meets and Report. Retrieved from www.unesco.org/the.report.and/efa.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

M.Seenivasan is currently working as a Librarian (Senior Grade) in R.M.K Engineering College, Kavaraipettai, Thiruvallur(D.t), Tamilnadu. He has completed his post graduate degree (MLIS) at Madras University in regular stream. He also obtained his M.phil Degree at Annamalai University in 2006. His area of research is school library development in Tamil Nadu.

Dr.N. Ashok Kumar is currently working as a University Assistant Librarian at Tamil Nadu Physical Education & Sports University, Chennai, TamilNadu. He Completed his Doctoral Degree from Annamalai University. His specialization of research is in Digitalization. He has published several research papers in National and International conferences and journals.