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# A Survey of Senior Secondary School Libraries in Jammu and Kashmir, India

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## Introduction

School libraries have always been an indispensable adjunct to education, a base for gathering innovative thinking, a stimulus to culture and an aid to self development (Onal, 2009). Morris (2004) contends that a school library serves as a center and coordinating agency of all materials used in the school. The IFLA/UNESCO School Library Manifesto (2000) while emphasizing the creation of strong and effective school libraries mandates that "for each country there should be work on developing links between school objectives and its library services." Thus, the contemporary school library has moved beyond the concept of mere an isolated facility for housing of books and other materials which has no role to play in the teaching-learning process in a school. Rather, it is seen more as the structure for integration of the library services with school's curriculum in the current world education scenario.

Traditionally school libraries offered conservative lending services and reading room facilities wherein students used to borrow books and browse through some newspapers and magazines. There was no concept of innovative personalized services. This state of affairs usually resulted in children's lack of interest in libraries. However, with the advancement of technology, school libraries came up with innovative programs and services for children that aimed at reversing this trend (Snowball, 2008). The integration of various school programs into school libraries have developed in to innovative hybrid library classrooms where students take full advantage of the library facilities and the resources (both technological and informational) for their course work. This activity/program brings the concept of school library in to school culture and increases student motivation with their active involvement in learning process (Houston & Spencer, 2007). The implementation of models like a community based school library has proved to be a success in relation to factors such as school participation, learner's participation in school activities during and after the school especially in areas where there is dearth of school libraries (Le-Roux, Hendrikz & Francois, 2006).

The information and communication technology revolution has helped every organization to improve its efficiency/productivity both qualitatively and quantitatively. The school libraries also fell in line with others to become not only the traditionally perceived learning environment as a physical space but also the virtual learning environment. With the advent of computers, the nature of school library management

and services has changed phenomenally. In the developed countries school libraries are developing intranet sections in collaboration with big corporations to promote greater interest in library by making available latest and easily accessible information to the school children (Shenton & Johnson, 2007). Most of the schools have developed school library websites. Students are kept informed about various activities and programs of the school through these websites (Jurkowski, 2007). Educational digital libraries are becoming sources of innovative teaching resources in schools. The information sources like internet, digital and audio-visual media are complementing books in school libraries. Recent research has revealed that internet is the most preferred information source used by students for project in school libraries followed by digital information sources which are preferred over print and audio-visual materials. The main reasons identified for using different information sources by Shaheen & Kanagasabai (2007) are "accessibility", "ease of use" and "appropriateness."

Another important and innovative aspect of modern school libraries is the collaborative arrangements with public, college and university libraries. According to Lonsdale & Armstrong (2006), these institutions have huge resources at their disposal and can play an important role in improving the situation in school libraries by delivering the information literacy skills relating to use of e-resources particularly to secondary schools. The collaborative role of teachers in development and use of school libraries is also important at the school level. Mardis, (2009) contends that teachers have very specific information needs relating to mastering the curriculum content and the behavioral structure of their classroom for a diverse range of learners. However, research has shown that teachers generally did not use their school libraries and various information resources effectively, mainly due to the inadequacy of their school libraries in terms of educational material and did not collaborate with the school librarians in planning their lessons or other academic activities as pointed out by Mokhtar & Shaheen (2005). Since school librarians form an important link to the scheme of things in school libraries they, therefore, need to play an active and collaborative role in knowledge acquisition and dissemination to reverse this trend.

School library media specialists (school librarians) in developed countries design many school programs and successfully implemented them, especially in the area of library instruction to engage students in their own learning (Manuel, 2005). The US concept of a "*School Library Media Center*" with its integral role to school curriculum, literacy, information literacy and leisure reading support is not well known in other parts of the world, however, this is changing; due largely to an increased awareness of the need for information literacy education in schools. The need is now being felt that political, educational and library systems have to join forces in order to empower school libraries and stimulate reading skills and interest in reading (Raftse, Saetre & Sundt, 2006).

## School Libraries and Secondary Education

The socio-economic and cultural development of a nation depends to a large extent on the achievements made by it on education and research. Libraries play a vital role in all stages of education especially in secondary and senior secondary education- the basic foundation on which the edifice of higher education is built. Libraries in schools are the natural supporting centres for individual's intellectual development and are particularly important today in view of the shift in emphasis towards individualized and heuristic learning. (Kumar, 1994) The change in instructional methods had been reflected in the function and role of libraries in learning process. This, renewed role of the library prompts it to provide documents and services for intellectual as well as recreational needs of individuals.

School library becomes a 'source and force for educational excellence' only when it functions as an integral component of the total teaching-learning process. The educational programme and library programme are interdependent and inseparable

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and have undergone tremendous changes since second half of the 20 century. India traditionally followed a textbook oriented system of education. However, in view of the changing philosophy of education and to bring changes in the education system, Government of India appointed an education commission (1964-66) under the chairmanship of D.S. Kothari. On the basis of its report, a new and uniform pattern of 10+2 system of school education was adopted in the country.

Although, libraries in higher educational institutions in India are well equipped and provide better facilities than their counterparts in schools; the school libraries are still not considered as an instrument of learning process. Even the available school library resources are not utilized to the desired extent. The integration of school libraries with the educational system from school level would lead to considerable quality improvement in teaching-learning process. Recently, the National Knowledge Commission (2005) appointed by the Government of India under the Chairmanship of Sam Pitroda envisaged the future road map for the growth and development of academic libraries by imbibing core issues such as, set up a national commission on libraries, prepare a national census of all libraries, revamp LIS education, training and research facilities, re-assess staffing of libraries, set up a central library fund, modernize library management, encourage greater community participation in library management, promote information communication technology applications in all libraries, facilitate donation and maintenance of private collections, and encourage public private partnerships in LIS development, etc. *(http://www.knowledgecommission.gov.in/recommendations/libraries.asp)*. The recommendations of the commission have generated a lot of hope among the library professionals who see it as a remarkable landmark in the library development in India. The National Curriculum Framework (2005) of the NCERT also attributes great significance to the library method of teaching and learning in schools.

Having said this, however, the prevailing picture of school libraries in India is contrastingly different. A lot needs to be done in order to provide our schools with well organized libraries. Currently, the situation is such that a few books locked in a classroom are given the status of a library in absence of any standards and guidelines. With this in mind, an attempt is made to assess and analyze the existing scenario of school libraries in the country in general and, Jammu and Kashmir State in particular with an honest endeavour to help make conditions better for school libraries. This paper is aimed at this. It presents the preliminary findings of some aspects of a survey investigating the existing status of senior secondary school libraries in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir. The research is part of a PhD undertaken in the department of Library and Information Science at University of Kashmir. The research elements discussed are an early stage in a wider investigation which will also consider development of standards for a model school library based on the local resources and conditions.

## Jammu and Kashmir

The state of Jammu and Kashmir has three administrative and geographical divisions-Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. The state after the recent administrative re-organization has 22 revenue districts, 10 each in the divisions of Jammu and Kashmir while as two in Ladakh. The creation of 8 new districts 4 each in Jammu and Kashmir lead to delineation of the administrative and educational boundaries of erstwhile districts. This resulted in non-proportional distribution of various educational institutions from schools to colleges. It has been observed that while the existing districts got a good number of schools, the newly created were left with a few. The state has population of 100, 699, 17 and literacy rate is 56 percent (census, 2001). These figures reveal the educational backwardness of the state. Efforts have been made from the far end of the 19th century to boost modern school education, no doubt initially by missionary efforts. Later the rulers of this then Princely State also began establishing schools at different levels. In 1894, the state had only a small number of schools which lacked the basic teaching and library facilities. However, after 1947 efforts were made to give flip to education at all levels. Schools were

established in every nook and corner of the state. Today the figures of different schools have gone up considerably. The state has about 10466 primary, 3994 upper primary, 1503 Secondary schools and 386 higher secondary schools (AISES, 2002). In the same survey it was revealed that 87 percent schools are rural and only 13 percent urban. The survey showed that 87.02 percent secondary and 97.66 percent higher secondary schools in Jammu and Kashmir have libraries. Though statistics about libraries are encouraging, however, the non availability of professional librarians is quite heartening as only 13.83 percent secondary and 55.18 percent higher secondary schools have full time trained professional librarians. These figures not only show a sharp rise in the number of schools but also the growing importance of education among the people of the state.

However, the rise in number of schools and students enrollments has not resulted in corresponding rise in infrastructural and educational quality improvement and development. The school education in the state still means, which it certainly should not in the modern times; a suite or a building and a teacher or a number of them, imparting education to the pupils. It is universally accepted that library services are an integral and essential component of the school education system as pinpointed earlier.

As discussed above, nine out of the ten senior secondary schools in Jammu and Kashmir claim to have library support, be it a shabby room having a small collection of books in almirahs, dumped in lockup with keys in charge of a teacher, a clerk or a peon. The library is not organized and remains locked most of the time. The services are just a conservative loan service with conditions that discourage pupils to enter the library. There are, no doubt, a few schools in private sector that may rightly claim a better library environment, though these too are lacking on all fronts. The lack of adequate library services in schools can be attributed to the secondary importance that is given to these libraries. There is hardly any planning put into practice before setting up libraries in schools.

As per the latest (2010) statistics available from the State Directorate of School Education which is responsible for regulation and laying down the standards for the establishment and recognition of schools in the state, there are 547 Government Schools and 231 Private/Public Schools at the higher secondary (10+2) level. In addition to this, there are 54 central schools comprising of Kendriya Vidyalayas, Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas and some army schools. The distribution of various types of senior secondary schools in various districts of the state is tabulated below:

Distribution of Higher/Senior Secondary Schools

| Jammu division | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S. No | District | State Government | Public/Privately Owned | Central Government | Total |
| 1 | Doda | 33 | 01 | 01 | 35 |
| 2 | Jammu | 63 | 87 | 18 | 168 |
| 3 | Kathua | 37 | 29 | 03 | 69 |
| 4 | Kishtwar | 13 | 01 | 01 | 15 |
| 5 | Poonch | 24 | 05 | 01 | 30 |
| 6 | Rajouri | 46 | 12 | 02 | 60 |
| | | | | | |

| 7 | Ramban | 10 | 00 | 00 | 10 |
|---|--------|----|----|----|----|
| 8 | Reasi | 17 | 03 | 00 | 20 |
| 9 | Samba | 17 | 22 | 04 | 43 |
| 10 | Udhampur | 29 | 10 | 06 | 45 |
| Total | | 289 | 170 | 36 | 495 |

| Kashmir division | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| S.No | District | State Government | Public/Privately Owned | Central Government | Total |
| 1 | Anantnag | 31 | 07 | 01 | 39 |
| 2 | Bandipora | 17 | 00 | 01 | 18 |
| 3 | Baramulla | 36 | 04 | 03 | 43 |
| 4 | Budgam | 29 | 11 | 01 | 41 |
| 5 | Ganderbal | 13 | 02 | 02 | 17 |
| 6 | Kulgam | 15 | 01 | 00 | 16 |
| 7 | Kupwara | 30 | 00 | 01 | 31 |
| 8 | Pulwama | 30 | 08 | 01 | 39 |
| 9 | Shopian | 05 | 02 | 00 | 07 |
| 10 | Srinagar | 24 | 21 | 04 | 49 |
| Total | | 230 | 56 | 14 | 300 |

| Ladakh Division | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| S.No | District | State Government | Public/Privately Owned | Central Government | Total |
| 1 | Kargil | 14 | 02 | 02 | 18 |
| 2 | Leh | 14 | 03 | 02 | 19 |
| Total | | 28 | 05 | 04 | 37 |

Total schools (J+K+L) = (495+300+37) = (832) Schools.

## Methodology

A survey questionnaire was used to collect data for the study. The first part of the questionnaire dealt with general profile of the school and the respondents and collected information about the school enrollment and professional status and qualifications of the respondents. The second part of the questionnaire investigated the available physical infrastructure like accommodation, physical facilities, furniture and fixtures and the seating capacities. The third part dealt with collection of information regarding the library operations like collection development, materials selection procedure and, organization of collection and the retrieval tools used. The last part solicited information about extent of access and the type of services provided in libraries.

The questionnaire was pretested on five senior secondary school libraries in the summer capital district of Srinagar. The respondents had very little or no problems in completing the questionnaire. However, some minor adjustments were made to accommodate their suggestions. Copies of the questionnaire were distributed among librarians/librarian in charges of each school in the sample personally by the investigator to ensure speedy response. A total of 201 (100 percent of the sample) school libraries from 10 administrative districts (selected through purposive sampling) responded to the survey. A rarely expected but highly desired 100 percent response rate was achieved through this method and above all the personal guidance of the investigator ensured unambiguous replies from the respondents. The data was collected over a period of 8 months during the 2010.

## Results and Discussion

A. Physical facilities

*a) Housing of libraries*

Most of the libraries (89.55 percent) are housed in insufficiently spaced single rooms within the schools while another 5.47 percent are accommodated in principal offices where students always have inhibitions to go. However, a few schools (4.97 percent) possess separate library blocks, though these also lack the basics of a library design (table 1).

The comparison of schools managed by various administering bodies shows a sizeable number of them claiming a separate room designated as library (State 84.80 percent, Public/Private 96.72 percent and Central 100 percent). However, on close observation, it is revealed that except a few centrally administered schools; all the schools have inadequately spaced libraries with different physical dimensions. The reasons appear to be non-compliance or absence of guidelines and standards.

No significant difference is revealed while assessing the rural-urban statistics relating to the library housing and location. More than 89 percent rural and 90 percent urban schools claim existence of a library with no standard physical requirements and specifications (table 1.1).

Table: 1 Housing status of libraries (state profile)

| School administering body | Housing | | | Total per stratum |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Separate block | Separate room(s) within the school | Principal's office | |
| state (n=125) | 10 (8) | 106 (84.80) | 09 (7.20) | 125 (100) |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| public (n=61) | 00 (00) | 59 (96.72) | 02 (3.27) | 61 (100) |
| central(n=15) | 00 (00) | 15 (100) | 00 (00) | 15 (100) |
| total (n=201) | 10 (4.97) | 180 (89.55) | 11 (5.47) | 201 (100) |

Table: 1.1 Housing status (rural-urban profile)

| Rural vs urban | Housing | | | Total per stratum |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Separate block | Separate room(s) within the school | Principal's office | |
| Rural (n=119) | 04 (3.36) | 106 (89.07) | 09 (7.56) | 119 (100) |
| Urban (n=82) | 06 (7.31) | 74 (90.24) | 02 (2.43) | 82 (100) |

*The figures in the parentheses indicate percentage.

*b) Multiservice infrastructural provision*

The statistics put forth in the 7th All India Educational survey about Jammu and Kashmir reveal that more than 82percent (84.15percent Rural and 93.76percent Urban) secondary and about 88percent (Rural 96.13percent and 99.44percent) higher secondary schools possess a library (ASIES, 2002). The data collected for the study shows a quantitative improvement in the overall library infrastructure which complements the above stated facts. However, observations show that libraries exist as "insufficiently spaced library cum reading rooms" in majority of schools lacking spaces for even the basic library provision. Further analysis reveals that the idea of having a school library with multiple sections is almost nonexistent in state run schools like other parts of India. It was observed that only a few school libraries possess separate sections and that an insufficiently spaced entity called "Library cum Reading Room" exists in 78.10 percent schools. Some schools do have more than one room with the other named as reading room (21.39 percent), circulation section (2 percent), reference section (3 percent) and audio-visual section (3 percent) (table 2).

The inter-school comparison reveals a majority of state funded government schools (81.60 percent), private/public funded schools (75.40 percent), and centrally administered schools (53.33 percent) schools possess a single 'Library cum Reading room. However, a few schools predominantly the centrally administered ones have developed separate sections with the view to provide diverse library services (table 2). The rural-urban comparison shows a greater percentage of urban schools (32.92 percent) with separate reading room than the rural (13.44 percent). Only few schools particularly the centrally administered ones show some progress with regard to multiple service section concepts (table 2.1).

The above mentioned facts indicate that children are deprived of the right to basic library facilities even in the 21st century when associations like IFLA and UNESCO proclaim "that intellectual freedom and access to information are essential to effective and responsible citizenship and participation in a democracy" (IFLA/UNESCO, 2000). Only a few our educationists know what a modern library equipped with latest ICT tools can do to the fortunes of children other than just issuing books and providing newspapers to read.

Table: 2. Service facilities in libraries (state profile)

| School administering body | Service facilities | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Reading room | Circulation section | Reference section | Audio visual section | Library/ reading room |
| State (n=125) | 21 (16.80) | 00 (00) | 00 (00) | 00 (00) | 102 (81.60) |
| Public (n=61) | 15 (24.59) | 01 (1.63) | 03 (4.91) | 01 (1.63) | 47 (75.40) |
| Central (n=15) | 07 (46.66) | 03 (20) | 03 (20) | 05 (33.33) | 08 (53.33) |
| Total (N=201) | 43 (21.39) | 04 (1.99) | 06 (2.98) | 06 (2.98) | 157 (78.10) |

Table: 2.1 Service facilities (rural-urban profile)

| Rural vs urban | Service facilities | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Reading room | Circulation section | Reference section | Audiovisual section | Library/ reading room |
| Rural (n=119) | 16 (13.44) | 02 (1.68) | 02 (1.68) | 03 (2.52) | 102 (84.87) |
| Urban (n=82) | 27 (32.92) | 02 (2.43) | 04 (4.87) | 03 (3.65) | 55 (67.07) |

*The figures in the parentheses indicate percentage.

*c) Library furniture*

The study reveals the availability of various furniture items in HS school libraries in Jammu and Kashmir. The picture looks pathetic as none of the schools claims to be sufficient in library furniture. Ironically, about 13 percent schools at the highest level of schooling in the state do not even possess chairs and tables in the library. About 17 percent schools do not possess racks/almirahs for stocking books and instead dump books in locked boxes. Only 15 (7.46 percent) HS School libraries in the state have a catalogue cabin for managing a card catalogue. There are only 13 (6.46 percent), 12 (5.97 percent) and 14 (6.96 percent) school libraries with periodical display racks, newspaper stands and clipboards respectively. The situation is alarming in state run school libraries as about 20 percent of them are without chairs and tables and 25 percent without almirahs for storing books. The public/private schools are slightly better with regard to furniture equipments. The central schools have the best library facilities vis-à-vis furniture and equipment in the state (table 3).

The rural- urban comparison shows that more than 20 percent rural schools are without any chair or table for students in the library (table 3.1). It is observed that State and public/private HS school libraries alike do not have sufficient furniture for

providing minimum possible services. These libraries are even used as prayer and dining halls in various schools noticed during the visit by the researcher.

Table: 3 Furniture in the libraries (state profile)

| Library furniture | Schools | | | No. of schools (N=201) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | State (n=125) | Public (n=61) | Central (n=15) | |
| Chairs | 102 (81.60) | 59 (96.72) | 15 (100) | 176 (87.56) |
| Tables | 104 (83.20) | 58 (95.08) | 15 (100) | 177 (88.05) |
| Almirahs | 94 (75.20) | 58 (95.08) | 15 (100) | 167 (83.08) |
| Book Racks | 23 (18.40) | 28 (45.90) | 10 (66.66) | 61 (30.34) |
| Lockers | 68 (54.40) | 22 (36.06) | 09 (60) | 99 (49.25) |
| Catalogue Cabinets | 02 (1.60) | 06 (9.83) | 07 (46.66) | 15 (7.46) |
| Periodical Display Racks | 00 (00) | 02 (3.27) | 11 (73.33) | 13 (6.46) |
| Newspaper Stands | 00 (00) | 02 (3.27) | 10 (66.66) | 12 (5.97) |
| Clipboards | 01 (0.80) | 02 (3.27) | 11 (73.33) | 14 (6.96) |

Table: 3.1 Furniture (rural-urban profile)

| Library furniture | Rural vs urban | | No. of schools (N=201) |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Rural (n=119) | Urban (n=82) | |
| Chairs | 96 (80.67) | 80 (97.56) | 176 (87.56) |
| Tables | 98 (82.35) | 79 (96.34) | 177 (88.05) |
| Almirahs | 91 (76.47) | 76 (92.68) | 167 (83.08) |
| Book Racks | 22 (18.48) | 39 (47.56) | 61 (30.34) |
| Lockers | 60 (50.42) | 39 (47.56) | 99 (49.25) |
| Catalogue Cabinets | 06 (5.04) | 09 (10.97) | 15 (7.46) |
| Periodical Display Racks | 07 (5.88) | 06 (7.31) | 13 (6.46) |
| Newspaper Stands | 06 (5.04) | 06 (7.31) | 12 (5.97) |
| | | | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Clipboards | 07 (5.88) | 07 (8.53) | 14 (6.96) |

*The figures in the parentheses indicate percentage.

*d) Seating Capacity*

The data collected for this study reveals that HS school libraries in the state are far below the standards in extending sufficient library spacing/seating capacity to students. An average seating capacity of only 27 students is recorded in higher secondary school libraries while as standards demand an accommodation of at least 40 to 120 students (BIS, 2004). When, this is compared to the average enrolment of 566 students per school, it gives a ratio of 21 prospective students for a single seating unit. In other words, there is a single chair for every twenty students in a HS school library (table 4). Assuming that a schedule is issued wherein every student is offered an opportunity to use library on a given day, he/she will be able to use library only once in a month and only 7-8 times in an academic session.

Comparison among schools administered by various governing bodies reveals that only libraries of centrally administered schools show some semblance with the standards vis-à-vis average seating capacity (47 students) as against a capacity of 50 students recommended by CBSE guidelines (CBSE, 2005) and 40-120 by BIS standards (BIS, 2004). The public/private schools follow with an average 31 students and state schools with the least average of 23 students which is far below the expected levels (table 4.1).

The rural-urban comparison is even more alarming. It was observed that rural school libraries have an average seating capacity of 24 students against an average of 33 students for urban schools (table 4.2). Observations show that school libraries do not have sufficient spaces for future expansion because rooms with varied physical dimensions are designated as "libraries." At places, library is even used as staff rooms, dining halls, prayer halls and store rooms and what not?

Table: 4 Seating capacity in libraries (general)

| Average enrollment | Average seating capacity | Ratio per seating unit* |
|---|---|---|
| 565.94 | 27.51 | 20.57 |

Table: 4.1 Seating capacity (state profile)

| School administering body | Average enrollment | Average seating capacity | Ratio per seating unit* |
|---|---|---|---|
| State (n=125) | 527.34 | 23.32 | 22.61 |
| Public (n=61) | 570.36 | 31.24 | 18.25 |
| Central(n=15) | 869.66 | 47.33 | 18.37 |

Table: 4.2 Average seating capacity (rural-urban profile)

| Rural vs urban | Average Enrollment | Average Seating Capacity | Ratio Per Seating Unit* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Rural (n=119) | 539.05 | 23.98 | 22.47 |
| | | | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Urban (n=82) | 604.97 | 32.64 | 18.53 |

*The number of students for each chair/seating unit.

*B. Human resources*

*a) Size of the staff*

The collected data shows that 63.19 percent senior school libraries in the state are still without professional manpower. Some of the libraries are run by teacher librarians on part-time basis (19.90 percent). There are only 74 professional librarians in selected HS schools and 127 non professionals. Comparing the schools run by various funding and administering bodies, it was observed that only Centrally Administered Schools like KVs, JNVs and Army schools possess 100 percent professional manpower in their libraries. This is followed by State run schools (37.60 percent) and public/privately run schools (19.67 percent) (table 5). The rural urban picture in Jammu and Kashmir looks even more alarming. More than 70 percent of HS school libraries in rural areas are without professional manpower with the urban picture a slightly better at 52 percent (table 5.1).

Lack of professional and other supporting staff in our school libraries is one of the major reasons which render them virtually non functional. These libraries are manned by a single staff member who is a simple graduate, matriculate and even below. In many cases, members of the clerical staff are assigned the task of looking after the libraries in the absence of a full time professional librarian. It is also observed that school libraries wherever existed, are understaffed as in other parts of India. The school library guidelines of the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) in India recommend "that for a Senior/Higher Secondary School consisting 2000 students, the library staff should consist of one senior librarian (PGT Grade), one Librarian (TGT Grade), one Assistant librarian (Assistant Teacher Grade) and one Library attendant. It goes further to add that in case the number of students in a school crosses 2000, there should be corresponding increase in the number of Library Attendants for every 500 students or part thereof" (CBSE, 2005). IFLA/UNESCO School Library Guidelines suggest in the same vein that "the size of the library staff should correspond to the size of the school and its special needs for library services" (IFLA/UNESCO, 2002). These guidelines also draw clear lines on the duties, importance, qualities and roles expected of the school library staff in general and professional librarians in particular. However, there seems to be a lack of seriousness from the affiliation and registering authorities for allowing non-compliance by the schools in the state and the absence of a strong and effective school inspection system.

Table: 5. Human resource in libraries (state profile)

| School administering body | Professional | Non-Professional | Teacher Librarian | Total per stratum |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| State (n=125) | 47 (37.60) | 55 (44) | 23 (18.40) | 125 (100) |
| Public (n=61) | 12 (19.67) | 32 (52.45) | 17 (27.86) | 61 (100) |
| Central(n=15) | 15 (100) | 00 (00) | 00 (00) | 15 (100) |
| TOTAL (N=201) | 74 (36.81) | 87 (43.28) | 40 (19.90) | 201 (100) |

Table: 5.1 Human resources (rural-urban profile)

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |

| Rural vs urban | Professional | Non-Professional | Teacher Librarian | Total per stratum |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Rural (n=119) | 35 (29.41) | 58 (48.73) | 26 (21.84) | 119 (100) |
| Urban (n=82) | 39 (47.56) | 29 (35.36) | 14 (17.07) | 82 (100) |

*The figures in the parentheses indicate percentage.

*b) Qualifications*

The situation vis-à-vis qualifications look even more concerning as the data reveals only18.90 percent librarians possessing a B.L.I.Sc, 15.92 percent M.L.I.Sc, 1.49 percent M.Phil and 0.49 percent PhD as the highest qualification; irrespective of the designations they hold. Comparison of the library staff qualifications by the types of school under study, it is found that 37.60 percent state administered (1 PhD, 1 M.Phil, 15 M.L.I.Sc. and 30 B.L.I.Sc.), 19.67 percent public/Privately run (2 M.Phil, 4 M.L.I.Sc and 6 B.L.I.Sc) and 100 percent centrally administered (13 M.L.I.Sc and 2 B.L.I.Sc.) school librarians are professionally qualified respectively (table 6).

The rural-urban comparison is even more revealing that only 30.25 percent rural (2 M.Phil, 14 M.L.I.Sc and 20 B.L.I.Sc) and 46.34 percent urban (1 PhD, 1 M.Phil, 18 M.L.I.Sc. and 18 B.L.I.Sc.) libraries have professional staff respectively (table 6.1).

The pathetic situation vis-à-vis professional staff in the state is because of the absence of or ignorance to the formulated standards. The guidelines regarding the selection of library staff need to be revisited. Presently, there is neither a system in place nor any thought process involved particularly at the state level to revise the required prescribed qualification criteria for appointing school librarians. The existing standards and guidelines at the national and international level can be used as effective reference tools for this purpose. For instance, the CBSE qualification criteria for various library designations in the senior/Hr. Secondary school libraries are quite remarkable. These guidelines suggest that a "*Senior Librarian* should have an M.L.I.Sc, a *Librarian* should be a Graduate with a degree or diploma in L.I.Sc, an *Assistant Librarian* should be a Matriculate or equivalent with certificate in L.I.Sc and a *Library Attendant* should be a Matriculate with library experience." (CBSE, 2005) However, this does not eliminate the need to revise and develop local standards and guidelines more so in view of the paradigm shift in the provision of school education at national and international levels.

Table: 6. Qualifications of librarians (state profile)

| School administering body | PhD | M.Phil | M.L.I.Sc | B.L.I.Sc | Masters Degree | Bachelors Degree | 10+2 | 10th | C.Lib | Total per stratum |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| State (n=125) | 01 (0.80) | 01 (0.80) | 15 (12) | 30 (24) | 10 (8) | 26 (20.80) | 28 (22.40) | 10 (8) | 04 (3.20) | 125 (100) |
| Public (n=61) | 00 (00) | 02 (3.27) | 04 (6.55) | 06 (9.83) | 04 (6.55) | 26 (42.62) | 09 (14.75) | 08 (13.11) | 02 (3.27) | 61 (100) |
| Central (n=15) | 00 (00) | 00 (00) | 13 (86.66) | 02 (13.33) | 00 (00) | 00 (00) | 00 (00) | 00 (00) | 00 (00) | 15 (100) |
| Total | 01 | 03 | 32 | 38 | 14 | 52 | 37 | 18 | 06 | 201 |

| (N=201) | (0.49) | (1.49) | (15.92) | (18.90) | (6.96) | (25.87) | (18.40) | (8.95) | (2.98) | (100) |

Table: 6.1 Qualifications (state profile)

| Rural vs urban | PhD | M.Phil | M.L.I.Sc | B.L.I.Sc | Masters Degree | Bachelors Degree | 10+2 | 10th | C.Lib | Total per stratum |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Rural (n=119) | 00 (00) | 02 (1.68) | 14 (11.76) | 20 (16.80) | 11 (9.24) | 32 (26.89) | 26 (21.84) | 11 (9.24) | 03 (2.52) | 119 (100) |
| Urban (n=82) | 01 (1.21) | 01 (1.21) | 18 (21.95) | 18 (21.95) | 03 (3.65) | 20 (24.39) | 11 (13.41) | 07 (8.53) | 03 (3.65) | 82 (100) |

*The figures in the parentheses indicate percentage.

*C. Library operations*

*(I) Collection development*

*a) Selection*

The library material selection procedures in senior secondary school libraries in Jammu and Kashmir vary a great deal. In majority of state run schools, it is the directorate of school education which selects and sends books to schools. For local requirements of textbooks, it is the mostly teachers who in collaboration with the Principal select and recommend books for purchase. These purchases are made out of the schools local fund which is a pool fund of the student fee. Library committees do exist in some schools where librarians also give selection related suggestions. In public HS schools, though, selection of library materials is anarchical; however, in centrally administered schools the process is liberal where even student suggestions are also considered important.

The data collected for the sample survey shows more than 70 percent of schools without a book selection committee. In more than 46 percent of schools only teachers and principal select books for library. Though in about 14 percent of schools, principal is the ultimate authority for book selection, about 29 percent claim books are being supplied through the directorate of school education and, therefore have no control over selection of materials.

A comparison of schools by their administering bodies reflect that in about 55 percent schools, libraries materials are selected by subject teachers and principal while as in about 45 percent materials are selected and supplied by the directorate of school education. More than 70 percent schools do not have a library committee. Among private/public schools, about 85 percent do not possess a library committee. In about 40 percent schools only Principal makes selections, while in another 40 percent indicate that principal and teachers together make selection of library materials. Contrary to this, about 87 percent central schools have a library committee and the process of selection is even augmented by the student views and choices. (table 7)

The rural-urban comparison shows about 75 percent rural and 64 percent urban schools do not have a book selection committee in place. In about 10 percent of rural and 20 percent of urban schools, only principal is responsible for selection of library materials. (table 7.1)

In addition to this, the investigator through personal interviews of many librarians

found out that they are rarely made a part of the selection process and their views are not sought while making library selection. They are generally ignored while constituting library committees in State Govt. and Private/Public schools, though with some exceptions. Almost all schools at higher secondary level except a few renowned private schools and centrally administered schools have a selection policy in place.

Table: 7. Stakeholders in library selection process (state profile)

| School administering body | Stakeholders | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Principal only | Subject teachers & principal | A committee | Any other |
| State (n=125) | 02 (1.60) | 68 (54.40) | 37 (29.60) | 57 (45.60) |
| Public (n=61) | 25 (40.98) | 24 (39.34) | 09 (14.75) | 00 (00) |
| Central (n=15) | 01 (6.66) | 01 (6.66) | 13 (86.66) | 01 (6.66) |
| Total J&K (n=201) | 28 (13.93) | 93 (46.26) | 59 (29.35) | 58 (28.85) |

Table: 7.1 Stakeholders in selection process (rural-urban profile)

| Rural Vs Urban | Stakeholders | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Principal only | Subject teachers & principal | A committee | Any other |
| Rural (n=119) | 12 (10.08) | 63 (52.94) | 29 (24.36) | 32 (26.89) |
| Urban (n=82) | 16 (19.51) | 30 (36.58) | 30 (36.58) | 26 (31.70) |

*the figures in the parentheses indicate percentage.

*b) Users' requirement assessment*

The state of HS school libraries in Jammu and Kashmir vis-à-vis assessment of user requirements reveals only a small percentage of schools do so in light of the student tastes and interests. Otherwise, it is generally the teacher requirements dominating the selections (96.01 percent). The marginal representation of students in the selection of library materials result in their lack of interest in school library thereby resulting in wastage of essential monetary and information resources. The schools librarians are also sidelined in selection process in majority of schools (83.58 percent). About a quarter of schools (24.37 percent) which predominantly includes central (about 73.33 percent) and some high brow private/public (29.50 percent) schools do invite student suggestions prior to selection of materials (table 8). However, whether these suggestions are considered in the final selection of books and other materials is also questionable.

The rural-urban comparison shows that more urban (36.58 percent) schools seek student suggestions than rural (15.96 percent). Also more urban schools (26.82 percent) involve librarians in selection of books than the rural schools (9.24 percent) (table 8.1).

Table: 8. User participation in selection (state profile)

| School administering body | Users consulted for library materials requirements | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Teachers | School/teacher Librarian | Class representatives | Meritorious students | Frequent visitors |
| State (n=125) | 121 (96.80) | 14 (11.20) | 20 (16) | 06 (4.80) | 01 (0.80) |
| Public (n=61) | 59 (96.72) | 16 (26.22) | 18 (29.50) | 12 (19.67) | 03 (4.91) |
| Central (n=15) | 13 (86.66) | 03 (20) | 11 (73.33) | 07 (46.66) | 07 (46.66) |
| Total J&K (n=201) | 193 (96.01) | 33 (16.41) | 49 (24.37) | 25 (12.43) | 11 (5.47) |

Table: 8.1 User participation in selections (rural-urban profile)

| Rural Vs Urban | Users consulted for library materials requirements | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Teachers | School/teacher Librarian | Class representative | Meritorious students | Frequent visitors |
| Rural (n=119) | 115 (96.63) | 11 (9.24) | 19 (15.96) | 10 (8.40) | 07 (5.88) |
| Urban (n=82) | 78 (95.12) | 22 (26.82) | 30 (36.58) | 15 (18.29) | 04 (4.87) |

*The figures in the parentheses indicate percentage.

Observations show that HS school libraries do not have well thought out selection policies in place. Very few schools possess selection committees and where these exist, they hardly meet. In such situations it is the monopoly of the Principals who single handedly select and order books for library. In many schools visited, students even do not know that they have a school library not to speak of their involvement in selection process.

*c) Size of the collection*

The current study which was conducted only for higher secondary school libraries records a slight improvement. It is estimated that about a quarter (24.87 percent) of libraries has a collection of up to 1000 books and another quarter (24.87 percent) 1001-2000 books, meaning that about 50 percent of libraries possess up to 2000 books. Another estimated 29 percent have 2001-4000 books. No significant difference is observed while comparing State and Public/Private schools. However, 95 percent of central schools have more than 2000 books (table 9).

The rural comparison shows that only 43 percent rural and about 61 percent of urban school libraries possess a collection of more than more than 2000 books. In other words, more than 57 percent rural and 39 percent urban HS school libraries in Jammu and Kashmir state lack the minimum collection requirement of 2500 books

(table 9.1).

Table: 9 Collection sizes of the libraries (state profile)

| Collection size | School administering body | | | Total J&K (n=201) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | State (n=125) | Public (n=61) | Central (n=15) | |
| 001-1000 | 34 (27.20) | 16 (26.22) | 00 (00) | 50 (24.87) |
| 1001-2000 | 34 (27.20) | 15 (24.59) | 01 (6.66) | 50 (24.87) |
| 2001-3000 | 22 (17.60) | 08 (13.11) | 03 (20) | 33 (16.41) |
| 3001-4000 | 18 (14.40) | 07 (11.47) | 00 (00) | 25 (12.43) |
| 4001-5000 | 03 (2.40) | 04 (6.55) | 03 (20) | 10 (4.97) |
| 5001-6000 | 06 (4.80) | 03 (4.91) | 00 (00) | 09 (4.47) |
| 6001-10000 | 07 (5.60) | 06 (9.83) | 04 (26.66) | 17 (8.45) |
| 10001-20000 | 01 (0.80) | 02 (3.27) | 04 (26.66) | 07 (3.48) |
| Total | 125 (100) | 61 (100) | 15 (100) | 201 (100) |

Table: 9.1 Collection size (rural-urban profile)

| Collection size | Rural-urban comparison | |
|---|---|---|
| | Rural (n=119) | Urban (n=82) |
| 001-1000 | 33 (27.73) | 17 (20.73) |
| 1001-2000 | 35 (29.41) | 15 (18.29) |
| 2001-3000 | 19 (15.96) | 14 (17.07) |
| 3001-4000 | 16 (13.44) | 09 (10.97) |
| 4001-5000 | 06 (5.04) | 04 (4.87) |
| 5001-6000 | 03 (2.52) | 06 (7.31) |
| 6001-10000 | 04 (3.36) | 13 (15.85) |
| 10001-20000 | 03 (2.52) | 04 (4.87) |
| Total (n=201) | 119 (100) | 82 (100) |

*the figures in the parentheses indicate percentage.

*d) Reference sources*

Assessment of the availability of reference sources in senior secondary school libraries in Jammu and Kashmir shows more than 35 percent schools without an encyclopedia, 3 percent without a dictionary and 73 percent without a yearbook. About 53 percent lack record books and 18 percent school libraries do not even possess maps and atlases.

The libraries in Central schools, on the other hand, are comparatively better placed with regard to reference collections as about all sample schools claimed to possess biographies, dictionaries and encyclopedias. About 93 percent claim to possess maps and atlases while about 87 percent record books. This is followed by Public/Private school libraries where about 30 percent schools do not possess an encyclopedia, 2 percent a dictionary, 70 percent a yearbook and 20 percent a biography (table 10).

The rural urban comparison shows rural school libraries less resourced than their urban counterparts in all types of reference sources (table 10.1).

The reference collections generally consist of a few single volume encyclopedias, a few dictionaries and at places maps and atlases. Generally, dearth of important reference sources like authentic and good quality encyclopedias, biographies, yearbooks, record books, directories and biographies is noted. Another important aspect is the currency and relevance of resources. Most of the schools visited possess out dated encyclopedias, mutilated dictionaries, torn off record books etc. locked in closed almirahs and ironically preserved as precious monuments.

Table: 10. Reference sources in the libraries (state profile)

| Reference sources | School administering body | | | Total J&K (n=201) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | State (n=125) | Public (n=61) | Central (n=15) | |
| Encyclopedias | 71 (56.80) | 43 (70.49) | 15 (100) | 129 (64.17) |
| Dictionaries | 120 (96) | 60 (98.36) | 15 (100) | 195 (97.01) |
| Year books | 24 (19.20) | 18 (29.50) | 12 (80) | 54 (26.86) |
| Directories | 09 (7.20) | 06 (9.83) | 05 (33.33) | 20 (9.95) |
| Biographies | 86 (68.80) | 49 (80.32) | 15 (100) | 150 (74.62) |
| Record books | 48 (38.40) | 35 (57.37) | 13 (86.66) | 96 (47.76) |
| Gazetteers | 07 (5.60) | 04 (6.55) | 02 (13.33) | 13 (6.46) |
| Maps & atlases | 98 (78.40) | 54 (88.52) | 14 (93.33) | 166 (82.58) |

Table: 10.1 Reference sources (rural-urban profile)

| | School administering body |
|---|---|
| | |

| Reference sources | Rural (n=119) | Urban (n=82) |
|---|---|---|
| Encyclopedias | 66 (55.46) | 63 (76.82) |
| Dictionaries | 114 (95.79) | 81 (98.78) |
| Year books | 24 (20.16) | 30 (36.58) |
| Directories | 08 (6.72) | 12 (14.63) |
| Biographies | 84 (70.58) | 66 (80.48) |
| Record books | 49 (41.17) | 47 (57.31) |
| Gazetteers | 03 (2.52) | 10 (12.19) |
| Maps & atlases | 94 (78.99) | 72 (87.80) |

*the figures in the parentheses indicate percentage.

*e) Audiovisual resources*

The impact of Information and communication technology on the educational sector in Jammu and Kashmir is comparatively slower than the other states of India. One of the reasons generally believed responsible for this are the political instability and resulting vacuum of industrial establishments in the state. Although, seriously damaged educational infrastructure of the state was revived to some extent; but, much still remains in ruins.

The data collected for this study demonstrates that impact of ICT on school libraries is almost negligible. The presence of related media like CDs, DVDs, audio-visual materials etc is almost non-existent in senior secondary school libraries of the state. However, libraries of a few central schools and some public/private school libraries are building up these alternate media (table 11). The rural-urban picture shows that more urban schools than the rural possess a few of these resources (table 11.1).

Table: 11. Audio visual and digital resources in the libraries (state profile)

| School administering body | Audio visual and digital resources | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Audio cassettes | Video cassettes | CDs | DVDs |
| State (n=125) | 01 (0.80) | 00 (00) | 10 (8) | 00 (00) |
| Public (n=61) | 10 (16.39) | 09 (14.75) | 24 (39.34) | 01 (1.63) |
| Central (n=15) | 07 (46.66) | 08 (53.33) | 12 (80) | 03 (20) |
| Total J&K (n=201) | 18 (8.95) | 17 (8.45) | 46 (22.88) | 04 (1.99) |

Table: 11.1 Audio visual and digital resources (rural-urban profile)

| Rural Vs Urban | Audio visual and digital resources | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Audio cassettes | Video cassettes | CDs | DVDs |
| Rural (n=119) | 06 (5.04) | 04 (3.36) | 21 (17.64) | 03 (2.52) |
| Urban (n=82) | 12 (14.63) | 13 (15.85) | 25 (30.48) | 01 (1.21) |

*the figures in the parentheses indicate percentage.

*f) Newspapers and magazine subscriptions*

Newspapers and magazines are an important source for keeping current with the latest happenings locally, nationally and internationally. These sources of information are considered invaluable to users for keeping current and at the same time add to the information content of the libraries. Libraries, therefore, subscribe to these vital sources as per their user requirements.

Jammu and Kashmir presents a microcosmic view of the overall school library development in India. The collected data suggest that although a majority of HS school libraries subscribe to a few local and national newspapers, but only a handful of them subscribe to magazines in the fields of science (53.23 percent), current affairs/News (48.25 percent) and sports (31.84 percent). About half of the schools do not subscribe to national newspapers. The inter-school comparisons do not show any significant difference except that more private than government schools subscribe to magazines. Most of the central schools, it is observed subscribe newspapers and magazines as per the KV Library Charter guidelines (table 12).

The rural-urban comparison brings forth a pitiable picture of rural schools. The data shows that about 65 percent rural HS schools do not subscribe to national newspapers and about 70 percent to magazines (table 12.1). Observations reveal that one of the reasons for less number of rural schools subscribing to the newspapers and magazines is long distance from main towns. There are some places where newspapers reach after two day lapse. Furthermore, observation and assessment reveals that access to these sources in schools (where these are subscribed) is mainly limited to the principals and teachers. Students rarely get an opportunity to lay their hands on them; that too when teachers put their hands off.

Table: 12. Newspaper and magazine subscriptions (state profile)

| School administering body | Newspaper subscriptions | | Magazine subscriptions | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Local | National | Science | News | Sports & others |
| State (n=125) | 123 (98.40) | 53 (42.40) | 48 (38.40) | 44 (35.20) | 27 (21.60) |
| Public (n=61) | 60 (98.36) | 36 (59.01) | 44 (72.13) | 38 (62.29) | 23 (37.70) |
| Central (n=15) | 15 (100) | 15 (100) | 15 (100) | 15 (100) | 14 (93.33) |
| Total (n=201) | 198 (98.50) | 104 (51.74) | 107 (53.23) | 97 (48.25) | 64 (31.84) |

Table: 12.1 Newspaper and magazine subscriptions (rural-urban profile)

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |

| Rural Vs Urban | Newspapers | | Magazines | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Local | National | Science | News | Sports & others |
| Rural (n=119) | 116 (97.47) | 45 (37.81) | 46 (38.65) | 44 (36.97) | 34 (28.57) |
| Urban (n=82) | 82 (100) | 59 (71.95) | 61 (74.39) | 53 (64.63) | 30 (36.58) |

*the figures in the parentheses indicate percentage.

*g) Books per pupil*

The state of Jammu and Kashmir according to the present survey results reveals a ratio of 5.40 books per pupil (table 13). This falls within the provisions of most of the available school library standards in India. However, when comparisons are drawn among different types of school libraries, the picture becomes more visible. It is observed that libraries of central schools (KVs, JNVs and Army schools) possess student book ratio of 9.09 books which has inflated the collective ratio because of the higher values of variables. Central schools have greater library collection and in spite of its inverse relation with student enrolment; the books per pupil ratio is highest in these schools. The central schools are followed by public/privately owned schools (5.26) and state run schools (4.74) books per pupil (table 13.1).

The rural-urban scene as expected shows a large difference. The rural school libraries lag behind with a ratio of 4.63 books per pupil as compared to the urban 6.40 books per pupil (table 13.2). The reasons are quite obvious as rural areas have few HS schools with high enrollments and libraries with fewer collections.

Table: 13. Books student ratio in the libraries

| Total enrollment (n=201) | Total collection (n=201) | Books per pupil |
|---|---|---|
| 113754 (565.94) | 614624 (3057.83) | 5.40 |

Table: 13.1 Book student ratio (state profile)

| School administering body | Average books per capita | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Total enrollment | Total collection | Books per pupil |
| State (n=125) | 65917 (527.33) | 312747 (2501.97) | 4.74 |
| Public (n=61) | 34792 (570.36) | 183236(3003.86) | 5.26 |
| Central(n=15) | 13045 (869.66) | 118642 (7909.46) | 9.09 |

Table: 13.2 Books student ratio (rural-urban profile)

| Rural Vs Urban | Average books per capita | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Average enrollment | Average collection | Books per pupil |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Rural (n=119) | 64147 (539.05) | 297109 (2496.71) | 4.63 |
| Urban (n=82) | 49608 (604.97) | 317516 (3872.14) | 6.40 |

*the underlined figures represent ratio per student.

**figures in the parenthesis represent averages.

*(II)Technical processing*

*a) Classification*

The library collections in senior secondary schools of Jammu and Kashmir are generally not organized according to standards. The collected data supports this viewpoint. It reveals that a little above 87 percent of sample school libraries virtually do not classify their collections. A few libraries use DDC (7.46 percent) and subject codes (4.47 percent). Comparing school by their administering bodies, a majority of state schools (86.80 percent), another majority public/private schools (88.51 percent) and about 40 percent central schools do not classify their library collections (table 14). This is partly either due to absence of required tools or non-availability of professional manpower. Surprisingly, in most schools despite the availability of and professional manpower, there is lack of will among librarians to carry out this premier professional work.

Table: 14. Classification of library materials (state profile)

| School administering body | Classification scheme/method used | | | | |
| | Dewey decimal classification | Colon classification | Subject codes | Self evolved method | Do not classify |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| State (n=125) | 02 (1.60) | 01 (0.80) | 06 (4.80) | 45 (36) | 71 (56.80) |
| Public (n=61) | 04 (6.55) | 00 (00) | 03 (4.91) | 06 (9.83) | 48 (78.68) |
| Central (n=15) | 09 (60) | 00 (00) | 00 (00) | 03 (20) | 03 (20) |
| Total J&K (n=201) | 15 (7.46) | 01 (0.49) | 09 (4.47) | 54 (26.86) | 122 (60.69) |

The rural-urban comparison shows more agonizing results. It shows more than 94 percent rural and 78 percent urban schools do not classify their library collections (table 14.1).

Table: 14.1 Classification (rural-urban profile)

| Rural Vs Urban | Classification scheme/method used | | | | |
| | Dewey decimal classification | Colon classification | Subject codes | Self evolved method | Do not classify |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Rural (n=119) | 05 (4.20) | 00 (00) | 02 (1.68) | 46 (38.65) | 66 (55.46) |
| | | | | | |

| Urban (n=82) | 10 (12.19) | 01 (1.21) | 07 (8.53) | 08 (9.75) | 56 (68.29) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

*the figures in the parentheses indicate percentage.

*b) Cataloguing*

Cataloguing of books and other reading materials in HS school libraries in Jammu and Kashmir is facing virtual extinction as only a small portion of schools particularly a few centrally administered ones catalogue their collections. Rest of the school libraries (93 percent) did not catalogue their collections. Only about 7 percent libraries use standard catalogue code. Nearly 6 percent libraries have evolved a local method of cataloguing books in absence of a standard cataloging manual. Comparison of cataloguing procedures in schools administered by various bodies shows that more than 98 percent state, 93 percent private and 46 percent centrally administered schools do not catalogue their collections at all (table 15). These percentages are much higher than as recorded at the national level by Patel and Kumar (2001) which show that a little less than 50 percent school libraries in India have no catalogues. There is no noticeable difference while making comparisons of rural and urban school libraries. Majority of school libraries (96 percent rural and 88 percent urban) alike, do not catalogue their collections (table 15.1).

It is surprising to observe that libraries even with professional staff lack the will to undertake the process of cataloguing. At places, person at the helm of affairs do not even know what really a library catalogue means. Some even consider accession record as catalogue while a few tried to show the publisher catalogues when asked 'whether they built a library catalogue?

Table: 15. Cataloguing of library materials (state profile)

| School administering body | Cataloguing method used | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Standard catalogue code | Self evolved method | Do not catalogue |
| State (n=125) | 02 (1.60) | 09 (7.20) | 114 (91.20) |
| Public (n=61) | 05 (8.19) | 03 (4.91) | 53 (86.88) |
| Central (n=15) | 08 (53.33) | 00 (00) | 07 (46.66) |
| Total J&K (n=201) | 15 (7.46) | 12 (5.97) | 174 (86.56) |

Table: 15.1 Cataloguing of library materials (state profile)

| Rural Vs Urban | Cataloguing method used | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Standard catalogue code | Self evolved method | Do not catalogue |
| Rural (n=119) | 05 (4.20) | 03 (2.52) | 111 (93.27) |
| Urban (n=82) | 10 (12.19) | 09 (10.97) | 63 (76.82) |

*the figures in the parentheses indicate percentage.

*c) Catalogue formats (physical)*

Although, considered as the basic professional exercise of a qualified librarian, preparation and maintenance of a library catalogue is a rarity in school libraries. The collected data demonstrates this fact. Majority of respondent HS school libraries (87.06 percent) do not maintain a catalogue in any form. 12 (5.97 percent) of the responding HS school libraries in the state maintain a book form catalogue while only 7 (3.48 percent) maintain a card catalogue. Another 7 (3.48 percent) libraries maintain a computerized catalogue. Comparing schools administered by various bodies, it was found that about 94 percent state administered and 86 percent privately owned schools do not maintain any form of catalogue. About 1/3$^{rd}$ of centrally administered schools found to maintain a computerized catalogue (table 16).

Table: 16. Physical forms of catalogue in libraries (state profile)

| School Administering Body | Forms of catalogue maintained | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Book form | Card form | Computerized/ Digital | Do not maintain |
| State (n=125) | 06 (4.80) | 02 (1.60) | 00 (00) | 117 (93.60) |
| Public (n=61) | 05 (8.19) | 02 (3.27) | 02 (3.27) | 52 (85.24) |
| Central (n=15) | 01 (6.66) | 03 (20) | 05 (33.33) | 06 (40) |
| Total J&K (n=201) | 12 (5.97) | 07 (3.48) | 07 (3.48) | 175 (87.06) |

*the figures in the parentheses indicate percentage.

The rural-urban comparison also reveals some interesting facts. An estimated 92 percent rural and 81 percent urban HS school libraries do not possess a catalogue at all. Among the sample only one rural school library maintained catalogue in card form while other two in computerized form. More urban schools were likely to maintain a catalogue than the rural (table 16.1).

Table: 16.1 Forms of catalogue (rural-urban profile)

| Rural Vs Urban | Forms of catalogue maintained | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Book form | Card form | Computerized/digital | Do not maintain |
| Rural (n=119) | 07 (5.88) | 01 (0.84) | 02 (1.68) | 109 (91.59) |
| Urban (n=82) | 05 (6.09) | 06 (7.31) | 05 (6.09) | 66 (80.48) |

*the figures in the parentheses indicate percentage.

It was also surprising to observe that even at places, where professional school librarians exist, cataloguing is not carried out. Usually, cataloguing small library collections is manageable affair, but librarians' lack of effort and will makes the situation difficult. When asked why for book collection of mere 200 odd books difficult to catalogue? One of the librarians replied saying that "shortage of staff and

funds hinders this process." Librarians particularly, in libraries with small collections size can take up cataloguing in piece meals without affecting other services if at all provided. But this spirit is totally missing. Absence of catalogue in a school library results in wasting a lot of students' time in futile searches for the books and also puts a question mark on the relevance and importance of appointing professional librarians in schools.

*d) Circulation systems (tools and techniques)*

The data collected reveals that all libraries in the sample use a manual system of circulation. Further analysis shows that predominantly ledger (58.70 percent) and register system (39.80 percent) is used while as in 22.38 percent schools books are issued on loose admission forms which bear a few transaction columns (5-10) beyond which books are not issued. No statistically significant difference was observed while comparing the circulations systems used in various types of schools under study (table 17).

Table: 17 Circulation systems in the libraries (state profile)

| School administering body | Circulation systems used | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Ledger system | Register system | Admission forms |
| State (n=125) | 83 (66.40) | 42 (33.60) | 43 (34.40) |
| Public (n=61) | 22 (36.06) | 37 (60.65) | 01 (1.63) |
| Central (n=15) | 13 (86.66) | 01 (6.66) | 01 (6.66) |
| Total J&K (n=201) | 118 (58.70) | 80 (39.80) | 45 (22.38) |

*The figures in the parentheses indicate percentage.

The rural urban comparison shows considerably a large number of school libraries issuing books on loose admission forms probably because school authorities do not provide printed ledgers or registers (table 17.1).

Table: 17.1 Circulation systems (rural-urban profile)

| Rural vs urban | Circulation systems used | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Ledger system | Register system | Admission forms register |
| Rural (n=119) | 66 (55.46) | 51 (42.85) | 42 (35.29) |
| Urban (n=82) | 52 (63.41) | 29 (35.36) | 03 (3.65) |

*the figures in the parentheses indicate percentage.

In majority of schools visited it was observed that the circulation service was the only proof of existence of libraries in schools. In majority of schools, normally students while applying for admissions are supposed to fill a library membership form supplied along with an admission form. The library form duly filled is received in the school after completion of the admission process and is handed over to the librarian for making the book lending entries. These forms usually remain unbound and librarians usually tag these under ordinary file covers. For the poor librarian the

problems start right from here. While issuing books, librarian has to search for the form of a particular student one by one while going through a complete set of at least 100 forms tagged in a single file which obviously takes time. In many cases frequent use of such forms makes them more fragile and thus makes these important records prone to damage. Sometimes mischievous students even steal these forms during heavy rush, unfortunately to put the claim of theft on the poor librarian later.

In many schools, especially in rural areas funds are so scarce that school authorities are unable even to issue ordinary registers to librarians for making circulation records. Many librarians spend their personal money to purchase such registers for maintaining the important circulation records so as to avoid the subsequent blame of theft on them.

*(III)Housekeeping*

*a) Stock taking*

The collected data reveals only 44.27 percent [77percent as studied by (Jha, 2009)] HS school libraries in Jammu and Kashmir undertake stock verification annually and more than a quarter (25.37 percent) has never done so. About 17 percent of the responding school libraries performed it bi-annually while another 10 percent occasionally. This shows an interesting trend of inconsistency because rules recommend a complete physical verification of books every year in libraries having not more than 20,000 volumes and not fewer than two qualified library staff. Since, whole sample (100 percent) of schools under study has a collection of less than 20,000 books, still regular stock taking procedures were missing in school libraries in the state (table 18).

Comparison of different types of schools under study shows about 70 percent of state administered and 40 percent of privately owned schools do not undertake annual stock verification as prescribed. However, centrally administered school libraries are comparatively better placed with about 80 percent performing stock verification annually while another 20 percent bi-annually (table 18).

Table: 18. Stock taking in the libraries (state profile)

| School administering body | Frequency | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Annually | Biennially | Five yearly | Occasionally | Do not undertake |
| State (n=125) | 38 (30.40) | 23 (18.40) | 07 (5.60) | 17 (13.60) | 40 (32) |
| Public (n=61) | 39 (63.93) | 08 (13.11) | 00 (00) | 03 (4.91) | 11 (18.03) |
| Central (n=15) | 12 (80) | 03 (20) | 00 (00) | 00 (00) | 00 (00) |
| Total J&K (n=201) | 89 (44.27) | 34 (16.91) | 07 (3.48) | 20 (9.95) | 51 (25.37) |

*the figures in the parentheses indicate percentage.

The rural-urban comparison shows a higher percentage of urban school libraries (59.75 percent) performing stock verification annually as compared to the rural (33.61 percent). Among the responding schools, a comparatively greater percentage of rural school libraries (38.65 percent) do not undertake stock verification than urban (6.09 percent) (table 18.1).

Table: 18.1 Stock taking (rural-urban profile)

| Rural Vs Urban | Frequency | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Annually | Biennially | Five yearly | Occasionally | Do not undertake |
| Rural (n=119) | 40 (33.61) | 11 (9.24) | 07 (5.88) | 15 (12.60) | 46 (38.65) |
| Urban (n=82) | 49 (59.75) | 23 (28.04) | 00 (00) | 05 (6.09) | 05 (6.09) |

*The figures in the parentheses indicate percentage.

In majority of schools where stock taking is carried out, it was observed that the process is usually restricted to mere counting of books and rarely followed by weeding and discarding of the obsolete and mutilated books. The stock taking is normally undertaken either during the winter/summer vacations or during the period of examination. Usually an outsider or a few teachers of the school are appointed as stock verifiers which imply "lack of confidence in the honesty of the library staff." (Koul, 1982)

*b) Weeding and discarding*

Like the rest of country, school libraries in Jammu and Kashmir run in the absence of any guidelines which affects their overall functioning. Weeding seems a rarity in school higher secondary libraries where collections are so old and small that weeding would leave nothing relevant behind. The current study while analyzing the weeding frequencies found that more than 61 percent [50 percent estimated by (Jha, 2009)] of HS school libraries say that there is no weed out policy in place and hence they never weed out any materials. While the rest in almost equal proportion either reported annual, biennial or occasional weeding. Although, there was no noticeable difference between the weeding practices of state schools and privately owned ones, however, a greater percentage of central schools (40 percent) undertake annual weeding regularly (table 19).

Table: 19. Weeding and discarding in libraries (state profile)

| School administering body | Frequency | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Annually | Biennially | Occasionally | Never weed out (no policy) |
| State (n=125) | 09 (7.20) | 17 (13.60) | 19 (15.20) | 80 (64) |
| Public (n=61) | 12 (19.67) | 04 (6.55) | 07 (11.47) | 38 (62.29) |
| Central (n=15) | 06 (40) | 02 (13.33) | 02 (13.33) | 05 (33.33) |
| Total J&K (n=201) | 27 (13.43) | 23 (11.44) | 28 (13.93) | 123 (61.19) |

The rural-urban picture reveals more urban schools undertaking regular weeding as compared to rural. While on the other hand more rural schools (66.38 percent) reported absence of a weeding policy than the urban (53.65 percent) (table 19.1).

Table: 19.1 Weeding and discarding (rural-urban profile)

| | |
|---|---|
| | |

| School administering body | Frequency | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Annually | Biennially | Occasionally | Never weed out (no policy) |
| Rural (n=119) | 15 (12.60) | 07 (5.88) | 18 (15.12) | 79 (66.38) |
| Urban (n=82) | 12 (14.63) | 16 (19.51) | 10 (12.19) | 44 (53.65) |

*The figures in the parentheses indicate percentage.

The lack of policy and standards result in piling irrelevant, obsolete and outdated library collections in schools, thereby turning them virtually in to dumping houses where students hardly venture in.

*D. Library services*

*a) Information services*

The schools libraries in Jammu and Kashmir like in other parts of India hardly provide any other service than the circulation of books. The current study while complementing this generalization reveals that a majority (98 percent) of senior secondary school libraries for which this study was conducted provide some sort of assistance in finding relevant books for home use. Only a small percentage of school libraries provide other services like reprographic (7.96 percent), internet browsing (8.95 percent), Newspaper clipping display (23.38 percent), list of latest arrivals (14.42 percent) and audio-visual (6.46 percent). However, while comparing schools administered by various funding bodies, it was found that though some central and public schools have initiated few services of some mention, state schools comparatively lag behind in all respects (table 20).

Table: 20. Services in the libraries (state profile)

| School administering body | Library services | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Assistance in finding books | Reprography | Internet browsing | Newspaper clipping display | List of latest arrivals | Audio visual service |
| State (n=125) | 122 (97.60) | 02 (1.60) | 00 (00) | 11 (8.80) | 06 (4.80) | 01 (0.80) |
| Public (n=61) | 60 (98.36) | 07 (11.47) | 11 (18.03) | 21 (34.42) | 08 (13.11) | 03 (4.91) |
| Central (n=15) | 15 (100) | 07 (46.66) | 07 (46.66) | 15 (100) | 15 (100) | 09 (60) |
| Total J&K (n=201) | 197 (98) | 16 (7.96) | 18 (8.95) | 47 (23.38) | 29 (14.42) | 13 (6.46) |

The rural urban comparison reveals a greater percentage of urban school libraries provide with latest services than the rural (table 20.1).

Table: 20.1 Services (rural-urban profile)

| Rural Vs Urban | Library services | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Assistance in finding books | Reprography | Internet browsing | Newspaper clipping display | List of latest arrivals | Audio visual service |
| Rural (n=119) | 115 (96.63) | 04 (3.36) | 05 (4.20) | 12 (10.08) | 10 (8.40) | 06 (5.04) |
| Urban (n=82) | 82 (100) | 12 (14.63) | 13 (15.85) | 35 (42.68) | 19 (23.17) | 07 (8.53) |

*The figures in the parentheses indicate percentage.

Observations have shown a dearth of appropriate and student oriented school library services. Even where librarians claim to provide so called 'personal assistance' in majority of cases it merely meant unlocking the almirah or even library that too with a heavy heart so that books are lent to students. Only a few public schools and majority of central schools provide services which qualify for word 'service.'

*b) Circulation service*

Like the rest of India, book circulation is the most prominent library service provided in school libraries in Jammu and Kashmir. Although, all senior secondary school libraries claim to provide students with books on loan; there are still few schools where books are not borrowed to students (3 percent) and in an equal percentage of schools to teachers (3 percent). About 13 percent schools do not extend lending privileges to the non-teaching staff (table 21).

While comparing libraries of different types of schools under study, it was revealed that only central schools extend circulation privileges to all its clientele comprising of students, teachers and non-teaching staff (table 21).

Table: 21. Circulation service in libraries (state profile)

| School administering body | Lending privileges | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Students | Teaching staff | Non-teaching staff |
| State (n=125) | 121 (96.80) | 120 (96) | 113 (90.40) |
| Public (n=61) | 59 (96.72) | 61 (100) | 47 (77.04) |
| Central (n=15) | 15 (100) | 15 (100) | 15 (100) |
| Total J&K (n=201) | 195 (97.01) | 196 (97.51) | 175 (87.06) |

The rural-urban comparison shows more urban school libraries extending circulation service to their users than the rural ones in general. Teachers and students in about 5 percent school libraries in rural areas alike have no lending privileges. Even in urban areas students in about 2 percent HS school libraries do not enjoy circulation privileges (table 21.1).

Table: 21.1 Circulation service (rural-urban profile)

| | Lending privileges |
|---|---|

| Rural Vs Urban | Students | Teaching staff | Non-teaching staff |
|---|---|---|---|
| Rural (n=119) | 114 (95.79) | 114 (95.79) | 100 (84.03) |
| Urban (n=82) | 81 (98.78) | 82 (100) | 75 (91.46) |

*the figures in the parentheses indicate percentage.

*d) Lending privileges*

The number of books issued to students and staff and the duration of the loan also varies a great deal in higher secondary school libraries. The number of books issued to students on average range between 1 to 3 books per students, while for teachers there is no limit to the number of books issued irrespective of the size of library collections. The average book lending/circulation limit is 1.45 items per students and 4.86 per staff member.

While comparing different types of schools under study, it was found that students in central school libraries enjoy the highest lending privileges with an average 2.06 items/books which conforms to the Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (2008) recommendation of two (2) books at a time. This is followed by state school libraries with 1.44 and private/public school libraries with 1.32 items per student. Similarly, averages calculated for staffs were; central school libraries with highest 5.46 items [5 items recommended by (KV Sangathan, 2008)]; followed by state school libraries 5.40 items and public/private school libraries 3.62 items per staff member (table 22).

The average loan durations calculated for students and staff also differs a great deal. The collected data reveals that about 37.81 percent school libraries issue books for one week; 56.21 percent for a fortnight; and 1.49 percent for a month to students. Likewise for staff, 5.97 percent issue books for one week; 27.36 percent for a fortnight; 25.37 percent for a month; while about 39.80 percent school libraries report no limit to the duration of loan. While comparing the book loan durations in school various types of schools under study, it is found that only central schools comply with standards to some extent and also observe some sort of a discipline with regard equitable lending provision.

The rural-urban comparison shows an average lending limit of 1.43 items in rural school libraries compared to 1.47 items per student in urban school libraries. About 6.72 percent rural libraries do not issue books to students at all. The loan duration to students also shows a great deal of difference. It was found that more urban school libraries (50 percent) issue books for a week's duration as compared to rural (29.41 percent). The data shows a greater number of rural schools issue books for a fortnight (61.34 percent) as compared to urban (48.78 percent). Regarding the circulation service to staff, an interesting thing to note is the fact that in rural school libraries staff has a greater average of lending limit (5.31 items per staff member) as compared to (4.21 items per staff member) in urban school libraries. No significant difference was observed in lending durations while comparing the services to staff of rural and urban school libraries.

*e) User education service*

School libraries are very important in child's life. These lay the foundation for his future library use. Therefore, user education has greatest importance at the school level. However, this study reveals that in senior secondary school libraries in Jammu and Kashmir more than a quarter of libraries (28.35 percent) include library periods in their time table, while as a few libraries claim to be providing other user education programs. It was observed that among these it is mainly the public and central schools where regular user education programs are held. While comparing, various schools under study, it was found that more central schools provide user educations

programmes (library periods 100 percent; library tours 33.33 percent; guest lectures 13.33 percent; book exhibitions 46.66 percent and book fairs 26.66 percent) followed by public/private schools and state administered schools (table 23).

Table: 23 User awareness programs in the libraries (state profile)

| School administering body | User education/awareness programmes | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Library periods | Library tours | Guest lectures | Book exhibitions | Book fairs | Do no conduct |
| State (n=125) | 13 (10.40) | 02 (1.60) | 00 (0) | 01 (0.80) | 00 (0) | 112 (89.60) |
| Public (n=61) | 29 (47.54) | 02 (3.27) | 01 (1.63) | 03 (4.91) | 02 (3.27) | 32 (52.45) |
| Central (n=15) | 15 (100) | 05 (33.33) | 02 (13.33) | 07 (46.66) | 04 (26.66) | 00 (0) |
| Total J&K (n=201) | 57 (28.35) | 09 (4.47) | 03 (1.49) | 11 (5.47) | 06 (2.98) | 144 (71.64) |

The rural urban comparison shows no statistically significant difference except that more urban schools tend to offer user education programmes than rural (table 23.1).

Table: 23.1 User awareness programs in the libraries (state profile)

| Rural Vs Urban | User education/awareness programmes | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Library periods | Library tours | Guest lectures | Book exhibitions | Book fairs | Do no conduct |
| Rural (n=119) | 25 (21) | 03 (2.52) | 03 (2.52) | 05 (4.20) | 01 (0.84) | 94 (79) |
| Urban (n=82) | 32 (39.02) | 06 (7.31) | 00 (0) | 06 (7.31) | 05 (6.09) | 50 (60.97) |

*the figures in the parentheses indicate percentage.

*f) Themes of user education*

Looking at the aims of/and themes of user education programs, it is found that over 27.36 percent senior secondary school libraries claimed that there main aim of conducting these programs is to inculcate reading habit in children; about 10 percent to teach effective library use; about 8.45 percent to impart information seeking skills; 10.44 percent teach how to access and interpret information; 6.96 percent teach problem based application of information; 5.9 percent teach internet use while another 5.47 percent teach how to use and access AV resources (table 24).

Table: 24 Themes of user education (state profile)

| School | Topics covered | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

| administring body | Effective library resource use | Information seeking skills | How to access & interpret information | Problem based application of information | Promotion of reading habits | Internet use | Use and access to audio visual resources |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| State (n=125) | 06 (4.80) | 02 (1.60) | 04 (3.20) | 02 (1.60) | 11 (8.80) | 01 (0.80) | 01 (0.80) |
| Public (n=61) | 06 (9.83) | 06 (9.83) | 07 (11.47) | 06 (9.83) | 29 (47.54) | 06 (9.83) | 05 (8.19) |
| Central (n=15) | 07 (46.66) | 09 (60) | 10 (66.66) | 06 (40) | 15 (100) | 05 (33.33) | 05 (33.33) |
| Total J&K (n=201) | 19 (9.45) | 17 (8.45) | 21 (10.44) | 14 (6.96) | 55 (27.36) | 12 (5.97) | 11 (5.47) |

*The figures in the parentheses indicate percentage.

The rural urban comparison reveals a slightly better percentage of urban schools providing trainings in various areas of user education.

Table: 24.1 Themes of user education (state profile)

| Rural Vs Urban | Topics covered | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Effective library resource use | Information seeking skills | How to access & interpret information | Problem based application of information | Promotion of reading habits | Internet use | Use and access to audio visual resources |
| Rural (n=119) | 09 (7.56) | 07 (5.88) | 09 (7.56) | 06 (5.04) | 24 (20.16) | 04 (3.36) | 03 (2.52) |
| Urban (n=82) | 10 (12.19) | 10 (12.19) | 12 (14.63) | 08 (9.75) | 31 (37.80) | 08 (9.75) | 08 (9.75) |

*the figures in the parentheses indicate percentage.

*g) Access to resources*

Majority libraries follow a closed access system (83.08 percent). Only marginal 11.94 percent school libraries adopt open access while nearly 5 percent provide open access to teachers only. Comparing different types of schools under study, it was revealed that about 89 percent state, 87 percent private and 40 percent central schools still follow closed access system. The centrally administered schools have the highest percentage of libraries (60 percent) with open access which itself is not much encouraging in the light of CBSE (2005) and Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (2008) standards both suggesting that "school library should follow open access system" (table 25).

Table: 25 Access to resources in libraries (state profile)

| School administering body | Access adopted | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|

| | Open access | Open access to staff only | Closed access |
|---|---|---|---|
| State (n=125) | 10 (8) | 04 (3.20) | 111 (88.80) |
| Public (n=61) | 05 (8.19) | 03 (4.91) | 53 (86.88) |
| Central (n=15) | 09 (60) | 03 (20) | 03 (20) |
| Total J&K (n=201) | 24 (11.94) | 10 (4.97) | 167 (83.08) |

Comparing school libraries at rural and urban levels, it is revealed that about 90 percent rural and 75 percent urban school libraries adopt a 'close access' system. Also, more urban schools (19.51 percent) than the rural ones (6.72 percent) provide open access to library's information resources (table 25.1).

Table: 25.1 Access to resources (rural-urban profile)

| Rural Vs Urban | Access adopted | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Open access | Open access to staff only | Closed access |
| Rural (n=119) | 08 (6.72) | 05 (4.20) | 106 (89.07) |
| Urban (n=82) | 16 (19.51) | 05 (6.09) | 61 (74.39) |

*the figures in the parentheses indicate percentage.

Observations show that 'close access' system inhibits and discourages students from laying their hands to the books and other sources available in libraries. It is the so called school librarian who chooses books and students have no choice but to rely on his judgments. This so called school librarian who in majority of cases happens to be either a matriculate or even below discourages the access to knowledge and negatively affects reading interests of the children. Even in school libraries claiming to exercise an open access system, libraries were found deserted with students hardly venturing in due to shortage of relevant and up-to-date reading materials. One of the students when asked about his disinterest in library said that *"there are not enough good books in the library and we mainly prefer to consult tutor notes over library books."*

*h) Library hours*

The data collected for library opening hours in Jammu and Kashmir shows a majority of libraries (95.02 percent) remain open for 36-hours a week (6 hours daily for 6 days in a week) which is higher than (56 percent) as recorded by Jha (2009) for school libraries in Ajmer district of Rajasthan. Not even a single library in the state was reported to provide services beyond the stipulated school timings. The library timings reported were same as that of the school (table 26).

The comparison between various types of schools with regard to opening hours shows that all centrally administered schools (100 percent) remain open throughout the day as recommended by Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (2008). Observations show that even during these hours very few students visited their libraries for consulting books; while as library remains busy only during a few hours daily during circulation of books. Other services students mostly remain busy with are; reading of newspaper and magazines that too during free periods. There is complete absence of awareness for the need libraries working beyond or before normal school hours

(table 26).

Table: 26 Library hours (state profile)

| School administering body | Library hours | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Daily (36-hours/week) | Once in a week (6-hours/week) | Twice a week (12- hours/week) | Occasionally |
| State (n=125) | 117 (93.60) | 01 (0.80) | 02 (1.60) | 05 (4) |
| Public (n=61) | 59 (96.72) | 00 (00) | 02 (3.27) | 00 (00) |
| Central (n=15) | 15 (100) | 00 (00) | 00 (00) | 00 (00) |
| Total J&K (n=201) | 191 (95.02) | 01 (0.49) | 04 (1.99) | 05 (2.48) |

*The figures in the parentheses indicate percentage.

The rural-urban shows a lesser percentage of rural school libraries (92.43 percent) open for 36 hours in a week than urban (98.78 percent). Rest of the statistics is self explanatory through the tables with not much significant result (table 26.1).

Table: 26.1 Library hours (rural-urban profile)

| Rural Vs Urban | Library hours | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Daily (36-hours/week) | Once in a week (6-hours/week) | Twice a week (12- hours/week) | Occasionally |
| Rural (n=119) | 110 (92.43) | 01 (0.84) | 03 (2.52) | 05 (4.20) |
| Urban (n=82) | 81 (98.78) | 00 (00) | 01 (1.21) | 00 (00) |

*The figures in the parentheses indicate percentage.

The library opening hours in higher secondary school libraries in the state when looked at through the prism of above collected data though seem encouraging, however, at the same time these can be misleading also. This is because school libraries have become a resting place, a prayer hall, a dining hall, store room and what not? Libraries no doubt in majority of cases remains open but in the absence of any service these are of no use to students. Ironically, the so called school librarians leave no stone unturned to discourage students from entering in to library- a place with so many nomenclatures and functionalities.

## Conclusion

The existing senior secondary library facilities in the state of Jammu and Kashmir are far from being satisfactory. The essentials like proper physical facilities, adequate collections, professional manpower, proper organization and basic services are lacking. It does not even fulfill the minimum standards of library. Authorities have to come forward with open mind to solve the problems of school libraries in the state. It is high time that recommendations of various commissions, committees, seminars,

conferences and standards regarding school libraries are revisited and necessary steps initiated together with regular funding to improve their existing plight.

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