

Collection Management in Senior Secondary School Libraries — An Analytical Study

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Abstract

The article states the status of the CBSE affiliated senior secondary school libraries and brings out the history and system of school libraries in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. It mentions the support and contribution of government and non- government organisation for the development of the CBSE affiliated school libraries. It also highlights the salient features of CBSE affiliated school libraries of Bhubaneswar. It also reflects on activities of school librarians for the development of school libraries in Bhubaneswar city.

INTRODUCTION

Education and library services are two inseparable elements. The importance of a secondary school library cannot be ignored. Among the three main functions of a library viz. collection, storage and dissemination of information, collection occupies the most pivotal position, as the document collection gives library a character more than either staff or building. Unless a library possess adequate recent collection of

documents (both books and non-book materials) supplemented with latest reference and bibliographical tools, including electronic resources, it cannot serve its clientele. This is considered as the prime duty of every library and the librarian. As such, the librarian has to develop an effective collection for students and teachers through her/his professional competence coupled with the established philosophy of collection development and management.

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STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Ever since the dawn of library and information system in India, there has been a significant change in the scope of collection development. The activities have broadened, the function of libraries has transcended beyond the community, regional and national missions, the basic aim being the all round development of the individual, both in terms of her/his educational attainment and personality development. The collection development policies, programmes, evaluation, procedures, techniques of collection development and tools considerably influence utility and image of the concerned school library. Unfortunately, such ideal condition does not prevail in the school libraries for many reasons. This is especially pertinent to the collection development policies adopted by the secondary schools in the country. The problems of collection development are creational mainly from three basic reasons viz. inadequate financial resource; non-availability of the right kind of materials in the market and shortage of accommodation for keeping the library holdings; added to these, problems of the emerging changes in the user needs and the requirements of fresh procurement from time-to-time

Pupils of senior secondary schools, who shoulder the responsibility of nation building of future world, form a very dynamic and potential group of library users; need a strong foundation of education

and vision with informative bent of mind. This phenomenon urges the need for assessing and evaluating library collection, examining their collection policy, and the type of library resources and services, which would be of great help to reshape these secondary school libraries.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The collection should be adequate, effective and need-based; otherwise it may spoil the academic pursuit. The study on collection development leading to senior secondary school libraries of Bhubaneswar, therefore, will be of immense help. In this context, the primary objectives based in the present context are summarised as—

- i to examine, how library collection helps the user-services in the present scenario of senior secondary school libraries.
- ii to assess the utility of the library resources in terms of documents to satisfy the curriculum needs;
- iii bring out the concept of collection development in senior secondary school libraries;
- iv to find out possible solutions to the problems, encountered at the time of investigation; and
- v Suggestions there to, for betterment of collection development programme in

the senior secondary school libraries of Bhubaneswar.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The present study is primarily concerned with the quantitative as well as qualitative judgment of the existing state of library collection development of senior secondary schools of Bhubaneswar. The present study has been conducted in three major fields, namely a) The type of reading material in the library; b) The community served, and c) The purpose of collection. The scope of the present investigation is however limited to:

- i this investigation includes the libraries of those senior secondary schools in the city of Bhubaneswar, which are affiliated to CBSE only.
- ii the period of collection development of libraries till 2012.
- iii the study covers only that information which is directly related to collection development of reading material in libraries.

SAMPLE

Information to be collected from 13 libraries of senior secondary schools affiliated to CBSE, scattered geographically all over the Bhubaneswar city, constitutes the major database for the present investigation. The 13 Senior

secondary schools consists of 10 public schools managed by private bodies and 3 Government schools- Kendriya Vidhyalaya, Sainik School and D. M. School one each.

METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

A survey methodology with structured questionnaire followed by interviews with the librarians administered as appropriate tools of obtaining needed data from the 13 senior secondary school libraries affiliated to CBSE in Bhubaneswar city. The relevant data collected get classified, tabulated and then statistically treated to draw inferences. Besides that, a number of information sources were also consulted so as to achieve the survey objectives.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

In the context of the present investigation, the tasks, such as sample selection and size, data collection methods, instrumentation, procedures, and ethical requirements and responses from the libraries were analysed and interpreted as to find the results as:

1. The Profile of the Schools

There are 11 (85 per cent) schools established before 2000, after this 2 schools came in. D.M School and Sainik School are the oldest schools established in 1964, SAI International School being the latest

(established in 2008). The type of management and governance show that, majority of 08 (62 per cent) schools i.e. out of 13 are managed by private bodies, and 05 (38 per cent) schools were managed by the government, Thus, the above background information becomes an indicator for an imbalance state of resources between these schools.

(i) Mode of Communication Available

In the IT age, 'communication' is considered a symbol of status and determines the image of an institution, state of services expected. Information pertaining to the type of communication technology elicited responses under four different modes of communication systems, all the sampled schools have websites, email, phone and fax services, which is quite encouraging.

(ii) Students' Strength

The strength of pupils determines the resourcefulness of an institution or expected to be. The elicited responses show the highest strength D.A.V. Public School Unit – VIII 2790 and the least being K.I.I.T. International School 349.

(iii) Status of the Librarians

Librarian is the true guide and facilitator of information and plays a curial role in successful functioning library. Information pertaining to the status of librarian along with details

of the supporting staff, all the 13 (100 per cent) libraries have trained librarians and 5 of them have two or more trained librarians each, which is quite encouraging. However, the state of supporting staff is disappointing, as all the schools have only one or no support staff. 4 (31 per cent) schools have teachers as in-charge of the library.

(iv) Major Sources of Library's Finance

Finance is key to the success, and library being a non-profit institution, is not an exception to this dictum. The elicited responses received pertaining to the sources of finance under three broad categories, major sources of finance 'students fees' and lump sum amount sanctioned by the management in 07 (54 per cent) out of 13 schools surveyed, surprisingly, none of the 13 (100 per cent) schools receives any grant from any other sources.

(v) Fund Allocation for Library

A balanced and equitable allocation of funds provides good dividend to the library users. The decision for such allocation rests with different authorities. Erratic distribution leads to inconsistency, contrary to or inadequate for the users' interest. The allocation of funds found that the principals play a major role in allocating the funds. In 11 (85 per cent) schools, the principals were the decision makers 2 (15 per cent) have school committees allocating the funds. No school librarian plays

a decisive role in allocation of funds.

(vi) Use of Classification Schemes

Classification helps a user to identify and locate a document on the shelves, documents procured in a school library are classified and the specific scheme used in classifying the documents. 9 (69 per cent) of school libraries follow the DDC (Direct Digital Control) classification scheme, and the remaining 4 (31 per cent) follow their own classification schemes for the convenience of their users.

(vii) Cataloguing Codes Used

Cataloguing helps to meet the multifarious approaches of the readers, and provides the status of documents. Majority (69 per cent) follow AACR-2 code for the purpose of cataloguing and the remaining are using their own cataloguing codes for the sake of convenience.

(viii) Charging and Discharging of Documents in use

Lending of documents is one of the most conventional and basic services. Responses were collected under three broad options as depicted under for necessary statistical interpretation and analysis demonstrates 7 (54 per cent) follow conventional ledger system while 3 (23 per cent) follow computerised system; 2 (15 per cent) follow two-card system whereas only one (8 per cent) school follows both the card system and computerised system.

(ix) Mode of Access to Documents

Open access to documents play optimal utilisation of library resources, users get their desired materials directly. Open access also saves time. The elicited responses provided by the libraries depicted for necessary statistical interpretations, 13 (100 per cent) followed the open access system.

(x) Opening Hours of Libraries

Opening hours lead to greater use of library. The responses pertaining to the duration of opening hours are depicted for necessary interpretation, 7 (54 per cent) schools keep their libraries open for 6 to 7.5 hours, followed by 5 (38 per cent) schools kept open for 8 to 9 hours. Surprisingly, 1 opens for 13.5 hours, which is quite encouraging.

(xi) Services Provided

A school library is known by its services. The extent of popularity, usability, credibility and effectiveness of library, depends upon the timely, need-based, qualitative and user-friendly services. All the respondents of the sample i.e. all 13 (100 per cent) schools provide library books for home reading, in-house reference and newspaper clipping services; followed by 8 (62 per cent) schools provide internet service; 7 (54 per cent) schools provide photocopying service to their users; 5(38 per cent) provide reference service; 3 (23 per cent) provide serial and 2 (15 per cent) provide bulletin board service.

2. Library Collections Text (Print Format)

Collection development programme in the print format, in a senior secondary schools, mainly constitute of textbooks, reference books, maps and atlases, reports, Govt. publications and other such forms. Nine (69 per cent) libraries have a collection of less than 3000 textbooks in their respective collection; followed by 3 (23 per cent) a collection between 8000-10000 books; 1 (8 per cent) having collection of more than 10000 to its credit.

3. Library Collections Reference (Print Format)

Five (38 per cent) school libraries have a reference collection of less than 5000; followed by 4 (31 per cent) more than 10000 volumes; and 4 (31 per cent) between 5000 and 10000. The collection of back volumes found as 9 (69 per cent) have up to 2000; other 4 (30.76 per cent) do not go for back volumes. In manuscript collection, almost all the schools say no 12 (92 per cent) out of 13; only 1 (8 per cent) school library has a manuscript collection of less than 300 in number. Collection of cartographic materials in school libraries indicate that, 7 (54 per cent) not respond to the question making the analysis inconclusive; followed by 6 (46 per cent) libraries have cartographic up to 500 numbers. About Reports, it is found 11 (85 per cent) school do not include reports in

their respective collection, while the remaining 2 (15 per cent) included. On the contrary, 12 (92 per cent) out of 13 libraries, reported to have not included collections as no data to this effect has been furnished by them, whereas only 1 (8 per cent) that goes for reprints collection of 254 reprints. Government publication find place in the collection indicate, 3 (23 per cent) out of 13 libraries opt for Government publications whereas, the remaining 10 (77 per cent) do not. In newspaper clippings it is found that 7 (54 per cent) school libraries do not include newspaper clipping; whereas rest 6 (46 per cent) keeps newspaper clippings in their library collection. Surprisingly, none of the schools surveyed seems to have adopted standards. The print format in the library collection, however, consists of all the items mentioned above. The study further reveals that 9 (69 per cent) schools have acquired documents in print formats between 10000 and 30000 and the rest 4 (31 per cent) having less than 10000. Thus, the overall state of print format collections in these secondary school libraries appear to be moderate as 13 schools together possess 51954 volumes of textbooks, and 96452 reference volumes, thereby, each of the schools, on an average, has a collection of 3996 volumes of textbooks and 719 reference volumes. It is, therefore, clear that the secondary school libraries have to give more stress on reference volumes than text-books.

4. Collection of Non-book Materials

Non-book materials, which large special libraries today, are generally gaining space in almost every library system, for the school libraries underestimates. Non-book materials responses are depicted as:

CD-ROM today occupies an important place in school libraries like their book counterpart, 9 (69 per cent) school libraries procure CD-ROM for their libraries; whereas rest 4 (31 per cent) schools not yet adopted to library collection. Audio-cassettes are gaining popularity, yet 7 (54 per cent) schools do not include audio-cassettes in their collection policy; whereas 6 (47 per cent) opt for the same in collections. Collection of video-cassettes, the study reveals that, 7 (54 per cent) have included video cassette; other 6(47 per cent) school libraries have not included. Collection of DVD a more sophisticated version of the CD-ROM in the school libraries, found that 7 (54 per cent) school libraries have included DVD in their library collection and the other 6 (47 per cent) school libraries do not included them in their library collection. Floppy diskettes, that are educational in nature, also find place in the school's collection programmes, even though, it is a powerful and popular backup storage medium yesterdays, all the 13(100 per cent) schools surveyed do not have floppy diskettes. Microfilms, Microfiche also do not find place in the collection of school libraries, including slides also receive a support. On the whole, while

considering the overall electronic formats used in the sample libraries observed, schools have given less important place to the documents in electronic formats for their library collection.

5. Magazine and Newspaper Subscriptions

Magazines and newspapers are the most important publications as they carry nascent information elicited responses pertaining to the collection of magazines and newspapers are depicted for necessary statistical interpretation and inference.

6. Pattern of Service Provided

As about magazines and journals indicates, 6 (47 per cent) schools subscribe 20 – 65 magazines, followed by 4 (31 per cent) 3(23 per cent) schools subscribing less than 10 titles. So far as newspapers are concerned, 10 (77 per cent) schools subscribe up to 10 daily newspapers; and the remaining 3 (23 per cent) subscribe more than 10 newspapers, which fall in the expected line. Interestingly, all the 13 (100 per cent) surveyed libraries subscribe both magazines and newspapers for their libraries, thereby helping their pupils to inculcate reading habits.

7. Recommending Authority for Library Collections

Though customarily, 'user' recommendations are to be given importance, but the complex management structure often changes

the collection scenario. The elicited responses to this effect under five broad groups of recommending books are depicted for necessary statistical inference.

8. Library Collection Pattern

Acquiring documents for library collection depends much upon the consensus of the school librarian, principal, faculty members, library committee and students' needs as well. A cursory view corroborates the fact that, 8 (62 per cent) school libraries acquire documents on the recommendations of their respective faculty members; 6 (47 per cent) by principals and library committee both; 4 (31 per cent) by the students. Unfortunately, 3 (23 per cent) honour the recommendations of their respective librarians. Schools surveyed have given no importance to the collection of such materials in their library collection. Like microfilm collections, projector mechanisms followed to check duplicate of titles. Checking of duplicate of titles is crucial event, but often neglected by acquisition librarians owing to several factors, like management pressure, personal bias towards author, laziness of the supporting collection staff, bias-prone motivation by the publishers, allocation of funds at the vague-end of the financial year, etc. The objectives of a library collection should be to provide maximum titles in least cost. Duplication, therefore, collection process in libraries is a

very delicate process that needs a lot of precautions to avoid duplicate. Mechanisms followed in the CBSE affiliated school libraries to check such repetition of titles vary from one school to the other, 7 (54 per cent) school libraries reported that they follow the accession register and catalogue both; 2 (15 per cent) check the order file and 1 (8 per cent) refers book shelf. The above study further reveals that, some follow more than one mechanism to avoid duplication.

9. Mechanism Followed to Check Repetition of Titles

(i) Mode of Approval of Titles

Different libraries follow different procedures to approve the titles proposed to be procured for the parent library system. Scanning the contents of a document physically before purchase, however, proves most effective and provides better dividends to library clientele compared to others. The elicited responses collected under 5 board groups pertaining to mode of approval of titles are depicted.

10. Procedure Followed for Approval and Purchase

Procedures followed for purchase of books vary from one school to another ranging from the physical approval of titles from different booksellers, scanning book previews, publishers' catalogues, consulting books selection tools of both printed

and electronic forms, lists submitted by faculty members, to other such mechanisms under consideration. The resultant data relating to the purchase behaviour of libraries in the process 11 (85 per cent) follow the list submitted by the faculty members, followed by 5 (38 per cent) priority to the scanning of book reviews and physical approval of books; 3 (23 per cent) consult book selection tools of both printed and electronic forms. No schools, however, adopts any other mechanism for purchase of books.

11. Limitations in Procuring Multiple Copies

Libraries as practicable, should avoid duplication of titles. Procurement of multiple copies or any duplication effort in a service library gives rise to several inherent problems, particularly budget and community. This results in limited subject and title coverages. The elicited responses, pertaining to number of copies procured on each title, are depicted for necessary statistical interpretation and analysis.

12. Limitations of Number of Copies Procured

Several constraints, like allocation of funds and other factors impose limitations in procuring books. The sample survey highlights the procurement of copies of textbooks under such constraints reveals 9 (69 per cent) procure 2 to 5 copies for their libraries; followed by 4 (31 per cent) who buy 10 or more copies.

13. Mechanisms of Evaluation of Collection Deficiencies

The responsibility of acquisition by school librarian does not cease immediately after the procurement of documents and nor does the documents so acquired are to be for granted for all time to come. The collection, in order to be clientele-friendly, need-based, and purposive, need to be evaluated constantly to ascertain both their usefulness and their deficiencies. There are several mechanisms to evaluate such collection, such as user's survey and feedback through informal conversation, circulation statistics, etc. Since none of the above mechanism can be accepted as a fool-proof solution, any one or more than one mechanism need to be adopted, if better result is aimed at. The elicited responses depicted for necessary statistical interpretation. All the sample survey libraries are reportedly going for evaluation of their library collection; however, the mechanisms differ in view of removing the deficiencies and to reform the collection making the same user-friendly. Six schools (46 per cent) evaluate their collection through the user's survey and the feedback of informal chatting with the users each and subject experts, 5 (38 per cent) evaluate their collections through the circulation statistics, 3 (23 per cent) observe the users at their study desk.

14. Mechanisms Followed for Evaluation of Collection Deficiencies

The study establishes the clear trend that, all the surveyed libraries adopt some mechanism to evaluate their respective library collections. Similarly, none of the schools considers inter-library loan record or any other method as a source of evaluation of their library stock.

15. Weeding out of Materials

Weeding out programme is costly proposition which only large library system can bear. Libraries of all kinds and sizes in the west, however, weed obsolete and outdated documents from their respective collections periodically as a matter of routine, contrary to the abilities of the libraries. The procedure to weed out documents from the collection differs from library to library. The elicited responses pertaining to weed out programme in senior secondary school libraries are depicted.

Surprisingly, the weeding out is almost an imperative followed by all the senior secondary school libraries of the sample survey. The procedure followed for weeding out and the type of documents included under weeding out differs from school to school. The data highlight 13 (100 per cent) schools follow weeding out programme; 10 (77 per cent) weed out only old and obsolete editions, 3 (23 per cent) weed out the multiple copies.

16. Librarian's Satisfaction on Collections

Professional satisfaction is more vital than anything else. In spite of rich resources, huge collection, alluring budget, sound infrastructure, if librarian who being the head of the library, is not satisfied it proves that, somewhere is wrong in the system which need to be attended too. The resultant data are depicted for necessary statistical interpretation and analysis on satisfaction.

17. Evaluation of Librarian's Satisfaction about Existing Library Collection

The satisfaction on the prevailing condition of collection development 12 (92 per cent) are satisfied and 1 (7.70 per cent) expressed dissatisfaction.

CONCLUSIONS

Taking the existing data on CBSE affiliated senior secondary schools as indicate of the contemporary situation, the following suggestions are put forward, which if implemented, will certainly help to improve the existing conditions of the secondary school libraries and pave the way to make these libraries more purposive and user-friendly. To inculcate reading habits among the senior secondary students and to ensure the enrichment of their knowledge horizon, the school administrators should have a special allocation of funds to procure more newspapers,

popular magazines, and pictorial literature for children by which more and more pupils can be motivated. To have a better utilisation of valuable time and cost of both library staff and readers, the senior secondary school libraries should switch over to computerised circulation control. They senior secondary school libraries should keep a specific library hour for their students to facilitate internet browsing so as to acquaint them with the global resources in their respective fields of interest. The senior secondary school libraries should set a limit beyond which no multiplication of copies will be permitted. The existing trend

of inconsistent policy for procuring duplicate copies may lead to a stage where such a huge collection may prove to be redundant in future, since the course curriculum gets changed at given intervals. Very few schools have a well written collection development policy; the consequence of this is the subjectively exercised by the individual librarians in developing the collection where the attitude towards collection development differs from school to school. So it is desirable for the libraries to draft a clear cut uniform and flexible policy statement for a better collection development policy minimising the effect of economic recession.

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