

PHYSICAL FACILITIES & FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOL LIBRARIES : A STUDY

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ABSTRACT

A school library is a library within a school where students, staff, and often, parents of a public or private school have access to a variety of resources. The goal of the school library media center is to ensure that all members of the school community have equitable access "to books and reading, to information, and to information technology." A school library media center "uses all types of media... is automated, and utilizes the Internet [as well as books] for information gathering." School libraries are distinct from public libraries because they serve as "learner-oriented laboratories which support, extend, and individualize the school's curriculum... A school library serves as the center and coordinating agency for all material used in the school."

Keywords: Financial Management, School Libraries, Library Budget, Library Facilities.

INTRODUCTION:

The school library has been recognized as an essential component of a good school, yet many schools of our country lack library facilities. From the prevailing picture of school situation in our country, it can be seen that much remains to be done in providing our schools with well-organized libraries, particularly so in far flung rural areas. Currently, the situation is such that a few books locked in a classroom are given the status of a library. Millions of our school children, other than those studying in public schools, are being deprived of the full complement of library resources and services, which they need and are entitled to. Even in schools where library facilities exist, the picture is not very bright. The condition of these libraries is below the standard when compared with their foreign counterparts.

The provision of School Library service must be open to the whole school community regardless of gender, race, and economic and social status, religious faith, nationality, language, and physical disabilities. The School Librarians should see to it that specific services and materials are provided to those who are for some reason unable to use mainstream library services.

OBJECTIVES OF SCHOOL LIBRARY

It is needless to emphasize that School Library is essential to every long-term strategy for

- Literacy
- Formal Education
- Information Provision
- Economic, Social and Cultural Development

SOURCES OF LIBRARY FINANCE:

Academic libraries are those attached to school and college of education and other similar institutions of learning. The importance of funding in providing quality library service cannot be overemphasized. It is the glue that holds the building, collection and staff together and allows the library to attain its goals. As such, money can be considered the soul of the library. Inadequate funds impede the effectiveness of any library (Anafulu, 1997).

- a) The Major Sources of Library Finance are:
- a) Library fee paid by students;
 - b) Grant-in-aid by government;
 - c) Donations;
 - d) Late fine/Overdue charges realized from the students for late return of books;
 - e) Sale proceeds of old newspapers, magazines etc;
 - f) Miscellaneous income (cost of lost books etc.)

Each student pays library and reading room fee. This fee should form nucleus of the Library Fund. All the grants (*recurring and non-recurring*), donations, sales proceeds of scrap papers, and the realization of cost of lost books etc. should be credited to this Fund.

BUDGET ALLOCATION FORMULA

The cost of books and periodicals/newspapers is so prohibitive these days that it is really very difficult for any school library to provide new books in required quantity. To meet the book needs of students and teachers, the government and other funding agencies should allocate adequate funds for meeting Library needs.

The entire amount allotted for Library books should be made available to the Library at the beginning of the session to facilitate collection development in a planned way. A definite policy regarding the proportion of Library grant to be spent on various heads needs to be spelt out. However, to formulate such a policy based on percentage or some other convenient principles is not easy. It may not get approval of many departmental heads. Apart from problem of deciding the proportion of budget to each of the heads, there is also the danger of growth taking a very narrow line. Yet the amount of grant-in-aid received has to be allocated to facilitate purchases. There is no better alternative to this.

The non-recurring grants received during the year may be spent on items for which they are released. But the recurring library grant as and when received must be allocated as far as possible

according to the following formula:

Books	50%
Periodicals/newspapers	10%
Library Stationery	10%
Miscellaneous (Library equipment and stacks etc)	20%
Binding and repair	10%

The amount allocated for books should further be allocated as follows:

General and recommended books	30%
Reference books	20%
Hobby books	10%
Fiction	30%
Audio Visual Material	10%

As suggested in the *Yashpal Committee Report (1993)* sufficient contingency amount (not less than 10% of the total salary bill of the school) could be placed at the disposal of heads of schools for purchase, repair and replacement of pedagogical equipment which could become part of the library. (*Should the needs arise; the funds may be diverted from one head to another.*)

PHYSICAL FACILITIES:

The location of the school library is of as much concern as is its size and shape. It should best be located in an area of maximum accessibility to the students and teachers. The premises chosen to accommodate the library should meet the following requirements:

- Should be in a quiet area free from excessive noise, disturbances and pollution.
- Should be away from canteen, common room, play ground and parking area
- Should have good ventilation and ample day light.
- Should have sufficient floor area in the Reading Room to enable the students to use it comfortably either in groups or individually.
- Should have sufficient work space for the staff to receive books on approval and undertake accessioning, classification, cataloguing, minor repair, issue and return, and reference service activities.
- Should have separate enclosure to be used as Committee/Conference Room by teachers and Pupils for participating in joint or group discussions.
- Should have sufficient stack area so as to organise the books in open shelves.
- Should have a counter/enclosure for keeping personal belongings.

The **Bureau of Indian Standard (BIS)** provide that the secondary and senior secondary school library building should have a Stack Room, a Librarian's Room and a Reading Room having a capacity of seating 40 to 120 students at a time. The stack room should be big enough to accommodate between 10000 to 15000 volumes.

The size and seating capacity of the Reading Room will depend on the optimum number of students that a school usually admits. A provision of 10 sq. ft floor area per pupil in Reading Room is considered adequate. On the basis of these considerations a Library should provide accommodation for at least 50 students of a class at a time plus 10% extra space for other group activities, projects and reference service beside room for librarian, circulation counter, reference desk, books / periodicals display, committee/conference room, property counter, catalogue enclosure.

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