

Perception and Use of School Library in Sharjah (U.A.E.): A Critical Case Study of India International School (IIS) and Providence English Private School (PEPS)

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Abstract

The present study explains the perception about library and actual use of library in two schools comparatively (India International School, Sharjah and Providence English Private School, Sharjah) in critical way. The author has visited both schools and observed that there was great difference between perception and use of the library in the both school. The author has pointed out few things which can be improved. Author further provides critical analysis and empirical and theoretical observations about school environment and services to students and staff.

Key Words: School Library, Academic Library, Library use study.

1. Introduction

Physical and intellectual access is guided by principles of intellectual freedom, legal standards, and professional ethics. Intellectual freedom is essential for students to become critical thinkers and lifelong learners who can contribute productively and responsibly in a democratic society. This concept of a learning resource center is both a social development of the twentieth century and an evolution of information exchange. Today, a school library-media specialist is more of a discerning cultivator matching their patrons with the print and digital resources to meet their information needs, the effect of library cuts can be students who have to take remedial classes in college, or who won't know how to find a job or succeed in the workplace. "This is the ultimate case of penny-wise and pound foolish," Miller said. If we do not invest in public schools and school libraries, we are just kicking the can down the road and will pay the price later on.

2. School Library

The library within the campus of a school established for the use of students and teachers is called school library. Schools with a strong school library program and a certified school librarian ensure their students have the best chance to succeed. School libraries help prepare students to live and learn in a world of information. The mission of school libraries is to ensure that students and staff are able to use ideas and information. The library curriculum used to be about information (reference) and literacy (books), with a librarian helping students to find a book with the facts they needed.

Collection of School Library

School library should have collection that will enrich and support the curriculum, there should be a library committee for the selection of materials which is delegated to the professionally trained personnel employed by the school system. Selection of materials involves principals, teachers, supervisors, and librarian.

Selection of Material

Selection of library resources depends on Authoritativeness, Curriculum, Strength of students, Reputation of the Publisher/Producer, Reputation and significance of the author/artist/composer, Format and price, Requests from faculty and students are given consideration.

Staffing of the School Library

School Librarian

Qualified school library media personnel are fundamental to successful programs that contribute to student learning, and a program's level of professional and support staffing is based upon a school's instructional program, services, facilities, and the quantity of students and teachers. School librarian must have a bachelors or masters degree in library and information science. School librarians work with every student in the school, teaching students to think critically, providing the resources and support learners need in school and beyond, and nurturing their creativity. In addition, school librarians are leaders in the school, helping to develop curriculum and representing the learning needs of all students and teachers.

3. Objective of the School Library

- To develops and implements curricula relating to information literacy
- To develop reading habit
- To develop easy understanding
- To make them able to understand the utility of library and need of it even in an online environment
- To provide materials containing a wide range of views on issues so that students may develop the practice of critical reading and thinking;
- Organize materials, equipment, facilities and staff for prompt service
- Provide guidance in the use of technology, materials and resources.
- To ensure that all members of the school community have equi Table access to books and reading, to information and to information technology

4. Scope of the Study

The present study is based on two schools library situated at Sharjah. A brief detail of these schools are as below:

India International School (IIS): It is situated at industrial area of Sharjah. The school follows the CBSE curriculum. It is one of the biggest schools in Sharjah. The school is running under the group of PACE. PACE education group was founded in the year 1999 by Dr P.A. Ibrahim Haji by forming a trust, namely, P.A. Educational Trust. The school is very big in context of area, students and staff. The school has good transportation service as they are having more than 70 buses across Dubai, Sharjah and Ajman. The school started functioning from April 2011 and it accommodated 5500 students.

Providence English Private School (PEPS): It is situated at industrial area of Sharjah. The school follows the British curriculum and hence the students are trained on the same line, since the very beginning. The books are highest asset of the school and take pride in the prescribed text we have chosen after much research from the world known publishers. For Arab students Arabic and Islamic studies are compulsory with an addition of Arabic social studies from grade-IV onwards as per the Ministry of Education, Government of UAE's rule.

5. Methodology

The author has used observation method for the present study. The author has personally visited both schools and their libraries and found the present status.

6. Analysis and Interpretation

Curriculum and Strength

School	IIS	PEPS
Curriculum	CBSE	IGCSE
Strength(student)	4000	1200
Strength (staff)	450	50

Table-1

Table-1 indicates that IIS followed CBSE curriculum while PEPS following national curriculum for England/British curriculum. The strength of students and staff is comparatively high in IIS.

Number of library and librarian

School	IIS	PEPS
Library	3 libraries(For each block)A.B.C.	1 Library
Librarian	3 librarian(For each block)A.B.C.	1 librarian
Librarian qualification	Bachelors	Bachelors

Table-2

Table-2 shows that IIS is more in number of library and librarian then PEPS. Both schools have bachelor qualified librarian.

Nationality and diversity in majority

School	IIS	PEPS
Nationality	Indian	mixed

Table-3

Table-3 explores that IIS have majority of Indian students where as PEPS having mixed nationality like Russia, Egypt, Serbia, etc.

Library Resources

School	IIS	PEPS
Resources	Print	mixed
Books	4000	1000
Reference books	400	100
Electronic resource	00	available
Online library	-	available
News paper	3	0

Table-4

Table-4 indicates the collection of both library and provision of online library. IIS is more in collection of print media while PEPS constituted online library and more electronic resources.

Type of access

School	IIS	PEPS
Library access	open	close

Table-5

Table-5 reveals that IIS provides open access to its students while PEPS provide close access. In PEPS students can borrow books for home use while in IIS has no such facility.

Borrowing of books

School	IIS	PEPS
borrowing of books for home (students)	Not allowed	Allowed (1 week)
borrowing of books for home (teacher)	Allowed (1 month)	Allowed (2 weeks)

Table-6

Table-6 shows that PEPS students can borrow books for home use while in IIS not. Teachers can borrow the books in both the schools. In PEPS they are allowed to borrow for one week while in IIS for one month.

Acquisition of book

School	IIS	PEPS
Acquisition of books	Vice principal	Vice principal

Table-7

Table-7 indicates that there is no library committee in both schools for acquiring the books. All books acquire by vice principal only.

Computer in library

School	IIS	PEPS
Computer in library	5	00
Computer in Lab	23	20

Table-8

Table-8 explores that beside computer lab there is no computer in the library of PEPS to help students and teacher to search books or any library related work.

Reading hall

School	IIS	PEPS
Reading hall	3 (block A, B, C)	1 (small)

Table-9

According to table-9, there is big reading hall in all the three blocks A,B,C of IIS where students can come and read while PEPS having one small reading room only for faculties.

Infrastructure facility

School	IIS	PEPS
Computer Lab	3	1
Photocopy (for Faculties)	available	available
Photocopy (for Students)	available	available

Table-10

Table-10 shows that there is a photocopy machine for students as well as for faculties in IIS and PEPS both. IIS having 3 computer Lab in all three blocks while PEPS having only 1 computer Lab.

Cooperation of staff

School	IIS	PEPS
Cooperation of staff for office work	Not cooperative	Little bit
Cooperation of library staff for searching books	Little bit	Little bit

Table-11

According to the table-11, both schools are lacking in cooperation.

Library Services

School	IIS	PEPS
Library	Organized	Not organized
Library period	For each class	No library period
Accession register	Available	Not available
Reference service	Not available	Not available
Classification	Done	Done
Cataloguing	Not done	Not done
Circulation method	Register	Paper slip

Table-12

In context of library and its services it can be seen in table-12 that IIS library more organized compare to PEPS. There is library daily period in IIS for every class in week while in PEPS there is no library period. Accession register is available in IIS, Classification of books also done hence in PEPS lacking in classification as well as they have no accession list. Register system use for circulation in IIS while PEPS following paper slip method of circulation. There is no reference service and cataloguing done in both libraries.

7. Findings and Suggestions

The key findings and suggestions of the study are discussed as under:

- IIS having more strength while PEPS low strength. Strength should be medium neither too crowded or nor too less.
- There should be more qualified librarians and more staff in the library like assistant librarian or library assistant.
- Mixed nationality is good for developing social aspect in children.
- More resources should be there including print as well as non print resource or online library access should be provided to students.
- Open access and books for home use should be encouraged
- There should be a library committee including teachers and administration for acquisition of books.
- More infrastructure faculties should be improved
- Findings explaining that library services are not appropriate in both schools .it should be improved
- Cooperation should be provided at each level.

8. Conclusion

The major finding of these studies was that students with access to a well-supported school library media program with a qualified school library media specialist, scored higher on reading assessments regardless of their socio-economic statuses. The school library exists to provide a range of learning opportunities for both large and small groups as well as individuals with a focus on intellectual content, information literacy, and the learner.

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