

# SCHOOL LIBRARIES IN THE PRIVATE MANAGEMENT HIGHER SECONDARY EDUCATION SECTOR IN THE STATE OF KERALA

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**Abstract:** The paper discusses the status of private management higher secondary school libraries in the state of Kerala. School libraries are the repositories of knowledge and form an integral part of school curriculum in the education sector. The private management schools have more discretion on curriculum and instructional methods, so they are more focused on the interests and abilities of their students. They do not allow any compromise to students' academic performance. Libraries play a major role in their academic excellence and thereby developing students' intellectual growth. Most of the private management schools have well equipped library facilities and the services are provided by the presence of qualified librarians. Even the students in the primary level have at least two library hours per each week. The use of school libraries especially in the higher secondary education causes their mental, academic, social and cultural development. They play a major role to make each and every student to become a good citizen.

**Keywords:** Higher secondary education, Private management schools, School curriculum, School libraries

## 1.0 Introduction

Education and library are the two vital factors of development of each and every child in the world. Both of them are strongly affected in the success of every child. Libraries are established to impart the knowledge of education. The school library acts as the heart of the school education system. They are the knowledge centres and disseminators of information. Without the presence and use of school libraries, that school education is said to be incomplete. School library is a social instrument which is designed to act as a link in the communication system that is essential for quality education in any nation or culture (Fayose, 1983). The function of the school library is to support the school curriculum by providing up-to-date information to keep students and teachers abreast of new developments. They assist teaching by storing curriculum oriented materials such as textbooks, journals, reference books, magazines, newspapers and audio-visual materials. 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).

A good library is like a solid rock on which people build their base for self-advancement and works for the development of the community as a whole, and the nation in its entirety. A library is an indispensable embellishment to a school, university, museum, organization or institution, without which, any teaching institution will find it hard to impart education and the knowledge accruing from it. The library plays the enviable part of the knowledge source and its dissemination, the analogy is that "education cannot exist on its own without a library support, and a library is redundant if it cannot pass on education". Library and education became symbiotically and inexorably dependent on one another. In this modern society, we understand that the library, education, literacy and national development always went hand in hand and have influenced everyone from the primary school students to the highest levels of education.

## **2.0 Education System in India**

The State and Central governments are responsible for education system in India Since 1976. According to State list of Constitution of India; the state governments are exclusively responsible for education in their respective states. Union government is responsible for maintaining national and integrative character of education under the union list. But both state and central government are responsible for education in case of partnership under the concurrent list. According to 86<sup>th</sup> Constitution Amendment Act the elementary education is a fundamental right for children in the age group 6-14 years. In India the school education is imparted at three levels. They are

- Elementary level: Standard I-VIII
- Secondary level: Standard IX-X
- Higher Secondary level: Standard XI-XII

The different types of schools in India are classified on the basis of administering bodies such as Government (State and Central), quasi-government (Army Schools), Model Schools (Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas), Public and Private Schools. Under different boards they develop their curriculum and conduct examinations at state and central levels. e.g. CBSE, ICSE and state education boards. The most important education providers are

### **2.1 Government Schools**

Government schools offered to all children with the compulsory education without charge. It is funded and controlled by the local, state or national government. Since they are supported by the government, they are wholly or partly funded by taxation. The curriculum of government school is decided at state or national levels. All government schools follow the same curriculum. Here admissions and testing are also managed by the government. The government schools are obliged to take the students who belong to their respective geographical zone.

### **2.2 Private Management Schools**

Private schools affiliated to Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and Council for Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE), controlled by different management committees is called Private Management Schools. Private schools are funded wholly or partly by student tuition and administered by a private body. These are independent to a large extent from the interference of the government. It is not funded or administered by the government. Private schools follow the same curriculum as decided by the government.

### **2.3 School Education in Kerala**

The schools and colleges in Kerala are run by the government or private trusts and individuals. Each school is affiliated with either the Indian Certificate of Secondary Education (ICSE), the Central Board for Secondary Education (CBSE), Kerala State Education Board or the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS). English is the language of instruction in most private schools, but government schools offer both English and Malayalam as medium. After 10 years of secondary schooling, students typically enroll at Higher Secondary School in one of the three streams- arts, commerce or science.

## **3.0 Secondary Education**

Secondary education is the most important stage of education which acts as the milestone for building up of a good nation. It provides the vital link between the elementary education on the one hand and the higher education on the other. It helps children to become a good human being in this complex and modern society. It develops to the highest potential in the child's ability, aptitudes, interest and qualities of character. Secondary stage of education enables an individual to enter his life with proper intellectual freedom. In Indian education system, the students belonging to the age group from 13 to 17 in schools are called secondary school students.

The Secondary Education Commission (1952-1953) has made the following recommendations in regard to its aims of Secondary Education. They are

- Development of democratic citizenship
- Improvement of Vocational efficiency
- Education for leadership
- Development of personality

## **4.0 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 education. A school library is a library within the school premises for use by the students and the teachers.

Secondary education is the basic foundation of higher education. School libraries are the natural supporting centres for intellectual development and knowledge up gradation. School library is an integral component of the total teaching-learning process. The goal of a school library is to respond to the learning ecology in the school. This learning ecology is defined as a set of contexts comprised of a unique configuration of activities, material resources, technologies and the interactions that emerge from them(Barron,2006).

### 5.0 Review of Literature

**Broady-Preston and Lobo (2011)** argued that the role and function of school libraries is closely tied to and contingent on the educational mission and institution of the school. School libraries' services being not only valued, but also vital to their parent organisation. The relationship between school libraries and learning appears to be the topic of empirical studies.

**Loertscher (2008)** analyzed that the school library is learning central. It is a place where students get access to all kinds of reading materials, cultural and knowledge building activities. It is also a place where students engage in deep thinking and lively learning discussions. In a school library, students are given opportunity to engage in innovative, curious and problem solving activities. School library is a place for social interactions. Cross-age peer tutoring, cooperative learning groups and informal 'study groups' are the motivating and supportive social situations within the school library to improve students' academic skills. Teachers and school librarians through collaborative efforts work out such social situations to facilitate learning. In such situations, teacher librarian collaboration is very important. School library provides the opportunity for teachers and school librarians to collaborate.

**Jagannath and Preveen(2007)** in their study revealed that the quality of materials and services has a long lasting effect on the students learning habits and attitudes. Library has a positive effect on students study habits which results in high academic achievements. These study habits become the ladder for higher education and success in future.

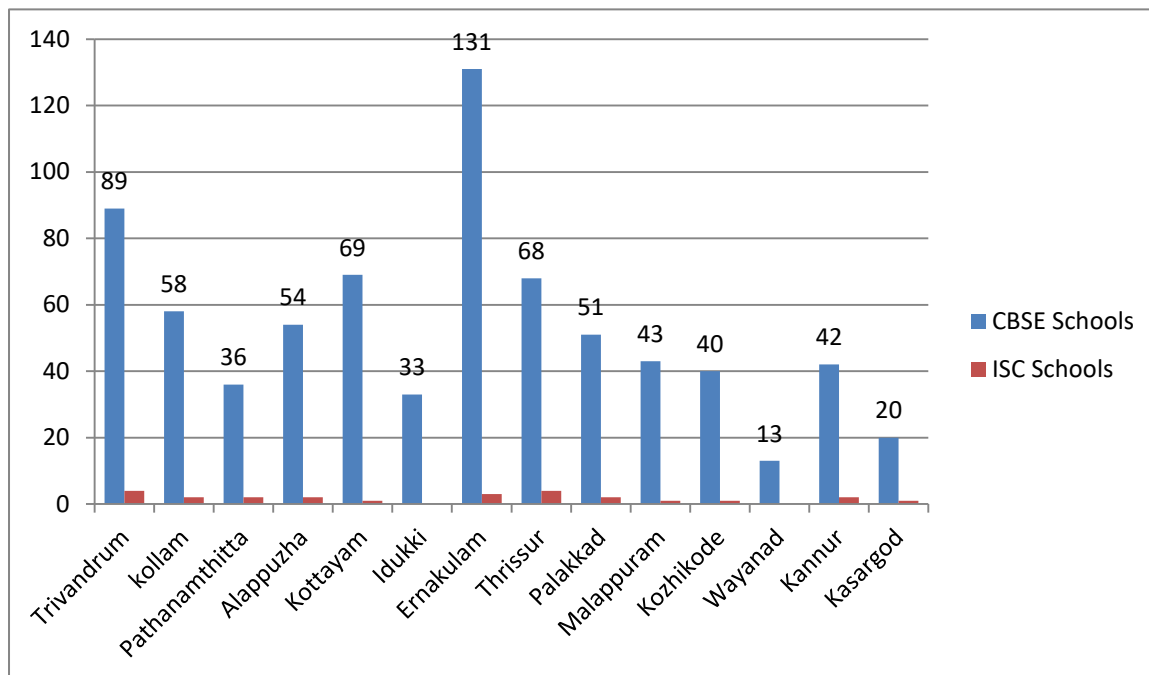
**Krashen(2004)** studied that when children have access to good libraries with plenty of good books and with adequate staffing, they read more, and thus do better on reading tests. For children of poverty, libraries are typically the only possible source of reading material.

**Rodney et.al.(2003)** studied by comparing schools with and without librarians, the study indicates that the presence of a qualified school librarian can make a tremendous difference in reading achievement. This difference ranges from eight percent for high schools to 35 percent for elementary schools. For instance, schools with librarians have 35 percent more fourth graders who score proficient or above than schools without librarians.

Table1: Total Number of Private Management Higher Secondary Schools in Kerala

Sl.No.	Districts	Private Management Higher Secondary Schools	
		CBSE affiliated Schools	ICSE affiliated Schools
1	Trivandrum	89	4
2	Kollam	58	2
3	Pathanamthitta	36	2
4	Alappuzha	54	2
5	Kottayam	69	1
6	Idukki	33	0
7	Ernakulam	131	3
8	Thrissur	68	4
9	Palakkad	51	2
10	Malappuram	43	1
11	Kozhikode	40	1
12	Wayanad	13	0

13	Kannur	42	2
14	Kasargod	20	1



**Fig 1: Total number of CBSE and ISC Schools in Kerala**

All the private management higher secondary schools have well equipped library facilities such as library building, library furniture, reading room, ICT technologies etc. All the informative services are provided with the help of a qualified librarian. They inculcate reading habits among students parallel to their study.

**6.0 Influence of Secondary School libraries among students**

The private management higher secondary school libraries strongly influences their students and by increasing their academic excellence and intellectual growth. The impacts of libraries are described below.

- School library supports the students in their studies.
- Students can borrow books and take them for further study.
- School library provide reference books in addition to text books for broaden their study.
- Use of school library develops the character of self-discovery among students. The mind of the students gets broadened and better grasping power is acquired and he starts to think in a new dimension altogether.
- The school library’s peaceful atmosphere helps the students to study without any disturbances. Library is an appropriate place for studies and mental development.
- Students can develop literary skills by reading rare books of literature.
- The use of academic magazines and periodicals in the school library keep the student aware of the latest development around the world.
- A library opens a world of wisdom for the student. A student can build his confidence by going through the books of his interest.
- The use of electronic media and library management software helps the school community to use the library with flexibility.
- A school library promotes building a knowledge-driven community for the future.

The private management higher secondary school library provides the following activities and services:

- Acquisition of Books
- Classification and Cataloguing
- Circulation of Books
- Reference Services
- Book Binding Services

- ICT Services
- Weeding out of non-readable books

The higher secondary school library has various types of informative resources for use in the school community. Library resources often used are listed below.

- Newspapers/magazines
- Novels
- Poems
- Reference Materials
- Textbooks
- Government Reports
- Audio-visual materials

The school libraries especially higher secondary education sector is said to be effective, it must satisfy

- i. Improve student outcomes by reading and learning programmes. They encourage curiosity, innovation and problem-solving. It is the central point for access to information, deep thinking and knowledge building.
- ii. Creating and providing balanced, inclusive and relevant resources for the students and teachers that support the teaching and learning needs of the school community.
- iii. Supporting literacy and reading by the use of good library collection and the support of qualified librarian.
- iv. Promoting digital literacy by providing digital resources and online library services to the entire school community.

## 7.0 Conclusion

The higher secondary school libraries are expected to provide curriculum-oriented services aims at satisfying the school community through the provision of appropriate information sources and services. The current status of school libraries of private management schools is satisfactory compared to state government schools. They provide the necessary fund required for the proper working and provision of necessary services to their students. The policy of periodically re-assess the information needs of school community must be ascertained because the sophisticated needs are constantly changing nowadays. The school libraries with good collection, supervised by qualified school librarians and offering variety of library services would contribute the students with the habit of self-directed independent learning which is antecedent to life-long education.

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