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Usage of School libraries by Secondary school teachers in Mysore block: A study

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Abstract

Teachers play a dynamic role in upbringing students in academics as well as for living successfully in today's complex and challenging information society. But certified librarians' play a more diverse role in student's life, among which is to support their well-being and help teachers leverage the power of technology in the classroom strategically and with purpose. The present paper attempted to study how teachers utilize the school library and other sources of information that inspire and motivate students to knowledge-based information technology-driven society. This study identified that a professional librarian is effective and library orientation programs support teachers in adopting a broad range of teaching strategies. The questionnaire method was employed to achieve the objectives of the study and 300 questionnaires were distributed among secondary school teachers in Mysore Block on a simple random basis for collecting relevant data. 276 teachers responded to the questionnaire. Inquiry into the teacher's perception and experiences for a library orientation or an entry-level library instruction class discovered that learning library skills toolkit would allow them to become more comfortable with library spaces and helps them reach the goal of solving a digital treasure box. It has been found that teachers who showed enthusiasm towards collaboration with a certified librarian can create a student's intrinsic motivation to learn and vitality in the classroom.

Keywords: School library, Secondary school teachers, Teacher's perception, User study, Collaboration of school teacher with the certified librarian, Mysore Block.

Introduction

School libraries are quintessential sources of information for students and teachers that enhance classroom teaching and learning. Library skills constitute a fundamental tool for creating opportunities for teaching and learning, support literacy and education and help shape the new ideas and perspectives that are central to a creative and innovative society. These skills, according to United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 1997) are one of the basic learning skills required by human beings to be able to survive, to develop their full capacities, to live and work in dignity, to make informed decisions and to continue learning. A professional librarian is effective in developing library programs that will enhance the library skills of teachers and the academic achievement of all students. Certified librarians are instrumental in teaching students as well as teachers how to locate and use information sources available to the learning community. Professional librarians facilitate collaborative engagement to cultivate and empower a community of learners to explore new ideas and implement new instructional strategies and embed new resources in instruction and incorporate information skills into the curriculum, student achievement gets a boost. Hence, the present study is to assess how far secondary school teachers utilize school library and information resources that support student's learning.

Objectives

The particular goals and objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To assess how far secondary school teachers utilize the school library.
2. To determine a teacher's preferences for additional library services.
3. To study teachers and certified librarian collaboration measures.

Review of related literature

The review of literature presents a descriptive summary and critical evaluation of what has been already published in scholarly articles and helps the researchers to go deep into the research problem. An attempt has been made here to identify unexplored areas to create new grounds for research. The goal is to present high-level information regarding the school libraries and certified librarian planning objectives and

strategic considerations involved in terms of collaboration with teachers and the development of new routes at a networked level.

IFLA (1999) affirmed that the school library bestows information and ideas that are the key ingredients to working effectively and successfully in today's 21st century. Carr (1998) discussed that teachers cannot prepare their students to be information literate unless they understand how to find and use information. Broady-Preston (2006) reviewed the depth guidance on the skills required to be information literate is to know when and why you need information, where to find it, and how to evaluate the role, use and communicate it in an ethical manner. Phillips and Lee (2019) study revealed an exploratory endeavor to know how school librarians in a state that embraced digital citizenship legislation engage with digital citizenship instruction and their perceptions of a school librarian's role in bringing forth this instruction. Strong (2013) offered a view in the United States authenticating how high-quality school library programs contribute to improved academic achievement. Bell and Shank (2004) defined the updated perspectives on "blended librarian" as an academic librarian who combines the traditional skill set of librarianship with the information technology skills, and the instructional or educational decision maker's ability to apply technology appropriately in the teaching-learning process. Montiel-Overall and Grimes (2013) suggested that administrators who want to make the best use of their library program including their rich collections of print, digital information, and instructional technologies should place prospects for collaboration among teachers and librarians. However, the principals who acknowledged the library impact studies conceded that they highly value collaboration, but collaboration does not just happen on its own. Teachers may have to be shown that librarians can function as instructional partners, and both librarians and teachers need training in collaborative instruction. Apeji (1993) asserted how a collaborative effort on the part of the school library staff and the teaching staff, can lead to a meaningful children's education. The author further discussed the ways to achieve this aim by way of constant dialogue, curriculum developments, collection development, library use, and help to children. Thus certified librarians as educators, their priorities are to help students and teachers that employ critical thinking and evaluation skills; develop a deep understanding of content; synthesize information - beyond reporting, invent new knowledge; and engage students to develop a love for books and a passion for reading. Bouazza and Al-Mufaraji (2004) proposed strategies that can be implemented to improve

teachers' collaboration with their school librarian by incorporating an information literacy program. Furthermore, the researchers recommended improving the situation for trainee practicing teachers needs to be developed to provide them with a basic set of skills in identifying, locating, accessing, evaluating, and using information. They can even be trained on how the use of the school library can be integrated into teaching, students' projects, extra-curricular activities, and other related tasks. Lance, Schwarz, and Rodney (2017) researchers have found evidence in the USA for the beneficial effects of using the school library on learning outcomes. A typical example is the South Carolina school libraries study that showed how school libraries contribute to students' success. The greater part of the teaching staff interviewed in this study indicated that they preoccupied their students in library activities such as escorting their students to the library, and remaining with them, and allowing groups of their students or individual students to go to the library during class time. The teachers confirm that the use of the school library is beneficial to students' learning.

Various studies revealed a positive change in user community digital information skills, usage of the library, and its resources after library instruction. This present paper tried to point towards that aspect of the library where it could educate its users by giving orientation so they can become accurate searchers and make use of the proper information at the exact time. To motivate teachers and students to use school library resources, certified librarians should provide basic software training or entry-level instruction class to the users, to help them access the electronic sources.

Methodology

The data was collected through a questionnaire method for analyzing the objectives. The researcher followed a stratified random sampling method for choosing the samples and thus inquiring from teachers in 60 selected secondary schools situated at Mysore Block. The researcher distributed 300 questionnaires to the 5 teachers in each selected secondary school on a simple random basis for collecting relevant data and 276 teachers enthusiastically responded to the questionnaire. The survey was conducted over six months and several follow-ups and requests had to be made to the respondents and thus return rate was 92%.

Scope and Limitations of the study

The present inquiry concentrated on the "Usage of School Libraries by Secondary School Teachers in Mysore Block: A study". In the Mysore district, there are seven revenue administrative blocks and nine educational blocks. Mysore block is separated into two instructive blocks specific as Mysore Urban and Mysore Rural. Mysore Urban is additionally bifurcated into two instructive blocks to be specific Mysore North and Mysore South for an authoritative reason. The population of this paper covers teachers of secondary schools in Mysore North, Mysore South, and Mysore Rural Blocks. Geographically the study is confined to 60 selected secondary school libraries in the Mysore block.

Analysis of data

The data collected from teachers was analyzed with the help of Microsoft Excel's advanced functionalities, and formulae related to statistical analysis have been used to calculate the desired results. The results were tabulated, analyzed, and interpreted to achieve the specific objectives of the study.

Table 1: Personal profile of the respondents

User	No. of respondents (n=276)	Percentage of respondents
Institute/Type of School Management		
Private Aided School	70	25.36
Private Unaided School	60	21.74
Department of Education	98	35.51
Tribal/Social Welfare Department	28	10.14
Central Government School	20	7.25
Total	**276**	**100**
Gender		
Male	94	34.06
Female	182	65.94
Age		
25-35	46	16.67
36-45	116	42.03
46-55	82	29.71
56-60	32	11.59

Level of Education		
Bachelor's degree	42	15.22
Bachelor's degree with Professional degree	168	60.87
Master's degree	26	9.42
Master's degree with Professional degree	28	10.14
others	12	4.35
Total	**276**	**100**

Table 1 study surveyed a total number of 276 secondary school teachers, 98 (35.51%) of the respondents were from the Department of Education. About 70 (25.36%) of the respondents were from Private Aided School, 60 (21.74%) of the teachers were from Private Unaided School, 28 (10.14%) of the participants were from the Tribal/Social welfare Department, and 20 (7.25%) of the teachers were followed by Central Government school. The majority of the teachers 182 (65.94%) are female and the remaining 94 (34.06%) of the teachers were male. It was also pointed out in the study that the majority of respondents 116 (42.03%) are between 36-45 years of age, 82 (29.71%) of the teachers are between 46 to 55 years of age, 46 (16.67%) of the teachers are between 25-35 years of age and 32 (11.59%) of the participants are between 56-60 years of age. The main bulk of the 168 (60.87%) of the respondents had Bachelor's Degree with Professional Degree B.Ed., 42 (15.22%) of the teachers were with Bachelor's degree, 26 (9.42%) of the participants earned Master's Degree, 28 (10.14%) of the respondents possessed Master's Degree along with Professional Degree B.Ed., and 12 (4.35%) of the respondents were with other qualifications. It appeared that a majority of the teachers had adequate teaching experience and were probably in a position to provide good feedback regarding their use of the school library, services, and collaboration with teacher-librarian.

Table 2: Utilization of school library

Usage of School library	No. of Respondents (n=276)	Percentage of Respondents
Frequency of Library Visit		
Daily	22	7.97
Once a week	98	35.51
Twice a week	42	15.22

Once a month	14	5.07
Occasionally	18	6.52
As and when required	82	29.71
Purpose of Visit		
To borrow/return books	84	30.43
To read newspaper/magazines	14	5.07
To refer reference books	66	23.91
To prepare class notes	52	18.84
To browse Internet	28	10.14
To obtain photocopy	32	11.59
Total	**276**	**100**

Table 2 study perceived that 98 (35.51%) of the respondents visit the school library once a week, 82 (29.71%) of the teachers visit the school library as and when required, 42 (15.22%) of the respondents answered that they visit the library two times per week, 22 (7.97%) of the respondents visit every day, 18 (6.52%) of the teachers replied that they visit occasionally to the school library, and 14 (5.07%) of the participants concurred that they visit the school library once in a month. The surveyed study identified that 84 (30.43%) of the teachers' fundamental motivation behind visiting the library is for borrowing and to return books. Secondly, 66 (23.91%) of the respondents main purpose of visit to school library was to refer to reference books, 52 (18.84%) of the teachers purpose is to prepare class notes, 32 (11.59%) of the participants to obtain photocopy, 28 (10.14%) of the respondents to browse the internet and finally 14 (5.07%) of the teachers to read newspapers/magazines in the school library.

Convenience and ample of school libraries

Respondents were asked about the adequacy of their school library resources and the timings when the school library is closed yet teachers might want it to be open in preparing lessons, getting ready exercises, and different errands committed to them. Participants were also asked about encouragement for students going to the school library in meeting their information needs for different activities.

Table 3: Adequacy of the school library

Adequacy of the School library	No. of Respondents n=276	Percentage
A quiet place where I can concentrate and do my work	94	34.06

Very important for helping me with my schoolwork	88	31.88
A place where I can relax and read	56	20.29
A place where I can get together with friends	24	8.70
A place I want to get out of as soon as possible	8	2.90
Noisy place	6	2.17
School library timings		
To be open before school	108	39.13
During lunch break	28	10.14
After school	8	2.90
At weekends	52	18.84
Happy with current timings	80	28.99
To encourage students		
More up-to-date books	36	13.04
More computers	14	5.07
More tables and desks	16	5.80
Improve the appearance of the library	18	6.52
Allowing students to suggest new books	52	18.84
More staff	12	4.35
Librarians should be user-friendly/ more approachable	64	23.19
The library is fine as it is	8	2.90
School librarians should be technology representatives for the school	56	20.29
Total	**276**	**100**

The data presented in table 3 showed 94 (34.06%) of the teachers described that school library is a quiet place where they can concentrate and do their work, 88 (31.88%) of the respondents concurred that school library is very important for helping them with the school work exercises and activities, 56 (20.29%) of the participants answered that a school library is a place where they can relax and read, 24 (8.70%) of the respondents replied that school library is a place where they can get together with friends for discussion about planning school programs, 8 (2.90%) of the teachers revealed that school library is a place to get out of as soon as possible, and 6 (2.17%) a small portion of the teachers concurred that a school library is a noisy place. The surveyed study conceded that 108 (39.13%) of the respondents felt the school library should be opened before the school ringer rings to assist students with preparing for everyday news which should be said in the get-together. It was intriguing to take note that 80 (28.99%) of the teachers were happy with current timings, 52 (18.84%) of the participants replied that the school library should be opened at weekends to prepare a lesson plan, 28 (10.14%) of the respondents concurred that library should be opened during lunch break, and 8 (2.90%) of the participants answered that school

library should be opened after the school. It can be noted that 64 (23.19%) of the participants replied that librarians should be user-friendly/more approachable, 56 (20.29%) of the respondents answered that school librarians should be technology representatives for the school, 52 (18.84%) of the teachers revealed that allowing students to suggest new books, 36 (13.04%) of the respondents conceded more up-to-date books, 18 (6.52%) of the teachers concurred to improve the appearance of the library, 16 (5.80%) of the participants replied that more tables and desks should be placed in the library, 14 (5.07%) of the teachers answered that more computers would help them to search information with the help of the librarian, and 8 (2.90%) of the respondents were satisfied with the current situation of the school library.

The collaboration of school teachers and certified librarian

Collaboration is an essential skill in today's competitive and changing workplace. Collaboration offers exciting new learning opportunities to teachers and another powerful skill for promoting the school library and demonstrating its ongoing relevance within the school. Garmston (1997) studied the effectiveness of various reasons for educators to collaborate and the key is to ensure that collaborators (e.g., teacher/teacher or teacher/librarian) know how to collaborate effectively and have a clear understanding of how to implement collaboratively planned instruction. The author further depicted that teachers must also recognize school librarians as potential collaborators in the education of students. Collaboration skills provide opportunities for collaboration with teaching staff, support digital/information literacy learning, and support the curriculum through curated research and study guides. These skills have intrinsic appeal for today's teachers to work together and a set of questions has been designed to know the collaboration between teachers and certified librarians and how effective is the collaboration. Respondents were also asked about the librarian to locate and help them with finding information.

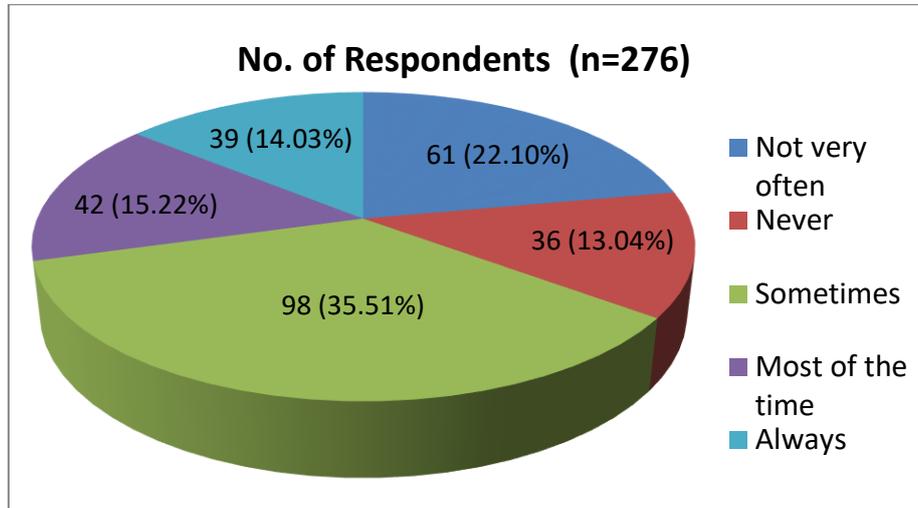## Figure 1: Teacher-Librarian to help teachers with finding Information

Figure 1 depicted that 98 (35.51%) of the teachers asked the teacher-librarian sometimes to help them with finding information, 61 (22.10%) of the respondents answered that not very often they ask help from a librarian, 42 (15.22%) of the participants replied that most of the time they ask help from teacher-librarian, 39 (14.13%) of the respondents revealed that they ask help always from a librarian with finding information, 36 (13.04%) of the teachers replied that they never ask help from the teacher-librarian.

Table 4: Teachers and Certified Librarian Collaboration Measures

Collaboration measures	No. of Respondents n=276	Percentage
Are you taught to find information in the school library?		
Yes, we have regular lessons	30	10.87
No	108	39.13
Only if you ask the librarian	12	4.35
Only when they start school?	74	26.81
I don't know	52	18.84
Why is collaboration important with the certified librarian?		
Learn more when you collaborate	154	55.80
Work harder	57	20.65
support one another emotionally	65	23.55
Total	276	100

Teachers were asked to state whether their respective school library provided an orientation program or entry-level library instruction class and were they taught to find information in the school library? Table 4 study results showed that the majority 108 (39.13%) of the respondents indicated that their libraries had

not provided any information or orientation program regarding effective use of the school library. They were also asked to specify if the current orientation programs or entry-level instruction class provided by their library covered what they needed. 74 (26.81%) of the teachers argued that only when the school starts, the other teaching staff who is in charge of the library assigned as the teacher-librarian would provide entry-level library instruction class and the information content was inappropriate. 52 (18.84%) of the respondents answered that they don't know any information regarding the effective use of school libraries because of the lack of certified librarians in the school. 30 (10.87%) of the teachers answered that the entry-level library instruction class was helpful and they had a regular orientation program. 12 (4.35%) of the teaching staff revealed that they are provided with information only when they ask the librarian regarding the effective use of the school library. Furthermore, teachers were questioned to answer why collaboration is important with the certified librarian? 154 (55.80%) of the teachers depicted that they learn more when teachers collaborate with the certified librarian. 57 (20.65%) of the respondents asserted that they work harder together to share ideas and collaborate to guide student understanding. 65 (23.55%) of the teaching staff revealed that certified librarian is a teacher at heart and support one another emotionally even if they were not prior classroom teachers. The data discovered that certified librarians can guide teachers to find quality sources using different discovery tools and continue to build and develop an engaged community that works professionally in a library and is responsible for its management and services.

Table 5: Opinion about collaboration with the certified librarian

Teacher's Perceptions	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
The certified librarian is instrumental to support course content.	18 6.52%	25 9.06%	15 5.43%	82 29.71%	136 49.28%
Working with the certified librarian, student achievement gets a boost in academics.	14 5.07%	23 8.33%	12 4.35%	73 26.45%	154 55.80%
Working with a certified librarian explores new ideas in learning and helps in a blended-learning way to teach.	20 7.25%	14 5.07%	18 6.52%	54 19.57%	170 61.59%
Working with a certified librarian helps to incorporate information	8 2.90%	12 4.35%	26 9.42%	58 21.01%	172 62.32%

skills into the curriculum and teach mini-lessons on literacy skills.					
The certified librarian has a significant role in the plan of workforce conferences.	23 8.33%	42 15.22%	53 19.20%	63 22.83%	95 34.42%
Headmaster urges teachers to work with the certified librarian.	10 3.62%	37 13.41%	21 7.61%	83 30.07%	125 45.29%
Certified librarian encourages teachers to use a range of resources beyond the textbook and teach teachers to use the latest tech tool.	13 4.71%	19 6.88%	11 3.99%	52 18.84%	181 65.58%
Certified librarian creates suitable services for teachers as per the goals and objectives of instructing.	44 15.94%	24 8.70%	42 15.22%	58 21.01%	108 39.13%
Frequently plan a lesson and exercise with a certified librarian are helpful.	58 21.01%	60 21.74%	33 11.96%	45 16.30%	80 28.99%
Library Orientation programs have a significant impact on benefits.	8 2.90%	4 1.45%	14 5.07%	38 13.77%	212 76.81%
More assistance from the library staff.	12 4.35%	16 5.80%	22 7.97%	44 15.94%	182 65.94%

A typical 5-point Likert scale asks teachers to specify their levels of agreement with a statement, from high to low with one neutral option in the middle. Table 5 surveyed shows that the majority 212 (76.81%) of the teachers in terms of collaboration strongly agreed that library orientation programs have a significant impact on the benefits derived from the school library. Furthermore, teachers opined that library orientation programs are informative and creative, and were received positively. 182 (65.94%) of the teachers strongly commented that more assistance from the library staff would familiarize them with library spaces and services. 181 (65.58%) of the respondents strongly conceded that certified librarian encourages teachers to use a range of resources beyond the textbook and teach teachers to use latest tech tool. 172 (62.32%) of the teachers strongly felt that working with a certified librarian helps to incorporate information skills into the curriculum and teach mini-lessons on literacy skills. Interestingly, in this study, the researcher found that perception 170 (61.59%) of the teaching staff in terms of collaboration strongly asserted that working with a certified librarian explores new ideas in learning and helps in a blended-learning way to teach. 154 (55.80%) of the participants reported that working with the certified librarian, student achievement gets a boost in academic. 136 (49.28%) of the respondents strongly noted that a certified librarian is instrumental to support course content. 125 (45.29%) of the teachers strongly agreed

that the headmaster urges teachers to work with the teacher-librarian. 108 (39.13%) of the participants depicted that certified librarian creates suitable services for teachers as per the goals and objectives of instructing. 95 (34.42%) of the participants strongly revealed that certified librarian has a significant role in the plan of workforce conferences. The result also found 80 (28.99%) of the teachers strongly agreed that planning a lesson frequently and exercise with a certified librarian is helpful. The data from these surveys evidence that certified librarians provide crucial aid to teachers through technology support, lesson planning, and finding resources. Not only certified librarians are equipped to handle the ambiguity and changing priorities of classroom teachers during COVID-19, but finding ways to demonstrate a powerful framework for teaching and helps teachers to determine the next steps for improvement. A professional librarian opens up windows to the world to create equitable access and empowers teacher personal growth and advances student success.

Results and Discussions

School libraries and certified librarian aims to help education systems determine the knowledge, digital skills, attitudes and values teachers and students need to thrive in for their academic and personal knowledge development. Especially during the pandemic, it is prominent to remember that students are working in more independent settings than they had previously been functioning in before. Certified librarians are pivotal to transitioning to a digital environment. Teachers are also excellent communicators and facilitators of the erudition process. Collaboration between teachers and certified librarians realizes their full potential that creates strong leadership and strong leadership builds quality libraries in the school.

The teachers have been utilizing the internet for teaching students as they are aware that online class has become the initial preference of continuing the education system. Together, teachers and certified librarians can share the responsibility of curriculum design; planning, teaching, and implement student-centered INQUIRY experiences and promote information literacy skills. The survey showed that 98 (35.51%) of the teachers were from the Department of Education Institution type of school management where the majority of schools do not have adequate library space, they keep the books in the cupboard and there is a lack of certified librarians. The results of this study revealed, in general, low use of school libraries by the Department of Education teachers in secondary schools. The 21st-century high-tech

information professional librarians are required to be very much updated with technological changes and key thought leaders in each school's quest to find a solution. Library orientation or an entry-level library instruction class helps teachers and students to access and use the appropriate information for effective learning. The study found 108 (39.13%) of the respondents pointed that their libraries had not provided any information or entry-level library instruction class regarding effective use of the school library due to the lack of certified librarians. One of the big challenges teachers and students face during the pandemic is a flood of information. During this pandemic, an immediate service that certified librarians can offer is assisting with the identification of the work effectively to adapt and navigate through the challenges. The very existence of certified librarians affords the best evidence to provide library and digital skills and constantly strives to find resources for teachers, policymakers, and learners to ensure education doesn't stop. Professional librarians support the curriculum by empowering all learners as they connect them to print and digital resources that support multiple literacies and diverse perspectives. Certified librarians foster equity as they meet user community needs and inspire personal growth. Notable findings from the study offered insights into an overwhelming majority 212 (76.81%) of the teachers strongly agreed that library orientation program or the entry-level instruction class are helpful for their teaching and learning purposes as they are aware that the online class has become the initial preference of continuing the education and also because of the abundant open access information available. The new reality amplifies and uncovers the urgency of implementing certified librarians, a valuable resource in the school library. It demands diverse skills from certified librarians in terms of collaboration with teachers, ways to connect with students, and approaches to transmitting knowledge. It is time to embrace the new reality and apply the practice of entry-level library instruction classes in the schools. Certified librarians truly need to provide library orientation programs or entry-level instruction classes for learning information and digital skills to be meaningful for user community development.

Collaboration between certified librarians and teachers opens up opportunities. Professional librarians can lead the digital transformation of learning. Not only certified librarians do have extensive training in advantageously utilizing digital content, but they also adept at adapting to changing environments while continuing to provide meaningful experiences. A high-tech information professional librarian extends beyond the confines of the academic world as they help foster innovations by collaborating with teachers

and co-creation of knowledge and enriching the practices of active learning and teaching communities in the environment.

Conclusion

COVID-19 has accelerated the digital transformation of education and is a stress test for education systems around the world. The strong school library program is not just an aspirational commodity but a valuable information center and has a unique value in education, thus it becomes necessary to be conscious to correct the existing system so that the education gap between the haves and have-nots is reduced in the Mysore block. School library has a uniquely challenging role to initiate library orientation program for teachers and students in educating and shaping the mindsets of future global leaders. Professional librarians can build student's digital and information literacy skills, helping them evaluate online information sources. There is a need for competent certified librarians who are digital literacy experts. Supporting teachers and students with their library and digital skills is a part of their job description. When certified librarians and teachers work together and collaborate, students achieve a higher level of literacy, reading, learning, and problem-solving. It's safe to say that every school irrespective of the Institute/Type of school management in Mysore block is being challenged to quickly adapt to this new world and leading that charge, from online classes to continue education, is technology. While an ICT skill is integrated with education, the sudden change to remote learning jolted the system. Technology cannot do it alone, to truly pivot to more digital technology, schools must have an agile backbone of Professional librarians and systems that can easily shift gears, adapt to new technology, and help schools meet student's academic, emotional, and social needs. If schools and educational policymakers wish to improve student's literacy outcomes and continue education at the same pace as their classmates, they should invest in school libraries and dual-qualified teacher-librarian or certified librarian.

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