

# The status of school libraries in Jaffna Educational zone as in year 2008

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A school library is a very important unit in a school. The World Bank had taken initiatives to develop the educational system of Sri Lanka through the school libraries via the resources based student centered learning emphasized in the new educational policy reforms of Sri Lanka. The main objective of the paper is to study the present status of school libraries in Jaffna educational zone and to examine whether the school libraries play sufficient role in the school activities. The present status in the paper is the availability of physical facilities, professional human resources and information sources in school libraries. Questionnaire survey research method was mainly used to collect data for the study. The study was formulated to collect data from the school libraries in the Jaffna educational zone where 113 schools are available. Sample size of the study was 40. A stratified random sampling was done.

The response rate of the study was 80 %. The study showed that only 53% of the schools in the studied area have permanent libraries. Among the 53 %, only 3 % of the libraries have A1 type library where internet facilities and new electronic information sources are available. The finding corroborates the statistics published by the Provincial Department of Education, Northern Province in year 2007. In which it was stated that only one National school library was categorized as A1 Type library in Jaffna district. It is very regrettable that some schools are with out libraries. The study revealed that only 50 % of the schools have teacher librarians appointed by the Ministry of education. Regarding the educational qualifications all the teacher librarians are graduates but 88% of them do not have professional qualification on library science field. Only 12 % completed Post Graduate Diploma course in Library science. The study indicates that lack of professional teacher librarians is also a problem in the school libraries in the Jaffna educational zone.

Regarding the physical furniture facilities 40 % of the libraries have basic furniture like book shelves, reading tables, chairs etc. More than 50% of the libraries have televisions and radio where as only 28% of the libraries have computer. Based on the study, more than 50 % of the libraries have less than 1000 books. Less than 10 % of the libraries perform the basic activities like cataloguing and classification. The study pointed out that about 72% of the libraries play an active role in most of the school activities such as Tamil day, English day, Science day, Debates and other school competitions. The study clearly indicates that there are many limitations in the present status of school libraries in the Jaffna educational zone. Without improvement of these libraries, real education can hardly be expected.

**Key words:** School Library, School Librarianship, Teacher librarian.