ASSESSMENT OF QUALITY OF SCHOOL LIBRARY PRODUCTS AND SERVICES: A SURVEY OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO HALDIA CITY

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Abstract: - *Library is the heart of any academic institution and in the elementary level of education school library plays the central role in teaching learning process. In India, standard of school library is very poor compared to developed countries. Unlike other cities of India, school libraries of Haldia area are not rich in quality and suffering from the scarcity of collection, resources, and infrastructures. Library services and facilities are not up to the marks. In this study school libraries are assessed in the view of students. Data was collected from the students of secondary and senior secondary level. The result of the study shows that school libraries not organised, resource collection and infrastructure is very poor, and services provided by the libraries are not satisfactory. Required recommendations have been made to improve the quality of school library services.*

Keywords : School Library, Quality assessment, School library services, School library products, Student's survey.

1. Introduction

School library is an integral part of the school system. School library provides the opportunity of access the knowledge resources to its user community. It helps to promote reading habit among the young learners and supports in teaching learning process. Traditional school libraries provide reading materials in the form of textbooks, curriculum based reference books, general information books and story books to read in the school reading room or sometimes issue for home. Libraries are organised following the guidelines of the affiliating boards/ council or some standard policies. Advancement of information and communication technology and its uses in school libraries improve the quality. Rapid growth of demand on digital information helps to include in school library collection and use of internet increasing tremendously. In India, sometimes school libraries are found excellent in all respect, sometimes these are very poor in quality. Quality of a school library can be measured in various aspects, but students are the most effective evaluators of their libraries.

2. Objectives of the study

The objectives of this study are:

- To find out the weakness and strengthens of the school libraries in the eye's of the students;

- To find the level of satisfaction of the students who use their school libraries in an effective way;

- To find out the quantity and quality of library knowledge resources in the school;

- To assess the quality ofservices provided by the school libraries in Haldia area;

- To assess the availability of infrastructure of the school libraries;

- To investigate the administrative initiatives regarding the library facilities;

- To evaluate student's satisfaction from the point of library services;

- To make recommendations for future research in this area.

3. Problems

School library is recognized as an essential component of a school, as per the guidelines provided by the school boards and organizations. Affiliated schools must have a library with adequate number of collection and sufficient infrastructure. The library should be organised and provide the quality services to its users community in their all information needs. But the actual picture is quite opposite and in most cases, the libraries are the storehouse of some books. School libraries possess inadequate collection, poor infrastructure, and insufficient fund and provide low quality services. Books are out dated and most part of library collection holds textbooks and specimen copies provided by the publishers. Books are not well organised and the libraries run by non-trained per time staff. Digital base information and current information are out of their reach. Millions of school children of our country are deprived from the quality library services. Students of private or public schools are paying a large amount of fees to receive library services from their schools, but schools are making profit in the name of library. During this study, it has been observed that only a few students are satisfied with the library service while large number of students is dissatisfied.

4. Review of literature

Mahajan (2010) conducted a study of secondary schools in Jammu and Kashmir State and recommended that school libraries in India need to uplifment and government should ensure that the school library has a well-stocked active collection managed by a qualified librarian. Snowball (2008) reported that traditionally school libraries offered conservative lending services and reading room facilities and studentsborrow books and read some newspapers and magazines. "The school library equips students with lifelong learning skills and develops the imagination, enabling to live as responsible citizens" (UNESCO/IFLA, 2008). Spreadbury (1999) opined that particular problem about access to school library, students get opportunity to visit their library during the break and lunch time. Moruf (2015) indicated in his study that the

school library is still be set with a myriad of problems, the prominent among which are lack of funds and unqualified staff. "Though all the schools studies have libraries but the quality of their resources and facilities was poor the school library services should foster and enhance the school's mission and curriculum, and should, consequently, provide the school community with a stimulating environment for all learners" (Ramaiah, 2013). Eghosa (2008) stressed the importance on encouraging greater community participation in library management, promotion of information communication technology applications in all libraries. Kumar (1994) added thatlibraries play a vital role in all stages of education especially in secondary and senior secondary education- the basic foundation on which the edifice of higher education is built. Ahmad (2011) indicated that the essentials like proper physical facilities, adequate collections, professional manpower, proper organization and basic services are lacking. It does not even fulfil the minimum standards of library. Idiegbeyan-Ose, (2006) in their study highlighted that a school library that is adequately staffed, resourced, and funded can lead to higher student achievement regardless of the socioeconomic or educational levels of the community. "A school library program that is adequately staffed, resourced, and funded can lead to higher student achievement regardless of the socioeconomic or educational levels of the community" (Australian School Library Survey, 2013).

5. Scope of the study

Generally a secondary or senior secondary poses a library to provide knowledge resources to its user community in respect to the by-laws of the affiliating boards/council. Sometimes libraries are excellent with rich collection of knowledge resources and good services, sometimes these are poor in all respect. So, the users i.e. students are the great evaluators of the school libraries of their own because they are the significant users of the school libraries.There is a large scope of assessing the school libraries in the view of the students.This study coversthe schools functioning in Haldia Area and affiliated to different school Boards/Councils e.g. Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), Indian Certificate of Secondary Examination (ICSE) and West Bengal Board of Secondary Education (WBBSE). Students from secondary and senior secondary level are selected for providing the information about their libraries. Quality and quantity of library resources, services, products and administrative perspectives are assessed in this study.

6. Research design

The study is purely a survey of students about the quality and accessibility of the school libraries in a particular area. Under this survey study, the data is collected through structured questionnaire. 300 studentsof classes 8-12, who use their libraries effectively, were selected as the population of the study.When the students were assembled the structured questionnaire was distributed among

them and explained it. The filled in questionnaires were collected from the students and the raw data were tabulated using various tables. The analysed data are presented using different types of charts e.g. column, pie, bar, etc. After analyzing the data, major findings are indicated separately. A number of recommendations have been made for the development of the qualities of school library services and facilities.

1. Methodology

To collect the faithful data related to the school library from the students, questionnaire was prepared. The questionnaire contains 42questions about the availability and qualities of library collection, library facilities and services, administrative initiatives. The questionnaire was distributed among the students and asked to fill the questionnaire by putting a tick against the simple questions. The selected students of each school were gathered in a place and the questions were explained as some questions/ terms were not understandable to them. Total 300 questionnaires were distributed in 10 schools, but 264 filled in questionnaire (88%) were received from the students. The following table is showing the total population and response rate.

Questionnaire Distributed	Responded		Not Responded	
300	264	88 %	36	12 %

Table-1: Total no. of population and response rate

1. Limitations

The study was conducted to assess the qualities of library services and facilities in the view of students and how satisfied they are with the library services. The ten schools from the different managements were selected for the study. In the limited time and resource four private, two companies sponsored and four Government schools were selected for this study. Only the students of secondary classes (8 to 10) and senior secondary classes (11 to 12) are selected for this study. The schools possess huge number students but 300 students (only 6 students from each class of each school) are selected as the sample size. A number of schools managed by the Government or private managements are functioning in Haldia area, but the schools with well reputation and standard library were considered for the study.The study was conducted in the academic session 2019-2020, so the students were asked to provide data on present situation of their libraries. Growth and development of library collection, services and facilities were not possible to show as the study was limited to short time span.

2. Data Analysis and Discussions

9.1 Library Collection

Sl.	Types of Library Collection	Responded			
		Yes		No	
		No.	%	No.	%
1	Sufficient text books	242	91.67	22	8.33
2	Text-based reference books	178	67.42	86	32.58

3	Sufficient story books	195	73.86	69	26.14
4	Enough general information books	45	17.04	219	82.96
5	Suitable reference books	128	48.48	136	51.51
6	Magazines and periodicals	172	65.15	92	34.85
7	Audio Video materials	95	35.98	169	64.02

Table 2: Library collection

Table-2 is showing the data related to the library collection that the students can use Libraries pose sufficient textbooks because 91.67% students are agreed with the statement. Collections of text-based reference books are also sufficient because 67.42% students replied 'Yes'. The school libraries are also enrich with the story books as 73.86% students support the statement. The schools are also holding adequate number of reference collection and magazines and periodicals (positive answers 48.48% and 65.15% respectively). But the libraries have poor collection general information books and audio-visual collection as 82.96% and 64.02% respectively replied negative answer. Figure-1 is showing the result of responses regarding library collection.
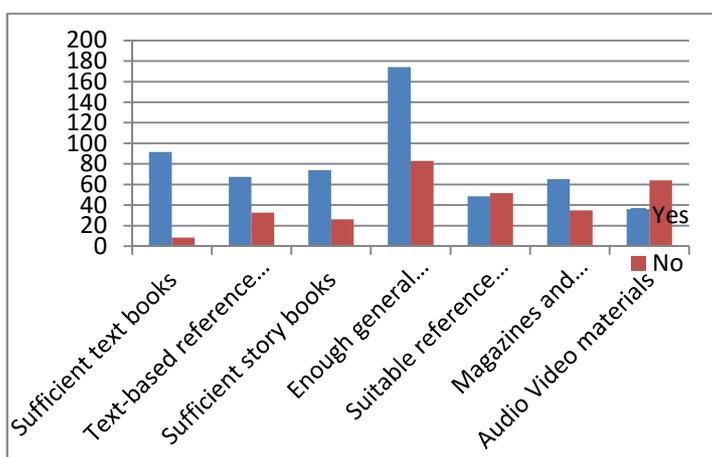

Figure-1: Library collection

9.2 Library Facilities

| Sl. | Types of Library Facilities to Students | Responded | | | |
		Yes		No	
		No.	%	No.	%
1.	Library catalogue	178	67.42	86	32.58
2.	OPAC	0	0	264	100
3.	Library reading room facility	202	76.51	62	23.49
4.	Student participation in book selection	88	33.33	176	66.66
5.	Student access the library stack	165	62.50	99	37.50
6.	Book reservation facility	82	31.06	182	68.94

Table 3: Library facilities

Table-3 reveals with the library facilities to the students. The result showing that 67.42% students are getting manually prepared library catalogue facilities but no library (0%) has OPAC that means libraries are not automated. 76.51% students are getting the library reading room facility for self study or do homework. Only 33.33% students replied that they can participate in book selection. 62.50% students can access the library stack to select the best books for him/her. Maximum students (68.94%) do not get the book reservation facility.

Sl.	Types of Library Services	Responded			
		Yes		No	
		No	%	No	%
1)	Reference service	133	50.37	131	49.63
2)	Information service	170	64.39	94	35.61
3)	Initiation/orientation service	45	17.05	219	82.95
4)	Internet service	43	16.29	221	83.71
5)	Bibliographic service	0	00	264	100
6)	Reprographic service	0	00	264	100
7)	Newspaper clipping service	0	00	264	100
8)	Translation service	0	00	264	100
9)	New book display service	133	50.38	131	49.62
10)	Inter library loan service	0	00	264	100

Table 4: Library services

Table-4 represents the responses regarding the various library services provided to the students. References service, information service and new book display services are quite good (50.37%, 64.39% and 50.38% respectively) as responded by the students. Responses on initiation/ orientation service and internet service are poor (17.05% and 16.29% respectively). No one library has found which one provides bibliographic service, reprographic service, newspaper clipping service and translation service. Figure- 2 is showing the responses of the students regarding library services.
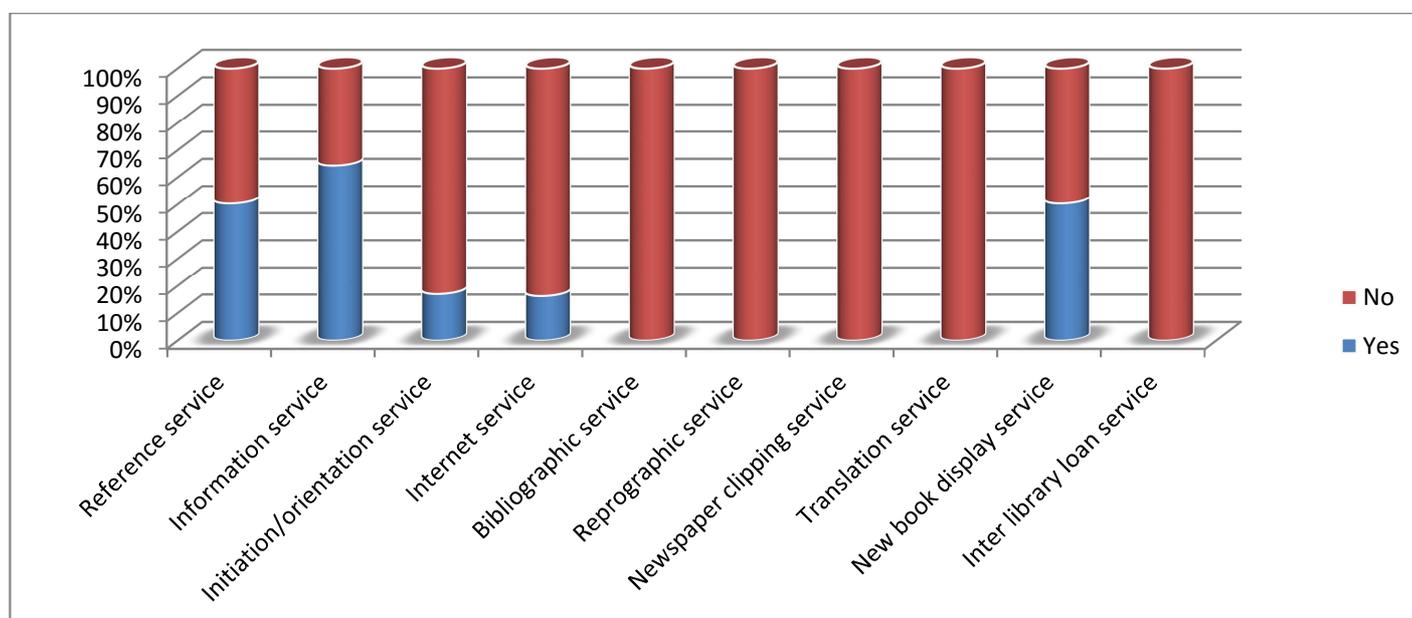
Figure-2: Library services

9.4 Library Administrative Initiatives

Sl.	Administrative Initiatives	Responded			
		Yes		No	
		No.	%	No.	%
1	Overdue charges	178	67.42	86	32.58
2	Reminder for book	45	17.05	219	82.95

Table 5: Library administrative initiatives

Table-5 is related to the library administrative initiatives for the library users. 67.42% students have positive responded on overdue charges and 82.95% responded that they do not get reminder for book return.

9.5 Library Hours

Sl.	Library hours	Responded							
		Excellent		Good		Average		Poor	
		No.	%	No.	%	No	%	No.	%
1.	Library opening hour	88	33.33	90	34.09	86	32.58	0	00
2.	Book circulation hour	52	19.70	126	47.73	42	15.90	44	16.67
3.	Lending period	43	16.29	58	21.97	79	29.92	84	31.82
4.	Reading room opening hour	62	24.24	90	34.10	65	24.62	47	17.80
5.	Library opening during vacation	0	00	44	16.67	44	16.67	176	66.66

Table 6: Library hours

Library hours i.e. library opening hour, book circulation hour, reading room opening hour are excellent or good as maximum responded by the students (Table-6). Book lending period is average or poor (29.925 and 31.82% respectively). Library opening during the vacation (e.g. summer, festival, winter) is very poor (66.66%).

9.6 Quality of Library

Sl.	Quality of library	Responded							
		Excellent		Good		Average		Poor	
		No	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1.	Library collection	52	19.70	47	17.80	79	29.92	86	32.57
2.	Organization of library collection	46	17.42	45	17.05	87	32.95	86	32.58
3.	Satisfaction with library services	38	14.39	37	14.02	95	35.98	94	35.61
4.	Satisfaction with library facilities	40	15.15	32	12.12	88	33.33	104	39.39
5.	Physical space facility	86	32.58	79	29.92	52	19.70	47	17.80
6.	Library equipment and furniture	55	20.83	90	34.10	76	28.79	43	16.29
7.	Light and air conditioning system	48	18.18	92	34.85	86	32.58	38	14.39
8.	Library accessibility	25	9.47	52	19.70	75	28.41	112	42.42
9.	Library rules	48	18.18	56	21.21	68	25.76	92	34.85
10.	Quality and qualification of library staff	89	33.71	124	46.97	39	14.77	12	4.55
11.	Assistance by library staff	37	14.02	159	60.23	41	15.53	27	10.22

Table 7: Quality of library

Table-7 is showing the quality of the library from the various angles and sides. More response rates on the quality of library collection are average (29.92%) and poor (32.57%). Library collections are not organized as more responded average and poor (32.95% and 32.58% respectively). More responses reflect in the satisfaction with the library services and library facilities are average (35.98% and 33.33%) and poor (35.61% and 39.39%) respectively. Library space facility is excellent (32.58) and good (29.92). Responses on library equipment and furniture are good and average (34.10% and 28.79% respectively). Light and air conditioning system of the libraries are good (34.85%) and average (32.58) as responded by the students. Response on library accessibility and library rules average or poor (28.41%, 25.76% and 42.42%, 34.85% respectively).Quality and qualification of library staff, as responded by the students, is excellent (33.71%) and good (46.97%). 60.23%. Assistance by the library staff more or less good (60.23%). The following figure (Figure-3) is showing the result of the qualities of the library.
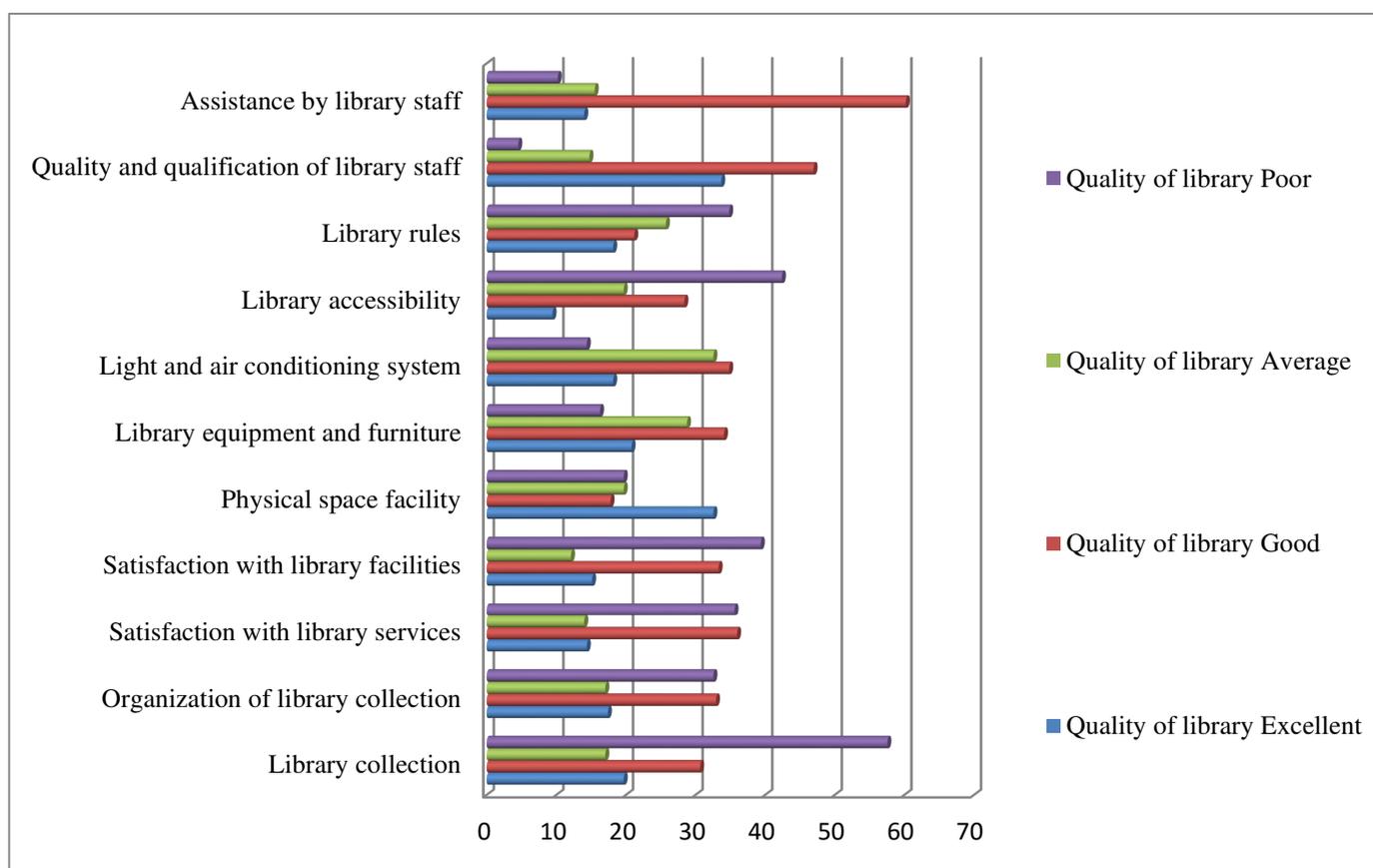

Figure-3: Quality of library

9.6 Overall Quality of Library

Sl.	Quality of library	Responded							
		Excellent		Good		Average		Poor	
		No.	%	No	%	No.	%	No.	%
42	Overall quality of the library of their own	74	28.03	58	21.97	76	28.78	56	21.21

Table-8: Overall quality of library

Students were asked to rate the libraries of their own at the end of the questionnaire. Table-8 is showing the responses of the students which are- 28.03% responded excellent, 21.97% responded well, 28.78% responded average and 21.21% responded poor. The following figure (Figure-4) is representing the responds of the students regarding the overall quality of their libraries.
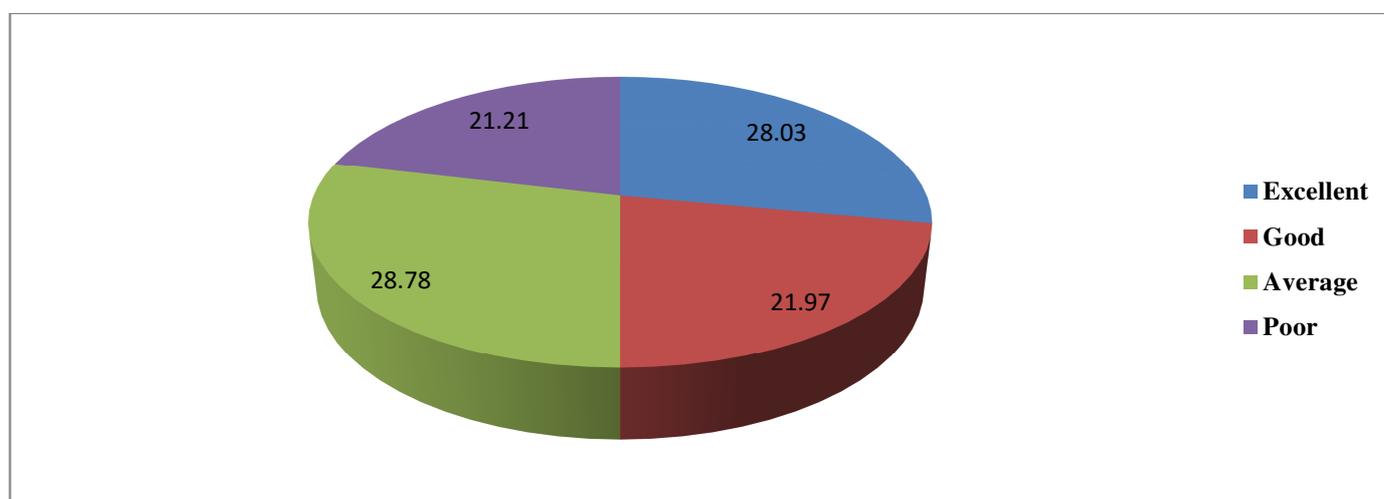

Figure-4: Overall quality of library

2. Major findings

☞ The school libraries poses sufficient number of textbooks, text-based reference books, story books and reference books, but they have less (17.04%) collection on general information books and audio visual materials (35.98%).

☞ Majority of the libraries are holding manually prepared catalogues, but no library has OPAC to access the catalogue from the remote place.

☞ Majority of the students responded that they are getting the reading room facility

(76.51%) and can access the book from the stack (62.50%).

☞ Around 50% students get reference service and new book display service from their libraries.

☞ Initiation/orientation service and internet service of the library are very poor (17.05% and 16.35% respectively).

☞ No one student receives the bibliographic service, newspaper clipping service, translation service, reprographic service and interlibrary loan service.

☞ 62.42% students responded that they are paying the overdue fines but only 17.05%

students receive reminders from their libraries.

☞ Library opening hour, book circulation hour, reading room opening hour of the libraries are good and average. Majority of the libraries (66.66%) do not open the doors during the vacation.

☞ Majority of the students are agreed with the poor quality of library collection (32.57%), organization of library collection (32.58%), library services (35.61%), library facilities (39.39%), library accessibility (42.42%) and library rules (34.85%).

☞ Library space, furniture and equipment, air and lighting facilities, quality and qualification of the library staff are excellent or good.

☞ Overall quality of some libraries is excellent (28.03%) and some libraries are average (28.78%).

3. Recommendations

In a nutshell, the following recommendations can be made:

1. The school libraries have to enrich their collection of general information books, reference books and audiovisual materials in order to meet the needs of the students.

2. Adequate number of current magazines and periodicals has to subscribe in the school libraries.

3. The school libraries are suppose to have automation and OPAC facility must be provided to the students.

4. Students must to be included in book selection committee and their choice will be considered as the important part.

5. Necessary facilities and services mainly bibliographic service, reprographic service, newspaper clipping service and inter loan service have to provide to the students as they can use maximum of their libraries

6. Libraries should be opened during the vacation to meet the needs of the students for their examination.

7. Library rules must be flexible and student's friendly, as result library accessibility will be increased.

8. Cooperation and assistance by the library staff is most requisite for inspiring the students to maximize the use of the library.

4. Conclusion

The rapid growth of information and communication technology (ICT) has changed the features of education system and discovered new learning resources in this 21st century. School, as the compulsory part of our education system, has implemented the use of ICT from its curriculum to teaching method. School libraries are also taking the benefit of application of ICT and providing digital based learning resources to its user community. Secondary school libraries in

Haldia municipal area are far away from the use of ICT and have not reached up to the marks. Libraries are suffering from the scarcity knowledge resources, staff, infrastructure and sufficient fund. So the school library services and products can not satisfy the students. So, urgent attention is required to improve the quality of servicesand quantity of resources. Identifying the problems associated with the library services and assessing the demand of the students only can make the school libraries excellent.

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