

Organization of resources and services in school libraries: A survey of district Multan, Punjab

Muhammad Fahad Rana

Department of Library and Information Science, The Superior University Lahore, E-mail:
fahad20425@gmail.com

Dr. Ahsan Ullah

Department of Library and Information Science, The Superior University Lahore

E-mail: ahsanullah_libr@yahoo.com

Dr. Iqbal Hussain Asad

Department of Library and Information Science, The Superior University Lahore , Email:
iqbalhussainasad@gmail.com

Abstract

This study examines how resources and services are organized in school libraries. It looks at library staffing, collection development, classification and cataloguing, automation, services, inter-library cooperation and practitioners' suggestions for improvement. A quantitative survey design was used. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire from the persons in charge of 61 school libraries. Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations) were used to analyse the data, and five-point Likert scales measured acquisition practices, purchasing authority and service provision. School libraries were managed almost entirely by teachers (85.2%); only one library was run by a librarian, and 82% had no support staff. Only 13% had a collection development policy, and decisions on purchasing rested mainly with heads of institutions. Fewer than one-third of libraries (29.5%) had classified their collections, mostly with the Dewey Decimal Classification, and 82% had no catalogue of any kind. Computers were available in only three libraries (4.9%), and the same number used automation software. Service provision was weak: even book lending, the most common service, had a mean below "sometimes" ($M = 2.75$). About one-fifth of libraries (21.3%) cooperated with other libraries. Respondents most often called for adequate budgets, proper library space and dedicated staff. The results point to the need for professional school librarians, minimum standards and dedicated budgets, collection development policies, basic organization of collections and low-cost automation of school libraries. The study offers empirical evidence on how school library resources and services are organized at the operational level. This aspect has received less attention than buildings and collection size in the literature on school libraries in developing countries.

Keywords: School libraries; Collection development; Classification; Cataloguing; Library automation; Library services; Library cooperation; Pakistan

Introduction

School libraries are widely recognised as an integral part of the teaching and learning process. The IFLA/UNESCO School Library Manifesto describes the school library as a physical and digital learning space where reading, inquiry, research, thinking, imagination and creativity are central to students' information-to-knowledge journey and to their

personal, social and cultural growth (IFLA/UNESCO, 2021). To serve this role, a school library needs more than a room and a collection of books. It requires qualified staff, a planned collection, systematic organization of materials and a range of services that link resources to the curriculum and to learners' needs (Schultz-Jones & Oberg, 2015).

A substantial body of international research shows that well-resourced school libraries, staffed by qualified librarians, are associated with better student achievement, reading and information literacy (Lance et al., 2000; Lonsdale, 2003; Todd & Kuhlthau, 2005). Syntheses of this evidence across several countries have repeatedly found that professional staffing, access to well-organized collections and active library programmes make a measurable difference to learning outcomes (Lance & Kachel, 2018; Williams et al., 2013). These benefits, however, depend on the library being properly organized and functional. A collection that is not developed against a policy, not classified, not catalogued and not made available through services remains largely invisible to its users (Johnson, 2018; Morris, 2004).

In Pakistan, school libraries have historically received limited attention in educational planning. More than five decades ago, Anwar (1971) reported that only a handful of pilot secondary schools had trained librarians and that spending on library materials ranged from nothing to very modest amounts. Later studies suggest that many of these problems persist. In a study of government high schools in Tehsil Gujar Khan, Latif et al. (2018) found that more than two-fifths of schools had no library at all, that no school employed a professional librarian and that none allocated a dedicated library budget. Such studies have mostly documented the existence of libraries, their physical facilities and the size of their collections. Less is known about how existing school libraries actually organize and manage their resources and services: who manages them, how materials are selected and acquired, whether collections are classified and catalogued, whether libraries are automated, which services are offered and whether libraries cooperate with one another.

The findings are expected to be useful to school administrators, education departments, policy makers and library and information science (LIS) professionals concerned with strengthening school libraries.

1.1 Research objectives

This study addresses that gap through a quantitative survey of 61 school libraries. Its specific objectives are to:

1. To identify the staffing arrangements of school libraries, including who is in charge and whether support staff are available;
2. To examine collection development and organization practices;
3. To measure the extent to which school libraries provide various library services and nature of cooperation among libraries.
4. To record the suggestions of library in-charges for improving school libraries.

2. Literature review

2.1 The role of school libraries

The purpose of the school library is set out in a series of international policy documents. The IFLA/UNESCO School Library Manifesto (IFLA/UNESCO, 2021) and the IFLA School Library Guidelines (Schultz-Jones & Oberg, 2015) position the school library as a centre for reading promotion, inquiry-based learning and information and digital literacy. The Guidelines specify that an effective school library requires a qualified school librarian, adequate funding, a collection developed against a written policy, organization of resources according to recognised bibliographic standards, and services and programmes integrated with the curriculum (Schultz-Jones & Oberg, 2015).

Empirical evidence supports these principles. The second Colorado study found that students in schools with stronger library programmes, better staffing and larger collections scored higher on reading tests, even after controlling for socio-economic factors (Lance et al., 2000). In Ohio, Todd and Kuhlthau (2005) reported that students perceived effective school libraries as helping them find and use information, complete assignments and develop reading habits. Reviews of the evidence (Lonsdale, 2003; Williams et al., 2013) and a later synthesis of more than two decades of state-level studies (Lance & Kachel, 2018) consistently show that the presence of a qualified librarian is one of the strongest predictors of the library's contribution to learning.

2.2 Staffing of school libraries

Staffing is the area in which the gap between standards and practice is most evident. The IFLA Guidelines recommend that school libraries be managed by professionally qualified school librarians supported by adequate staff (Schultz-Jones & Oberg, 2015). In practice, many school libraries in developing countries are placed under teachers who have additional teaching duties and little or no training in librarianship. Anwar (1971) found that only four of 19 pilot secondary school libraries in Pakistan had trained librarians, while the rest were looked after by teachers. Nearly half a century later, Latif et al. (2018) reported that none of the government high schools they surveyed employed a professional librarian. Similar conditions have been reported elsewhere. In South Africa, Paton-Ash and Wilmot (2015) found that school libraries were often managed by teachers with heavy workloads and limited training, which constrained their opening hours and the services they could offer. Even in developed countries, reductions in professional staffing have been identified as a major threat to school library programmes (Haycock, 2003).

2.3 Collection development and acquisition

Collection development involves the planned selection, acquisition and evaluation of materials to meet the needs of a library's users. A written collection development policy is regarded as the foundation of this process because it defines the library's goals, selection criteria, responsibilities, budget allocation and procedures for gifts and weeding (Evans & Saponaro, 2019; Johnson, 2018). For school libraries, the collection should support the curriculum as well as students' recreational reading, and selection should involve the school librarian working with teachers (Morris, 2004; Schultz-Jones & Oberg, 2015). Purchase is usually the main method of acquisition, supplemented by gifts and exchange (Evans & Saponaro, 2019). Where dedicated budgets are absent, however, collections in school libraries tend to grow irregularly through donations and occasional purchases, as reported in Pakistani and South African schools (Latif et al., 2018; Paton-Ash & Wilmot, 2015).

2.4 Organization of collections: classification and cataloguing

Bibliographic organization makes a collection accessible. Classification arranges materials by subject on the shelves, and the catalogue provides a record of holdings that can be searched by author, title and subject (Taylor & Joudrey, 2009). The IFLA Guidelines recommend that school library resources be classified and catalogued according to accepted international standards so that they can be retrieved and shared (Schultz-Jones & Oberg, 2015). The Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) is the scheme most widely used in school and public libraries because of its simple notation and hierarchical structure (Taylor & Joudrey, 2009). In Pakistan, a particular issue is the treatment of Islamic literature, which is poorly accommodated in standard schemes. Idrees and Mahmood (2010) found that most Pakistani libraries with substantial Islamic collections considered standard schemes inadequate, and that libraries used a mix of DDC, local expansions and other schemes to classify these materials.

2.5 Automation of school libraries

Library automation, the use of computers and integrated library software to manage acquisitions, cataloguing, circulation and the online public access catalogue (OPAC), improves both the efficiency of library operations and users' access to collections. Open-source systems such as Koha have made automation more affordable for libraries in developing countries. Nevertheless, automation depends on the prior availability of computers, trained staff and organized bibliographic records, which are frequently lacking in school libraries. Paton-Ash and Wilmot (2015) noted that a lack of resources and trained personnel limited the use of technology in school libraries, and the IFLA Guidelines treat technology infrastructure and staff expertise as basic requirements for a modern school library (Schultz-Jones & Oberg, 2015).

2.6 Library services and cooperation

The value of a school library ultimately depends on the services it provides. Core services include lending, reference and search guidance, reading promotion and information literacy instruction. More advanced services include current awareness (CAS), selective dissemination of information (SDI), photocopying and document delivery (Morris, 2004; Schultz-Jones & Oberg, 2015). Studies of high-performing school libraries show that it is the active, instructional role of the library, not its collection alone, that is linked to student learning (Lance & Kachel, 2018; Todd & Kuhlthau,

2005). Cooperation and resource sharing with other school, public and academic libraries can extend the resources available to small libraries, and international guidelines encourage school libraries to build such networks (IFLA/UNESCO, 2021; Schultz-Jones & Oberg, 2015).

2.7 Research gap

The literature establishes clear standards for staffing, collection development, organization, automation and services in school libraries, and international evidence links these to learning outcomes. Research on school libraries in Pakistan, however, remains limited, and the available studies focus mainly on whether libraries exist, along with their buildings, budgets and collection sizes (Anwar, 1971; Latif et al., 2018). Little empirical evidence is available on how existing school libraries organize their resources and deliver services in day-to-day practice. The present study seeks to fill this gap.

3. Research methodology

Quantitative design is used to explore the main areas of collection development, organization of collection, human and financial resources, library services and library automation. Survey method was used to conduct this research, because this method remained very effective and provide quick response as compared to other methods. Questionnaire adapted for the current study comprised of different parts, i.e. institutional information, library resources, human resources, collection development, organization of collection, library services and library automation. Likert scale was used to measure the statements of collection development, organization and Library services. Expert review was used to maintain validity of the questionnaire. The first draft of the questionnaire was presented to the panel of experts who belonged to the field of Library and Information Science. These experts were highly qualified teachers and practitioners of both fields and had research experience in their respective fields. For pilot testing, final version of the draft questionnaire was sent to two library in-charges of school libraries who were not the part of the sample. All confusions pointed out by librarians during pilot testing were removed and questionnaire was further revised. The internal consistency and reliability of different statements of questionnaire was calculated and the resulting value of Cronbach's alpha was between 0.70 and 0.82. This value of the alpha showed a high satisfaction level of the reliability.

3.1 Population and sampling

The target population comprised of school libraries located in the district Multan Punjab. Different channels were pursued to determine the exact targeted population. Websites were perused, telephone calls were made and emails were sent to librarians and personal visits of the offices were conducted. After pursuing these entire sources, researcher could acquire only general lists of schools. The researcher used the convenience cum purposive sampling technique in this study. The questionnaire was sent to all the heads of school libraries in Multan District. Sixty one respondents filled the questionnaire.

3.2 Data collection and analysis

After that researcher sent to them questionnaires and frequently follow up activity was made through phone. Social media technologies were used to collect maximum data. Researcher personally visited the school libraries. Confidentiality of data collected from the library heads. The collected data was analyzed by using SPSS 22. Descriptive statistics were applied to calculate the frequencies, percentages. Means and SD was calculated to see the trends in collection development and use of libraries resources..

4. Results

4.1 Library in-charge and support staff

The data was collected from the persons who have been given the charge of the library. Dominant majority of library in-charge were teachers with different designations and grades. Clerks and attendants were managing some

libraries. Headmistress and Headmaster were also in-charge of one library each. Only one librarian was in-charge of a library. Support staff is very important for managing routine tasks of the library. Dominant majority of libraries (82%) have no support staff. Slightly less than one-fifth schools (18%) have deputed support staff in school libraries as in-charge or providing help to library head (Table 1).

Table 1: Library in-charge

Library In-charge	Frequency	Percent %
Teacher	52	85.24
Attendant	03	04.91
Clerk	02	03.27
Librarian	01	01.64
Headmaster/Headmistress	02	03.27
Number of support staff	Frequency	Percent %
No support staff	50	82
On to three	11	18
Total	61	100

4.2 Collection development by school libraries

To explore the status of Collection Development policy the respondents were asked about the existence and not existence of policy. Collection development policy was available in 13% libraries and 87% libraries did not create policy.

Five point Likert scale was used to explore the methods of acquisition in school libraries. Three statements were ranked in descending order according to means. The purchase method was often used in acquisition ($M=2.41$). While acquisition through gifts done sometimes, through personal collection rarely. The means for acquisition through exchange methods was lowest

Head of the institution had authority to purchase the library materials for libraries ($M=3.48$). Library committee has also higher authority to purchase library collection ($M=3.02$) as compared to teacher ($M=2.79$). Library in-charge has the lowest authority to purchase library material (Table 2).

Table 2: Collection development by school libraries

Collection development policy	Frequency	Percent %
Yes	08	13
No	53	87
Total	61	100.0
Authority to purchase	Independent authority	Joint authority
Acquisition through purchase	2.41	1.441
Library committee	3.02	1.533
Acquisition through exchange	2.00	1.238
Authority to purchase	Independent authority	Joint authority
Head of the institution	3.48	1.479
Library committee	3.02	1.533
Teachers	2.79	1.416
Library in-charge	2.72	1.392

Scale: 1= Never, 2= Rarely, 3= Sometimes, 4= Often, 5= Always

4.3 Organization of school libraries Collection

Most of the respondents (70.50%) did not classify the library collection and only one third of libraries have classified their library material.

Out of 18 libraries using classification systems, most of the respondents used DDC (61%) for classification of library collection followed by library of congress scheme (17%) and 16% used Shafi expansion. One library classified according to subject without using any classification scheme

Most of the respondents (82%) have not created any catalogue in the library. Only 13% libraries maintained card catalogues, and only four (5.0%) created computerized catalogue (Table 3).

Table 3: Organization of school libraries collection (N=61)

Classification of resources	Frequency	Percent %
Yes	18	29.50
No	43	70.50
Classification Schemes used	Frequency	Percent %
DDC	11	61.11
Shafi expansion	03	15.66
Library of congress	03	16.66
Arranged subject wise	01	05.55
No scheme used	43	05.55
Catalogue types	Frequency	Percent %
No Catalogue	50	82.0
Card Catalogue	08	13.10
Computerized catalogue	03	04.90
Total	61	100.0

4.4 Automation of school libraries

Computers were available in only 03 (5%) libraries. Dominant majority of libraries have not purchased computers (see Table 4.21). Out of 61 libraries, 03 libraries were automated with LIMS and SLIMS software. Dominant majority of libraries (58 out of 61) have not implemented automation software (see Table 4)

Table 4: Automation of school libraries

Table 1: Automation of School Libraries				
Computer available		Frequency	Percent %	
Yes		03	04.92	
No		58	95.08	
Total		61	100.0	
Use of Software	LIMS	Koha	SLLMS	No
No. of libraries	02	00	01	58

4.5 Library Services

The respondents were asked about the provision of different kinds of library services. The book lending has higher mean as compared to other services (M=2.75). The overall values of means showed that majority of services are not being provided by the school libraries (Table 5).

Table 5: Library Providing the Services (N=61)

Service	Frequency	Percent %
Book Lending	2.75	1.479
Search Guidance	2.39	1.214
Referral services	2.02	1.124
Newspapers clipping	1.98	1.145
Photocopy Service	1.90	1.234
Document Delivery	1.90	1.123
SDI and CAS Services	1.84	1.023

4.6. Status and types of libraries cooperation

Out of 61 respondents, 13 libraries (20%) were found to be cooperating with others. Dominant majority of library did not cooperate with others. Respondents were asked about the type of cooperation with other libraries. Formal cooperation was higher as compared to informal cooperation (see Table 6).

Table 6: Status and types of libraries cooperation

Libraries cooperation	Frequency	Percent %
Yes	13	21.31
No	48	78.69
Kind of cooperation	Frequency	Percent %
Formal	08	61.54
Informal	05	38.46
Total	13	100.0

4.7 Recommendations for improving school libraries

In respect of suggestions for improving libraries, 14 respondents suggested the provision of sufficient budgets for libraries (Table 4.24). Ten respondents expressed the need for good library in schools. They recommended provision of separate library building and library staff for improving the condition of libraries. Some respondents also expressed the need for automation of libraries. One respondent also recommended digitization of resources and acquiring e-resources (Table 8).

Table 8: Suggestions for improving school libraries (n=35)

Statements	Frequency
Sufficient budget should be provided	14
We need a good library in our schools	10
Specific room or building may be allotted	07
Library staff should be recruited	07
Administration should provide books	05
Qualified Librarians should be recruited instead of teacher in-charge	04
School library should be automated	02
Accessibility and digitization of resources	01
Improve library environment	01
Promotion of reading among students	01
Acquire e-resources	01
Collect user feedback and suggestions	01
Training of library staff	03
Proper organization of books	01
Proper planning	01

5. Findings

The major findings of the study are summarised below:

- Most school libraries (85.2%) were managed by teachers as an additional responsibility. Only one library (1.6%) was managed by a librarian, and the remainder were looked after by clerks, attendants or heads of schools. Most libraries (82%) had no support staff.
- Only 13% of libraries had a collection development policy. Purchase was the most commonly used method of acquisition ($M = 2.41$), although its mean indicates that even purchasing took place only rarely to sometimes, while acquisition through exchange was the least used ($M = 2.00$). Authority to purchase library materials rested

mainly with the head of the institution ($M = 3.48$), followed by the library committee ($M = 3.02$) and teachers ($M = 2.79$). The library in-charge had the least authority ($M = 2.72$).

- Fewer than one-third of libraries (29.5%) had classified their collections. Of these, most used DDC (61.1%), followed by the Library of Congress Classification (16.7%) and Shafi's expansion (16.7%). One library arranged books by subject without any scheme. Most libraries (82%) had no catalogue. Card catalogues were maintained in 13.1% of libraries and computerised catalogues in 4.9%.
- Computers were available in only three libraries (4.9%). Three libraries used automation software (LIMS in two and SLIMS in one), while 58 libraries were not automated.
- Library services were poorly developed. Book lending was the most commonly provided service ($M = 2.75$), followed by search guidance ($M = 2.39$) and referral services ($M = 2.02$). Newspaper clippings, photocopying, document delivery and SDI/CAS services were rarely provided ($M < 2.00$).
- Only 21.3% of libraries cooperated with other libraries. Of these, 61.5% had formal and 38.5% informal arrangements.
- The improvements respondents suggested most often were a sufficient library budget, a proper library, a separate room or building, the recruitment of library staff and qualified librarians, the provision of books, staff training and the automation of libraries.

6. Discussion

This study set out to examine the organization of resources and services in school libraries. Overall, the results show that most of the libraries surveyed exist as collections of books rather than as organized, staffed and service-oriented libraries. Each part of library management falls well short of international standards (IFLA/UNESCO, 2021; Schultz-Jones & Oberg, 2015).

The most important finding is the near absence of professional staffing. With 85.2% of libraries managed by teachers and only one by a librarian, the situation has changed little since Anwar (1971) reported that only a few pilot secondary schools had trained librarians. It also mirrors the more recent findings of Latif et al. (2018), who found no professional librarians in the government high schools of Gujar Khan. Teachers in charge of libraries usually hold this responsibility alongside a full teaching load and have no formal training in librarianship, which leaves little time or expertise for technical work or service delivery. Paton-Ash and Wilmot (2015) observed the same pattern in South African primary schools. Because international evidence consistently identifies the qualified librarian as a key factor in the library's contribution to learning (Lance & Kachel, 2018; Lance et al., 2000), this staffing gap is likely to limit any educational benefit the libraries could provide. The lack of support staff in 82% of libraries makes it worse, because routine tasks such as issuing books, shelving and maintenance fall on the same overstretched teacher.

Collection development in the surveyed libraries was largely unplanned. Only 13% had a written policy, although such a policy is regarded as the basis for systematic, curriculum-related selection (Evans & Saponaro, 2019; Johnson, 2018). Even purchase, the main method of acquisition, was reported as occurring only rarely to sometimes, which reflects the lack of dedicated budgets also reported by Latif et al. (2018). Purchasing authority was concentrated with heads of schools and library committees, while the library in-charge had the least say. This contrasts with the professional model, in which the school librarian leads selection in consultation with teachers (Morris, 2004; Schultz-Jones & Oberg, 2015). When selection is made by administrators who are not familiar with the collection or with students' reading needs, the resulting collections may be poorly matched to the curriculum and to learners' interests.

The low level of bibliographic organization is closely linked to the staffing situation. More than two-thirds of the libraries had not classified their collections, and 82% had no catalogue. Classification and cataloguing require professional knowledge that teachers in charge of libraries are unlikely to have. Without them, users cannot find materials efficiently, and the library cannot know what it holds (Taylor & Joudrey, 2009). Among libraries that did classify their materials, DDC was the dominant scheme, consistent with its wide use in school libraries. The use of Shafi's expansion and subject-wise arrangement in some libraries reflects the long-standing difficulty of classifying Islamic and local materials in Pakistani libraries noted by Idrees and Mahmood (2010). Using different schemes across libraries would also complicate any future cooperative cataloguing or union catalogue.

Automation was almost entirely absent. Only three libraries had computers and only three used library software. This is not surprising given that automation depends on organized bibliographic data, trained staff and basic ICT

infrastructure, all of which were lacking. It does mean, however, that school libraries are falling behind the digital and information literacy role that the IFLA/UNESCO Manifesto (2021) expects of them. The fact that a few libraries had adopted locally developed systems shows that automation is feasible. Free and open-source systems and cloud-based services could lower the cost, provided that staffing and cataloguing problems are addressed first.

The weakness of library services follows from the problems above. Book lending was the only service approaching occasional provision, while search guidance, referral, current awareness, SDI, photocopying and document delivery were rarely offered. International research shows that the educational impact of school libraries comes mainly from active services and instructional programmes (Lance & Kachel, 2018; Todd & Kuhlthau, 2005), so the limited services found here suggest that these libraries contribute little beyond custody of books. Similarly, only about one-fifth of libraries cooperated with others, which means that small, under-funded collections are not using resource sharing to extend what they can offer students, although international guidelines recommend it (IFLA/UNESCO, 2021).

Respondents' own suggestions confirm these findings. Their calls for adequate budgets, proper library rooms, dedicated and qualified staff, more books, training and automation correspond closely to the gaps identified in the survey. They also show that people working in school libraries recognise the problems and want improvement. What is missing is policy commitment and resources at the institutional and government levels.

7. Implications

7.1 Implications for policy

Education departments should develop and enforce minimum standards for school libraries, based on the IFLA School Library Guidelines (Schultz-Jones & Oberg, 2015) and adapted to local conditions. These standards should cover space, collection size, staffing and funding. Sanctioned posts for qualified school librarians, at least in secondary and higher secondary schools, and a fixed proportion of the school budget earmarked for the library are the most important policy measures suggested by this study.

7.2 Implications for school management and practice

- Each school should adopt a written collection development policy that sets out selection criteria, responsibilities, the treatment of gifts and weeding procedures, and gives the library in-charge a clear role in selection.
- Where professional librarians cannot be appointed immediately, teachers in charge of libraries should receive short training in basic library management, classification (DDC) and cataloguing, and be given reduced teaching loads.
- Collections should be classified and catalogued using standard schemes, preferably DDC with a commonly agreed expansion for Islamic and local materials, so that records can be shared.
- Schools should adopt low-cost or open-source library software in stages, beginning with a computerised catalogue and circulation.
- Libraries should go beyond lending and offer reading promotion, search guidance and basic information literacy sessions linked to the curriculum.
- Clusters of nearby schools, and links with public and college libraries, could be formed to share resources, cataloguing work and training.

7.3 Implications for LIS education and professional bodies

LIS departments and library associations can contribute by offering short certificate courses for teacher-librarians, developing simple manuals on school library organization and advocating for the creation of school librarian posts.

7.4 Limitations and directions for future research

This study was based on a survey of 61 school libraries and on self-reported data from library in-charges, and it relied on descriptive statistics. Its findings may therefore not be generalisable to all schools. Future studies could cover larger and more varied samples, including public and private schools in different regions, test differences across school types with inferential statistics, examine students' and teachers' use of school libraries, and investigate the relationship between the organization of library resources and student learning outcomes.

8. Conclusion

This study examined how resources and services are organized in 61 school libraries. The results show that these libraries are mostly managed by teachers without support staff, that they lack collection development policies and dedicated purchasing roles, and that most of their collections are neither classified nor catalogued. Automation is almost non-existent, services are largely limited to occasional book lending, and cooperation with other libraries is rare. Taken together, these conditions mean that most school libraries are not yet performing the educational role envisaged by international guidelines (IFLA/UNESCO, 2021; Schultz-Jones & Oberg, 2015).

The root causes are structural: the absence of qualified staff, dedicated budgets and enforceable standards. Library in-charges themselves recognise these needs, as their suggestions show. Improving school libraries therefore requires coordinated action. Policy makers need to establish standards and posts, school administrations need to give libraries a defined budget and role, and the LIS profession needs to provide training and technical support. With these measures, school libraries can move from being storerooms of books to becoming active learning centres that support reading, inquiry and lifelong learning among students.

References

- Anwar, M. A. (1971). *Secondary school libraries in Pakistan*. *International Library Review*, 3(3), 349–352. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0020-7837\(71\)80013-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0020-7837(71)80013-4)
- Evans, G. E., & Saponaro, M. Z. (2019). *Collection management basics* (7th ed.). *Libraries Unlimited*.
- Haycock, K. (2003). *The crisis in Canada's school libraries: The case for reform and re-investment*. Association of Canadian Publishers.
- Idrees, H., & Mahmood, K. (2010). *Classification of Islamic literature in Pakistani libraries: A survey*. *Library Review*, 59(3), 149–164. <https://doi.org/10.1108/00242531011031142>
- IFLA/UNESCO. (2021). *IFLA-UNESCO school library manifesto 2021*. International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions.
- Johnson, P. (2018). *Fundamentals of collection development and management* (4th ed.). ALA Editions.
- Lance, K. C., & Kachel, D. E. (2018). *Why school librarians matter: What years of research tell us*. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 99(7), 15–20. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0031721718767854>
- Lance, K. C., Rodney, M. J., & Hamilton-Pennell, C. (2000). *How school librarians help kids achieve standards: The second Colorado study*. Hi Willow Research and Publishing.
- Latif, A., Ahmed, Z., Satti, N. A., Satti, M. H., & Haq, I. (2018). *School libraries of Pakistan: A case study of government high schools in Tehsil Gujar Khan, Rawalpindi*. *Scholars Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences*, 6(3), 552–557. <https://doi.org/10.21276/sjahss.2018.6.3.12>
- Lonsdale, M. (2003). *Impact of school libraries on student achievement: A review of the research*. Australian Council for Educational Research.
- Morris, B. J. (2004). *Administering the school library media center* (4th ed.). *Libraries Unlimited*.
- Paton-Ash, M., & Wilmot, D. (2015). *Issues and challenges facing school libraries in selected primary schools in Gauteng Province, South Africa*. *South African Journal of Education*, 35(1).
- Schultz-Jones, B., & Oberg, D. (Eds.). (2015). *IFLA school library guidelines* (2nd rev. ed.). International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions.
- Taylor, A. G., & Joudrey, D. N. (2009). *The organization of information* (3rd ed.). *Libraries Unlimited*.
- Todd, R. J., & Kuhlthau, C. C. (2005). *Student learning through Ohio school libraries, Part I: How effective school libraries help students*. *School Libraries Worldwide*, 11(1), 63–88.
- Williams, D., Wavell, C., & Morrison, K. (2013). *Impact of school libraries on learning: Critical review of published evidence to inform the Scottish education community*. Robert Gordon University, Institute for Management, Governance & Society.