

# **Role of a Teacher Librarian in International Baccalaureate Schools: A User Study**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*The Role of a School Librarian is different from the role of a Librarian working in Colleges, Universities and other institutions because the school librarian has to collaborate with the teachers in the curriculum planning and designing a reading program to inculcate reading habits into young minds. The major challenge for a librarian who is working in IB schools, as a teacher-librarian is to carry many roles to meet the IB curriculum requirements for the library, and also in adapting new pedagogies and ability to adapt new technologies used by students at school and at home, and to multiliterate students who will continue to make new demands on the teacher-librarian. Smart students use smart information and need smart teacher-librarians to help them learn. Teacher-librarians in India and other countries need to be aware of the learning and teaching context in which they work because it is the learning and teaching that happens in the school is at the school's heart. Teacher-librarian in the IB program plays many roles, such as management of information resources both print and digital, collaborating with the teachers to build the collection and co-teach, maintaining the library by using technology tools to sharpen the students' understanding and many more. User Studying teacher librarianship is an important tool for knowing the teacher's perception which leads to better collaboration to achieve academic excellence. In relation to the curriculum of the IB, teacher-librarian is not an administrative position but it is purely an academic which has the equal responsibility towards the all round development of a student as the teacher has.*

**KEYWORDS:** School Library, Teacher-Librarian, Teacher-Librarianship, International Baccalaureate Schools, International School Libraries.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Teacher Librarianship is the profession of a person who works as a teacher-librarian in a School. In some countries like Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and some parts of Europe, school librarians are called 'Teacher librarians'. In the USA, a school librarian is called a 'School Library Media Specialist'. So in different countries with different names, the duties and responsibilities are almost the same. The reason for calling a school librarian a teacher-librarian in some countries is that they have special courses and have a qualification in teaching and librarianship. In

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Australia, some universities are offering a Master's degree in Education (Teacher-Librarianship) for a qualified teacher to do a master's in librarianship and to start a career as a teacher-librarian in any school. This Teacher-librarian performs the duties of a teacher and also the duties of a school librarian. But in India, except in IB (International Bacculaureate) curriculum international schools, we call a librarian working in schools a school librarian only. In these IB schools librarians are called teacher librarians, because of their curriculum which has its presence in many countries. The role of a librarian is similar to that of a Teacher-librarian working in Australia and other countries. In IB world schools in India though they do not have any qualifications and experience in teaching, but having qualified in Librarianship they will be called as a Teacher librarian with the virtues of a teacher who supports students by learning and resources.

### **SCHOOL LIBRARY AND ITS IMPORTANCE**

The school library is a vital teaching and learning environment in the school community. The school library and its staff are integral in empowering the students to become independent lifelong learners. Student learning outcomes are enhanced through the teacher librarian's acquisition and organisation of information resources, the dissemination and circulation of learning materials and collaboratively planned programs to integrate information and digital literacy.

### **DEFINITIONS & CONCEPTS**

#### **School Library**

IFLA in its School library guidelines defined a School library as "A school library is a school's physical and digital learning space where reading, inquiry, research, thinking, imagination, and creativity are central to students' information-to-knowledge journey and their personal, social, and cultural growth" (IFLA, 2015, p.16).

#### **Teacher Librarian**

"The Canadian School Library Association (C.S.L.A) defines this position as "An experienced certified teacher, with additional qualifications in the selection, management, and utilisation of learning resources, who has responsibility for administering the school library and for working with classroom teachers to design and implement instructional programs". "Teacher-librarian" replaced the term "school librarian".

Teacher-librarian is the one who collaborates with the teachers in promoting reading, teaching, and referencing through information literacy.

"In 2009, the International Association of School Librarianship (IASL) set criteria to define an international school as a school which should follow an international curriculum with international accreditation by the international education board, transferable student's education across international schools, non-selective schools, multinational and multilingual student bodies and English as the main or bilingual language" (IASL, 2009, p.16).

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

**Boelens, Helen** 2010 submitted his thesis titled “The Evolving Role of the School Library and Information Centre in Education in Digital Europe ” from Middlesex University London. Around 60 countries from the European continent have been selected for this research survey. The purpose of this research is to study the evolving role of the school library and information centre (SLIC) in primary and secondary education in digital Europe, not only in countries where schools have reached an advanced stage of usage of digital technology in education but also in less advanced schools. This survey hopes to measure the impact of the school library and information centre and the library staff on the teaching of interdisciplinary information literacy in secondary schools in Europe in 2003.

**Teresa P. Hidber** from the University of British Columbia, in 1998 studied “Implementing a Global Perspective: The Role of Teacher Librarian in Curriculum Change”. The purpose of this study is to investigate ways in which teacher librarians can facilitate the implementation of a global perspective in their schools through the School Library Resource Center. He wants to create a situation that encourages teacher-librarians to evolve as leaders in their school, whether it is as cooperative program planners and teachers, as advocates of teaching from a global perspective, or as forerunners of information technology.

In 1994, **Amanda Hufton** in his thesis titled “The Role of the Elementary School Teacher Librarian in British Columbia” studied the changing role of the teacher-librarian and school library resource centre in Canada both through the literature and model in practice in an urban school district. By comparing the perceptions of the primary and intermediate teachers, the administrators and the teacher-librarians to the literature, any actual change will be observed. In his research, he recommended the role of library management of the teacher-librarian. Teacher librarians must recognize that library management may become a full-time responsibility unless priorities are set and tasks delegated. If clerical assistance at the elementary level is unequivocally denied, the teacher librarian must elicit help from parents, students, and noon-hour supervisors if they are to structure the needed time for cooperative planning and teaching as well as consultation. If this is not a possibility, then teacher-librarians must be extremely cautious to not let library management tasks supersede those of more importance.

In 2017, **Rebecca Maria**, in her article titled “The Hidden Roles of the School Librarian“, conducted a study in a school district in Texas. All of the principals and librarians in the district were invited to participate. The survey was sent to 57 librarians and 23 principals. The findings of this study are the librarians rated their library programs as good, but with room for improvement under the standards. When the librarians were asked to define their roles in their own words, they defined themselves as librarians, teachers, leaders, and managers. When asked how they believed that their principals viewed the role of the librarian, many thought that they were viewed as clerks and support staff. Some of the librarians stated that their principals saw them as teachers and literacy leaders. The librarians felt that their library programs enhance student achievement, but that more support would allow them to enhance student learning even more. The principals rated their library programs and librarians as excellent under the standards. When asked to define the role of the librarian in their own words, the principals called them literacy advocates, cheerleaders, and team players. When the principals were asked to define the role of the librarian in the school, they stated teacher, leader, and literacy advocate. The principals felt that the library enhanced student

achievement, and the librarians supported student learning by encouraging reading as well as teaching skills that reinforce what is learned in the classroom.

### **NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The number of international schools in India has doubled in the last ten years. The participation of international institutions in Indian education has been noticed at all levels, from pre-primary to university levels. According to the International Bacculaureate (IB) International curriculum “India is the 6th nation with the largest number of students enrolled in international schools under the IB curriculum” (IBO, 2010). The need for the study of Librarians working in IB (International Bacculaureate) world schools is to study the role of a teacher-librarian and find out who the teacher-librarian is. And what are responsibilities? This study tried to reveal the duties of a Teacher-librarian who is working in Indian IB curriculum schools and tried to find out the teacher’s perception of the role of a ‘Teacher-librarian The user study has been conducted to find out the perception of teachers in the IB schools and their level of satisfaction with library resources and services. This study helps the teachers and teacher-librarians to understand each of them better to coordinate and collaborate effectively.

### **ABOUT IBO AND IB (INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE ORGANIZATION) CURRICULUM**

IBO was started in the year 1968 as a non-profit educational foundation to offer international education through 4 highly respected programs that develop the intellectual, personal, emotional and social skills for a rapidly globalising world. To offer these programs schools must be authorised by the IB organisation. “The IB maintains high standards of teaching, pedagogical leadership, and student achievement. IB works with schools, governments, and international organisations to develop challenging programs of international education and rigorous assessment. There are more than 4,000 schools so far that have chosen to teach International Bacculaureate (IB) programs with more than 70,000 educators, who are teaching more than one million students worldwide.

### **IB schools in India**

As per the data provided by IBO, there are 222 schools, which are following the IB curriculum. Out of these 222 schools, there are 52 schools that are accredited to teach at least 3 of the 4 programs offered by the IB i.e., Primary Year Program (PYP), Middle Year Program (MYP), Diploma Programme (DP) and Career-related program (CP). All these 52 IB world schools have library facilities with world-class infrastructure, and some of them also have a separate library for primary school students because they need to have an appropriate library collection with a suitable ambiance.

These schools have day and residential/boarding facilities, equipped with all the facilities for the teachers and students to make the campus more convenient and a hub of learning.

The study has been conducted on 4 IB schools in Hyderabad, Telangana state, out of the total population of 52 International schools in different cities in India. These schools are selected based on programs that are offered by the IB curriculum, they are Primary Year Program (PYP) 1-5, Middle Year Programme (MYP) 6-10, and Diploma Program (DP) 11-12.

## **OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

- ✓ To find out the teachers' perceptions of the role of teacher-librarian.
- ✓ To study the faculty's awareness of Teacher Librarianship
- ✓ To Analyse the teacher's preferences on the teacher-librarian's role in IB schools
- ✓ To study the level of satisfaction of Teachers with library resources and services in IB schools
- ✓ To study the status of training and professional development courses for Teacher-librarians

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The present study is based on both the primary and secondary sources of data. The primary data has been collected from the identified sample respondents based on a pre-designed questionnaire and every care including the cross-checking of the data has been considered to minimize any bias. The primary data has been collected from the teacher faculty of the IB schools. The questions addressed are prepared in very simple language so that the respondents can understand them easily and provide specific information or questions with yes or no answers or multiple answers.

### **The Sample Collection**

The first questionnaire was intended for the librarians and was distributed to all the selected International schools in Hyderabad, Telangana State and questionnaires filled in were received. The questionnaire refers to a device for securing answers to questions by using a form that the respondent fills in him or her. (Simple / Random sampling) questionnaire technique is used for data collection and these questionnaires will be distributed among the users of the selected International Baccalaureate schools in Hyderabad.

The second questionnaire was intended for the teachers working in the IB schools in Hyderabad. A total of 110 questionnaires were distributed of which 90 were received with a response rate of 81.81%.

### **Sampling Technique**

A simple Random sampling method is adopted. The Survey method is going to be used for research work with a questionnaire technique. A structured questionnaire is designed and distributed to collect the data from teachers and teacher-librarians who are working in the IB schools in Hyderabad, Telangana State.

### **Scope and Limitations of the Study**

The present study is limited to International Baccalaureate (IB) Schools in India. There are a total of 222 schools which are following the IB (International Baccalaureate) Curriculum in which 4 schools were selected for the pilot study.

## **DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE STUDY**

For the pilot study, 4 IB schools in Telangana have been identified. Questionnaires were prepared and circulated randomly through electronic mode using different online platforms. There are two types of questionnaires. One for the teachers working in IB schools to know about awareness on the role and responsibilities of a teacher librarian, library usage, and satisfaction level with library resources and services. One is for the Teacher-Librarians to find out the library resources and services in IB schools.

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**Table-1:** Selection of Sample under the Pilot Study and distribution of Questionnaire

<b>S. No.</b>	<b>Name of the School and location</b>	<b>Number of Questionnaires distributed</b>	<b>Responses Received from Teachers</b>	<b>Responses Received from Teacher-Librarian</b>	<b>Total</b>
1	Indus International School, Hyderabad	40	36	2	38 (95%)
2	Sreenidhi International School, Moinabad, Hyderabad	30	20	1	21 (70%)
3	The Aga Khan Academy, Hyderabad	20	17	2	19 (95%)
4	Oakridge International School, Hyderabad	20	17	1	14 (90%)
	<b>Total</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>96 (88%)</b>

This table No.1 states that the total number of questionnaires distributed was 110 and received 90 from teachers and 6 from librarians. Here is the response rate of distributed questionnaires.

**Table 2:** Academic Qualifications of a Teacher-Librarian

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
C.L.I.Sc	1	17
B.L.I.Sc	1	17
M.L.I.Sc	4	66
Ph.D	-	-
Other	-	-

This table No.2 indicates that out of 6 respondent's majority of respondents, 66% completed their master's degree in library science.

**Table 3:** IB Professional Development courses/ workshops:

<b>S. No</b>	<b>SCHOOL</b>	<b>CATEGORY 3</b>	<b>NONE</b>
1	INDUS INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL HYDERABAD	1	1
2	OAKRIDGE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL	1	
3	SREENIDHI INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL	1	
4	THE AGA KHAN ACADEMY	1	1
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4 (66.66%)</b>	<b>2 (33.33%)</b>

This table No.3 indicates that 4 of the 6 respondents have completed their category 3 workshop in the part of professional development and training program..

**Table 4:** Teacher's Frequency of Library Visit

<b>Frequency of Visit</b>	<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Daily	16	17.8%
Weekly	49	54.4%

Fortnightly	24	26.7%
Monthly	1	1.1%
Rarely	0	-
Total	90	100%

This table No. 4 indicates the frequency of library visits of the respondents. A majority of 54.4% of respondents visit the library weekly, 26.7% visit the library fortnightly, 17.8% respondents visit daily, and 1.1% visit the library monthly.

**Table 5:** Teacher’s level of satisfaction with Library Resources

Level of Satisfaction	IISH	SNIS	The Aga Khan Academy	Oakridge
Extremely Satisfied	-	-	1 (5.88%)	-
Satisfied	27 (75%)	19 (95%)	16 (94.11%)	15 (88.23%)
Moderately Satisfied	9 (25%)	1 (5%)	-	2 (11.76%)
Slightly Satisfied	-	-	-	-
Not at all Satisfied	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>

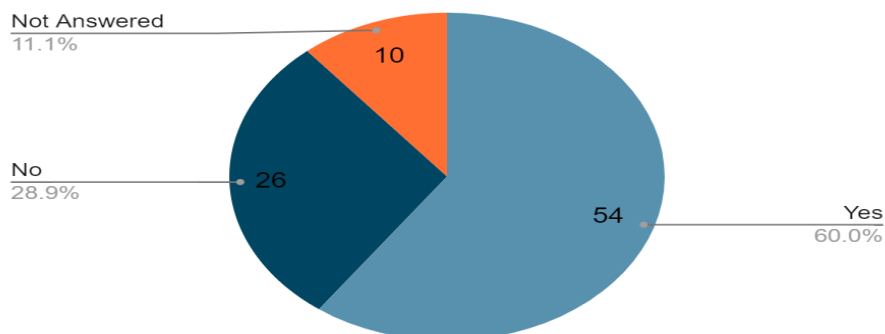
This table No.5 indicates that the majority of the respondents were satisfied with the school library resources. The Aga Khan Academy and Sreenidhi International School have the highest rate of satisfaction levels with 94% and 95% respectively and at Indus International School 25% of the respondents were moderately satisfied with the library resources.

**Table 6:** Teacher’s level of satisfaction with Library Services

Level of Satisfaction	IISH	SNIS	The Aga Khan Academy	Oakridge
Extremely Satisfied	-	-	1 (5.88%)	-
Satisfied	27 (75%)	19 (95%)	15 (88.23%)	14 (82.35%)
Moderately Satisfied	9 (25%)	1 (5%)	1 (5.88%)	3 (17.64%)
Slightly Satisfied	-	-	-	-
Not at all Satisfied	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>

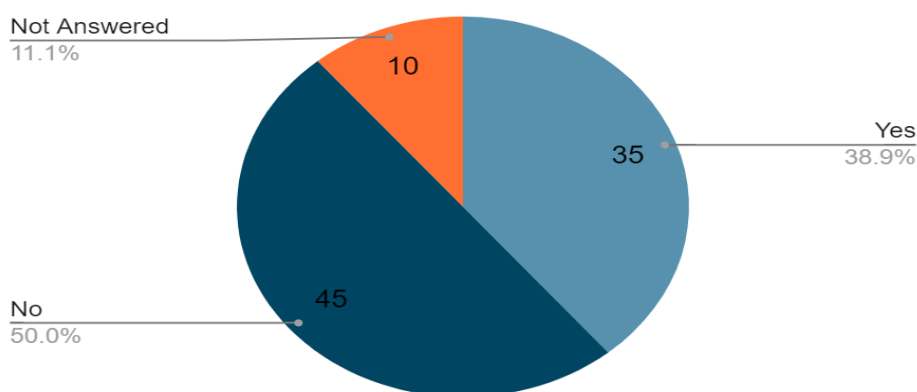
This Table 6 shows the teaching faculty’s level of satisfaction with library services. The majority of the respondents are satisfied with the library services at Sreenidhi International School, followed by the Aga Khan Academy. At Indus International School and Oakridge International School, respondents are moderately satisfied with 25% and 17.64% respectively.

**Figure 2: Aware on Teacher-Librarian Role and Responsibilities**



This figure 1 shows that 60% of the respondents said they are aware of TL’s role and responsibilities, 29% said that they are unaware of the same, and 11% were neutral/not answered. This means there is a significant percentage of respondents who have an awareness of the Teacher-librarian’s role and responsibilities.

**Figure 2: Aware on Teacher-Librarian's Qualification and Experience**



This table shows that 50% of the respondents said that they are unaware of Teacher-Librarian’s qualification and experience, 38.9% said they are aware of it and 11.1% of the respondents have not answered the question.

**Table 7: Teacher’s opinion rating on the role of a Teacher-Librarian in the IB curriculum**

S. No	Opinion	Very Important	Important	Neutral	Low Importance	Not at all Important
1	Providing Information to the Teachers	86 (95.6%)	3 (3.3%)	1 (1.1%)	0	0
2	Providing listening, viewing, and reading guidance	85 (94.4%)	4 (4.4%)	1 (1.1%)	0	0
3	Perform regular evaluations of the school library program	82 (91.1%)	7 (7.8%)	1 (1.1%)	0	0
4	Assist teachers to incorporate outside resources into learning experiences for students	84 (93.3%)	5 (5.6%)	1 (1.1%)	0	0
5	Be familiar with the IB (International	87 (96.7%)	2 (2.2%)	1 (1.1%)	0	0



	Baccalaureate) Curriculum					
6	Be familiar with curriculum guides in use in the school	79 (87.8%)	9 (10%)	2 (2.2%)	0	0
7	Initiate specific teaching units to integrate the effective use of learning resources with classroom instruction	79 (87.8%)	9 (10%)	2 (2.2%)	0	0
8	Prepare regular reports to the principal on the library resource centre program	75 (83.3%)	12 (13.3%)	3 (3.3%)	0	0
9	Become involved with the teachers in the evaluation of learning experiences	0	0	4 (4.4%)		
10	To know and fulfil the Information needs of the students	0	0	1 (1.1%)		
11	Establish written policies and procedures that achieve the goals of the School Library Program	0	0	1 (1.1%)		

This table No.7 indicates that the majority of the respondents responded positively to the duties of a teacher librarian apart from the regular administrative duties. There are no responses to prove that the TLs are not doing any of the above duties. 96.7% of the respondents think that it is very important that the librarian should be familiar with the IB curriculum and also provide information to the teachers with 95.6%.

**Table 8:** Statements and the teaching faculty’s opinion.

S. No.	Statement	Yes	No	Neutral	Total
1	A teacher can become a Teacher-Librarian	29 (32%)	22 (24%)	30 (33%)	90
2	Teacher-librarian support in Teaching and Professional Development	85 (94%)	5 (6%)	-	90
3	Teacher-librarian support in taking online classes during the lockdown	11 (12%)	79 (88%)	-	90

- Whether a teacher can become a TL or not as there are cases appointing a teacher to take care of the library duties in the school. The majority of the respondents were not answered / neutral to this question. 32% of the respondents said ‘yes’ and 24% said ‘no’ that the teacher cannot become a Teacher-Librarian.
- The statement is that the Teacher-Librarian supports teaching and professional development and 94% of the respondents said ‘yes’ and only 6% said ‘no’.
- There 88% of the respondents said ‘No’, that the TL did not support taking online classes during the lockdown laid due to the coronavirus pandemic.

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**Table 9:** Responses of Teaching Faculty towards the duties of a Teacher-Librarian as per the curriculum of IB (International Baccalaureate)

<b>S. No</b>	<b>Opinion</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
1	Teacher-Librarian should be treated as a Teacher and posted under the Teaching Faculty	8 (8.88%)	48 (53.33%)	32 (35.55%)	-	2 (2.22%)
2	Teacher-librarians are part of method instructional team	4 (4.44%)	41 (45.55%)	45 (50%)		
3	Developing appropriate services for teachers according to the goals of teaching	8 (8.88%)	72 (80%)	10 (11.11%)		
4	Teacher-librarians encourage teachers to use a range of resources beyond the textbook	12 (13.33%)	75 (83.33%)	3 (3.33%)		
5	The principal encourages teachers to plan with the teacher-librarians	5 (5.55%)	30 (33.33)	54 (60%)	1 (1.11%)	
6	Teacher-librarians have an important place on the agenda of staff meetings	4 (4.44%)	17 (18.88%)	58 (64.44%)	11 (12.22%)	
7	Teachers Often plan a lesson with teacher-librarians	1 (1.11%)	5 (5.55%)	30 (33.33%)	54 (60%)	
8	Working with a Teacher-librarian improves students' achievement.	12 (13.33%)	78 (86.66%)			
9	Working with teacher-librarians improves teachers' teaching skills.	10 (11.11%)	76 (84.44%)	4 (4.44%)		
10	Working with teacher-librarians improves students' enjoyment of learning	23 (25.55%)	65 (72.22%)	2 (2.22%)		
11	The teacher-librarian consults with teachers incorporating information materials and skills into the classroom curriculum	16 (17.77)	71 (78.88%)	3 (3.33%)		

This table No.9 is to show the teacher's perception of the role of a teacher librarian in IB school. The major findings are that 56 of the respondents out of 90 are agreeing to that the TL should be treated as a teacher and come under teaching faculty, whereas 32 are unanswerd and 2 strongly disagree.50% of the respondents accept that the TL is a part of method instructional team and remaining 50% are neutral. It has been found that the teachers do not plan lessons with TLs, because a majority of the respondents i.e., 60% disagree with the statement.

## **FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

The Major findings of this study are:

- The majority of the teachers 54.4% visit their school library weekly once to use the library resources. Though it is the majority, the necessary action should be taken to increase library visitors and encourage them to use library resources effectively.
- It has been found that the level of satisfaction on library resources and services is more in SNIS and Aga Khan academy when compared with the IISH and Oakridge International School's library resources and services.
- Majority of the teachers with 60% have awareness of the teacher-librarians roles and responsibilities, at the same time majority of the teachers 50% do not have awareness of the teacher-librarian's qualification and experience. This means the teachers are not fully aware of the academic background and experience which is required to become a librarian/teacher-librarian.
- It has been found in the study that the majority of teachers 96.7% think that the teacher-librarian should be familiar with the IB curriculum to support and collaborate with the teachers followed by the responses on providing information to the teachers with 95.6%. No teacher has given any 'low importance' and 'Not at all important' to any of the provided statements
- In this study, the majority of the teachers agreed with 86.66% that working with a teacher-librarian will definitely improve the student's academic achievement and 60% of the teachers disagreed with the statement that teachers often plan lessons with the teacher-librarian. This means the teachers are not always encouraged or willing to plan lessons with the teacher-librarian. If this gap is filled by the management, taking some initiatives will definitely improve the student's academic results.

## **CONCLUSION**

The role of a teacher librarian in IB (International Baccalaureate) schools is to create a positive and engaging learning environment in the school library and fulfill the various academic-related needs of students and teachers. The teacher-librarian is there to support and assist the students, teachers, parents, and administrators in developing various information literacy skills. Being a curriculum leader, the Teacher-librarian has a leadership role, a role in cooperative/collaborative planning and teaching, and a management role in library collection maintenance. The study on duties of a teacher-librarian discussed here is to review the term Teacher-librarianship which is used in the IB Curriculum. This study aims to find out the preferences of teachers on the role of a teacher-librarian so that the collaboration between the teacher and teacher-librarian can be improved further. Though this study is limited to IB world schools, the duties performed by a teacher-librarian are very much needful to other schools, which will give the best results in the academic and overall development of a student.

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