

School Library Month 2017

In the context of the School Library Month 2017 the Mauritius Library Association (MLA) organized a Discussion Forum on the theme `` **A Reflection on School Libraries in Mauritius** ``. Same was held on Wednesday 04 October 2017 in Lecture theatre SARO State College. Some 75 participants were present and there were 2 guest speakers namely Mr A. Hossany , Mauritian author and Mr F. Soogali , Part Time Lecturer at Open University and Former Head Library Cadre at the Min of Education.

The deliberations were focused around the following questions:

- How effective are School Libraries in Mauritius?
- To what extent do School libraries satisfy and cater for students & teaching staff (customers) needs?
- What are the quality and quantity of library resources available in Schools?
- How can Libraries be a better place for students to learn?

Eventually kindly find below some of the main reflections and outcomes:

- Presently ``school `` Library Officers are viewed as successful collaborators with teachers. As they worked jointly to educate, guide and support students.
- In this age of fast changing technological innovation, Library Officers assisted by Library clerks of secondary school libraries have the prominent role and task of inculcating reading culture and enhancing the quest for knowledge and information among students.
- They have to instill curiosity among students through books and related subjects. Nowadays activities turning around literacy, books and information are something very prevalent and ongoing during students` Library classes.
- For examples reading aloud, story and summary telling, guiding and monitoring of Library note books, marking and commemoration of National and International Days through projects works and art works, visualization of films on specific topics or power point presentation ,etc
- Though Library Officers and Library Clerks conduct many pedagogical undertakings directly with students, school Library Staff have never received any pedagogical training so as to enable them to improve their performance and which ultimately would certainly have a positive impact on students as well. Thus to empower school library staff it is important to create a tailor made pedagogical course for Library Officers & Library clerks working in school libraries in Mauritius.

- There is an urgent need to set up appropriate school Libraries in primary schools along with required qualified Library staff.
- In an evolving education system it is pitiful to note that at primary level, students do not have access to a convenient school Library. There are reading corners which are NOT school Libraries. In that way it would have been far much availing to primary students if suitable school Libraries with proper infrastructures, amenities, facilities and qualified human resources could be implemented.

Kind regards

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